

**CHARACTER MATTERS: PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHERS AND
ADMINISTRATORS**

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B. Ed., University of Regina, 1987

A Project
Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies
of the University of Lethbridge
in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF EDUCATION

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

LETHBRIDGE, ALBERTA

July 2004

Dedication

This work is dedicated to my family

To my husband, Dave, without your love, support, and encouragement I would not have been able to finish this project.

And to Connor, my son, who was six months old when I started this journey and is now almost three. For all the time we have missed because mommy was sitting at a computer.

Finally to Ryan, my newborn son, who has inspired me to finish this project so I can spend all my time with you.

Abstract

In a time when school violence and insensitivity to others have become everyday realities, many educators are seeking an all-encompassing solution. Simultaneously, interest is growing in efforts to instill values in youth, to help families by reinforcing a sense of right and wrong, and to show students the kind of people we hope they will become. Teachers and administrators today are challenged to educate children morally as well as academically. Character education programs can provide our youth with the information and skills they need to mature into ethical and virtuous people. One School's response to this current issue was to implement the Community of Caring program. To gain a better understanding of the implementation of the Community of Caring program and its effects on a school community, this study explores the perceptions of teachers and administrators in a large urban school. This case study focuses on one particular school that implemented the Community of Caring program in September 2003. Results show that teachers and administrators through their involvement in and support of the program were able to impact school climate and student character development. Analysis of pre- and post-survey data determined that the implementation of the program had made a positive effect on the critical elements of school culture and the strong support of administrators and teachers is crucial to the success of the program.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank David Townsend, my supervisor, for all of his guidance and encouragement. Thank you for believing that we could do this!

I would also like to express my appreciation to my colleagues in the Calgary cohort, your friendship and support has made this journey so much easier.

Thank you also to my partners Mike and Nadia you taught me that laughter and friendship are the most important things in life.

To my dear friend Kathy, we started this journey together five years ago and you have been my biggest cheerleader. Thank you for your support and friendship.

And, finally, I would like to acknowledge my parents for instilling in me such a strong belief in the importance of education and life long learning.

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Chapter One: Research Question and Background

Introduction

In the words of Theodore Roosevelt, “To educate a person in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society” (Lickona, 1991, p. 4). There are numerous problems in society such as violence, alcohol abuse, suicide, drugs, and the breakdown of the family unit. All of these problems potentially impact children. They shape children’s lives. Increasingly, educators are finding a need to implement programs that can counter the effects of problems that develop in society and reveal themselves in schools.

Michelle Borba (2001), in her book *Building Moral Intelligence: The Seven Essential Virtues That Teach Kids To Do The Right Thing*, emphasizes that it is important for schools to fill the void in the area of character development for children. Educators need to provide opportunities for everyone within the school setting to develop morally because “the moral atmosphere in which today’s children are being raised is toxic to moral intelligence” (p. 4).

Borba explains that society has created the problems that children face today because “adult supervision, models of moral behavior, spiritual or religious training, meaningful adult relationships, clear national values, community support, stability and adequate parenting are slowly disintegrating.” (p. 4).

Teaching has always been more than the three R’s,- reading, writing and arithmetic. Educators have always taught the hidden curriculum of morals and moral development. This study examines the implementation of a character education program and the perceptions of teachers and administrators at a large urban school

Background Information

My experience in administration over the past five years has allowed me to work in five different schools with five different leaders. I have had the unique opportunity to observe many different leadership styles, different programs and different school cultures. As a leader I became very much aware of the importance of a positive school climate for parents, teachers and students. I saw what the Community of Caring Program did for staff, students and parents. I soon realized that the program made a significant impact on school climate, and I wondered why every school wasn't implementing this program.

I came to my present school in the fall of 2001 as a Vice-Principal. This was both a new school and a new position for me and I was very excited and a little apprehensive. I spent the better part of the year becoming familiar with routines, staff and students. As a leader I spent a lot of time reflecting on how we could improve on what we were already doing. The Community of Caring program did not exist at my new school, so I began to investigate the program. I wanted to know how to develop staff interest and what I needed to do to begin implementation. I remembered the philosophy of the program and the effect it had on the school community at my previous school. This program was about developing community and purposefully teaching important dimensions of character. I made a commitment to build interest in the character education program throughout the remainder of the year. I invited district personnel to come in and speak to the staff about the program. I developed a committee and we started discussions about what we wanted this program to look like at our school.

I realized it is important as a leader to have time to think, dream and create new visions to inspire people to move forward. I knew if we could implement this program that, slowly, we would see positive changes occur in our school community.

Goal

The goal of the study was to examine the impact teachers and administrators have on the implementation of the Community of Caring program in one school and the effects of the program on the student character development and the overall school climate. The study specifically examined the implementation of the program according to the perceptions of teachers and administrators as reported in pre- and post-surveys.

Research Question

How does the leadership and participation of both teachers and administrators impact the implementation of the Community of Caring Program in a large urban school?

In addition, the study was pursued through an exploration of the following guiding question: Does their support and participation in the program result in positive change in the character development of our students, as well as the schools' overall climate?

Significance of the research

There are a number of reasons why this research may be considered significant. First, this research could provide the District, and others, evidence for determining future directions for such character education programs as the Community of Caring. Second, it is hoped that this research will lead to the implementation of character education programs in other schools. Third, the findings could possibly lead to the development of a new curriculum, one that would include character education. Fourth, this study may lead to an increased partnership between home and school. Together they may be more

successful in creating communities or schools of caring which focus more purposefully on the development of responsible citizens.

Definition of terms

The following definitions are intended to provide further clarity.

Lickona (1991) states *good character* “consists of knowing the good, desiring the good, and doing the good-habits of mind, habits of heart, and habits of action” (p. 51).

Character education is an organized approach for parents, educators and members of the community to instill strong character in our children and students, preparing them to become responsible citizens. It seeks to teach virtues to develop character in an organized fashion so students can be empowered to make choices that are right for them.

Community of Caring is a comprehensive, values-based education program designed to integrate values and values discussions into a school community (Community of Caring Elementary Program Guide). Community of Caring creates a school environment that will help students develop virtues so they confront the challenges they meet in a positive manner.

Empathy, as defined by Borba (2001) is “identifying with and feeling other people’s concern” (p.13).

Respect is “showing you value others by treating them in a courteous and considerate way” (Borba, 2001, p. 119).

Responsibility is “Doing what is right; being answerable and accountable to yourself and others” (Borba, 2001, p. x).

“Our *values* define what is meaningful to make the world a more moral place” (Borba, 2001, p. 130).

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

Character Education

In a world of contrasts--wealth, poverty, gluttony, hunger, honesty, dishonesty, generosity and greed-- evidence that people are lacking character is reflected in the choices they are making (Maloney 2003, p. 1). Traditionally, Western democracies have assumed education helps people make gains in their own development as human beings, and it can also enable a country to forge ahead socially and economically. However, escalating moral problems in society, ranging from greed and dishonesty to violent crime, to self-destructive behaviors such as drug abuse and suicide, are bringing about a new consensus (Lickona 1991, p. 4).

If governments value responsible citizens, they must attend more closely to those aspects of society that promote greater responsibility and address deficiencies (Glaze, McLean & Hogarth, 2003, p. 1). One of the most effective ways to accomplish societal change is still through the education system. Maloney (2003) echoes that point when she states that Aristotle thought, “all who have mediated on the art of governing mankind have been convinced that the fate of the empire rests with the education of our youth” (p. 3). Yet the methods may need to change.

To contribute to the development of responsible citizens schools need to promote programs that instill values that are important to society. “Values, respect for others, and discipline must be at the centre of what we teach our students” (McGuinty, 2003, p.1).

Martin Luther King Jr. offers a similar sentiment when he says that the meaning of education is to “remember that intelligence is not enough. Intelligence plus character: that is the goal of true education” (McGuinty, 2003, p. 2).

Because society is seen to be continually changing, so many of the values in society may also be seen to be changing. Students are confronted constantly with conflicting values. Mohandas Gandhi believed people should not fall victim to one of the *seven blunders* so they can experience the numerous good things that life offers. These *blunders* are said to be “wealth without work”; “pleasure without conscience”; “knowledge without character”; “commerce without morality”; “science without humanity”; “worship without sacrifice”; and “politics without principle” (Maloney, 2003, p. 4-5).

There are many opportunities for people in their lifetimes to make choices about their lives and it is important for individuals to have a *moral compass* (DuFour & Eaker, 1998) to help them make right choices. To counteract many of the problems within society, Lickona (1991) feels strongly that character education should be an integral part of schooling. Borba (2001) echoes a similar thought as she says there is a crisis in society because of the lack of moral intelligence. She argues that professionals from various walks of life, including education, are concerned and they feel the problem has to be dealt with immediately. Youth violence is a serious problem, a fact that is evident in many schools across Canada and the United States. Reports of disturbing events in schools are splashed across newspapers and reported widely on the evening news. Borba (2001) provides a number of frightening statistics, which clearly identify the seriousness of the problem in the United States. Bullying, teasing, threatening and name-calling are keeping students out of the classrooms as they are simply staying home for fear of what might

happen when they arrive at school. These students fear for their safety and their well-being. “Peer cruelty is steadily increasing: an estimated 160,000 children stay home each day and miss school for fear of being picked on by their peers, and considering the accessibility of weapons, the potential for physical injury is high” (p. 2).

The problems, however, are not simply limited to youth violence. A number of other concerns demonstrate the lack of moral intelligence or character in our children. Borba notes, “Other distributing indicators including substance abuse, disrespect for parents and teachers, incivility, increase in vulgarity, and widespread cheating and dishonesty” (p. 2). She provides the following statistics as evidence:

Fifty percent of students surveyed indicated they have stolen something; twenty-five percent would lie to get a job; seventy percent admitted cheating on an exam; over twenty percent of fifth grades admitted to having been drunk; adolescent suicide is up three hundred percent; depression is up one thousand percent; and the average age of a first experiment with marijuana is down to the age of twelve.
(p. 2)

Borba (2001) argues that schools must teach values and focus on character development because, “The moral atmosphere in which today’s children are being raised is toxic to moral intelligence” (p. 4). Simply put, society has created the problem because “adult supervision, models of moral behavior, spiritual or religious training, meaningful adult relationships, clear national values, community support, stability and adequate parenting are slowly disintegrating” (p. 4).

The mass media also has a tremendous impact on children and their character. Everyday they are bombarded by messages from television, radio, advertising, print, and

the Internet. The problem is that many of these messages can contribute to the erosion of moral intelligence or character in society. Lickona (1991), in his examination of the effects of television, paints a very clear picture of its impact on children. He argues that television can have a positive effect on moral intelligence; however, the negative effects outweigh the positive. He states: "At its worst - and the worst is increasingly pervasive - television inundates the young with shoddy values and diverts them from the family relationships and healthy pursuits. In many ways, television is the most insidious and ubiquitous moral miseducator in the lives of children" (p. 406).

In response to numerous problems, such as the one just described, there has been a general call for more programs dealing with character education. "Now all across the country, from private citizens and public organizations, from liberals and conservatives alike, comes a summons to the schools: Take up the role of moral teachers of our children" (Lickona 1991, p. 4). Ryan and Bohlin (1999) contend that character development is lacking in our schools and governments should pass legislation requiring schools to focus more on it. They also cite Gallup polls based on public opinion, which call for schools to focus on virtues such as responsibility, respect, honesty, caring, tolerance, and moral courage. It is important to teach children values but whose values should be taught? In the *Community of Caring Elementary Program Guide*, it is stated that:

Schools exist to educate for citizenship.... citizenship has a values component. We cannot credibly say we are educating good citizens if we don't help our young people to think seriously about matters of value and create for them a community in which they can discover

themselves. (p. 17)

Barlow and Robertson (1994) in the book *Class Warfare* also confirm that education, in serving society, balances the needs of the individual with the need for common knowledge and experiences and collective values. Most educators agree that the school system should develop people to become responsible citizens. However, they do not always agree on the values that should be taught, or how they should be taught.

DuFour and Eaker (1998) describe values and how they have an impact on people. “Values are a link between emotion and behavior, the connection between what we feel and what we do ... with everything changing around us we need something unchanging ...to hang on to ...Values are our moral navigational devices” (p. 87).

There are numerous programs already in place that deal with character education. Otten (2000) describes several of these approaches to the development of character in her article *Character Education*. For example, *Character Counts* is a program that identifies six pillars that are supposedly necessary in education. The pillars are caring, trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, and citizenship. In the *Giraffe Project* students look out, or “stick their necks out,” for other people. The students work at building a caring community. The *Character Education Partnership* serves as a model of exemplary practices where schools can learn about and build a community of caring (p. 2).

Borba (2001), in her book entitled, *Building Moral Intelligence: The Seven Essential Virtues That Teach Kids To Do The Right Thing*, stresses the importance of building moral intelligence by focussing on teaching our children seven essential virtues. These virtues are empathy, conscience, self-control, respect, kindness, tolerance and fairness.

She argues, “the sooner we begin purposefully cultivating our children’s capacity for moral intelligence, the better the chances of acquiring the foundation they’ll need to develop solid character and of growing to think, believe, and act morally” (p. 6).

John Dewey (1959), in his work *Moral Principles in Education*, focuses on the importance of moral development in the education system. He examines the school’s role in developing moral character in students to enable them to develop and sustain relationships with others.

The child is an organic whole, intellectually, socially, and morally, as well as physically. We must take the child as a member of society in the broadest sense, and demand for and from the schools whatever is necessary to enable the child intelligently to recognize all his social relations and take his part in sustaining them. (p. 9)

Lickona (1991), a developmental psychologist and educator who is internationally recognized as a respected authority on moral development and values education, claims that in the absence of values, no society can function effectively and no individual can hope to live happily. Not to teach good character based on these core values would be a grave moral failure for any society, according to Lickona.

As educators we learn about the values or virtues that are important; it is also essential that we understand how to implement these in the school. Sergiovanni (2000) writes extensively about the importance of developing good character in building a learning community. According to Sergiovanni, to be a learning community, a school needs to develop a community of relationships, a community of mind and heart, a

community of memory of what was and what can be, and a community where positive practice is seen as important.

As a school becomes a community of relationships, connections among people are close and informal individual circumstances count, acceptance is unconditional, emotions are legitimated, sacrificing one's self-interest for the community is common, relationships are intrinsically valued, knowledge is valued and learned, and students are accepted and loved. These kinds of relationships among people create a unity that is similar to those found in families and other close-knit collections of people. (Sergiovanni, 2000, p. 23)

Similarly, Barth (1990) focuses on school culture and on the interpersonal relationships that exist in the school. He points out the importance of creating a culture where relationships are strong. Character education programs can be of practical value in relationship building, as teachers, students, parents and members of the community all model positive relationships based upon community values.

DuFour and Eaker (1998) use the term community rather than organization as it "places greater emphasis on relationships, shared ideals, and a strong culture, all factors that are critical to school's improvement" (p. 15). DuFour and Eaker argue that professional learning communities attempt to create environments that foster mutual cooperation, emotional support and personal growth, as all members of the community work together to achieve goals. It is quite possible that such a supportive environment could not be developed without the existence of character education.

Borba (2001) claims that over the past few years we have witnessed a breakdown of appropriate role models for the youth of today. She believes this to be the case because character traits, like skills, are learned. Students learn these traits by watching others model them. In our schools, we must be role models for each other whether we are administrators, teachers, students, parents or support staff members.

Fullwinder (as cited in Sergiovanni, 2000) writes about the importance of school character, and its development. As virtues are implemented within a school it is seen to develop a stronger character. The virtues Fullwinder speaks of are "moral virtues - honesty, truthfulness, decency, courage, justice, intellectual virtues - thoughtfulness, strength of mind, curiosity; communal values - neighborliness, charity, respect, helpfulness, and political values - commitment to the common good, and responsible participation" (p. 19).

The National Commission on Character Education (cited in Williams & Schaps, 1999) in the United States broadly defines the term character education as "any deliberate approach by which school personnel, often in conjunction with parents and community members, help children and youth become more caring, principled and responsible" (p. 2). The Character Education Partnership, an advocacy group for character education, defines it as "the deliberate efforts by schools, families, and communities to help young people understand, care about, and act upon core ethical values" (Lickona, 1996, p. 1).

All the preceding definitions imply that character education requires the deliberate actions of individuals. Coles (1998) states that "character is ultimately who we are expressed in action, in how we live, in what we do, and so the children around us know: they absorb and take stock of what they observe, namely, us - we adults living and doing

things in a certain spirit, getting on with one another in our various ways” (p. 7). If educators are going to be successful in character education programs, Coles says they have to bring up “matters of conscience, of ethical concern, again and again” (p. 9).

The research indicates that while character education programs are considered important for students, there have been numerous programs in the past that may not have always succeeded. In the article *The Missing Link's Missing Links* Ryan (1997) explains there have been numerous reforms introduced, and financial resources allocated to programs that have not enjoyed success. Ryan states, “if educational reform is to succeed, the twin goals of intellectual and moral development must be championed in every classroom in that America” (p. 81).

Schaps, Schaeffer, and Sanford (2001), in *What's Right and Wrong In Character Education Today*, contend that a person's character develops over time, and can be formed in many ways. They write: “One way is through exposure to the actions and attitudes of others, particularly those whom we have come to trust. Another is through engaging in moral action, such as service to others. A third way is through open, considered dialogue about those situations” (p. 1). One structure that promotes open dialogue about various moral situations is Kohlberg's six stages of moral reasoning. In *Promoting Moral Growth from Piaget to Kohlberg* the authors, Reimer, Paolitto and Hersh (1983), discuss Kohlberg's stages of development. They suggest Kohlberg's theory of moral development “is more properly a description of the development of moral judgment.” (p. 45).

Figure 1 presents an adaptation of Kohlberg's theory.

Figure I: *The Six Stages of Moral Development*

Level and stage	What is right	Reasons for doing right	Social perspective of stage
Level 1 Preconventional Stage I Heteronomous morality	Sticking to rules backed by punishment	Avoidance of punishment	Egocentric point of view
Stage 2 Individualism	Following rules only when in one's immediate interest	To serve one's own needs or interests	Concrete individualistic perspective
Level II Conventional Stage 3 Mutual interpersonal expectations	Living up to what is expected by people close to you	The need to be a good person in your own eyes and those of others	Perspective of the individual
Stage 4 Social system and conscience	Fulfilling duties to which you have agreed	To keep the institution going as a whole	Differentiates societal point of view from interpersonal agreement or motives
Level III Post conventional Stage 5 Social contact	Being aware that people hold a variety of values and opinions and that most of their values are relative to their group	A sense of obligation to law	Considers moral and legal points of view
Stage 6 Universal ethical principles	Following self-chosen ethical principles	The belief in the validity of universal moral principles and a sense of commitment to them	Perspective of a moral point of view from which social arrangements derive

According to Kohlberg's theory of moral development, some people think of morality as the values they have acquired from their environment. Therefore, when they know

they have values, people who are seen as *moral* know they must act upon the values they have acquired. Of course, as the authors note, this type of thinking does not take into account what happens to people's values when they conflict.

Cronin (1999) in the text, *Character Education in the Catholic School*, identifies three goals that are important for children in a character education program. They are:

1. The cultivation of a desire to be good so that they undertake and persist in living lives of care and concern for themselves and others.
2. The formation of a lasting habit of introspection about their behavior and its consequences to enable them always to be aware of how other people are treating themselves and how they treat other people.
3. The development of an understanding of the reasons why they should be good and the ways in which they can be good. (p. 7)

If children are to develop and maintain good character they will need to want to be good. According to Cronin, "Putting children in touch with their own behavior and its consequences and motivating in them the desire to act in the service of goodness is the essence of character education. All three dimensions are essential – knowing what to do, wanting to do it, and doing it" (p. 7).

Cronin goes on to describe the following distinguishing attributes of character:

1. A good character is rooted in a positive sense of self, an awareness of and confidence in one's personal worth.
2. A person of good character has developed a well-formed and active conscience.
3. A person of good character has learned and uses the following skills of decision-making and choosing:

- a. choosing purposively
 - b. evaluating alternatives
 - c. considering the consequences
 - d. incorporating what has been learned by experience from one situation to another and appropriately applying it to new situations
4. A person of good character has a wide array of virtuous habits, such as honesty, temperance and patience, which are practiced consistently. (pp. 7-9)

A critical step for a school staff is to find out what type of character education program to teach. Some of the character education programs that schools use aim only to promote good manners, or follow the rules, and do not seek to develop strong, morally sound individuals.

Schaps, Schaeffer, and Sanford (2001) comment upon some types of character education programs which are problematic. They include programs described as “cheerleading,” “praise and reward,” “define and drill,” and “forced formality” (p. 2). The authors go on to explain why such programs are inadequate. The cheerleading program may incorporate such things as posters, banners, a new virtue every month, motivational presentations and upbeat messages on the intercom. This type of program exposes the children to these types of messages and then has the students attempt to become good by doing the right things.

Praise and reward programs are based on forms of positive reinforcement in much the same way that B.F. Skinner used food pellets to shape the behavior of rats. This type of program focuses on the reward, and not the student’s actions.

Define and drill approaches have students memorize the definitions for the values and regurgitate the information without any attempt to apply what they have learned. The idea of memorization is equated with the idea that the child has internalized the virtue.

Forced formality programs ask the students to comply strictly with the rules of the school. One example is the students would need to show respect by saying “Yes, sir” or “No, ma’am” when an adult speaks with them (p. 2).

Schaps, Schaeffer, and Sanford (2001) describe the types of character education programs they believe will work in schools. They say the best programs are those in which students are active, influential participants as they create a caring environment in their classrooms and also the whole school. The authors go on to explain that the “best forms of character education also involve students in honest, thoughtful discussion and reflection about the moral implications of what they see around them, what they are told, and what they personally do and experience” (p. 3).

Schaps, Schaeffer, and Sanford elaborate on their view of character education with concrete examples of how to achieve success in the program. They propose:

1. Class meetings to solve common problems and assess progress.
2. An exploration of the moral and social implications of what the students are learning.
3. Student collaboration on projects.
4. Buddy programs in which students of different ages come together to work on various types of academic and service activities.
5. Events that include the whole school body that encourage students to use their personal experiences to enrich their lives and the lives of others.

6. Projects, which are service learning, provide opportunities inside and outside the school. (p. 4)

According to Schaps, Shaeffer, and Sanford, character education programs that are successful must demonstrate such approaches, combined with an unremitting focus on lofty standards for the duration of the program.

Arbuthnot and Faust (1981) discuss some of the problems educators face when implementing a character education program. They write first about the *insensitive participant*. Students may be insensitive to other students' comments and say something they shouldn't. Accordingly, rules make sure inappropriate comments are discouraged. Arbuthnot and Faust also describe the *overactive participant*, a person who monopolizes discussions and doesn't allow other students to have input in the discussion or activity. A third type is the *under active participant*, a person who contributes little to the discussion or the activity. The participant may be experiencing discomfort with the activity, or may lack interest. Finally, the authors describe the person who has a *negative attitude*. Such students' input is negative, or they develop negative ideas about character education.

The implementation of a character education program can have educators wondering if it is worth the effort because of all the problems they may encounter. Therefore, it is important that they be sure of the purpose behind implementing a character education program before they begin.

Character education programs vary in type, purpose and critical elements. Accordingly, educators are advised to select the program most suitable to their students' and their school needs.

A character education program develops students so they learn how to become morally sound individuals. This will ensure they become responsible citizens in the future. Educators need to review what values the school stands for before implementing a character education program. The success of the program will be dependent upon developing strong interpersonal relationships to create a positive school culture.

Two main goals of education are academics and character. The implementation of a character education program gives schools the opportunity to achieve these goals. In this study, the specific program that the District has chosen is the Community of Caring Project.

A Brief History of the Community of Caring Project

Community of Caring is a comprehensive, values-based education program designed to integrate values and values discussions into a school community (Community of Caring Elementary Program Guide).

The Community of Caring program of character education fosters the high level of self-esteem that is essential to combat the forces that lead to harmful relationships and destructive behaviors that may occur later in adolescence. Community of Caring is not confined to a traditional classroom, nor a single curriculum (Community of Caring Elementary Program Guide). Teachers participate in character development everyday, whether it is in a classroom, hallway, cafeteria, playground, or on the playing field. Community of Caring is an interactive process that is woven into all aspects of the curriculum. Through discussion, exploration, and service learning projects students will begin to understand the relationship between their values, their decisions, and their actions.

The Community of Caring program was founded in 1982 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, and it developed into a project of the Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation in Washington D.C. The program was first established to assist unwed mothers by focusing on five core values of caring, trust, respect, responsibility, and family. Today, through a multi-faceted process, Community of Caring addresses the attitudes that frequently lead to premature sexual involvement, teen pregnancy, substance abuse, delinquent behavior, violence, and dropping out of school. At the heart of Community of Caring are the five core values: Family, Caring, Responsibility, Respect, and Trust. These are defined as follows:

- **Caring:** Caring is the opposite of both indifference and hate. Without caring, nothing matters (<http://www.communityofcaring.org/>).
- **Trust:** When people care for and respect each other, trust takes root and grows. Trusting people means counting on them: depending on them and expecting them to deliver. Communities of people cannot exist without a certain level of trust. Trust requires knowledge (<http://www.communityofcaring.org/>).
- **Respect:** Respect for each other makes a moral community--a community of caring--possible. To respect others means to see them as valuable in their own right. Self-respect and respect for others go together, and both are essential (<http://www.communityofcaring.org/>).
- **Responsibility:** People who care must be willing to take responsibility. That means they are accountable for their actions, enjoying praise when things go well and willing to accept blame when things go wrong. Being responsible means

being willing to stand up and be counted, to say "I" decided to take action. It was my choice, my achievement or my fault (<http://www.communityofcaring.org/>).

- **Family:** Family is the community that raises children, the community they leave to go to school, and the kind of community they may create themselves one day. Families have been called "the school of character," the place where values are taught and learned (<http://www.communityofcaring.org/>).

Components of the program include teacher training, values discussion, student forums, family involvement and service learning. Special activities are planned, implemented, and led by students, teachers, community leaders and family members. The groups come together and discuss issues of concern to students with adults acting as guides and mentors. Students are encouraged to put their concerns in the context of the larger community. Young people speak their minds and offer their own solutions to issues and problems, as they develop leadership skills. The interactive process brings together the adults and students in a learning setting that is broader than academic work. (<http://www.communityofcaring.org/>)

The District adopted the Community of Caring Program in 1999. At the heart of the District' schools is Religious Education; therefore, the need to add the sixth value, faith, was recognized. Through Religious Education students develop the knowledge, beliefs, skills and values needed to build a relationship with God. It is an essential and integral part of a Catholic school.

Effective Leadership Qualities

Ultimately it is the principal who takes responsibility for changes within the school and, therefore, leadership is a vital component in implementing new programs and

initiatives within a school. The implementation of a character education program that builds community and teaches values requires distinct leadership qualities. The success of that program depends on the leaders in the building, both teacher leaders and administrators. Qualities such as vision, values, relationship building, commitment and lifelong love of learning and leading are essential to the development of a character education program within a school. Staff members must be seen as role models who model appropriate behaviors, morals and values. The adults need to be approachable, warm, and caring. Developing a positive school climate takes time and commitment from all members of the school community. Moreover, although there are many characteristics of effective leaders, qualities essential to building and nourishing community within the school are most important in character education. Leaders need to have strong principles, be visionary, empowering of others, supportive, skilled, and committed to creating a community enriched in values and learning.

Having a vision is one of the keys to fostering community in a school. “A vision is a kind of moral imagination that gives school people, individually and collectively, the ability to see their school not only as it is but also what they would like it to become” (Barth, 2001, p. 204). A vision is necessary so that a school can establish goals and work towards those goals. The success of a new program is dependent upon whether or not it is seen as a goal or just another thing to do. Adults in the building need to recognize the value in a program so students will then recognize that same value. The principal’s role is to “engage the faculty in the co-creation of shared vision and values” (DuFour & Eaker, 1998, p. 184). This shared vision should be the hopes and dreams of the people within the school. Relying on this vision will give people a direction and focus to work towards.

Identifying that citizenship is a key component of education is crucial to the success of character education programs. Wald and Castleberry (2000) believe that:

To sustain this communal energy and hope, the leader must hold the vision high for all to see, constantly revisit it, expand on it and continually help members of the community connect with it and find ways to personalize it and make it their own. (p. 20)

The six core values of a Community of Caring are on the walls throughout our school. It is a daily reminder of what we stand for and the values we are trying to instill. Having our message visible allows for everyone to be a part of that vision and to share in it. Sergiovanni (1996) discusses the importance of being invitational in building a school with this kind of vision. It is essential for leaders to be visionary and inviting as they work towards creating a community rich in values.

Values-based leadership, or moral leadership, is another distinct quality necessary for a leader implementing a character education program. Sergiovanni (1996) states, “communities are defined by their centers of values, sentiments, and beliefs...” (p. 47). Therefore, if communities are defined by their values, so must the leaders within those communities be so defined. Wald and Castleberry (2000) believe that “leaders, by their words and actions, are the keepers of values. Such words and actions emanate from deep within the heart of the leader” (p. 22). This idea of knowing who you are as an individual, first and foremost, is the basis for being able to draw out the values and beliefs of the other individuals within the community. A leader who is authentic will be able to do just that. Moral or values-based leaders must be able to stand up for their beliefs, displaying strong convictions and courage. A moral leader will understand what values are

important and will use them as a guide for behavior and decisions. In turn, it is so important we teach our students to do the same.

Building relationships is an integral component to the development of a Community of Caring. Administrators need to build productive relationships with teachers, parents and students. Teachers need to build the same relationships with parents and students. A sense of caring, respect, and family needs to be developed. Covey (1991) discusses the importance of believing in people as a characteristic of *Principle-Centered Leadership*. He says the leader must believe in the “unseen potential of all people” (p. 35), because it allows for growth and opportunity. Accepting and recognizing the diversity of individuals within the learning community will help “provide opportunities for learning teams to seek new or different perspectives” (Wald & Castleberry, 2000, p. 27).

Trust and integrity are foundational to strong relationships. Covey (1990) also believes “trust - or the lack of it - is at the root of success or failure in relationships and in the bottom line results of...education...” (p. 31). Once leaders have demonstrated trust and integrity the process of creating community has begun. Trust is one of the six core values in a Community of Caring. Trust must be established with the leaders in the building so that teachers, students and parents feel safe and risk-taking can occur. To teach values such as trust it is important that the values can be seen within a person. They can’t just be something people talk about. When people in an organization feel trusted and respected they “learn more about themselves and their individual and collective potential” (Wald & Castleberry, 2000, p. 26).

Establishing a sense of belonging is also a key component to building relationships within a community. The sense of belonging created by the leader enables people to feel

as if they are an important part of the community. It also empowers people to act on their ideas. Fullan (2001) sums it up best when he says, “the role of the leader is to ensure that the organization develops relationships that help produce desirable results” (p. 68).

In the end, perhaps, the leaders are responsible for providing the enabling structures needed for building positive relationships among the members of the school organization and, thus, they are a key factor in determining whether or not a school becomes a successful community entrenched in values.

Student Leadership

Academics are only one area of education; to develop empathy and leadership in students is a lifelong, necessary skill for a future decent society. As defined by Fertman and Van Linden (1999):

Character education in schools involves formal instruction in honesty, trust, cooperation, respect, responsibility, hope, determination, and loyalty; it also lays the foundation for positive leadership development. The values mentioned are important to leaders regardless of race, religion, economic status, or other defining characteristics, to promote a livable and workable society. For adolescents, positive leadership behavior is character education in action. (p. 182)

Community of Caring is a project implemented in over 60 schools in the District to achieve the goal of making these values a prominent part of the school environment. Community of Caring is a process as well as a program. It empowers student through the teaching of universal values that improve their self-esteem. Through their involvement, students increase their commitment to school, their amount of productive community service, and their understanding of the importance of planning for their future. The

project plays a key role in the interaction between adults and young people (C. McInnes personal communication, May 9, 2003).

Character Education is more necessary now than ever before in our society. Calgary Police are active participants in the school community and are proactive in making sure students speak out about violence and bullying in the initial stages to head off more serious problems. “This is not a police message. This is just a message about human decency”, said Constable Rick Woo of the Calgary police youth education and intervention unit in talking to educators (Toneguzzi, 2003). Edmonton City Council has recently passed Canada’s first anti-bullying bylaw, which outlaws pushing, shoving, or name-calling and provides fines of up to \$250.00 for offenders. However, most educators do not believe law enforcement is a lifelong solution to this problem.

Borba (2001) believes it has become the role of schools to become moral educators, so our teachers must focus on character education and ethical development. Schools must take on this role because many of today’s students lack the understanding of what it means to possess good character. Character education programs are of the utmost importance if educators are going to develop strong, trusting relationships with their students. It is through such programs as our Community of Caring that schools can begin to create the climate necessary to foster character in their students.

In order for students to become emotionally involved in the process of building a Community of Caring it is necessary for them to have a voice and a role in the decision making process. The teenage years are a time when the most important questions, such as “What gives meaning to life?” or “Why am I here?” can fester in loneliness or, with support, inspire a journey toward wisdom and connection (Kessler, 2000). All students

have the ability to find the best in themselves. It is important for students to be told this and have them believe it. Too often, students are stereotyped and not given appropriate opportunities. However, it is up to the staff to provide them with opportunity and give them the choice to participate. Berman (1997), an educator who has devoted much of his work to understanding the development of social responsibility, believes that people must, sooner or later, turn purpose into action. “Young people are continually negotiating a sense of meaning, place and commitment,” writes Berman. “In often subtle ways they ask: Do I have a meaningful place in the social and political world? Are there values that I can make a commitment to and people I can stand with? Am I capable of contributing something useful to others that they will welcome and appreciate?” (p. 97). Through meaningful participation in their community, students can go beyond “rules” to empathy and decency, beyond filling mandated “service learning” requirements to finding purpose through giving. Students develop social responsibility not as an obligation, but out of a sense of connection and empowerment. They discover the compassion that makes humans want to alleviate the suffering of others. Through experience, they find that choice and change are possible - first in themselves and, by extension, in the community and society at large (Kessler, 2000).

According to Fertman and Van Linden (1999), “There are three stages of youth leadership development: awareness, interaction, and mastery” (p. 18). Students need to become aware of themselves as leaders and need help to begin the process of identifying and building on their leadership potential. They can then begin to get involved in leadership activities and, eventually, realize their ability to influence others. By establishing a Community of Caring, the District sought to promote both leadership

activities and character education. Schools are attempting to teach both responsibility and accountability.

Youth leadership includes both transactional and transformational leadership. Transactional leadership focuses on the skills and tasks usually associated with leadership such as speaking in public, delegating authority, leading meetings, and making decisions... Transformational leadership focuses on the process of leadership and what it means to be a leader... *doing* leadership tasks vs. *being* a leader. (Fertman & Van Linden, 1999, p. 25)

Leithwood, Jantzi, and Steinbach (2000) believe that transformational leadership is a particular area of need in both staff and students. It is important for administration team leaders to value the participation and contribution of their staff and, in turn, expect they will do the same for their students. All relevant viewpoints and advice should be taken into account before decisions are made. Developing an understanding and appreciation for others' points of view, culture and needs is essential. Perhaps too often, educators focus on the transactional; the doing and organizing of a task, but don't consider instilling the character traits of being a leader.

As the Community of Caring Project changes, or transforms, school culture, it is necessary for teachers, simultaneously, to mediate the transformation of the student body. Transformational leadership entails not only a change in the purposes and resources of those involved in the leader-follower relationship, but an elevation of both - a change 'for the better'"(Leithwood, et al., 2000). It is also noted that vision, inspiration, and individual consideration have positive effects over contingent reward and *Management-by-exception*, which means to attend to an aspect of the organization only when

something exceptional or unusual occurs (Leithwood , et al., 2000). In other words, it is far more desirable to implement a Community of Caring and promote regular, decent behavior towards our fellow human beings, rather than jumping to attention after a violent action has occurred.

A Community of Caring needs to be built slowly in order for it to be sincere and a natural part of the school culture. The use of discussion groups and other opportunities to share ideas on problems and solutions can build an initial atmosphere of trust. Student-led spirit activities can help develop a positive, inclusive atmosphere. Involvement in charitable works where students have the opportunity to connect with those they are helping and develop an understanding of others' hardships, can allow them to make that emotional connection and develop a personal passion for the activity rather than being assigned the task from an outside authority. According to Fertman and Van Linden (1999) " The goal in forging leadership development and character education is to help students experience and reflect on both their transformational and transactional leadership abilities" (p. 69). In working with adolescents to develop and support basic human values, educators in the District are also laying the foundation for the development of caring and competent leaders. In order to help our students make positive contributions to their workplaces, communities and families, we must put into effect trust, responsibility, respect, caring, determination, and faith while they are in our care.

Chapter 3: Methodology

To gain a better understanding of the implementation of the Community of Caring program and its effects on a school community, this study explored the perceptions of teachers and administrators at one school. This chapter will present the method of study, method of data collection, and demographics, and the processes of data analysis.

Through the use of action research, I studied Character Education in a large urban school. Charles and Mertler (2002) define action research as “research done to improve a product, procedure, or program in a particular setting, with no intention of generalizing the results” (p. 379). Elliott (1991) further clarifies that action research aims “to realize professional values”, where professional values define the relationships of interaction between practitioners and clients/colleagues, within a context of “wise and intelligent decision-making” (p. 21). Action research is an appropriate method because it allows us to “study what’s happening in our school and see if we can make it a better place” (Calhoun, 1994, p. 1), which is the main goal of the Community of Caring program.

In this case study I looked for patterns in the lives, actions, and words of people in the context of the complete case as a whole” (Neuman, 1997, p. 331). Yin (1994) states that “the essence of a case study, the central tendency among all types of case study, is that it tries to illuminate a decision or set of decisions: why they were taken, how they were implemented, and with what result” (p.15). In this particular case study, I examined how the decision to implement Character Education through the Community of Caring program impacted the lives of the educators and students in the community, and the school culture as a whole.

Quantitative Research

Gay (1996) says quantitative research is defined as “the collection and analysis of numerical data in order to explain, predict or control phenomena of interest” (p. 208). Quantitative researchers attempt to be objective while developing an understanding of the world, which is independent of their personal biases and values. The quantitative approach can involve descriptive research, co-relational research or experimental research (cause and effect). Quantitative researchers use standardized instruments such as surveys, questionnaires or tests when collecting their data as an attempt to eliminate bias. This project used descriptive research - in particular, the survey method. It also employed an experimental component, as I had both a pre-survey and a post-survey, to analyze the effects of the implementation of the Community of Caring Program over a period of time.

The survey method is most often used to measure behavior, attitudes, beliefs, opinions, and expectations of a sample population (Neuman, 1997). Since this research addressed staff and administrators’ specific reactions and opinions of the Community of Caring project, it was appropriate to use the survey method. A significant proportion of research done in education involves the use of surveys. Gay (1996) indicates “one type of survey unique to education is the school survey, which may involve the study of an individual school or of all the schools in a particular system” (p. 252). School surveys can often provide very valuable and necessary information for school districts and individual schools.

The census survey closely matched my purpose. It is defined by Gay(1996) as an attempt to collect data from each and every member of the population and is often used

with smaller populations. I attempted to collect data from all forty staff members at the school.

Subjects

The subjects of this research were 40 staff members at a large urban Kindergarten to grade 9 school.

Distribution of Survey

All staff members were given a letter of consent with background information describing the intent of study (Appendix B) They were asked to return the consent form and complete the pre-survey on the computer over a two-week period. To maintain anonymity the clerk typist collected the information from all staff participating in the study. She kept a list of the staff handing in consent forms. The pre-survey was done on the computer, so once the staff members handed in their consent forms they then went on the computer and filled in the survey anonymously. There were no hard copies of the pre-survey.

The implementation of the program ensued. The post-survey was handed out to all staff members who completed the pre-survey, in early February. The post-survey was not done on the computer; therefore, each teacher received the survey to complete and hand-in. To track the responses anonymously, the clerk typist numbered each survey form and matched it with a staff list of consent forms. At the end of the two-week period, I received only the consent forms and the numbered surveys. The two-week period was extended as I sent out reminder notices for staff members to hand in their post surveys. After three and a half weeks and two reminders I ended the collection of surveys.

Survey Instrument

The pre-survey and the post-survey consist of 27 questions using the Likert scale. R. Likert created the Likert Scale for the purpose of measuring the attitudes of people. A Likert scales asks an individual to respond to a series of statements by indicating whether he/she strongly agrees, agrees, strongly disagrees, disagrees (Gay, 1996). The survey specifically focuses on five different areas:

1. Identifying personal involvement.
2. Identifying administration support for the program.
3. Identifying elements of school culture including student achievement
4. Identifying student participation in the school community.
5. Identifying parental involvement

The survey has been adapted and approved by the Calgary Catholic School District and is used consistently with all schools within the Board. (Appendix A)

Implementation of the Community of Caring Program

Data collection occurred after the program was implemented. The pre-survey was given to staff in the early stages of implementation. The program implementation began in September with the development of a Community of Caring committee. The administrators asked for volunteers interested in being a part of the committee. Twelve teachers and one administrator made up the committee. Once the committee was established we developed subcommittees. The subcommittees established were: charities, staff, student lessons, visibility, and community liaison. The charities subcommittee focused on the service activities we would participate in for the year. The staff committee planned activities for the staff. The student lesson committee developed monthly lessons

for teachers to use in their classroom. Our visibility committee focused on making posters and decorating bulletin boards with the Community of Caring values and our community liaison committee worked on notifying the community about the Community of Caring program and requesting support through donations.

As a committee we established what our focus would be for our first year of implementation. Major components included the following:

- Focusing on only two values each year. During the first year we would focus on Family and Caring.
- Establish buddy classes with all homerooms in the school.
- Monthly value lessons within the classroom provided by the student lesson committee.
- A program called the Paw initiative program to recognize students demonstrating one of the two values chosen.
- A community service program. We would focus on two major projects as school community.
- A kick-off to introduce Community of Caring to the students and parents.
- Incorporation of a student leadership program to develop positive activities for the student body.

A kick-off occurred in November with full staff participation. A group of teachers did a lip-sync presentation of the song “We are Family”. Other staff members introduced the Community of Caring Logo and its meaning. Another group of teachers showed a power

point presentation that they had spent many hours putting together. The power point introduced the concept of Community of Caring.

In December the classes worked together with their buddy classes on a value lesson about family. Together the buddy classes collected food and gifts for families in the community for Christmas hampers.

From the beginning, the Paw initiative program was in place. The paw represents a symbol of the school name, Tigers. Students who had been caught demonstrating a caring act or anything to do with family would receive a business card with their name on it. Their card would go into a draw and four students' names (one from each division and then an overall winner) would be drawn at the end of the month for a reward. All students were recognized by having their name posted on a tiger paw and these paws were put up on the walls around the school.

The value lessons, work with the buddy classes, and Paw program would continue throughout the school year. The hope was to have a finale, similar to the kick-off, at the end of the implementation year, to celebrate all that the school community accomplished in the first year of Community of Caring.

After some of the events were completed a post-survey was administered to the same group of staff in February 2004. The post-survey was identical to the pre-survey given at the beginning of the study. The pre- and post-surveys were designed to determine whether or not the implementation of the Community of Caring program made a difference over a period of time.

Data Analysis

The Survey data, both pre and post, were entered, analyzed and reported in text and tables using the SPSS 12 program. Each individual question for both the pre-data and the post was analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Chapter 4: Analysis of Results

In reporting the data, both the standard deviation and mean are given for responses to each question. As well, the frequency, percent, valid percent and cumulative percent are shown for each set of responses. Because the pre-survey was done on the computer and sent to a central database, I did not receive a hard copy for each participant. I received only an analysis of each question and the number of respondents for each response. This could affect validity because the pre- and post-surveys could not be analyzed in exactly the same manner.

A total of 40 consent forms and surveys were distributed to the staff. Twenty-eight people completed the pre-survey on the computer, a 70% percent return rate. Twenty-six people returned the post survey, a 65% return rate. These return rates are a good representation of the staff and were considered reliable and valid. Gay indicates, “if your percentage of returns is not 70% or so, the validity of your conclusions will be weak”(1996, p. 260). Most of the findings are reported in table format. For each question there are two tables, the first indicating the pre-survey results and the second indicating the post-survey results.

In the analysis of the data in the following tables, responses indicating any degree of agreement (agree, strongly agree) have been aggregated. Accordingly, the percentage figures represent all levels of agreement.

Survey Results

Question 1a-I have phoned colleagues on a monthly basis in regards to Catholic Community of Caring

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	10	35.7	35.7	35.7
	Disagree	10	35.7	35.7	71.4
	Neutral	5	17.9	17.9	89.3
	Agree	1	3.6	3.6	92.9
	Strongly Agree	2	7.1	7.1	100.0
	Total	28	100.0	100.0	
	Standard deviation				1.166
Mean				2.11	

Question 1b-I have phoned colleagues on a monthly basis in regards to Catholic Community of Caring

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	2	7.7	7.7	7.7
	Disagree	16	61.5	61.5	69.2
	Neutral	6	23.1	23.1	92.3
	Agree	2	7.7	7.7	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation				.736	
Mean				2.31	

Responses to question 1 show only slight changes in participants' use of telephone calls to talk to colleagues about the Community of Caring program. Most respondents were not inclined to talk on the phone before the program started, and most were slightly less inclined to do so once the program was underway.

Question 2a-I have met with colleagues on a monthly basis in regards to Catholic Community of Caring

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	6	21.4	21.4	21.4
	Disagree	6	21.4	21.4	42.9
	Neutral	4	14.3	14.3	57.1
	Agree	8	28.6	28.6	85.7
	Strongly Agree	4	14.3	14.3	100.0
	Total	28	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation			1.412		
Mean			2.93		

Question 2b-I have met with colleagues on a monthly basis in regards to Catholic Community of Caring

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	3	11.5	11.5	11.5
	Disagree	8	30.8	30.8	42.3
	Neutral	3	11.5	11.5	53.8
	Agree	10	38.5	38.5	92.3
	Strongly Agree	2	7.7	7.7	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation			1.233		
Mean			3.00		

Responses to question 2 show a slight increase in participants meeting on a monthly basis about Community of Caring. Once the program was underway slightly more participants (12/26; 46.2%) were meeting with colleagues on a regular basis. Before the program started, 12/28 (42.9%) respondents were meeting with colleagues on a regular basis.

Question 3a-I have emailed colleagues on a monthly basis in regards to Catholic Community of Caring

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	12	42.9	42.9	42.9
	Disagree	8	28.6	28.6	71.4
	Neutral	6	21.4	21.4	92.9
	Agree	1	3.6	3.6	96.4
	Strongly Agree	1	3.6	3.6	100.0
	Total	28	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation			1.071		
Mean			1.96		

Question 3b-I have emailed colleagues on a monthly basis in regards to Catholic Community of Caring

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	2	7.7	7.7	7.7
	Disagree	18	69.2	69.2	76.9
	Neutral	6	23.1	23.1	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation			.543		
Mean			2.15		

Responses to Question 3 show that there were slight changes in the frequency with which participants e-mailing colleagues about Community of Caring. Before the program started, 2 participants (7.2%) indicated they used e-mail to correspond with colleagues. After the program was underway no one used e-mail for that purpose.

Question 4a-I have contacted colleagues through the Threaded Discussion Forum in regards to Catholic Community of Caring

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	14	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Disagree	9	32.1	32.1	82.1
	Neutral	4	14.3	14.3	96.4
	Agree	1	3.6	3.6	100.0
	Total	28	100.0	100.0	
	Standard Deviation			.854	
Mean			1.71		

Question 4b-I have contacted colleagues through the Threaded Discussion Forum in regards to Catholic Community of Caring

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	4	15.4	15.4	15.4
	Disagree	16	61.5	61.5	76.9
	Neutral	5	19.2	19.2	96.2
	Agree	1	3.8	3.8	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
	Standard Deviation.			.711	
Mean			2.12		

Responses to Question 4 show very minimal changes in participant use of the Threaded Discussion Forum to talk to colleagues about Community of Caring. In fact, only 1(3.6%) participant used the Forum before the program started and 1(3.8%) participant used the Forum once the program was underway.

Question 5a-I have worked with an experienced Catholic Community of Caring colleague in my school

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	3.6	3.7	3.7
	Disagree	4	14.3	14.8	18.5
	Neutral	2	7.1	7.4	25.9
	Agree	12	42.9	44.4	70.4
	Strongly Agree	8	28.6	29.6	100.0
	Total	27	96.4	100.0	
	Missing	System	1	3.6	
Total		28	100.0		
Standard Deviation			1.145		
Mean			3.81		

Question 5b-I have worked with an experienced Catholic Community of Caring colleague in my school

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	3.8	3.8	3.8
	Disagree	2	7.7	7.7	11.5
	Neutral	2	7.7	7.7	19.2
	Agree	14	53.8	53.8	73.1
	Strongly Agree	7	26.9	26.9	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
	Standard Deviation			1.017	
Mean			3.92		

Responses to Question 5 show an increase in participants working with an experienced Catholic Community of Caring colleague in their own school. Before the program started, 20 (71.5%) respondents worked with an experienced Community of Caring colleague. After the program was underway 21 (80.7%) respondents worked with such a colleague.

Question 6a-I have worked with an experienced Catholic Community of Caring colleague from another school.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	13	46.4	46.4	46.4
	Disagree	8	28.6	28.6	75.0
	Neutral	4	14.3	14.3	89.3
	Agree	2	7.1	7.1	96.4
	Strongly Agree	1	3.6	3.6	100.0
	Total	28	100.0	100.0	
	Standard Deviation			1.120	
Mean			1.193		

Question 6b-I have worked with an experienced Catholic Community of Caring colleague from another school.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	7	26.9	26.9	26.9
	Disagree	12	46.2	46.2	73.1
	Neutral	4	15.4	15.4	88.5
	Agree	2	7.7	7.7	96.2
	Strongly Agree	1	3.8	3.8	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
	Standard Deviation			1.047	
Mean			2.15		

Responses to Question 6 show little difference in the extent to which participants worked with an experienced Community of Caring colleague from another school. Most respondents did not work with such a colleague before the program started and most did not work with a colleague from another school once the program was underway.

Question 7a-My school administration team supports Catholic Community of Caring informally by providing substitute teacher time for committee planning.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	3	10.7	11.1	11.1
	Disagree	4	14.3	14.8	25.9
	Neutral	8	28.6	29.6	55.6
	Agree	3	10.7	11.1	66.7
	Strongly Agree	9	32.1	33.3	100.0
	Total	27	96.4	100.0	
	Missing	System	1	3.6	
Total		28	100.0		
Standard Deviation			1.394		
Mean			3.41		

Question 7b-My school administration team supports Catholic Community of Caring informally by providing substitute teacher time for committee planning.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	3	11.5	11.5	11.5
	Disagree	2	7.7	7.7	19.2
	Neutral	10	38.5	38.5	57.7
	Agree	7	26.9	26.9	84.6
	Strongly Agree	4	15.4	15.4	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
	Standard Deviation			1.185	
Mean			3.27		

Responses to Question 7 show slight changes in perceptions of the level of administrative support for Community of Caring through the provision of substitute teacher time for committee planning. Twelve (42.8%) respondents were inclined to believe administration supported Community of Caring by providing substitute teacher time before the program began. Slightly fewer (11; 42.3%) were inclined to believe that support existed once the program was underway. There were a high percentage of neutral responses (28.6%) before the program began; once the program was underway the neutral

responses increased to 38.5%.

Question 8a-My school administration team supports Community of Caring informally by being flexible in providing time for Catholic Community of Caring activities throughout the school day

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
Strongly Disagree	1	3.6	3.6	3.6
Neutral	6	21.4	21.4	25.0
Agree	12	42.9	42.9	67.9
Strongly Agree	9	32.1	32.1	100.0
Total	28	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation		.943		
Mean		4.00		

Question 8b-My school administration team supports Community of Caring informally by being flexible in providing time for Catholic Community of Caring activities throughout the school day

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
Agree	16	61.5	61.5	61.5
Strongly Agree	10	38.5	38.5	100.0
Total	26	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation		.496		
Mean		4.38		

Responses to Question 8 show a change in perceptions of administrative support through the provision of time for Community of Caring activities. Most respondents 21/28 (75%) believed administration supported Community of Caring by providing time through out the day before the program started. However, once the program began, all 26 respondents (100%) believed administration supported the program by providing time for Catholic Community of Caring activities.

Question 9a-A representative from my school administration team attends CC of Caring committee meetings.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neutral	2	7.1	7.1	7.1
	Agree	12	42.9	42.9	50.0
	Strongly Agree	14	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	28	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation			.634		
Mean			4.43		

Question 9b-A representative from my school administration team attends CC of Caring committee meetings.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neutral	3	11.5	11.5	11.5
	Agree	14	53.8	53.8	65.4
	Strongly Agree	9	34.6	34.6	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation			.652		
Mean			4.23		

Responses to Question 9 show a slight change in participants' perceptions of administrative attendance Community of Caring meetings. Most respondents (26/28; 92.9%) believed an administrator from their school attended Community of Caring meetings before the program began; they were slightly less inclined (23/26; 88.4%) to believe that an administrator attended meetings once the program was underway.

Question 10a-My school administration team includes CC of Caring in our annual School Goals

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neutral	1	3.6	3.6	3.6
	Agree	10	35.7	35.7	39.3
	Strongly Agree	17	60.7	60.7	100.0
	Total	28	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation			.537		
Mean			4.57		

Question 10b-My school administration team includes CC of Caring in our annual School Goals

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neutral	2	7.7	7.7	7.7
	Agree	14	53.8	53.8	61.5
	Strongly Agree	10	38.5	38.5	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation			.618		
Mean			4.31		

Responses to Question 10 also show only a slight change in respondents' perceptions that school administrators included Community of Caring in the annual School Goals. Before the program began, most respondents (27/28; 96.4%) believed that administration included Community of Caring in their school goals. Once the program was underway, slightly fewer respondents (24/26; 92.3%) believed administration included Community of Caring in the annual School Goals.

Question 11a-My school is an inviting welcoming community

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	3.6	3.6	3.6
	Disagree	1	3.6	3.6	7.1
	Neutral	1	3.6	3.6	10.7
	Agree	12	42.9	42.9	53.6
	Strongly Agree	13	46.4	46.4	100.0
	Total	28	100.0	100.0	
	Standard Deviation			.967	
Mean			4.25		

Question 11b-My school is an inviting welcoming community

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neutral	2	7.7	7.7	7.7
	Agree	16	61.5	61.5	69.2
	Strongly Agree	8	30.8	30.8	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation			.587		
Mean			4.23		

Responses to Question 11 show an increase in respondents' beliefs that their school is inviting and welcoming. Before the program began 25/28 (89.3%) respondents believed their school was inviting and welcoming. Even more respondents (24/26; 92.3%) were inclined to believe their school was warm and welcoming after the program was underway.

Question 12a-In my school people are treated with respect

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	2	7.1	7.1	7.1
	Disagree	5	17.9	17.9	25.0
	Neutral	3	10.7	10.7	35.7
	Agree	12	42.9	42.9	78.6
	Strongly Agree	6	21.4	21.4	100.0
	Total	28	100.0	100.0	
	Standard Deviation			1.232	
Mean			3.54		

Question 12b-In my school people are treated with respect

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neutral	6	23.1	23.1	23.1
	Agree	15	57.7	57.7	80.8
	Strongly Agree	5	19.2	19.2	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation			.662		
Mean			3.96		

Responses to Question 12 show a definite increase in respondents' beliefs that people are treated with respect in their school. Before the program began, 18/28 respondents (64.3%) believed that people were treated with respect. Once the program was underway, even more respondents (20/26; 76.9 %) believed people were treated with respect in their school.

Question 13a-In my school we are accepting of individual differences.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	2	7.1	7.1	7.1
	Disagree	1	3.6	3.6	10.7
	Neutral	3	10.7	10.7	21.4
	Agree	15	53.6	53.6	75.0
	Strongly Agree	7	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	28	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation				1.079	
Mean				3.86	

Question 13b-In my school we are accepting of individual differences.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	2	7.7	7.7	7.7
	Neutral	2	7.7	7.7	15.4
	Agree	14	53.8	53.8	69.2
	Strongly Agree	8	30.8	30.8	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation				.845	
Mean				4.08	

Responses to Question 13 show a significant change in participants' beliefs that they are accepting of individual differences in their school. Before the program started, 22/28 respondents (78.6%) believed they were accepting of individual differences. Once the program was underway, 22/26 (84.6%) believed they were accepting of individual differences in their school.

Question 14a My school provides a safe environment for all (handles bullying, harassment in a positive and effective manner)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	4	14.3	14.3	14.3
	Neutral	5	17.9	17.9	32.1
	Agree	9	32.1	32.1	64.3
	Strongly Agree	10	35.7	35.7	100.0
	Total	28	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation				1.066	
Mean				3.89	

Question 14b-My school provides a safe environment for all (handles bullying, harassment in a positive and effective manner)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	3.8	3.8	3.8
	Neutral	1	3.8	3.8	7.7
	Agree	13	50.0	50.0	57.7
	Strongly Agree	11	42.3	42.3	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation				.874	
Mean				4.27	

Responses to Question 14 show a positive change in respondents' beliefs that their school provides a safe environment. Before the program began, only 19/28 respondents (67.8%) believed their school provided a safe environment. Once the program was underway, many more respondents (92.3%) were inclined to believe their school provided a safe environment for all.

Question 15a- People in my school are attentive and show interest in others.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
Strongly Disagree	2	7.1	7.1	7.1
Disagree	4	14.3	14.3	21.4
Neutral	2	7.1	7.1	28.6
Agree	13	46.4	46.4	75.0
Strongly Agree	7	25.0	25.0	100.0
Total	28	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation		1.219		
Mean		3.68		

Question 15b- People in my school are attentive and show interest in others.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
Strongly Disagree	1	3.8	3.8	3.8
Disagree	1	3.8	3.8	7.7
Neutral	5	19.2	19.2	26.9
Agree	12	46.2	46.2	73.1
Strongly Agree	7	26.9	26.9	100.0
Total	26	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation		.993		
Mean		3.88		

Responses to Question 15 show almost no change in participants' beliefs that people in their school are attentive and show interest in others. Before the program began 20/28 respondents (71.4%) believed people were attentive and showed interest in others. After the program began, 19/26 respondents (73.1%) believed people were attentive and showed interest in others at their school.

Question 16a-As a result of Catholic Community of Caring activities, students are taking part in the life of the school (Playground peace patrols, Caring Clubs, Action Committees, etc)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	3.6	3.6	3.6
	Disagree	3	10.7	10.7	14.3
	Neutral	8	28.6	28.6	42.9
	Agree	12	42.9	42.9	85.7
	Strongly Agree	4	14.3	14.3	100.0
	Total	28	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation			.999		
Mean			3.54		

Question 16b-As a result of Catholic Community of Caring activities, students are taking part in the life of the school (Playground peace patrols, Caring Clubs, Action Committees, etc)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	3.8	3.8	3.8
	Disagree	1	3.8	3.8	7.7
	Neutral	10	38.5	38.5	46.2
	Agree	10	38.5	38.5	84.6
	Strongly Agree	4	15.4	15.4	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation			.945		
Mean			3.58		

Responses to Question 16 show a slight change in participants' beliefs that students were participating more in school life as result of Community of Caring activities. Respondents were less inclined to believe students were taking part in the life of the school, as a result of Community of Caring, after the program was underway. After the program began, there was consistency in respondents' levels of agreement but an increase in the number of respondents who offered a neutral response.

Question 17a-As a result of Catholic Community of Caring activities (ie, through sub-committees, on a consultation basis, etc.), students are more willing to become involved in planning other school events.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	1	3.6	3.6	3.6
	Neutral	12	42.9	42.9	46.4
	Agree	15	53.6	53.6	100.0
	Total	28	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation			.577		
Mean			3.50		

Question 17b-As a result of Catholic Community of Caring activities (ie, through sub-committees, on a consultation basis, etc.), students are more willing to become involved in planning other school events.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	2	7.7	7.7	7.7
	Neutral	15	57.7	57.7	65.4
	Agree	9	34.6	34.6	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation			.801		
Mean			3.19		

Responses to Question 17 show a considerable change in participants' beliefs that students were more willing to become involved in planning other school events as a result of Community of Caring activities. Respondents felt students were willing to become more involved in planning other school events as a result of Community of Caring before the program started. However, once the program was underway, respondents felt students were less inclined to become involved in planning school events as a result of their participation in Community of Caring. A large number of participants (12/28; 42.9%) offered a neutral response before the program began; after the program was underway, the number of neutral responses increased (15/26; 57.7%)

Question 18a-Students in my school feel they have a special role in Community of Caring.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	1	3.6	3.6	3.6
	Neutral	7	25.0	25.0	28.6
	Agree	19	67.9	67.9	96.4
	Strongly Agree	1	3.6	3.6	100.0
	Total	28	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation.			.600		
Mean			3.71		

Question 18b-Students in my school feel they have a special role in Community of Caring.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	3.8	3.8	3.8
	Neutral	9	34.6	34.6	38.5
	Agree	15	57.7	57.7	96.2
	Strongly Agree	1	3.8	3.8	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation			.758		
Mean			3.58		

Responses to Question 18 show a change in participants' beliefs that students feel they have a special role in Community of Caring. Before the program started, most respondents (20/28; 71.5%) believed students felt they had a special role in Community of Caring. Once the program was underway, fewer respondents (16/26; 61.5%) believed students felt they had a special role in Community of Caring.

Question 19a-My school provides opportunities for students to become connected through friendship (BFG, groups, clubs)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	3	10.7	10.7	10.7
	Neutral	9	32.1	32.1	42.9
	Agree	11	39.3	39.3	82.1
	Strongly Agree	5	17.9	17.9	100.0
	Total	28	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation			.911		
Mean			3.64		

Question 19b-My school provides opportunities for students to become connected through friendship (BFG, groups, clubs)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	3.8	3.8	3.8
	Disagree	1	3.8	3.8	7.7
	Neutral	10	38.5	38.5	46.2
	Agree	12	46.2	46.2	92.3
	Strongly Agree	2	7.7	7.7	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
	Standard Deviation			.860	
Mean			3.50		

Responses to Question 19 show a slight change in participants' beliefs the school provides opportunities for students to become connected through friendship. Before the program started, 16/28 respondents (57.2%) felt the school provided opportunities for the students to become connected through friendship. Once the program was underway, slightly fewer respondents (14/26; 53.9%) felt the school provided opportunities for students to become connected through friendship.

Question 20a-Due to the positive relationships in my school, there are less discipline referrals to administration

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	3	10.7	11.1	11.1
	Neutral	16	57.1	59.3	70.4
	Agree	7	25.0	25.9	96.3
	Strongly Agree	1	3.6	3.7	100.0
	Total	27	96.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	3.6		
Total		28	100.0		
Standard Deviation			.698		
Mean			3.22		

Question 20b-Due to the positive relationships in my school, there are less discipline referrals to administration

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	1	3.8	3.8	3.8
	Neutral	12	46.2	46.2	50.0
	Agree	13	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation			.582		
Mean			3.46		

Responses to Question 20 show a considerable change in participants' beliefs that there were fewer discipline referrals to administration due to the positive relationships in the school. Before the program began 8/28 (28.6%) respondents felt there were less discipline referrals to administration due to the positive relationships. Once the program began, 13/26 (50%) of the respondents felt there was a decrease in discipline referrals to administration due to the positive relationships in the school.

Question 21a-Due to the positive relationships in my school, there is less truancy.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	3	10.7	11.1	11.1
	Neutral	15	53.6	55.6	66.7
	Agree	8	28.6	29.6	96.3
	Strongly Agree	1	3.6	3.7	100.0
	Total	27	96.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	3.6		
Total		28	100.0		
Standard Deviation			.712		
Mean			3.26		

Question 21b-Due to the positive relationships in my school, there is less truancy.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neutral	18	69.2	69.2	69.2
	Agree	6	23.1	23.1	92.3
	Strongly Agree	2	7.7	7.7	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation			.637		
Mean			3.38		

Responses to Question 21 show very little change in participants' beliefs that there was less truancy due to the positive relationships. Before the program started 9/28 (32.2%) respondents felt there was less truancy in the school due to positive relationships. Slightly fewer (8/26; 31.8%) were inclined to believe there was less truancy in the school due to positive relationships once the program was underway. This question elicited a large number of neutral responses on both the pre-survey (15/28; 53.6%) and the post-survey (18/26; 69.2%).

Question 22a-Due to the positive relationships in my school, there is an increase in student success

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	2	7.1	7.1	7.1
	Neutral	12	42.9	42.9	50.0
	Agree	12	42.9	42.9	92.9
	Strongly Agree	2	7.1	7.1	100.0
	Total	28	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation			.745		
Mean			3.50		

Question 22b-Due to the positive relationships in my school, there is an increase in student success

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	1	3.8	3.8	3.8
	Neutral	11	42.3	42.3	46.2
	Agree	12	46.2	46.2	92.3
	Strongly Agree	2	7.7	7.7	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation			.703		
Mean			3.58		

Responses to Question 22 show a slight change in participants' beliefs that there was an increase in student success due to the positive relationships in the school. Before the program started, 14/28 (50%) respondents felt there was an increase in student success due to the positive relationships in the school. Once the program was underway, 14/26 (53.9%) respondents believed there was an increase in student success due to the positive relationships in the school.

Question 23a-Due to the positive relationships in my school, there is an increase in student overall achievement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	1	3.6	3.6	3.6
	Neutral	12	42.9	42.9	46.4
	Agree	13	46.4	46.4	92.9
	Strongly Agree	2	7.1	7.1	100.0
	Total	28	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation			.690		
Mean			3.57		

Question 23b-Due to the positive relationships in my school, there is an increase in student overall achievement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	1	3.8	3.8	3.8
	Neutral	12	46.2	46.2	50.0
	Agree	11	42.3	42.3	92.3
	Strongly Agree	2	7.7	7.7	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation			.706		
Mean			3.54		

Responses to Question 23 show a slight change in participants' beliefs that there was an increase in student overall achievement due to the positive relationships in the school. Before the program started 15/28 (53.5%) respondents felt there was an increase in student overall achievement due to the positive relationships in the school. Once the program was underway, slightly fewer respondents (13/26; 50%) believed there was an increase in student overall achievement due to the positive relationships in the school.

Question 24a-As a result of Catholic Community of Caring, parents have become more connected to the life of the school.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	8	28.6	29.6	29.6
	Neutral	11	39.3	40.7	70.4
	Agree	7	25.0	25.9	96.3
	Strongly Agree	1	3.6	3.7	100.0
	Total	27	96.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	3.6		
Total		28	100.0		
Standard Deviation			.854		
Mean			3.04		

Question 24b-As a result of Catholic Community of Caring, parents have become more connected to the life of the school.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	3.8	3.8	3.8
	Disagree	4	15.4	15.4	19.2
	Neutral	12	46.2	46.2	65.4
	Agree	8	30.8	30.8	96.2
	Strongly Agree	1	3.8	3.8	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation			.881		
Mean			3.15		

Responses to Question 24 show a slight change in participants' beliefs that parents have become more connected to the life of the school as a result of Community of Caring. Eight out of 27 respondents (29.6%) believed parents had become more connected to the life of the school before the program started. After the program was underway, nine out of 26 respondents (34.6%) believed that parents had become more connected.

Question 25a- As a result of Catholic Community of Caring, all parental opinions and contributions are considered valuable.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	2	7.1	7.1	7.1
	Neutral	9	32.1	32.1	39.3
	Agree	14	50.0	50.0	89.3
	Strongly Agree	3	10.7	10.7	100.0
	Total	28	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation			.780		
Mean			3.64		

Question 25b- As a result of Catholic Community of Caring, all parental opinions and contributions are considered valuable.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	1	3.8	3.8	3.8
	Neutral	5	19.2	19.2	23.1
	Agree	16	61.5	61.5	84.6
	Strongly Agree	4	15.4	15.4	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation			.711		
Mean			3.88		

Responses to Question 25 show a considerable change in participants' beliefs that all parental opinions and contributions are considered valuable as a result of Community of Caring. Before the program began, 17/28 respondents (60.7%) felt parental opinions and contributions were considered valuable. After the program was underway, even more respondents (20/26; 76.9%) felt parental opinions and contributions were considered valuable.

Question 26a-As a result of Catholic Community of Caring, my school has become more inviting and welcoming to parents.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neutral	10	35.7	35.7	35.7
	Agree	16	57.1	57.1	92.9
	Strongly Agree	2	7.1	7.1	100.0
	Total	28	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation			.600		
Mean			3.71		

Question 26b-As a result of Catholic Community of Caring, my school has become more inviting and welcoming to parents.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neutral	5	19.2	19.2	19.2
	Agree	16	61.5	61.5	80.8
	Strongly Agree	5	19.2	19.2	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation			.632		
Mean			4.04		

Responses to Question 26 show a considerable change in participants' beliefs that their school had become more inviting and welcoming to parents. Before the program began, 18/28 respondents (64.2%) felt their school was inviting and welcoming. After the program was underway, 21/26 (80.7%) felt their school was inviting and welcoming as a result of Community of Caring.

Question 27a-As a result of Catholic Community of Caring being implemented in our school I am pleased to work here.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	4	14.3	14.8	14.8
	Neutral	9	32.1	33.3	48.1
	Agree	7	25.0	25.9	74.1
	Strongly Agree	7	25.0	25.9	100.0
	Total	27	96.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	3.6		
Total		28	100.0		
Standard Deviation			1.043		
Mean			3.63		

Question 27b-As a result of Catholic Community of Caring being implemented in our school I am pleased to work here.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	1	3.8	3.8	3.8
	Neutral	4	15.4	15.4	19.2
	Agree	14	53.8	53.8	73.1
	Strongly Agree	7	26.9	26.9	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
Standard Deviation			.774		
Mean			4.04		

Responses to Question 27 show considerable changes in participants' levels of satisfaction as a result of Community of Caring. Before the program started, half of the respondents indicated they were pleased to work at their school. However, once the program was underway, 21/26 respondents (80.7%) indicated they were pleased to work at their school as result of Community of Caring.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Recommendations

Limitations of the Study

Limitations exist in all educational research. I felt that this study was inclusive in that all staff members were invited to participate in the study and there was a fairly high percentage of return for both the pre- and post-surveys. However, there were definite limitations present within this study that may have skewed the results.

I am concerned about the Halo effect and the Hawthorne effect. To what extent were results affected by staff reactions to being observed, and by the biases of the observer? Some staff members may have tried to please the researcher and skew the results in the pre- and post- surveys. Biases may also have occurred due to my administrative involvement and leadership in this program. Another limitation is that we may not know how successful the program could have been due to the fact that the growth of teachers and students may not have been observable or measurable in the short period of time the study was conducted. It is also possible that the results could have been skewed due to the fact that the pre-survey was done on a computer program that was unable to produce each individual case survey and the results were given to me already analyzed, with numbers of responses tallied for each question. This differed from the post-survey, where I received a hard copy of the survey from each participant. A final concern is that due to the size and focus of the sample, study results are not generalizable to other districts, or other schools.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine perceptions of teachers and administrators on the implementation of a character education program, in particular the Community of Caring program. My intentions were to focus on the perceptions of teachers and administrators and whether their support and participation in the program resulted in a positive change in the character development of our students, as well as the schools' overall climate.

Through character education programs, a school can evolve into a more of a learning community with shared ideals, common practices, and a healthy respect for the ways individual differences contribute to the diversity of the whole. Cheryl McInnes has been the Coordinating Teacher heading the Community of Caring Program throughout the Calgary Catholic School District since its inception in 2000. Through her observations, she notes that although Catholic Community of Caring is a District initiative, the approach and implementation is unique to each individual school. She does stress that all successful schools have the following key components in common: service-learning opportunities, values integrated into the curriculum, parent involvement, and strong relationships among community members, particularly staff. These relationships are foundational and the implementation of any program needs the support and participation of all members; parents teachers, students and administrators. Likona (1992) believes that effective leaders are involved in all activities common to values education. They model, promote and provide all staff with the goals and strategies of the values program. It is essential to note that the success of a character education program is contingent on the leaders in the school, both administrators and teachers.

The results of the post-survey suggested that there were perceptions of small growth in most areas of the survey. These include personal involvement, administration support, school culture, student involvement, and parental involvement. Overall, there were many indications that the implementation of the program had started to make positive differences at this school. This was most apparent in responses to questions that addressed staff personal involvement. More staff members, over time, became involved in the Community of Caring program. Lambert (2003) believes that often it is the effort of an individual or small group to begin a process that gathers people together to work towards a common good. As the staff members began to implement and work with this program they recognized that they had activities already in place that contributed to Community of Caring in the school and, therefore, they didn't see the program as an add-on. I believe many staff members also recognized the positive effect the program was having on students, and their colleagues, and they were encouraged to become more involved.

Although the survey data indicated that few staff members were e-mailing colleagues and phoning colleagues regarding Community of Caring, this was not necessarily an indication their involvement in Community of Caring was limited, or that it decreased. In fact I believe the phone calls and e-mails prior to the implementation were to gather information about the program and, once the program started, teachers in the school quickly became experts about Community of Caring. Discussions about Community of Caring did occur in the building, on a more informal and *ad hoc* basis.

After the committee, was established, staff members were clearly more interested in knowing what was going on with the Community of Caring, so a binder was put in the

staff room with the minutes from the meetings. All teachers were then able to have a voice or be a part of the Community of Caring process even if they were not on the committee.

One of the areas emphasized throughout the literature review is the importance of administrative support when implementing new programs. Clover and Goens (1991) describe good leaders as ones who can create the vision and climate that encourages everyone in the system to reach higher and accomplish more. Administrative support is essential for the implementation of the Community of Caring Program to be successful.

The post-survey results did indicate that respondents believe the administration team supports the program by providing time throughout the school day for Community of Caring activities. There was a definite increase from the pre-survey results.

The responses to the question that addressed administrative support by providing substitute time for committee members showed quite a large standard deviation in both the pre-and post-survey. I believe this could be because substitute time only involved a very small group of teachers. The rest of the staff members were unaware of the time given to the committee members. Therefore, the staff responses may be indicative of staff members' uncertainty, or their lack of knowledge.

In the responses to the question regarding Community of Caring being included in the annual school goals, I noted that more people in the pre-survey than in the post-survey felt this did happen than in the post-survey. This could be due to the fact the annual school goals were reviewed around the same time as the pre-survey was given; some people may have forgotten the extent to which they were part of the school goals.

School culture is an important component of the Community of Caring program and all literature indicates that communities with a values component often have a positive school climate. Kohn (1996) stated that the development of a caring community would foster positive student values and a love of learning.

A positive school climate exists when all students feel comfortable, wanted, valued, accepted, and secure in an environment where they can interact with caring people they trust. A positive school climate affects everyone associated with the school: students, staff, parents, and the community. It is the belief system or culture that underlies the day-to-day operation of a school. (Manitoba Education, Training and Youth, 2001, p.33)

In general the results of this study indicate that there was an overall increase from the start of the program in aspects of positive school climate, including being an inviting community, treating people with respect, and showing interest in others. As well, there was a considerable increase in the area of accepting of individual differences and providing a safe environment for all. I believe, such things as the Caring and Family values in the monthly lesson plans with the buddy classes, and the visible signs of Community of Caring posted throughout every corner of the school, contributed directly to these changes. The buddy class system made teachers become aware of what was going on in other classrooms; it challenged teachers to talk to each other more, and organize their time together. Teachers also had to talk to their students about working with other students, and being accepting of others. I think staff perceptions on providing a safe environment changed, too, because the program was implemented school wide and incorporated into all aspects of the curriculum, not just religion. I also believe the

implementation of the Paw program, where good behaviors were recognized instead of bad behaviors, helped enhance staff members' perceptions that we were providing a safe environment.

School culture is the key to change. Research has shown that schools whose cultures are characterized by norms of trust, collaboration, professional sharing, and respect among teachers and administrators are more instructionally effective for students. The post-survey results in this study indicated staff members really hadn't noticed much change in student success or overall achievement. However, developing positive relationships and trust takes time and, given more time, I think more staff members would have seen an increase in overall student achievement. Research has consistently shown a link between positive school climate and other important measures of school success such as academic achievement.

Discipline referrals and truancy were two other areas that were seen to have shown an improvement due to the greater positive relationships that were developing in the school. After the program was implemented, the post survey results indicated the staff felt that there were fewer discipline referrals to the office and truancy had decreased. When students feel they are part of a positive school environment, where adults are approachable and caring, they are more likely to attend and become active members of the school community.

The final question in the survey, *As a result of Community of Caring being implemented in our school I am pleased to work here*, deals with yet another dimension of school culture – that of belonging. Post-survey results indicated there was an increase in staff members who were happy to be working at this school after the program had been

implemented. I felt this was the most important question in the survey because it addressed one of the guiding questions of the study: whether teacher support and participation in the program resulted in a positive change in the schools' overall climate. There must have been some definite changes in the school's overall climate because a larger number of staff members indicated in their post-survey responses that they were pleased to work at the school. The implementation of the Community of Caring activities could not have been done without the support and participation of all staff members. This further suggests that as staff members became more involved in the work of the school, their own levels of satisfaction increased.

Student involvement is another key to the success of Community of Caring. Students need to feel that they have ownership in the program and, therefore, must be given a voice and a part in the decision making process. According to Fertman and Van Linden (1999), "The goal in forging leadership development and Character Education is to help students experience and reflect on both their transformational and transactional leadership abilities" (p. 69). Teachers need to give students the opportunity to develop those leadership skills; the implementation of the Community of Caring program allows students to develop those skills.

Most staff members did not see student involvement improving with the implementation of Community of Caring program; nor did they think that students felt they had a special role in Community of Caring. In fact, they believed that students wanted to be *less* involved in planning other school events as a result of Community of Caring. I believe this occurred because the initial focus of the implementation was to get staff members to buy into the program and to try to help students develop an appreciation

for selected values. The student part of the program wasn't fully developed during the time period of this study. Student council had not become active members of the Community of Caring committee. The teacher representative was the voice of the students at meetings and would deliver concerns or ideas to the council or the committee on their behalf. This suggests to me that there should have been a stronger student role on the committee. Even though activities and lessons were planned with students in mind, students were not directly given a voice or an opportunity to become leaders in the implementation process. As the literature has indicated that for character education programs to be successful students must be actively involved, students' direct involvement will have to be more carefully planned in year two of the program.

“Character Education’s popularity with parents and educators is that it acknowledges that schools, families and communities cannot be successful in developing character if any one of them acts alone – or if any partner shirks its responsibility.

Character Education is a shared responsibility”

(www.schoolcouncils.net/published_articles.htm). Schools must engage parents to become actively involved in Character education programs. The Community of Caring program believes that parental involvement is essential to its success. The fifth core value of the Community of Caring program is family. “ In Community of Caring schools, families, schools, and the community work together in meaningful ways to build relationships and collaborate on activities based on the five values” (<http://www.communityofcaring.org/>).

The survey had three questions that dealt with parental involvement. Participant responses indicated perceptions of positive change involving parents with the program implementation. Teachers perceived that parents had become more connected to the

school as a result of the Community of Caring program, parental opinions were considered more valuable, and the school had become more welcoming and inviting to parents.

Literature has indicated consistently that community, family, and school must work together to develop responsible citizens. Dr. Joyce Epstein (1995) believes that there are three main spheres of influence that affect children. Each sphere overlaps and works together to shape children's attitudes and experiences. The implications for character education are that, together, the school, parents and community will develop and reinforce a common set of values.

Recommendations

The results of this study suggest that Community of Caring has had a positive effect on the school when it comes to relationship building, community building, and the development of positive school culture and school climate. Teachers, students, and parents appear more willing and able to model positive relationships, based upon common values established through the Community of Caring program. For success to occur there needed to be a high level of interest and involvement from most staff members, including the administration team. Staff members' belief in and commitment to this program, and their willingness to incorporate it into their classrooms was a major factor contributing to the generally positive results that the study reported.

The growth in most areas was not great. However, I believe that over time there will be continuous growth, especially in areas of student success and achievement. Lickona (1998) states that character education programs have an impact on academic performance because, as student behavior improves students become more comfortable, and this tends to lead to improved academic scores. Educators know it takes time to change behaviors, develop trust and build relationships. As those changes occur within the school community I think we would see even stronger growth in areas such as personal involvement, administration support, school culture, student involvement/achievement, and parental involvement.

Teacher and Administration Support

The staff and administration at this school made a commitment to implement this program by developing a committee, planning regular Community of Caring activities, and making the Community of Caring logo visible throughout the school. The survey

results indicated that administration supported the program by including it in the School goals, providing substitute teacher time, and being flexible in providing time throughout the day for activities. I believe the administration and the committee need to continue to communicate with the whole staff so that more people – staff members, students and parents – will come to feel they have ownership of the program. Administrators can help this happen by having Community of Caring as a regular item on staff meeting agendas. They can also have a special section of the monthly newsletter that is reserved for Community of Caring. In this section of the newsletter administrators and teachers can report to parents what has been happening with the Community of Caring program. They can also include ideas on how parents can incorporate the different values at home. I also think that reporting to the school council at monthly school council meetings and allowing parents to have input on the activities is an important factor to develop that community family and school partnership. Eventually it would be important that we had a parent representative on the Community of Caring committee.

Administration can also support the program by incorporating a regular time in the schedule when Community of Caring activities and lessons take place. For example every day one period one would be a Community of Caring period. This allows teachers to spend the time incorporating and discussing the values associated with Community of Caring.

Maintaining the binder with the committee meeting notes in the staff room, another form of communication, allows all staff to know what is happening and to have input into the program. The success of this program relies on the support and commitment of teachers and administrators.

Student Leadership

Student Leadership was not seen to develop very much during the surveyed period. Students need to feel they have ownership in the program and I believe all staff members have to be more purposeful, over time, in promoting ways to include, involve, and invite students into the program. As staff members develop activities and lessons for the students, they must remember how important it is that students have a voice. Giving students the ability to participate in decision related to the organization of school activities can help build enthusiasm and a sense of belonging.

I think that student forums, where students can speak up about issues in the building and developing of a plan, are an important aspect of character education. A student forum allows young people to share their thoughts, experiences and values with teachers, administrators, and peers. A supportive environment encourages discussion about critical issues that affect their lives, and permits adults to listen. Student forums are powerful tools for developing Community of Caring.

In conclusion, many staff members perceive that the implementation of the Community of Caring program has made a difference in school climate, relationship building and parental involvement. Today our schools must be in the business of educating the hearts and souls of children, as well as their minds. Character education programs allow us to teach values and virtues that are essential to the growth of the individual. These programs cannot be successful without the commitment and support of teachers and administrators. Likona (1991) says, "schools need more than a list of values. They need a concept of character and a commitment to developing it in their students" (p.

49). Leaders who have a vision of a better world, where respect and responsibility are critical to the development of our students, recognize that character matters.

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Appendix A
Catholic Community of Caring
 Staff Survey

Gender **M or F**

#	Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	I have phoned colleagues on a monthly basis in regards to Catholic Community of Caring	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I have met with colleagues on a monthly basis in regards to Catholic Community of Caring	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I have emailed colleagues on a monthly basis in regards to Catholic Community of Caring	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I have contacted colleagues through the Threaded Discussion Forum in regards to Catholic Community of Caring	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I have worked with an experienced Catholic Community of Caring colleague in my school	1	2	3	4	5
6.	I have worked with an experienced Catholic Community of Caring colleague from another school.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	My school administration team supports Catholic Community of Caring informally by providing substitute teacher time for committee planning.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	My school administration team supports Community of Caring informally by being flexible in providing time for Catholic Community of Caring activities throughout the school day	1	2	3	4	5

9.	A representative from my school administration team attends CC of Caring committee meetings.	1	2	3	4	5
10	My school administration team includes CC of Caring in our annual School Goals	1	2	3	4	5
11.	My school is an inviting welcoming community	1	2	3	4	5
12	In my school people are treated with respect	1	2	3	4	5
13.	In my school we are accepting of individual differences.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	My school provides a safe environment for all (handles bullying harassment in a positive effective manner)	1	2	3	4	5
15.	People in my school are attentive and show interest in others.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	As a result of Catholic Community of Caring activities, students are taking part in the life of the school (Playground peace patrols, Caring Clubs, Action Committees, etc)	1	2	3	4	5

17.	As a result of Catholic Community of Caring activities (ie, through sub-committees, on a consultation basis, etc.), students are more willing to become involved in planning other school events.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	Students in my school feel they have a special role in Community of Caring.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	My school provides opportunities for students to become connected through friendship (BFG, groups, clubs)	1	2	3	4	5
20.	Due to the positive relationships in my school, there are less discipline referrals to administration	1	2	3	4	5
21.	Due to the positive relationships in my school, there is less truancy.	1	2	3	4	5
22.	Due to the positive relationships in my school, there is an increase in student success	1	2	3	4	5
23.	Due to the positive relationships in my school, there is an increase in student overall achievement	1	2	3	4	5
24	As a result of Catholic Community of Caring, parents have become more connected to the life of the school.	1	2	3	4	5
25.	As a result of Catholic Community of Caring, all parental opinions and contributions are considered valuable.	1	2	3	4	5
26	As a result of Catholic Community of Caring, my school has become more inviting and welcoming to parents.	1	2	3	4	5
27	As a result of Catholic Community of Caring being implemented in our school I am pleased to work here.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix B

Letter of Invitation and Informed Consent

Dear Staff,

As part of the Masters of Education program at The University of Lethbridge, I am focusing my research on the Community of Caring Project. The purpose of this project is to ascertain the effects program implementation has on staff opinions of the school environment. There will be a pre and post survey conducted to determine if there has been a change in staff attitudes in regard to the school environment due to the implementation of the Community of Caring Project.

You are being asked to participate in the study. Your participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time. Please note that all information will be handled in a confidential and professional manner. When responses are released, they will be reported in summary form only. Further, all names, location and any other identifying information will not be included in any discussion of the results. The data will be retained in a locked filing cabinet in my residence for a period of 5 years from the study completion, at which time all data will be shredded. The final report will be available through The University of Lethbridge Library. The research findings may be presented to educators and administrators or other agencies as a part of presentation by the researcher. This study will take place from January 2004 to February 2004.

I would very much appreciate your participation in this study. If you choose to do so, please indicate your willingness by signing the separate consent form and returning it to me. If you have any questions about the study, or specifics about your role, or the use of the data, please feel free to contact me via email at ddnolan@shaw.ca or phone at home (201-5101). Thank you for your cooperation in this matter. Also please feel free to contact my project supervisor at The University of Lethbridge (403-329-2731), email: davidtownsend@uleth.ca or Dr. Thelma Gunn, Chair of the Human Subject Research Committee, The University of Lethbridge (403-329-2459), email: thelma.gunn@uleth.ca, if you wish additional information. Please return the form by January 14/04. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

Deneen Nolan

Consent Form

I, _____ have read and understand the conditions stated above, and having been briefed on the nature of the study, I consent to my participating in the study. I realize I am free to withdraw my consent at any time.

Name: _____

Please Print
Signature

Appendix C

Permission to Conduct Research Letters and Forms in the CSSD

To Marlene Lambe, Director
 Instructional Services, Secondary
 Calgary Catholic School District
 1000 Fifth Avenue, S.W.
 Calgary, AB
 T2P 4T9

Re: Permission to Conduct Research

Dear Marlene,

As a graduate student at the University of Lethbridge, I wish to conduct research on the effects of the Community of Caring project within the schools of the Calgary Catholic School District. The purpose of this study will be to examine to what extent does the implementation of the Community of Caring Program within the Calgary Catholic Separate School District result in positive change in the character development of our students as well as the schools' overall climate? I anticipate this study could provide the Calgary Catholic School District, and others, useful information for determining future directions for such character education programs as the Community of Caring.

As part of this research I will be administer a pre-survey to a sample group of staff at St. Margaret School in January 2004. The survey has been adapted and approved by the Calgary Catholic School District and is used consistently with all schools of the Board. A copy of the survey can be found in the Appendix. A post-survey will be administered to the sample group in February 2004. Please note that all information will be handled in a confidential and professional manner. When responses are released, they will be reported in summary form only. Further, all names, location and any other identifying information will not be included in any discussion of the results. The data will be retained in a locked filing cabinet in my residence for a period of 5 years from the study completion, at which time all data will be shredded. The final report will be available through The University of Lethbridge Library. The research findings may be presented to educators and administrators or other agencies as a part of presentation by the researcher.

I would very much appreciate your permission to carry out this research. Please indicate your permission by signing the attached form and returning it to me. If you have any questions about the research, please feel free to contact me via email at ddnolan@shaw.ca or by phone at home (257-5888). Also to contact my project supervisor at The University of Lethbridge (403-329-2731), email: davidtownsend@uleth.ca or Dr. Thelma Gunn , Chair of the Human Subject Research Committee, The University of Lethbridge (403-329-2459), email: thelma.gunn@uleth.ca

, if you wish additional information. I am attaching the documents as required by the Calgary Catholic School District.
Please sign below and return to me. Again thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Deneen Nolan

Permission to Conduct Research

I, the undersigned, have read and understand the conditions stated above, and having been briefed regarding the nature of the research, grant permission to conduct the research.

Name (printed)

Signature

Date

Contact information

Phone

email