

## **Well Rounded Student Professional Development**

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### **ABSTRACT**

**Statistics suggest that crime rate in public schools have quickly sky rocketed due to an increase in gangs and expectations. According to governmental documents, in 1998, students' ages 12 through 18 were victims of more than 2.7 million total crimes at school. What can educators do to help decrease behavior problems and crime in schools? An answer to this question seems to be that students complete professional development training.**

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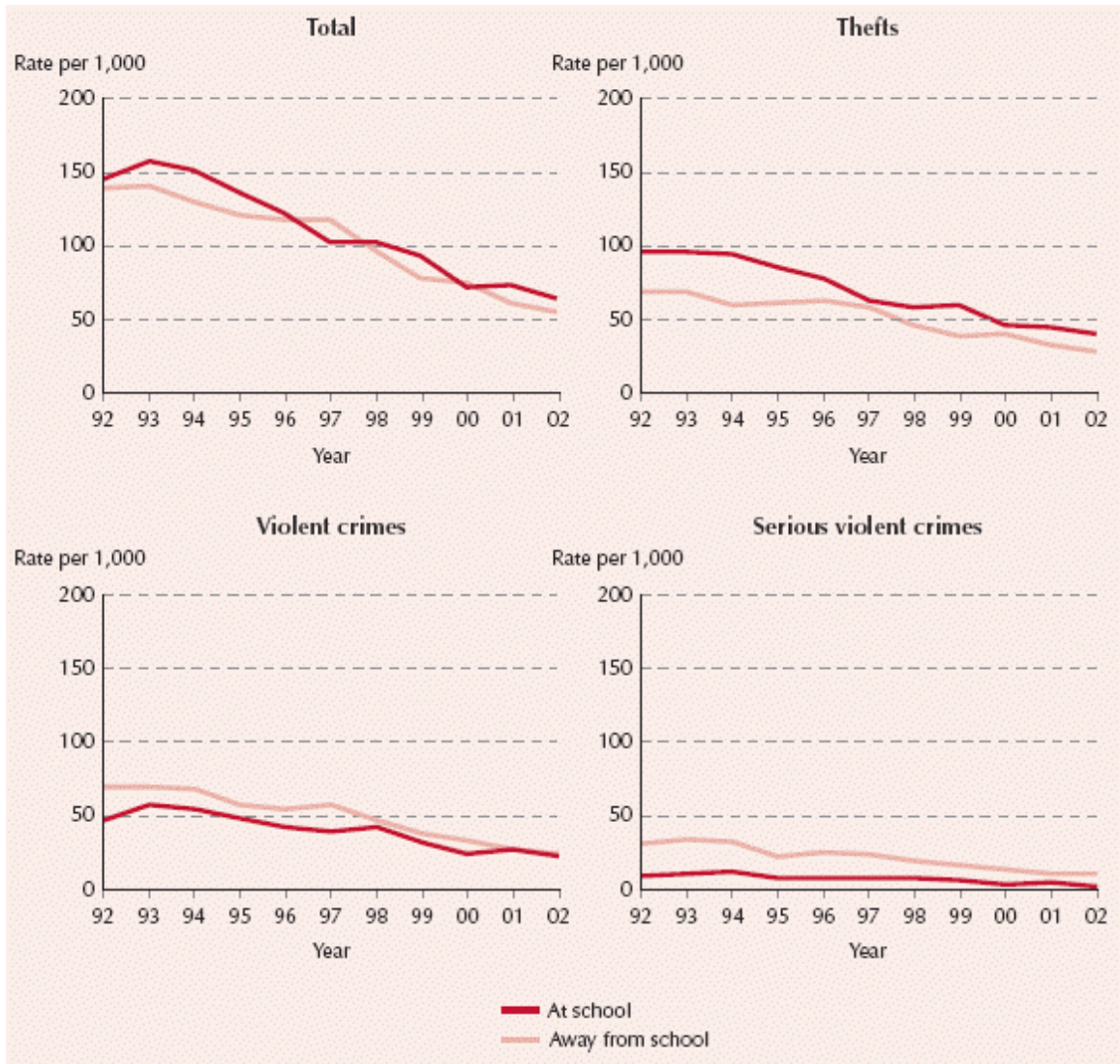
**L**earning, behavior and crime have plagued schools all over the nation. Many students have been killed or degraded at least one time during their years in schools. Educators tend to believe that it is the parent's responsibility to teach students how to act. Likewise, parents believe it is the school's responsibility to teach the students and handle student management. Statistics, in Figures 1-3 from the United States Government, suggest that it is everyone's responsibility.

Figure 1



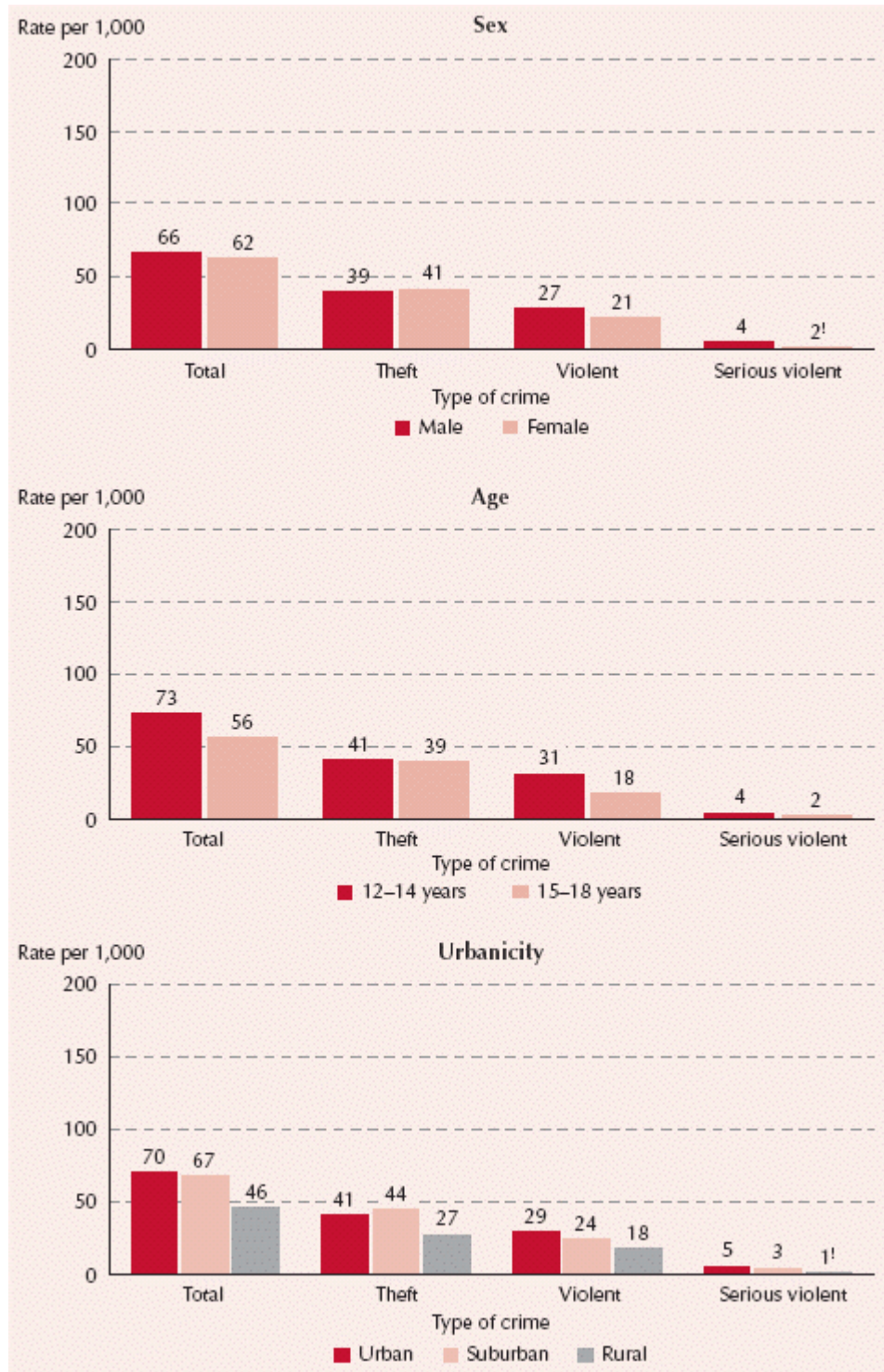
The purpose of this article is to promote a professional development program for students in all Texas public schools. School responsibilities consist of the educators promoting a safe environment for all students. This article discusses a new idea called, “Professional Development for Students. When looking at the data at school and away from school (Figure 1), one can see that the percentages fluctuate. Recently, since 2000, America has experienced many other crimes (Figure 2). These statistics are used to show that programs must be put in place to lower these statistics. All statistics listed are from the National Commission of Educational Statistics. The program should be incorporated in elementary schools first because statistics suggest that younger students (ages 12 through 14) were more likely than older students (ages 15 through 18) to be victims of crime at school. However, older students were more likely than younger students to be victimized away from school. As the data suggests, violent crimes happen at school and away from school about the same amount.

Figure 2



Data in Figure 3 suggest that 12-14 year old students are often the victims, rather than older students. Most of the crimes occur in the urban areas, which are the areas that the program will be incorporated. Program components would consist of helping students develop self-confidence, wellness, learning strategies, study skills and behavior management.

Figure 3



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## Professional Development for Students

### Program Description

All students will go through an ongoing professional development training twice every month. Training will last thirty-five minutes and will be during technology time because many activities will be centered on interaction and technology incorporation. Students will be divided in time segments according to what time they have computer time. Training will count as a participatory grade in technology.

### Components of the Professional Development for Students

Self-confidence is the first component of the professional development training for students. In the process of professional development training, students will be asked to develop a journal. At each meeting, the student will write how he or she feels before, during and after the training. At the conclusion of each training session, students will write a one-page reflection paper on the training and how they can incorporate it in the classroom. During the training, students will develop self-confidence and learn how to construct sentences and utilize technology. In the article "*Technology in Schools to Support the System or Render it Obsolete*," Papert states:

Technological fluency will be valued far less as something needed for the workplace than as a language in which powerful ideas can be expressed. For example lower elementary school-aged children using the latest versions of Lego extended by "programmable bricks" (small programmable computers that can be built into your model) meet ideas from system theory and control engineering usually encountered only in engineering school (1).

In turn these ideas from engineering give concreteness to powerful mathematical ideas such as:

- solving problems by successive approximations
- using limits
- using probability

If a student's self-confidence is built at an early age, then the student will become a productive citizen and feel better at taking risks at school. In addition to building self-confidence, the students work on the reflection process that is considered a vital

component of learning. Students are able to reflect on what they learn and process the information in their long-term memory.

### Wellness

Today’s students are continuously becoming obese. These students resort to bad choices because they often are made fun of by their peers. Some students choose to become members of gangs. Obesity is on the rise in the elementary schools. A review by the University Of Texas School Of Public Health found that obesity rates for Texas children are among the highest in the nation. The report also found that black and Hispanic children exhibited the highest risk for being overweight. Professional development centered on wellness will be ultimately useful to students and build high self-esteem. All students will go through interactive exercises and social situations to build wellness. Exercises will be low to moderate.

The whole concept of the wellness component of professional development will be to increase the student’s social concepts, reducing the rate of obesity and teaching students to take care of their body. In addition, schools will invite professional athletes to come to speak with students. Table 1 provides the statistics for Texas and nationwide areas. Females have a significantly higher percentage of obesity rates than men. In addition, the break down of age groups where obesity is prominent is from 30-44years of age. Programs such as this must be in place during the elementary, middle and high school years to decrease obesity. Health education and physical education is great in schools, but students need to have more time and knowledge in trying to maintain a better life-style.

Table 1

Chart is from the Texas Department of Health	Sample Size*	% at risk	95% CI	
			Lower	Upper
Nationwide	236,287	58.8	58.4	59.2
Texas	5,734	62.8	61.3	64.3
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	2,362	70.4	68.2	72.6
Female	3,372	54.9	52.9	56.8
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>				
White	3,633	58.9	57.0	60.8

Black	517	75.2	70.7	79.3
Hispanic	1,317	69.8	66.7	72.8
<b>Age Group</b>				
<b>Table 1 continued</b>				
18-29 Years	1,093	50.5	47.0	54.1
30-44 Years	1,844	65.5	63.1	67.9
45-64 Years	1,798	70.2	67.5	72.7
65+ Years	974	62.8	59.3	66.1
<b>Education</b>				
No High School Diploma	872	70.1	66.1	73.8
H. S. Graduate	1,586	64.8	61.9	67.5
Some College	1,504	61.8	58.9	64.7
College +	1,763	57.0	54.3	59.6

### **Learning Strategies**

Many students have a difficult time adapting to learning because no one has taught the students how to learn. Kindergartners are expected to listen to directions from the teacher and follow through. It appears that these practices are modeled all the way to high school. Students are used to listening to instruction instead of becoming critical thinkers.

One component of the learning strategy professional develop model will be teach students to work cooperatively and also become decision makers. In addition, learning strategies will be focused on how to store information in long-term memory and maintain that information. Also, learning strategies will be centered on students learning that encompasses test taking strategies and process of elimination techniques. The model would start in kindergarten because students must become independent thinkers.

### **Study Skills**

In some schools, teachers are afraid to provide students with homework for two reasons. First, teachers are afraid that parents will not be able to help the students, so

most of the classroom work is performed in class. Secondly, teachers believe that lack of motivation allows students to not complete their assignments. One of the major advantages with the professional development program is that the student's self-esteem will be enhanced so it may be a little easier to motivate students to complete assignments. Students will learn how to study in the new professional development program.

Training will consist of how to prepare weeks in advance for a test, how to select certain words to remember concepts, how to stay calm, exercises that relaxes the student before tests, and how to apply the process of elimination. Classes such as these will be very important because these skills can be applied on any test, especially the TAKS test. It is important that students become great test takers because students continuously take tests.

### **Behavior Management**

Behavior Management is an important concept that needs to be addressed in every school. Teachers and students alike will need to go through this professional development. Developments such as these will be interactive, role playing and socialization. Students will share on a voluntary basis different behaviors that make them upset and then experts will show the students how to deal with the problems. As we know, learning is lost everyday due to behavior problems. Trainings like this allow students to understand expectations and how to apply these expectations in a classroom. It is necessary that schools incorporate the segment of Behavior Management in order to create a campus of excellence.

### **Program Will Not Put Students in Danger**

Professional development for students will be incorporated in the regular school day. Superintendents, teachers and educational stakeholders will be involved in the process of making it fit the needs of students. At no time will the student be placed in a situation of immediate danger. All professional development activities will be administered on campus by a hired professional or an educational researcher who is most familiar with the students and district.

### **Cost of Program**

The program calls only for time and more computers and ink. Totally, for each school, the program would cost about \$4,500 per campus. Many schools have computers and computer labs, yet the figure is an estimate due to the uncertain quantity of computers available to each student. Stakeholders could write grants. Grants and private donations, as well as fundraisers, could serve as monetary assistance to the program

### **Results**

Students will incorporate technology while learning. Students will work collaboratively in groups, which are considered one of the best strategies for learning. Students' self-esteem and test scores will increase. Many students will begin to practice healthy eating habits and promote wellness. Another advantage is students will learn effective study skills, which can be applied now and later in adulthood. Finally, students will understand behavioral expectations and the incident of behavioral problems in classrooms may decrease.

**Self-confidence+Self-esteem+Wellness+Study Skills+ Behavior Management=Well rounded Student**

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, Professional Development for Students is a great concept to implement in schools because it allows ongoing training for students. Many students will experience success and gain more motivation with learning. Students will attend school with ease and have success.

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