Perceptions of School Safety: Year 2 of the School Safety Survey

Pinellas County School District
Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative
Evaluation Report #207-7
Prepared by the Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute

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Executive Summary

Perceptions of School Safety: Year 2 of the School Safety Survey

A rating scale entitled the School Safety Survey (SSS) (Massey, Armstrong, & Santoro, 2000) was developed to identify staff perceptions of school-based issues that contribute to feelings of safety at school. Additionally, the proposed structure and validity of the rating scale were investigated. Sections of the SSS included factors that compromise school safety, overall feelings of safety at school, factors that restore school safety, and familiarity with grant-funded programs.

The instrument was administered to and returned by 477 staff members from three high schools, three middle schools, two elementary schools, and the district counseling staff in Pinellas County, Florida. The results indicated that school staff perceived that level of parental involvement and teasing among students were the largest factors compromising school safety. Eighty-four percent of respondents indicated a belief that their schools were either safe or very safe. Insufficient parental support was reported to be more problematic at elementary and high school levels, while inappropriate child behaviors (e.g., teasing, bullying) were more problematic at the middle school level.

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to study the proposed six-factor structure of the instrument. The results of the analysis indicated that the proposed model provided an unacceptable fit for the data. Two sources of misfit were present. Misfit between items and latent variables occurred because items specified to load on one latent variable also loaded on one or more other variables in addition to the one specified. Misfit occurred also among items because the error variance did not appear to occur randomly.

The findings of this study are being used to redevelop the instrument for administration during the spring of 2002. It is anticipated that the final instrument will prove to be a useful tool in understanding the experiences of faculty and staff with regard to safe and healthy American schools.

Perceptions of School Safety:

Year 2 of the School Safety Survey

Introduction

In spite of media hype surrounding school shootings, violent crimes have decreased steadily in society and schools since 1995 (Fox & Zawitz, 2000). In larger societies, homicide rates are a good estimate of violent crimes nationwide. Homicide trend data indicate that commission and victimization rates of homicide have decreased overall, but have increased in younger age groups. Specifically, in 1993, homicide perpetration rates in the 14-17 year-old age range were higher than the perpetration rates of both 25-34 and 35-49 year-olds. The victimization rates in the 18-24 year-old age range reflected the highest homicide rate of all age groups (Fox & Zawitz, 2000).

While the rate of violent crimes continues to decrease, the profile of those who commit violent crimes also has begun to change in recent years (Fox & Zawitz, 2000), with younger children committing more violent crimes. Since 1992, perpetrators of violent crimes have become younger and the crimes they commit have become more violent. Younger people are more likely to commit violent crimes in groups and it is more likely that there will be multiple victims as a result of such crimes (Fox & Zawitz, 2000). Specifically, the number of victims of any single act of school violence increased from 4 victims during the 1992-1993 school year to 16 victims during the 1997-1998 school year (Annual Report on School Safety, 1998).

Although violence at school has decreased, research on the perceptions of schools as unsafe places is not as clear. Between 1995 and 2000, there were simultaneous decreases in the percentage of students ages 12-18 who feared being attacked at school

and the percentage of students who reported feeling not worried about being attacked at school (Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, 1999; Indicators of School Crime and Safety, 2000). Individual students and teachers in schools, however, are reporting increased incidents of fearing a physical attack at school and fewer are reporting that they feel safe or very safe in school (Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, 1999). This might be related to increasingly severe acts of violence at school and the changing profile of violent offenders to include younger perpetrators.

Some students also report fear during travel to and from school and during school hours (Annual Report on School Safety, 1998; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2000; Indicators of School Crime and Safety, 2000). Five percent of students reported missing one or more days of school per month because of fear. Several plausible reasons for perceptions of schools as unsafe places include media hype over school shootings, increases in gang activity in schools and communities, the presence of weapons in school, and the presence of drugs and alcohol in schools (Arnette & Walsleben, 1998).

Although these factors offer some possible explanations about what contributes to a climate of fear within America's public schools, they do not address the perceptions of individuals within the school building. Astor (1998) suggested that different people have different perceptions of violence as a function of their experiences. Similarly, because of different school experiences, students might have different perceptions of school safety. Administrators, teachers, and students may have differing perceptions of fear as a function of their different experiences while at school.

Teachers and students have increasing concerns of being personally attacked at school (Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, 1999). Between 1993 and 1998, student fears of being physically attacked in or around their school increased from 9% feeling very worried in 1993, to 15% feeling very worried in 1998. Further, fewer students reported feeling not at all worried about being physically attacked in school. In 1993, 48% reported feeling not at all worried about being physically attacked in or around their schools and in 1998, 37% reported feeling not at all worried about being physically attacked in or around their schools.

Many studies have investigated different groups of people's perceptions of fear while at school (Larson, 1993; Morrison & Furlong, 1994; Morrison, Furlong, & Smith, 1994; Furlong, Chung, Bates & Morrison, 1995; Furlong, Poland, Babinski, Munoz, & Boles, 1996; Petersen, 1997; Price & Everett, 1997; Griffith, 1998; Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, 1999; United States Departments of Education and Justice, 1999). There is contradictory information about perceptions of school safety reported between all of these studies. Some indicated decreasing rates of reported violence at school, while others indicated increases in fear of personal attacks and decreases in the number of students and teachers who feel safe or very safe at school (Price & Everett, 1997; Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, 1999). These studies do not, however, include a thorough analysis of factors that contribute to a compromised feeling of safety at school. In addition, they do not present a clear or consistent analysis of current perceptions of schools safety.

Method

Participants

One hundred surveys were given to each middle and high school to be completed and returned. Two social skills specialists distributed 300 surveys at the elementary schools and among the counseling staff. Of the 900 surveys that were disseminated, 477 were returned for a return rate of 53%. Babbie (1990) indicated that a response rate of at least 50% is considered acceptable for analysis of self-report data. Overall, the response rate was acceptable.

Table 1

Response Rate Calculations

School	# Distributed	# Returned	Return Rate
1031	100	51	51%
3781	100	72	72%
4681	100	58	58%
2861	100	48	48%
0531	100	18	18%
0141	100	35	35%
Elem. Schools and Counselors	300	253	84.3%

High schools had a return rate of 68.3%, while middle schools had a return rate of 43%. Return rates could not be calculated separately for elementary schools and counseling staff as they were distributed together. Their return rate together was 84.3%. Schools' return rates ranged from 18% to 72% demonstrating a good amount of variability between schools. Because the data were analyzed together, the overall return rate of 53% was used as a measure of return across groups.

In an effort to ensure anonymity, few identifying questions were posed of the respondents. They were asked to indicate the school where they were currently

employed, their position within the school, and the number of years they had worked at that school. Forty-three percent of the respondents were high school staff, 27% were middle school staff, and 28% were elementary school staff. Two percent of the respondents did not indicate their school. Teachers represented 62% of the respondents, counselors represented 26%, administrators represented 2.5%, and other professional staff represented 6.5% of the sample. Three percent of the respondents did not indicate their positions within the school.

Respondents' years of experience at their current schools ranged from 1-30 years. Fifty-four percent had 1-5 years of experience, 19% had 6-10 years of experience, 11% had 11-15 years of experience, 11% had 16-20 years of experience, and 5% had 20-30 years of experience at the schools in which they were currently working.

Measures

A rating scale entitled the School Safety Survey (SSS) (Massey, Armstrong, & Santoro, 2000) was developed to examine perceptions of school safety. The purpose of this study was (1) to identify factors that influence perceptions of safety and (2) to evaluate the proposed structure and validity of the rating scale. The SSS was administered to 8 schools in Pinellas County: 3 high schools, 3 middle schools, and 2 elementary schools, as well as the entire district counseling staff. The SSS addressed 4 areas relevant to perceptions of school safety, which are: 1) factors that compromise school safety, 2) overall feelings of safety at school, 3) factors that restore school safety, and 4) familiarity with grant-funded programs. The first section of the SSS addressed perceptions of factors that compromise school safety. Respondents were asked to rate each item on a scale of 1 to 5. The values of the ratings were as follows: 1 = Extreme

Problem, it is obvious to the most casual observer; 2 = Serious Problem, it occurs and has affected the school; 3 = Moderate Problem, it occurs and sometimes affects the school; 4 = Minimal Problem, it occurs, but does not affect the school; and 5 = Not a Problem, it does not occur.

The second section of the SSS addressed perceptions of overall safety while at school. Respondents were asked to rate each item on a scale of 1 to 5. The values of the ratings were as follows: 1 = Very Unsafe; 2 = Unsafe; 3 = Unsure; 4 = Safe; and 5 = Very Safe.

In the third section of the SSS, perceptions of the effectiveness of strategies for making schools safe were addressed. Respondents were asked to rate each item on a scale of 1 to 5. The values of the ratings were as follows: 1 = Very Ineffective; 2 = Ineffective; 3 = Unsure; 4 = Effective; and 5 = Very Effective.

Finally, the fourth section of the SSS addressed familiarity with grant-funded programs. Respondents were asked to rate each item on a scale of 1 to 3. The values of the ratings were as follows: 1 = Very Familiar; 2 = Somewhat Familiar; 3 = Not Familiar.

Instrument Development

The SSS was developed in a series of stages that included reviews of the literature and available school district data, question development, and pilot testing with 101 school counselors from the Pinellas County Schools. Data from the pilot survey, entitled the 135 Survey, indicated that there were four factors sampling the construct of school safety. Two of those factors were quite robust and were entitled 1) Child Behaviors and 2) Crime. Items from the Child Behaviors factor sampled different types of legal student behavior such as teasing and bullying. The Crime factor sampled illegal student behaviors such as having drugs or weapons at school. Two factors that also emerged

were entitled 3) Administrative factors and 4) School Locale factors. The Administrative factor related to the administrative supervision and teacher support within the school. The School Locale factor included questions regarding violence in the community surrounding the school. The factor analysis of the third section, which included items sampling perceived efficacy of violence prevention programs (e.g., anger management, social skills instruction), did not yield a clear set of underlying factors.

After conducting the Exploratory Factor Analysis, a national expert in school violence was consulted to aid in the revisions of the survey. The goals of the revision of section one on the survey were to more adequately tap into the emergent factors and to improve the technical adequacy of the instrument. For section three, the goal was to improve item clarity. Following consultation with the expert, revisions were made to the instrument to add items to the Administration and School Locale factors. Two additional factors, Teacher and Family, were added because of their likely relevance according to the literature regarding school violence. The final revision of the first section of the instrument included 6 factors.

The second section of the original 135 Survey included one question inquiring about overall feelings of school safety. Two additional questions were added to this section. The third section included items sampling the perceived efficacy of violence prevention programs. Because the exploratory factor analysis did not yield any robust factors, many of the items were changed in the revision of the instrument. Specifically, content was left intact, but wording was changed to increase item clarity. The fourth section, which inquired about familiarity with grant-funded programs, remained unchanged.

The results of the study will be presented in three main sections. First, development of the instrument will be discussed, followed by the demographic information and response rate calculations of the participating staff. Second, descriptive statistics will be provided for each item on the SSS both for the overall instrument and by school level. Then, information from issues rated as the most problematic in individual schools and from the items targeting overall feelings of safety from individual schools will be reported next. Finally, the results of a confirmatory factor analysis on the first section of the instrument will be presented.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Univariate statistics were calculated to examine the normality of the distribution of scores across items of the SSS rating scale. Item number 3, violence at the bus stop, was eliminated from the analysis because many of the respondents did not answer the question due to insufficient knowledge of the issue. Appendix 1 provides the descriptive statistics for each of the other 35 items in section one by domain.

Responses for each item ranged from 1-5 on all items except for item number 7 which fell on the teacher domain. Its range was 2-5. The mean response ranged from 2.81 on item 24, 'teasing among students', to 4.37 on item 11, 'staff's intolerance of student diversity.' As skewness and kurtosis values become less than –1.0 and greater than 1.0, the distribution of scores becomes more non-normal. Skewness and kurtosis were not problematic for this distribution of scores. There were two items whose skewness values were slightly greater than 1.0 and two items whose kurtosis values were slightly greater than 1.0. These items were from the crime and teacher domains.

Information about the percentage of participants responding to ratings on each item is included in Appendix 2. On the first section, teasing among students and lack of parental support were issues most frequently rated as problematic within schools. The second section indicated that the majority of respondents indicated that they felt safe or very safe at school. There was a truncated range in the responses on the third section of the survey for all participant staff. This means that there was very little range in the responses offered by the participants. Mean scores ranged from 2.9 (School Uniforms) to 3.9 (Presence of School Resource Officers at school). Most people indicated that all programs were at least minimally effective. With respect to participants' familiarity with grant-funded programs, over half of the participants indicated that they were very familiar with School Resource Officers (SRO's). SRO's are on staff at every school in Pinellas County, therefore, this finding was not surprising.

Appendix 3 includes the frequency of responses for participant elementary school staff, appendix 4 includes the frequency of responses for participant middle school staff, and appendix 5 includes the frequency of responses for participant high school staff. Elementary school employees reported different types of concerns than did middle and high school employees. A greater percentage of middle school employees than elementary and high school employees indicated that issues of concern were more extreme problems in their schools. The majority of employees from all three school levels indicated feeling safe or very safe.

The results on the first section of the SSS indicated that two of the thirty-six items on this section of the survey had an average score less than 3. This means that there were

two items that staff perceived overall to be more than a moderate problem in the county. Table 2 includes information about the issues of greatest concern among all respondents.

Table 2

Factors that Compromise School Safety

Item	Average Rating	% Responding that the issue was a serious or extreme problem.
Not enough parental support in addressing discipline.	2.85	38
Teasing among students.	2.81	32

Table 3 includes Pinellas County staff's responses to questions regarding their overall perceptions of school safety.

Table 3

Overall Feelings of Safety at School

Item	Average Rating	% Responding that their perception was safe or very safe.
How would you rate your personal safety at school?	4.07	83.5
How would you rate the overall safety of <u>your</u> school?	3.88	74.5
How would you rate the overall safety of other schools in Pinellas County?	3.30	32

Individual Schools

Results from each of the schools were analyzed for sections one and two of the survey. The issues rated as most problematic at each school along with ratings about feelings of overall safety follow, beginning with high schools, then middle schools and concluding with elementary schools.

At Dixie Hollins High School, the results on the first section of the SSS indicated that of five of the thirty-six items on this section of the survey had an average score less than 3. This means that there were five items that staff perceived overall to be more than a moderate problem at Dixie Hollins High School. Table 4 includes these findings.

Table 4

Factors that Compromise School Safety

Item	Average Rating	% Responding that the issue was a serious or extreme problem.
Insufficient parental involvement in school.	1.98	74
Not enough parental support in addressing discipline.	2.31	63
Family drug or alcohol abuse.	2.76	41
Teasing among students.	2.71	41
Verbal threats among students.	2.86	29

Table 5 summarizes Dixie Hollins High School staff's responses to questions regarding o overall perceptions of school safety.

Table 5

Overall Feelings of Safety at School

Item	Average Rating	% perception was safe or very safe.
How would you rate your personal safety at school?	3.74	68%
How would you rate the overall safety of <u>your</u> school?	3.53	51%
How would you rate the overall safety of other schools in Pinellas County?	3.41	39%

At St. Petersburg High School, the results on the first section of the SSS indicated that of nine of the thirty-six items on this section of the survey had an average score less

than 3. This means that there were nine items that staff perceived overall to be more than a moderate problem at St. Petersburg High School. Table 6 includes these findings.

Table 6

Factors that Compromise School Safety

Item	Average Rating	% Responding that the issue was a serious or extreme problem.
Not enough parental support in addressing discipline.	2.63	44
Verbal threats among students.	2.70	39
Teasing among students.	2.66	39
Bullying among students.	2.75	37
Insufficient parental involvement in school.	2.73	37
Ineffective classroom discipline policies.	2.72	34
Family drug or alcohol abuse.	2.81	33
Illegal activity at school.	2.85	30.5
Personal property stolen or destroyed at school.	2.86	30

Table 7 summarizes St. Petersburg High School staff's responses to questions regarding overall perceptions of school safety.

Table 7

Overall Feelings of Safety at School

Item	Average Rating	% Responding that their perception was safe or very safe.
How would you rate your personal safety at school?	3.97	85
How would you rate the overall safety of <u>your</u> school?	3.69	69
How would you rate the overall safety of other schools in Pinellas County?	3.28	33

At Palm Harbor University High School, the results on the first section of the SSS indicated that none of the thirty-six items on this section of the survey had an average score less than 3. This means that there were no items that staff perceived overall to be

more than a moderate problem at Palm Harbor University High School. The responses ranged from an average of 3.45 (Ineffective discipline policies) to 4.7 (Gang activity at school). Table 8 summarizes Palm Harbor University High School staff's responses to questions regarding overall perceptions of school safety.

Table 8

Overall Feelings of Safety at School

Item	Average Rating	% Responding that their perception was safe or very safe.
How would you rate your personal safety at school?	4.37	88
How would you rate the overall safety of your school?	4.28	90
How would you rate the overall safety of other schools in Pinellas County?	3.29	33

At Largo Middle School, staff and students both completed the SSS. Of the thirty-six items on this section of the survey, the average score for staff was less than 3 for three items and the average score for students was less than 3 for four items. This means that these items were perceived by staff and students overall to be more than a moderate problem at Largo Middle School. Table 9 includes the staff results and Table 10 includes the student results.

Table 9

Factors that Compromise School Safety

Item	Average Rating	% Responding that the issue was a serious or extreme problem.
Teasing among students.	2.63	34
Bullying among students.	2.82	29
Verbal threats among students.	2.89	23

Table 10

Factors that Compromise School Safety

Item	Average Rating	% Responding that the issue was a serious or extreme problem.
Bullying among students.	2.78	47.4
Verbal threats among students.	2.74	47
Physical violence among students.	2.81	46
Teasing among students.	2.75	46

Table 11 summarizes Largo Middle School staff's responses to the questions regarding overall perceptions of school safety and Table 12 summarizes Largo Middle School students' overall perceptions of school safety.

Table 11

Overall Feelings of Safety at School

Item	Average Rating	% Responding that their perception was safe or very safe.
How would you rate your personal safety at school?	3.97	88
How would you rate the overall safety of your school?	3.91	82
How would you rate the overall safety of other schools in Pinellas County?	3.24	30

Table 12

Overall Feelings of Safety at School

Item	Average Rating	% Responding that their perception was safe or very safe.
How would you rate your personal safety at school?	3.29	47
How would you rate the overall safety of your school?	3.27	48
How would you rate the overall safety of other schools in Pinellas County?	3.10	30

At Oak Grove Middle School, the results of the first section of the SSS indicated that one item had an average score less than 3. This means that there was one item that staff perceived overall to be more than a moderate problem at Oak Grove Middle School. That item was teasing among students. The average rating was 2.46 and 51% of the participants indicated that the issue was a serious or extreme problem. Table 13

summarizes Oak Grove Middle School staff's responses to the questions regarding overall perceptions of school safety.

Table 13

Overall Feelings of Safety at School

Item	Average Rating	% Responding that their perception was safe or very safe.
How would you rate your personal safety at school?	4.03	80
How would you rate the overall safety of your school?	3.85	78
How would you rate the overall safety of other schools in Pinellas County?	3.15	23

At Bardmoor Elementary School, the results of the first section of the SSS indicated that six items had an average score less than 2.5. This means that there were six items that staff perceived overall to be more than a moderate problem at Bardmoor Elementary School. Table 14 includes these findings.

Table 14

Factors that Compromise School Safety

Item	Average Rating	% Responding that the issue was a serious or extreme problem.
Insufficient parental involvement in school.	1.87	82
Not enough parental support in addressing discipline.	1.96	78
Verbal threats among students.	2.17	62
Lack of alternatives to suspension and expulsion.	2.20	64
Ineffective classroom discipline policies.	2.26	62
Teasing among students.	2.27	62

Table 15 summarizes Bardmoor Elementary School staff's responses to the questions regarding overall school safety.

Table 15

Overall Feelings of Safety at School

Item	Average Rating	% Responding that their perception was safe or very safe.
How would you rate your personal safety at school?	3.62	66
How would you rate the overall safety of your school?	3.38	49
How would you rate the overall safety of other schools in Pinellas County?	3.07	20

At Clearview Elementary School, the results of the first section of the SSS indicated that three items had an average score less than 3. Table 16 provides the three items that staff at Clearview Elementary School perceived to be a moderate problem overall.

Table 16

Factors that Compromise School Safety

Item	Average Rating	% Responding that the issue was a serious or extreme problem.
Not enough parental support in addressing discipline.	2.74	41
Insufficient parental involvement in school.	2.85	33
Teasing among students.	2.88	19

Table 17 summarizes Clearview Elementary School staff's responses to the questions regarding overall school safety.

Table 17

Overall Feelings of Safety at School

Item	Average Rating	% Responding that their perception was safe or very safe.
How would you rate your personal safety at school?	3.93	83
How would you rate the overall safety of your school?	3.65	81
How would you rate the overall safety of other schools in Pinellas County?	3.34	42.5

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted on the first section of the instrument to gather information about the model fit of the data with the six proposed factors. First, the internal consistency of the six factors was examined. Internal consistency is a method of estimating the reliability of scores by investigating the individual items of the instrument (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996). Cronbach's alpha determines the extent to which participants who answer one item in a certain way also answer similar items in the same way. Reliability coefficients range from .00 to 1.00, with .00 indicating no relationship among test items and 1.00 indicating perfect reliability among test items. Items with ratings of .80 and higher generally are considered to have good reliability. Internal consistency reliability estimates for each of the six factors are summarized in Table 18.

Table 18

Reliability Coefficients

Scale	# of Items	Cronbach Alpha	Range of Item to Total Correlation
Child Behaviors	7	.90	.87 to .89
Administration	5	.90	.86 to .91
School Locale	4	.83	.77 to .82
Crime	7	.89	.86 to .88
Teacher	6	.83	.77 to .84
Family	6	.87	.83 to .87

In examining the range of item to total correlation, there were no items that, if deleted, would have increased the internal consistency of individual domains to a marked degree. This indicates that the items within each domain are a fairly consistent representation of the domain construct.

The correlation matrix for the latent variables was examined to ascertain the degree to which the purported domains are related to each other. Correlations of .80 and higher generally indicate that items are related to a marked degree. The correlation matrix of the latent variables is displayed in Table 19.

Table 19

Correlation Matrix of Latent Variables

	Child	Admin.	Schl Loc.	Crime	Teacher	Family
Child	1.0					
Admin.	0.73	1.0				
Schl Loc.	0.67	0.68	1.0			
Crime	0.68	0.45	0.59	1.0		
Teacher	0.57	0.53	0.44	0.56	1.0	
Family	0.79	0.64	0.60	0.53	0.59	1.0

Correlations among latent variables ranged from 0.443 between teacher and school locale factors to 0.789 between child and family factors. A certain degree of correlation among latent variables would be expected because all latent variables are sampling different aspects a single construct, school safety. No correlations among latent variables were large enough to suggest multi-colinearity as a problem.

Confirmatory factor analysis is a technique in which the researcher imposes constraints on the factor model (Long, 1983). These constraints indicate which latent variables are correlated, which latent variables affect which observed variables, which observed variables are affected by unique error factors, and which unique error factors are correlated. Thus, factor models summarize the degree to which respondents answer a particular group of questions in a similar manner. These groups of items (i.e., observed variables) contribute to the variance in the proposed latent variables. The results of the confirmatory factor analysis will be presented in three sections. First, the fit statistics of the model will be presented followed by the standardized and non-standardized factor model. Finally, the modification indices will be presented to examine potential sources of misfit in the proposed model.

Confirmatory factor analysis only can be conducted on complete data sets. That is, respondents must have answered all questions on the SSS to be included in the data analysis. Of the 477 returned rating scales from Pinellas County staff, 360 were complete and were included in the confirmatory factor analysis. Examination of fit statistics enables the researcher to ascertain the degree to which the confirmatory factor model fits the proposed factor model. The results of this analysis yielded a statistically significant chi square, $?^2$ (355, N = 360) = 2742.05, p<.01). A chi square value can be statistically

significant when a specified model is good, but not perfect. The statistical significance of the chi-square is influenced by the sample size. That is, when a large sample size is used in the confirmatory factor analysis, it is not unusual to have a statistically significant chi square value. Other fit indices were examined to further examine the model fit. If forced to fit the specified model, the data yielded a Bentler-Bonnett Nonnormed Fit Index (NNFI) of .748, a Bentler's Comparative Fit Index (CFI) of .769, and a Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) of .106. Cut-off values of each fit index indicate whether or not the data are considered a good fit. For the NNFI and CFI, values >.90 indicate a relatively good fit. For the RMSEA, any value less than .08 indicates a relatively good fit. All of the fit indices produced in this analysis indicated a sub-par model. Based on these fit indices, the SSS using a 6-factor structure model was not supported based on the theoretical model proposed. Table 20 summarizes the fit indices.

Table 20

Fit Indices of the Confirmatory Factor Model

Fit Index	Relatively Good Fit	Obtained Value
NNFI	>.90	.75
CFI	>.90	.77
RMSEA	<.08	.11

The standardized factor loadings ranged from .323 to .930. Unstandardized factor loadings were set to 1.000 for the first item on each domain to identify the model. This provided a known value so the equation could be solved. Factor loadings, standard errors, and t-values were examined on the non-standardized factor model. Factor

loadings with t-values >2 are considered statistically significant at the $p \leq .05$ level. This is considered a good measure of association. All t-values were statistically significant ($t > 2$, $p \leq .05$) and ranged from 6.18 to 27.38. The standardized factor loadings, non-standardized factor loadings, standard errors, and t-values are summarized in Table 21 (see appendix).

When a factor model does not fit the proposed structure, there are two sources of misfit that can occur. The first source of misfit occurs between items and latent variables and indicates that an item specified to load on one latent variable might load on one or more other variable in addition to the one specified. The second source of misfit occurs among items and indicates that there is correlated error. One assumption of confirmatory factor analysis is that error variance occurs randomly. When errors are correlated, it suggests that the error is systematic. Modification indices greater than five indicate that one of these sources of misfit is problematic.

The Lambda-X modification indices provide a measure of misfit between items and latent variables. Of the possible 175 indices, 88 (or 50%) were less than five suggesting that the item was correctly specified to load on a particular latent variable. Of the other 87 items, 27 had modification indices of 5 to 9.9, 30 had modification indices of 10 to 19.9, 17 had modification indices of 20 to 39.9, 9 had modification indices of 40 to 59.9, and 4 had modification indices greater than 60. There is a certain degree of correlation assumed to be present among latent variables because they are all sampling a similar construct: perceptions of school safety. Therefore, because of the similarity among latent variables, it is not surprising that items loaded on additional latent variables than suggested by the factor model. Of the four largest modification indices,

two were between observed items on the crime domain and the child behaviors domain, one was between an observed item on the teacher domain and the child behaviors domain, and another was between the same observed item on the teacher domain and the crime domain. Table 22 summarizes the individual items, specified domain, suggested domain, and modification indices of the largest sources of misfit.

Table 22

Largest Source of Misfit Between Items and Latent Variables

Item	Specified Domain	Additional Domain Suggested by MI	Modification Index (MI)
Drugs being sold in school.	Crime	Child Behaviors	100.662
Personal property stolen or destroyed at school.	Crime	Child Behaviors	88.581
Lack of student engagement.	Teacher	Child Behaviors	62.557
Lack of student engagement.	Teacher	Crime	62.030

This suggests that the items, "Drugs being sold in school," and "Personal property stolen or destroyed at school" load strongly with items on the latent variable entitled *Child Behaviors* as well as loading with the latent variable entitled *Crime.* Further, it appears that the item, "Lack of student engagement" is a complex variable and may load on several of the proposed latent variables.

A second source of misfit indicates that there is correlated error among items. This refers to the tendency of respondents to answer different questions in the same manner. This phenomenon is not uncommon in self-report instruments. Although items

on the instrument were designed to be independent, respondents may answer items if they are asking the same thing, creating a response set. The Theta-Delta modification indices provide a measure of correlated error among items. Of the 595 indices, 459 or 77%, were <5 suggesting an acceptable degree of correlated error among the items. Of the other 136 items, 68 had modification indices of 5 to 9.9, 38 had modification indices of 10 to 19.9, 17 had modification indices of 20 to 39.9, 6 had modification indices of 40 to 59.9, and 7 had modification indices greater than 60. Six of the indices were greater than 100. Table 23 summarizes the six pairs of items with the largest sources of misfit.

Table 23

Largest Source of Misfit Between Items

Items	Item Numbers	Modification Index
Inadequate supervision of access to school building./Insufficient monitoring of school grounds.	28, 29	250.31
Family drug or alcohol abuse./Domestic violence.	34, 35	241.51
Students using drugs or alcohol at school./Drugs being sold in school.	18, 20	220.36
Violence in the community where your school is located./Presence of known problem areas around the school.	26, 27	210.07
Ineffective classroom management./Ineffective classroom discipline practices.	5, 6	161.25
Not enough parental support in addressing discipline./Insufficient parental involvement in school.	30, 31	111.26

Correlated error among items suggests that the respondents answered questions as if they were the same. The largest sources of misfit between items occurred when similar items were placed in close proximity to each other, contributing to the possibility of a response set. Further investigation of the items with the largest correlated error indicated that their content was very similar.

Based on the analysis of the fit indices and the modification indices, the proposed model has a fit that is sub-par. Values from the modification indices suggested two plausible explanations for the misfit. First, some of the items may have loaded with different latent variables than the ones put forth in the model. This was not surprising given that the proposed latent variables were sampling the same construct, perceptions of school safety. Second, correlated error among items indicated that respondents answered some items as if the items were the same. Further investigation of these questions indicated that they were, indeed, very similar and that they were placed in close proximity to each other on the SSS.

Discussion

The Perceptions of School Safety rating scale (SSS) is best conceptualized as a work in progress. Different forms of the instrument have been used to gather data in two studies thus far. In the future, several recommendations are warranted. First, based on the results of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and problem solving among the team of evaluators, revisions to the instrument will be made. Second, the revised version of the SSS will be administered to all school staff in Pinellas County during spring semester 2002. The larger sample size will enable additional CFA at the school level. Specifically, three separate CFA will be conducted, one at each school level, to ascertain

whether or not the SSS is exhibiting a different factor structure at different school levels. Finally, group differences among schools will be analyzed.

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Appendix 1

Table 21

Standardized and Non-Standardized Factor Loadings

Item by Domain	Standardized Loading	Unstandardized Loading	Error Variance	T-Value
CHIBEH 1	.772	1.000		
CHIBEH 9	.777	.982	.063	15.676
CHIBEH 17	.852	1.095	.062	17.573
CHIBEH 19	.723	.873	.061	14.390
CHIBEH 21	.824	1.097	.065	16.842
CHIBEH 24	.726	.937	.065	14.451
CHIBEH 36	.687	.831	.061	13.555
ADM 2	.759	1.000		
ADM 13	.876	1.286	.073	17.721
ADM 14	.897	1.258	.069	18.210
ADM 15	.864	1.184	.068	17.436
ADM 16	.655	.957	.075	12.677
SCHLOC 26	.518	1.000		
SCHLOC 27	.598	1.163	.137	8.470
SCHLOC 28	.901	2.001	.193	10.378
SCHLOC 29	.889	1.945	.188	10.340
CRIME 4	.810	1.000		
CRIME 12	.637	.646	.051	12.699
CRIME 18	.808	1.014	.059	17.232
CRIME 20	.808	.952	.055	17.213
CRIME 22	.807	.903	.053	17.180
CRIME 23	.628	.778	.062	12.494
CRIME 25	.619	.717	.058	12.280
TCHR 5	.918	1.000		
TCHR 6	.930	1.045	.038	27.377
TCHR 7	.661	.688	.046	14.873
TCHR 8	.548	.708	.062	11.448
TCHR 10	.558	.690	.059	11.733
TCHR 11	.323	.345	.056	6.176
FAMILY 30	.839	1.000		
FAMILY 31	.840	1.101	.058	18.923
FAMILY 32	.585	.651	.056	11.655
FAMILY 33	.615	.703	.057	12.408
FAMILY 34	.723	.733	.048	15.300
FAMILY 35	.723	.711	.047	15.287

Appendix 2

Descriptive Statistics for the SSS by Domain

Item #	Domain	Mean	Std. Dev.	Skewness	Kurtosis
1	Child beh.	3.05	.90	-.246	-.193
9	Child beh.	3.77	.88	-.543	-.020
17	Child beh.	3.44	.90	-.469	-.171
19	Child beh.	4.09	.86	-.779	.275
21	Child beh.	3.12	.94	-.353	-.196
24	Child beh.	2.81	.90	-.166	-.106
36	Child beh.	3.52	.86	-.287	.046
2	Administration	3.21	1.05	-.257	-.443
13	Administration	3.65	1.19	-.611	-.487
14	Administration	3.77	1.13	-.764	-.110
15	Administration	3.67	1.11	-.502	-.542
16	Administration	3.57	1.20	-.505	-.703
26	School Locale	3.87	.91	-.649	.230
27	School Locale	3.86	.94	-.539	-.281
28	School Locale	3.75	1.07	-.689	-.079
29	School Locale	3.80	1.05	-.673	-.095
4	Crime	3.63	.92	-.366	-.167
12	Crime	4.11	.77	-.862	1.265
18	Crime	3.95	.97	-.818	.318
20	Crime	4.12	.92	-.941	.516
22	Crime	4.24	.85	-1.044	.917
23	Crime	3.37	.94	-.466	.008
25	Crime	3.58	.88	-.484	.287
5	Teacher	3.52	.80	-.311	.099
6	Teacher	3.48	.81	-.244	-.166
7	Teacher	4.11	.78	-.585	-.135
8	Teacher	3.68	.95	-.406	-.249
10	Teacher	3.64	.93	-.387	-.092
11	Teacher	4.37	.80	-1.234	1.468
30	Family	2.85	1.12	.049	-.712
31	Family	2.98	1.23	.044	-.908
32	Family	3.49	1.06	-.380	-.435
33	Family	3.59	1.07	-.508	-.293
34	Family	3.26	.93	-.177	-.317
35	Family	3.37	.90	-.279	-.304

Appendix 3

Frequencies, All Schools

I. How serious are these issues at your school?	Extreme Problem	Serious	Moderate	Minimal	Not a Problem
1. Verbal threats among students.	7.8	20.0	39.2	25.1	5.2
2. Ineffective disciplinary policies.	6.1	16.4	34.3	28.6	11.1
3. Violence at school bus stop.	2.1	7.3	24.9	37.6	15.3
4. Illegal activity at school.	3.1	9.9	29.4	35.5	17.6
5. Ineffective classroom management.	2.3	8.7	34.5	40.6	10.1
6. Ineffective classroom discipline practices.	1.7	10.5	35.5	38.3	9.9
7. Inadequate supervision of students during class.	1.4	4.7	16.7	41.6	31.4
8. Inadequate supervision of students during transition times.	2.6	10.5	28.0	34.7	20.4
9. Verbal threats directed toward staff.	3.0	9.1	22.8	43.0	18.8
10. Lack of student engagement.	2.8	9.2	29.4	33.6	18.1
11. Staff's tolerance of student diversity.	2.3	3.3	14.1	28.4	47.2
12. Students bringing weapons to school.	2.6	4.7	13.4	42.3	31.4
13. Not enough administrative support.	6.6	11.5	20.2	29.3	27.7
14. Ineffective leadership practices.	5.7	9.1	20.0	32.4	28.7
15. Ineffective use of suspension and expulsion.	5.2	11.0	23.5	28.2	27.9
16. Lack of alternatives to suspension and expulsion.	6.8	16.4	19.3	27.4	26.0
17. Physical violence among students.	5.1	15.2	27.7	39.0	9.2
18. Students using drugs or alcohol in school.	3.5	7.1	19.0	33.8	32.2
19. Physical violence directed toward staff.	1.7	5.4	16.6	37.5	34.8
20. Drugs being sold in school.	4.2	5.6	15.3	31.2	38.2
21. Bullying among students.	8.9	17.2	35.5	28.7	6.1
22. Gang activity in school.	3.8	3.8	16.0	30.5	40.6
23. Personal property stolen or destroyed at school.	6.1	13.6	32.2	34.7	9.8
24. Teasing among students.	11.8	21.4	41.8	17.2	4.2
25. Vandalism	5.6	8.0	29.8	37.8	14.5
26. Violence in community where your school is located.	3.5	7.3	21.3	36.6	25.4
27. Presence of known problem areas around the school.	2.4	8.5	22.3	33.8	27.0
28. Inadequate supervision of access to school building.	5.2	8.9	23.0	32.4	27.0
29. Insufficient monitoring of school grounds.	3.7	8.7	23.3	31.4	29.3
30. Not enough parental support in addressing discipline.	11.8	22.0	30.3	19.7	12.2
31. Insufficient parental involvement in school.	12.2	20.2	28.0	20.0	15.5
32. Not enough community resources (e.g. Boys and Girls Clubs and community centers).	5.4	13.1	27.4	30.0	18.3
33. Insufficient supervision before or after school.	5.1	10.3	26.0	31.7	21.3
34. Family drug or alcohol abuse.	3.8	15.2	32.8	26.8	13.4
35. Domestic violence.	3.3	13.1	30.7	32.2	12.5
36. Students' intolerance of diversity.	2.8	9.1	34.7	34.5	15.0

	Very Unsafe	Unsafe	Unsure	Safe	Very Safe
1. How would you rate your personal safety at school?	1.4	5.9	14.5	50.2	24.7
2. How would you rate the overall safety of <u>your</u> school?	1.6	7.3	20.0	50.0	17.9
3. How would you rate the overall safety of other schools in Pinellas County?	2.1	5.4	56.3	27.5	3.8

II. How effective are these strategies in making your school safe?	Very Ineffective	Ineffective	Unsure	Effective	Very Effective
1. Consistently implemented suspension/expulsion of students who commit acts of violence.	5.6	14.1	22.6	36.6	16.4
2. Installing security devices in schools (e.g. camera, metal detectors).	4.2	8.2	30.7	32.8	15.9
3. Presence of School Resource Officers on school campus.	3.1	7.0	19.5	37.3	27.9
4. Training students in anger management techniques.	3.0	11.7	28.2	40.4	12.7
5. Bringing drugs/weapon sniffing dogs to school.	4.9	5.9	28.2	36.4	17.4
6. Training students in conflict resolution and peer mediation.	3.3	9.9	22.5	42.7	17.4
7. Training students to accept cultural and racial diversity.	3.0	7.5	27.0	41.6	16.9
8. Anonymous warning system for students to report their awareness of drugs, weapons or violence (e.g. hotline).	2.6	6.4	35.5	32.4	16.0
9. Availability of school based drug screening.	6.1	8.9	53.3	14.3	7.1
10. Presence of zero tolerance policies for drugs, weapons and alcohol.	5.4	9.1	20.7	37.1	23.3
11. Having counselors available to help students.	5.4	9.6	14.1	45.3	23.2
12. Having mentor for new teachers.	4.7	7.5	26.1	41.6	15.9
13. Increasing effective parent involvement in school.	3.8	9.4	20.9	43.2	17.6
14. A diverse range of school-based extra-curricula activities	2.8	8.4	25.4	41.1	16.2
15. A wide range of community-based extra-curricula activities.	3.1	9.4	31.7	37.3	12.7
16. School-based mental health services for students.	4.0	7.7	34.0	36.1	13.1
17. Community-based mental health services for students.	3.1	6.8	40.8	31.9	12.5
18. School uniforms	14.6	10.1	38.2	13.8	8.4
19. Enforced dress code	11.1	17.8	24.2	31.5	10.6
20. School wide social skills training.	4.5	12.4	34.1	30.8	11.0
21. Training students in leadership skills.	3.5	7.8	32.1	38.3	11.7
22. Presence of students' disciplinary policy committee.	5.6	9.9	39.9	29.8	6.1
23. Trained crisis intervention team available.	3.0	7.8	33.6	37.5	11.7
24. Training students in Character Education initiatives.	5.1	9.6	37.6	29.4	11.3
25. Adult supervision at the school bus stop.	5.7	5.4	40.8	28.2	12.2
26. Community-based schools.	3.7	5.6	39.9	30.3	12.5
27. Increased presence of police officers in community where school is located.	3.0	6.1	30.5	37.1	17.4

III. Rate your familiarity with the following programs or services	Very Familiar	Somewhat Familiar	Not Familiar
1. School Resource Officers (SRO's)	56.6	31.2	9.2
2. Gang Specialists	5.9	30.3	60.5
3. K-9 Program	17.2	41.8	37.5
4. Violence Prevention Specialists	12.7	36.4	47.0
5. Project Chill Out	2.8	8.9	84.8
6. Talking Schools	5.4	12.9	78.0
7. Parent Advocacy	11.3	39.9	44.4
8. Social Skills Specialists	15.5	28.0	52.1
9. Social Marketing	3.5	11.7	80.7
10. Partnership Program	15.7	38.5	42.0
11. Mental Health Wraparound	5.6	12.7	77.4
12. Anger Management	29.1	45.8	21.1
13. Pre-school Consultation	5.6	19.7	69.9
14. On Campus Intervention Program (OCIP)	30.7	22.3	43.2
15. FAST	6.4	10.8	78.4
16. Camp Anytown	21.1	27.7	47.4
17. Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative (SS/HSI)	13.9	21.3	13.9

Appendix 4

Frequencies, Elementary Schools

I. How serious are these issues at your school?	Extreme Problem	Serious	Moderate	Minimal	Not a Problem
1. Verbal threats among students.	10.5	22.6	37.6	27.8	1.5
2. Ineffective disciplinary policies.	10.5	21.8	27.8	27.1	12.0
3. Violence at school bus stop.	.8	10.5	35.3	39.1	11.3
4. Illegal activity at school.	--	3.0	18.8	37.6	39.1
5. Ineffective classroom management.	--	8.3	36.8	45.9	6.8
6. Ineffective classroom discipline practices.	--	10.5	35.3	45.1	7.5
7. Inadequate supervision of students during class.	--	1.5	9.0	39.8	48.9
8. Inadequate supervision of students during transition times.	--	5.3	20.3	45.1	28.6
9. Verbal threats directed toward staff.	.8	11.3	25.6	36.8	24.8
10. Lack of student engagement.	.8	7.5	28.6	38.3	23.3
11. Staff's tolerance of student diversity.	.8	--	11.3	28.6	57.9
12. Students bringing weapons to school.	--	3.0	11.3	48.1	36.1
13. Not enough administrative support.	10.5	14.3	24.1	26.3	23.3
14. Ineffective leadership practices.	9.8	13.5	20.3	27.8	26.3
15. Ineffective use of suspension and expulsion.	4.5	21.8	26.3	16.5	29.3
16. Lack of alternatives to suspension and expulsion.	10.5	24.8	28.6	17.3	16.5
17. Physical violence among students.	3.8	23.3	24.1	37.6	9.8
18. Students using drugs or alcohol in school.	--	--	2.3	16.5	78.9
19. Physical violence directed toward staff.	.8	9.8	21.8	35.3	31.6
20. Drugs being sold in school.	--	--	1.5	7.5	88.7
21. Bullying among students.	8.3	18.8	36.1	29.3	6.8
22. Gang activity in school.	.8	--	7.5	18.0	72.9
23. Personal property stolen or destroyed at school.	4.5	11.3	32.3	37.6	12.0
24. Teasing among students.	12.0	23.3	48.1	14.3	.8
25. Vandalism	2.3	3.8	27.1	41.4	23.3
26. Violence in community where your school is located.	1.5	3.8	24.1	41.4	24.1
27. Presence of known problem areas around the school.	.8	5.3	26.3	33.8	29.3
28. Inadequate supervision of access to school building.	4.5	10.5	21.1	30.8	32.3
29. Insufficient monitoring of school grounds.	3.8	9.8	20.3	27.1	38.3
30. Not enough parental support in addressing discipline.	15.8	31.6	27.8	18.0	5.3
31. Insufficient parental involvement in school.	18.0	30.1	27.1	15.0	8.3
32. Not enough community resources (e.g. Boys and Girls Clubs and community centers).	3.0	12.8	28.6	33.1	19.5
33. Insufficient supervision before or after school.	1.5	11.3	24.8	36.8	24.1
34. Family drug or alcohol abuse.	3.0	18.0	46.6	24.1	6.0
35. Domestic violence.	1.5	20.3	36.1	31.6	7.5
36. Students' intolerance of diversity.	.8	11.3	30.8	42.1	14.3

	Very Unsafe	Unsafe	Unsure	Safe	Very Safe
1. How would you rate your personal safety at school?	.8	5.3	12.8	54.9	26.3
2. How would you rate the overall safety of <u>your</u> school?	.8	8.3	20.3	52.6	18.0
3. How would you rate the overall safety of other schools in Pinellas County?	1.5	5.3	57.1	30.1	2.3

II. How effective are these strategies in making your school safe?	Very Ineffective	Ineffective	Unsure	Effective	Very Effective
1. Consistently implemented suspension/expulsion of students who commit acts of violence.	8.3	26.3	24.8	25.6	12.8
2. Installing security devices in schools (e.g. camera, metal detectors).	5.3	7.5	50.4	18.0	2.3
3. Presence of School Resource Officers on school campus.	4.5	12.0	36.8	27.8	7.5
4. Training students in anger management techniques.	4.5	11.3	16.5	56.4	9.0
5. Bringing drugs/weapon sniffing dogs to school.	6.8	6.0	49.6	18.8	3.0
6. Training students in conflict resolution and peer mediation.	3.8	10.5	17.3	50.4	15.8
7. Training students to accept cultural and racial diversity.	.8	4.5	21.8	52.6	16.5
8. Anonymous warning system for students to report their awareness of drugs, weapons or violence (e.g. hotline).	2.3	6.0	44.4	30.8	6.0
9. Availability of school based drug screening.	8.3	6.0	54.1	12.0	3.0
10. Presence of zero tolerance policies for drugs, weapons and alcohol.	7.5	13.5	24.1	33.8	18.0
11. Having counselors available to help students.	12.8	9.8	8.3	44.4	24.1
12. Having mentors for new teachers.	6.8	6.8	21.1	42.1	19.5
13. Increasing effective parent involvement in school.	3.8	9.8	14.3	43.6	25.6
14. A diverse range of school-based extra-curricula activities	4.5	11.3	32.3	33.1	10.5
15. A wide range of community-based extra-curricula activities.	3.8	9.8	35.3	33.1	11.3
16. School-based mental health services for students.	3.0	5.3	19.5	45.9	21.1
17. Community-based mental health services for students.	1.5	6.8	30.8	40.6	15.8
18. School uniforms	11.3	7.5	45.1	17.3	6.8
19. Enforced dress code	8.3	9.8	37.6	31.6	8.3
20. School wide social skills training.	4.5	6.8	19.5	47.4	16.5
21. Training students in leadership skills.	3.0	4.5	23.3	48.1	15.8
22. Presence of students' disciplinary policy committee.	5.3	9.8	42.9	30.8	3.8
23. Trained crisis intervention team available.	3.0	11.3	29.3	37.6	12.8
24. Training students in Character Education initiatives.	2.3	8.3	13.5	50.4	22.6
25. Adult supervision at the school bus stop.	6.0	6.0	31.6	32.3	17.3
26. Community-based schools.	5.3	3.0	36.8	31.6	16.5
27. Increased presence of police officers in community where school is located.	3.0	3.8	32.3	47.4	9.0

III. Rate your familiarity with the following programs or services	Very Familiar	Somewhat Familiar	Not Familiar
1. School Resource Officers (SRO's)	33.1	44.4	19.5
2. Gang Specialists	3.8	22.6	72.2
3. K-9 Program	14.3	34.6	48.9
4. Violence Prevention Specialists	20.3	40.6	37.6
5. Project Chill Out	8.3	90.2	98.5
6. Talking Schools	.8	9.8	88.0
7. Parent Advocacy	9.8	45.9	41.4
8. Social Skills Specialists	33.8	38.3	26.3
9. Social Marketing	1.5	6.8	89.5
10. Partnership Program	14.3	48.1	36.1
11. Mental Health Wraparound	5.3	13.5	79.7
12. Anger Management	36.1	48.1	12.8
13. Pre-school Consultation	3.0	24.8	69.9
14. On Campus Intervention Program (OCIP)	5.3	13.5	79.7
15. FAST	4.5	9.8	83.5
16. Camp Anytown	13.5	14.3	70.7
17. Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative (SS/HSI)	25.6	25.6	47.4

Appendix 5

Frequencies, Middle Schools

I. How serious are these issues at your school?	Extreme Problem	Serious	Moderate	Minimal	Not a Problem
1. Verbal threats among students.	11.5	18.6	37.6	20.4	8.0
2. Ineffective disciplinary policies.	4.9	13.7	31.0	31.9	13.7
3. Violence at school bus stop.	4.9	9.7	26.1	32.3	16.4
4. Illegal activity at school.	5.3	10.6	23.9	39.4	14.6
5. Ineffective classroom management.	4.0	8.4	25.7	42.0	14.6
6. Ineffective classroom discipline practices.	3.1	9.7	30.5	37.6	14.2
7. Inadequate supervision of students during class.	3.5	6.2	14.2	37.2	33.6
8. Inadequate supervision of students during transition times.	5.3	14.6	27.4	29.6	18.6
9. Verbal threats directed toward staff.	6.6	8.0	20.4	39.8	20.8
10. Lack of student engagement.	4.4	9.3	27.0	32.7	20.4
11. Staff's tolerance of student diversity.	4.9	5.8	16.4	23.0	43.8
12. Students bringing weapons to school.	5.8	8.4	8.8	34.5	34.1
13. Not enough administrative support.	7.1	11.1	12.8	30.1	32.3
14. Ineffective leadership practices.	6.2	8.4	15.9	33.6	31.0
15. Ineffective use of suspension and expulsion.	7.5	7.5	17.7	33.6	27.9
16. Lack of alternatives to suspension and expulsion.	8.4	18.6	16.4	25.2	26.5
17. Physical violence among students.	9.3	13.7	27.9	34.5	9.3
18. Students using drugs or alcohol in school.	4.9	6.6	15.5	38.5	27.9
19. Physical violence directed toward staff.	3.5	5.3	13.3	30.1	41.6
20. Drugs being sold in school.	8.4	5.8	10.2	33.2	35.0
21. Bullying among students.	14.2	17.7	30.5	24.3	8.4
22. Gang activity in school.	8.4	5.8	15.9	29.2	35.0
23. Personal property stolen or destroyed at school.	9.3	14.6	27.4	31.4	12.8
24. Teasing among students.	15.5	22.1	35.8	15.9	6.2
25. Vandalism	11.1	8.4	27.0	32.3	15.9
26. Violence in community where your school is located.	7.1	7.5	18.1	30.1	30.5
27. Presence of known problem areas around the school.	4.9	8.8	17.7	30.5	31.0
28. Inadequate supervision of access to school building.	7.5	7.5	24.3	31.0	24.8
29. Insufficient monitoring of school grounds.	4.4	7.5	23.5	31.9	27.4
30. Not enough parental support in addressing discipline.	9.7	14.2	31.4	19.5	19.9
31. Insufficient parental involvement in school.	7.1	15.9	29.6	27.0	15.5
32. Not enough community resources (e.g. Boys and Girls Clubs and community centers).	7.5	11.1	27.0	27.9	19.5
33. Insufficient supervision before or after school.	6.6	9.3	29.2	26.5	22.1
34. Family drug or alcohol abuse.	5.8	8.8	24.8	26.5	23.5
35. Domestic violence.	5.8	7.5	24.8	31.9	19.9
36. Students' intolerance of diversity.	4.9	8.0	33.6	29.2	19.0

	Very Unsafe	Unsafe	Unsure	Safe	Very Safe
1. How would you rate your personal safety at school?	3.1	9.3	15.9	44.2	20.4
2. How would you rate the overall safety of <u>your</u> school?	3.5	9.3	17.7	46.5	15.9
3. How would you rate the overall safety of other schools in Pinellas County?	4.0	6.6	53.5	23.5	4.9

II. How effective are these strategies in making your school safe?	Very Ineffective	Ineffective	Unsure	Effective	Very Effective
1. Consistently implemented suspension/expulsion of students who commit acts of violence.	8.0	9.7	25.2	33.2	17.3
2. Installing security devices in schools (e.g. camera, metal detectors).	5.3	8.8	31.9	23.0	22.6
3. Presence of School Resource Officers on school campus.	4.9	7.1	18.1	30.5	35.4
4. Training students in anger management techniques.	4.0	12.8	32.3	30.5	15.0
5. Bringing drugs/weapon sniffing dogs to school.	5.3	6.2	16.8	39.4	27.9
6. Training students in conflict resolution and peer mediation.	4.4	9.3	27.4	33.2	19.9
7. Training students to accept cultural and racial diversity.	6.2	7.1	30.5	33.6	17.3
8. Anonymous warning system for students to report their awareness of drugs, weapons or violence (e.g. hotline).	3.5	6.2	29.2	32.7	22.1
9. Availability of school based drug screening.	4.9	8.8	49.1	15.9	12.4
10. Presence of zero tolerance policies for drugs, weapons and alcohol.	6.6	7.1	21.2	33.6	25.7
11. Having counselors available to help students.	4.0	11.1	16.4	35.0	29.6
12. Having mentors for new teachers.	4.4	7.5	27.4	38.9	16.4
13. Increasing effective parent involvement in school.	4.4	9.3	26.1	37.2	16.8
14. A diverse range of school-based extra-curricula activities	3.5	10.2	30.1	33.6	15.9
15. A wide range of community-based extra-curricula activities.	4.0	10.2	32.7	31.9	15.0
16. School-based mental health services for students.	5.8	8.4	38.1	31.4	10.6
17. Community-based mental health services for students.	5.3	7.1	41.6	27.9	12.8
18. School uniforms	19.5	10.6	32.3	13.3	11.9
19. Enforced dress code	11.9	15.0	20.8	31.0	15.9
20. School wide social skills training.	5.3	12.4	37.6	26.5	11.1
21. Training students in leadership skills.	5.3	8.4	35.0	31.9	11.9
22. Presence of students' disciplinary policy committee.	8.0	8.4	39.8	26.1	8.0
23. Trained crisis intervention team available.	4.4	7.1	37.2	30.5	14.6
24. Training students in Character Education initiatives.	6.6	11.1	42.0	21.7	9.3
25. Adult supervision at the school bus stop.	8.4	6.2	41.6	24.3	11.9
26. Community-based schools.	4.9	7.5	39.4	30.5	11.5
27. Increased presence of police officers in community where school is located.	5.3	7.5	27.9	28.3	25.2

III. Rate your familiarity with the following programs or services	Very Familiar	Somewhat Familiar	Not Familiar
1. School Resource Officers (SRO's)	64.2	23.5	8.8
2. Gang Specialists	11.5	34.1	49.6
3. K-9 Program	23.5	42.5	29.2
4. Violence Prevention Specialists	14.2	36.7	42.9
5. Project Chill Out	7.1	13.3	73.9
6. Talking Schools	10.2	15.0	69.0
7. Parent Advocacy	15.9	35.0	43.4
8. Social Skills Specialists	13.3	27.0	54.4
9. Social Marketing	7.5	15.9	71.2
10. Partnership Program	18.6	35.0	41.2
11. Mental Health Wraparound	10.2	16.8	67.3
12. Anger Management	30.1	44.2	20.4
13. Pre-school Consultation	10.6	21.2	61.9
14. On Campus Intervention Program (OCIP)	35.8	24.8	34.5
15. FAST	11.9	14.6	67.7
16. Camp Anytown	18.6	24.8	51.3
17. Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative (SS/HSI)	13.7	19.9	60.2

Appendix 6

Frequencies, High Schools

I. How serious are these issues at your school?	Extreme Problem	Serious	Moderate	Minimal	Not a Problem
1. Verbal threats among students.	2.4	20.5	42.0	28.8	3.9
2. Ineffective disciplinary policies.	4.4	16.6	42.4	26.3	6.8
3. Violence at school bus stop.	--	2.9	17.6	42.0	16.1
4. Illegal activity at school.	2.9	14.1	43.4	31.2	4.4
5. Ineffective classroom management.	2.0	9.8	43.4	35.6	6.3
6. Ineffective classroom discipline practices.	1.5	11.2	42.4	34.6	5.9
7. Inadequate supervision of students during class.	--	5.4	24.9	48.3	16.6
8. Inadequate supervision of students during transition times.	1.5	9.3	34.6	33.2	16.6
9. Verbal threats directed toward staff.	.5	9.3	24.4	49.3	13.2
10. Lack of student engagement.	2.4	10.7	33.2	31.7	11.7
11. Staff's tolerance of student diversity.	.5	2.9	14.1	33.7	43.9
12. Students bringing weapons to school.	1.0	2.0	20.5	48.8	23.4
13. Not enough administrative support.	3.9	10.2	26.3	29.8	25.4
14. Ineffective leadership practices.	2.9	6.8	24.4	34.6	27.3
15. Ineffective use of suspension and expulsion.	3.4	7.8	28.8	30.2	25.9
16. Lack of alternatives to suspension and expulsion.	2.9	8.8	17.1	35.6	31.2
17. Physical violence among students.	1.5	12.2	30.7	44.9	7.3
18. Students using drugs or alcohol in school.	4.4	12.7	34.1	40.5	5.4
19. Physical violence directed toward staff.	.5	2.9	17.6	47.3	28.8
20. Drugs being sold in school.	2.4	9.3	30.2	45.4	7.3
21. Bullying among students.	3.9	16.1	41.0	32.7	2.9
22. Gang activity in school.	1.0	4.4	22.4	41.0	23.9
23. Personal property stolen or destroyed at school.	3.9	14.6	38.5	35.1	4.4
24. Teasing among students.	8.3	19.5	44.9	20.0	3.9
25. Vandalism	2.0	10.7	35.6	40.5	6.8
26. Violence in community where your school is located.	1.0	9.8	23.9	40.5	19.5
27. Presence of known problem areas around the school.	1.0	10.7	25.9	37.6	19.5
28. Inadequate supervision of access to school building.	3.4	9.8	23.4	34.6	25.4
29. Insufficient monitoring of school grounds.	2.9	9.8	25.9	33.2	24.9
30. Not enough parental support in addressing discipline.	12.2	24.9	31.2	20.0	7.8
31. Insufficient parental involvement in school.	14.1	19.5	26.8	16.1	19.0
32. Not enough community resources (e.g. Boys and Girls Clubs and community centers).	4.4	16.1	27.3	30.2	15.6
33. Insufficient supervision before or after school.	5.4	11.2	24.4	33.7	17.6
34. Family drug or alcohol abuse.	2.4	19.5	33.7	27.8	7.8
35. Domestic violence.	2.0	14.6	33.7	32.2	8.3
36. Students' intolerance of diversity.	2.0	8.8	40.0	35.1	9.8

	Very Unsafe	Unsafe	Unsure	Safe	Very Safe
1. How would you rate your personal safety at school?	--	2.9	14.6	54.1	27.3
2. How would you rate the overall safety of <u>your</u> school?	--	4.9	22.9	52.7	19.0
3. How would you rate the overall safety of other schools in Pinellas County?	.5	4.4	58.5	30.7	3.4

II. How effective are these strategies in making your school safe?	Very Ineffective	Ineffective	Unsure	Effective	Very Effective
1. Consistently implemented suspension/expulsion of students who commit acts of violence.	1.5	11.2	18.5	47.3	17.6
2. Installing security devices in schools (e.g. camera, metal detectors).	2.4	8.3	16.1	52.7	17.6
3. Presence of School Resource Officers on school campus.	.5	3.9	9.8	50.2	33.7
4. Training students in anger management techniques.	1.0	11.2	31.7	40.0	12.7
5. Bringing drugs/weapon sniffing dogs to school.	3.4	5.9	25.9	45.9	15.1
6. Training students in conflict resolution and peer mediation.	2.0	10.7	21.0	48.8	14.6
7. Training students to accept cultural and racial diversity.	1.0	10.2	27.3	42.4	16.6
8. Anonymous warning system for students to report their awareness of drugs, weapons or violence (e.g. hotline).	2.0	7.3	36.6	33.2	15.6
9. Availability of school based drug screening.	6.3	11.2	57.1	14.1	3.9
10. Presence of zero tolerance policies for drugs, weapons and alcohol.	2.9	8.3	17.6	43.4	24.4
11. Having counselors available to help students.	2.4	8.3	16.1	56.6	15.1
12. Having mentors for new teachers.	3.9	7.8	27.8	45.4	12.2
13. Increasing effective parent involvement in school.	2.9	9.3	20.5	49.3	13.2
14. A diverse range of school-based extra-curricula activities	.5	4.4	16.1	54.6	21.0
15. A wide range of community-based extra-curricula activities.	1.5	8.8	28.3	45.9	11.7
16. School-based mental health services for students.	2.4	8.8	40.0	33.7	10.7
17. Community-based mental health services for students.	1.5	6.8	47.3	29.8	10.2
18. School uniforms	12.2	11.2	39.0	12.2	5.9
19. Enforced dress code	12.7	26.3	19.0	32.2	5.9
20. School wide social skills training.	3.9	16.6	41.0	24.4	6.3
21. Training students in leadership skills.	2.0	9.8	35.1	38.0	8.8
22. Presence of students' disciplinary policy committee.	2.9	12.2	38.5	33.7	4.9
23. Trained crisis intervention team available.	1.5	6.8	33.2	44.9	7.3
24. Training students in Character Education initiatives.	5.4	8.8	48.8	24.4	5.9
25. Adult supervision at the school bus stop.	2.9	4.4	45.9	29.8	8.8
26. Community-based schools.	1.5	5.4	42.4	29.3	11.2
27. Increased presence of police officers in community where school is located.	.5	6.3	31.7	40.0	15.1

III. Rate your familiarity with the following programs or services	Very Familiar	Somewhat Familiar	Not Familiar
1. School Resource Officers (SRO's)	63.4	32.2	2.4
2. Gang Specialists	1.5	29.8	66.3
3. K-9 Program	11.2	45.9	40.5
4. Violence Prevention Specialists	4.9	33.7	59.0
5. Project Chill Out	4.4	93.7	98.0
6. Talking Schools	3.4	11.7	82.4
7. Parent Advocacy	5.9	41.0	49.8
8. Social Skills Specialists	4.9	22.4	67.8
9. Social Marketing	.5	10.7	84.9
10. Partnership Program	12.7	36.6	47.3
11. Mental Health Wraparound	1.0	7.3	87.3
12. Anger Management	22.0	47.3	27.8
13. Pre-school Consultation	2.0	14.1	79.0
14. On Campus Intervention Program (OCIP)	42.4	25.4	28.3
15. FAST	2.0	7.3	86.8
16. Camp Anytown	28.3	39.0	29.3
17. Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative (SS/HSI)	5.4	19.5	70.7

SCHOOL SAFETY SURVEY

PURPOSE: As part of the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Evaluation, this survey seeks to identify beliefs about school safety. Your answers will be kept confidential and will be reported in summary form only. Thank you for your assistance.

Demographic Information:

Position: Teacher, Counselor, Administrator, Student, Other (specify) _____

School: _____Years at this school: _____ Date: _____

I. How serious are these issues at your school?	Please circle one number for each question **Extreme problem = it is obvious to the casual observer.** **Serious = it occurs and has affected the school.** **Moderate = it occurs and sometimes affects school.** **Minimal = it occurs but does not affect the school.** **Not a problem = it does not occur.**				
	Extreme Problem	Serious	Moderate	Minimal	Not a Problem
1. Verbal threats among students.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Ineffective disciplinary policies.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Violence at school bus stop.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Illegal activity at school.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Ineffective classroom management.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Ineffective classroom discipline practices.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Inadequate supervision of students during class.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Inadequate supervision of students during transition times.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Verbal threats directed toward staff.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Lack of student engagement.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Staff's tolerance of student diversity.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Students bringing weapons to school.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Not enough administrative support.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Ineffective leadership practices.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Ineffective use of suspension and expulsion.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Lack of alternatives to suspension and expulsion.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Physical violence among students.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Students using drugs or alcohol in school.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Physical violence directed toward staff.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Drugs being sold in school.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Bullying among students.	1	2	3	4	5
22. Gang activity in school.	1	2	3	4	5
23. Personal property stolen or destroyed at school.	1	2	3	4	5
24. Teasing among students.	1	2	3	4	5
25. Vandalism	1	2	3	4	5
26. Violence in community where your school is located.	1	2	3	4	5
27. Presence of known problem areas around the school.	1	2	3	4	5
28. Inadequate supervision of access to school building.	1	2	3	4	5
29. Insufficient monitoring of school grounds.	1	2	3	4	5
30. Not enough parental support in addressing discipline.	1	2	3	4	5
31. Insufficient parental involvement in school.	1	2	3	4	5
32. Not enough community resources (e.g. Boys and Girls Clubs and community centers).	1	2	3	4	5
33. Insufficient supervision before or after school.	1	2	3	4	5
34. Family drug or alcohol abuse.	1	2	3	4	5
35. Domestic violence.	1	2	3	4	5
36. Students' intolerance of diversity.	1	2	3	4	5

	Please circle one number for each question				
	Very Unsafe	Unsafe	Unsure	Safe	Very Safe
1. How would you rate your personal safety at school?	1	2	3	4	5
2. How would you rate the overall safety of <u>your</u> school?	1	2	3	4	5
3. How would you rate the overall safety of other schools in Pinellas County?	1	2	3	4	5

II. How effective are these strategies in making your school safe?	Please circle one number for each question				
	Very Ineffective	Ineffective	Unsure	Effective	Very Effective
1. Consistently implemented suspension/expulsion of students who commit acts of violence.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Installing security devices in schools (e.g. camera, metal detectors).	1	2	3	4	5
3. Presence of School Resource Officer on school campus.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Training students in anger management techniques.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Bringing drugs/weapon sniffing dogs to school.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Training students in conflict resolution and peer mediation.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Training students to accept cultural and racial diversity.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Anonymous warning system for students to report their awareness of drugs, weapons or violence (e.g. hotline).	1	2	3	4	5
9. Availability of school based drug screening.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Presence of zero tolerance policies for drugs, weapons, and alcohol.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Having counselors available to help students.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Having mentors for new teachers.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Increasing effective parent involvement in school.	1	2	3	4	5
14. A diverse range of school-based extra-curricula activities	1	2	3	4	5
15. A wide range of community-based extra-curricula activities.	1	2	3	4	5
16. School-based mental health services for students.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Community-based mental health services for students.	1	2	3	4	5
18. School uniforms.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Enforced dress code.	1	2	3	4	5
20. School wide social skills training.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Training students in leadership skills.	1	2	3	4	5
22. Presence of students' disciplinary policy committee.	1	2	3	4	5
23. Trained crisis intervention team available.	1	2	3	4	5
24. Training students in Character Education initiatives.	1	2	3	4	5

25. Adult supervision at the school bus stop.	1	2	3	4	5
26. Community-based schools.	1	2	3	4	5
27. Increased presence of police officers in community where school is located.	1	2	3	4	5

III. Rate your familiarity with the following programs or services	Please circle one number for each question		
	Very Familiar	Somewhat Familiar	Not Familiar
1. School Resource Officers (SRO's)	1	2	3
2. Gang Specialists	1	2	3
3. K-9 Program	1	2	3
4. Violence Prevention Specialists	1	2	3
5. Project Chill Out	1	2	3
6. Talking Schools	1	2	3
7. Parent Advocacy	1	2	3
8. Social Skills Specialists	1	2	3
9. Social Marketing	1	2	3
10. Partnership Program	1	2	3
11. Mental Health Wraparound	1	2	3
12. Anger Management	1	2	3
13. Pre-school Consultation	1	2	3
14. On Campus Intervention Program (OCIP)	1	2	3
15. FAST	1	2	3
16. Camp Anytown	1	2	3
17. Safe School Healthy Students Initiative (SS/HSI)	1	2	3

Thank you for your assistance. We invite you to add your comments below.