



**National Study of Delinquency Prevention  
in Schools**

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## Preface

This project was supported by Grant No. 96-MU-MU-0008, awarded by the National Institute of Justice in cooperation with the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. NIJ (with help from BJA) is the primary sponsor of this research, and the research activities from which we report results here were designed and begun under the NIJ grant. As the project progressed, additional support for the work reported was provided by the Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice through Grant No. 98-JN-FX-0004. With OJJDP support we expanded data collection activities to include information on juvenile gangs and on activities directed at gangs. The project also depended on the support by the Planning and Evaluation Service, U.S. Department of Education, of a Study on Violence and Prevention through a contract with Westat. The Department of Education was required by Congress to investigate violence in schools and its prevention. Westat merged some of its research tasks with those of the present project – particularly the student and teacher surveys – in order to maximize resources and minimize the burden on schools. Views expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice. Nor do they necessarily represent the position or policies of other sponsors or organizations.

The overall design for the project was drafted by Gary D. Gottfredson and Denise C. Gottfredson in a grant proposal submitted to NIJ in August 1995, with subsequent revision (including a reduced budget) in November 1995. After NIJ made a grant award in August 1996, Gary and Denise Gottfredson began work elaborating a taxonomy of school-based activities to prevent problem behavior. We were assisted in this effort by Shannon C. Womer who gathered information from federal and state government agencies, foundations, technical assistance providers, and others about the range of activity undertaken in schools with the aim of preventing or reducing drug use, delinquency, and other forms of problem behavior or to promote a safe and orderly school environment. Ms. Womer's work contributed greatly to the development of the taxonomy, which was completed in the early Spring of 1997.

The taxonomy was the basis for the design of questionnaires to gather information about the nature and extent of school prevention activities from school principals – the Phase 1 survey – conducted in the spring of 1997. The Phase 1 survey was coordinated by Ellen R. Czeh. She was assisted by Suzanne Busby, Rebecca Gold, Elizabeth Jones, Jacob Lawrence, Kirsten Mackler, Felicia Morings, and Nicole Piquero who telephoned schools in Herculean efforts to extract questionnaire returns.

While Phase 1 data were being collected, Gary Gottfredson and Denise Gottfredson developed the Phase 2 questionnaires. Reviews of school based prevention programs completed by Denise Gottfredson (1997, in press) and the taxonomy were important sources of guidance in developing the Phase 2 Principal Questionnaire and the fourteen distinct Activity Coordinator Questionnaires. The principal questionnaire adapted measures of conscientiousness from the work of Goldberg (1992) and of accomplishment record from the work of G. Gottfredson (1994). The Phase 2 Student

Questionnaire was adapted from the Effective School Battery student survey (G. Gottfredson, 1984/1999), What About You (G. Gottfredson & D. Gottfredson, 1992, 1999), and the School Action Effectiveness Study student questionnaire (G. Gottfredson, 1982) with new material based on the taxonomy developed for this project. The Phase 2 Teacher Questionnaire was adapted from the Effective School Battery teacher survey (G. Gottfredson, 1984/1999), and the Organizational Focus Questionnaire (G. Gottfredson and Holland, 1997), with the incorporation of original material based on the taxonomy. Ellen Czeh assisted in the production of the seventeen separate questionnaires developed for Phase 2.

Sally Hillsman, Thomas Feucht, Rosemary Murphy, and Winifred Reed of the National Institute of Justice (DOJ) and Joanne Wiggins of the Planning and Evaluation Service (ED) worked to develop the Memorandum of Understanding between PES and NIJ to share data and data collection instruments that had been developed for Phase 2 surveys, which was signed by Alan L. Ginsburg, Director of PES, and Jeremy Travis, Director of NIJ. Following this, Scott Crosse and Irene Hantman of Westat worked with Joanne Wiggins of PES to obtain Office of Management and Budget clearance that would be necessary for teacher and student surveys to be collected by Westat under contract with ED, and they suggested minor revisions in questions. David Cantor of Westat suggested additions to the Phase 2 principal questionnaire to capture school crime data similar to that captured in other surveys.

Data collection responsibilities for Phase 2 were divided between Gottfredson Associates and Westat, with Westat focusing on secondary schools where teacher and student surveys would be conducted and Gottfredson Associates focusing on elementary schools. Scott Crosse was study director for the Westat effort. Irene Hantman led the data collection effort at Westat. She was assisted by Katie Andrew, Julie Anderson, Betty Barclay-Hurley, Kristen Heavener, Robin Hill, Galen McKeever, Pat McClure, Sheri Nicewarner, Parvis Omidpanah, Jeff Roussos, and Fran Winter in recruiting schools and by Liv Aujla, Kevin Jay, Steve Linz, Kim Standing, and Diane Steele in data collection. She was also assisted by Al Bishop, John Brown, Jason Grim, and Ying Long in data management. Ellen Czeh led the data collection effort at Gottfredson Associates. She was assisted by Rebecca Silverman and Adriana Wade who communicated with schools to secure the return of data, and by Nisha Gottfredson and Kara Czeh who prepared survey materials.

Gary Shapiro and Lana Ryaboy of Westat developed nonresponse weights that were used together with initial sampling weights to produce national estimates reported here, and they advised Gary Gottfredson on the calculation of sampling errors. Elizabeth Jones prepared initial data files from survey data and performed initial psychometric analyses for student and teacher data. Ratings of prevention activity quality were devised by Denise Gottfredson and Gary Gottfredson, and psychometric analyses for discretionary activity data were performed by Denise Gottfredson and for Principal data by Gary Gottfredson. Allison Payne performed yeoman service in coding the complicated information provided by activity coordinators, April Simonsen prepared census data for schools, and Shawn Anderies coded information principals provided in Activity Detail Booklets to produce the measures of span of control and delegation. Statistical analyses reported here were

prepared by Gary Gottfredson and Denise Gottfredson. Ellen Czeh assisted in the preparation (over and over again) of tables.

We are grateful for the endorsement of the project by Thomas F. Koerner, Deputy Executive Director of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and by Ronald J. Areglado, Associate Executive Director for Programs of the National Association of Elementary School Principals. Letters from these association leaders and a letter from Jeremy Travis, Director of the National Institute of Justice, assisted in encouraging school principals to participate in the project.

The report was written by Gary Gottfredson and Denise Gottfredson, who were assisted by Ellen Czeh.

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