



CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW?

*Psychological Issues in **School Violence** at Adventist Schools*

School violence is everyone's problem: Each person coming into contact with students can either improve the safety of the school or increase its risk.

BY RON COFFEN

"Can you hear me now?" This phrase is repeated in remote locations in a popular U.S. TV ad that boasts great cell phone reception for a certain company. The ad is powerful because we all want to be heard, but the most desperate to be heard are youth, who communicate this need in a multitude of ways. In 1999, two youth used guns and attempted to set off bombs to get "heard," and in the process killed 12 students, a teacher, and then themselves at Columbine High School in Colorado. At the end of 2007, in a private school in India, two youth killed a fellow student after administrators ignored death threats the victim had made against the shooters. These kinds of problems also occur in Seventh-day Adventist schools.

What's the Problem?

Media attention to school shootings has left many feeling that schools are not safe. In fact, schools are safe: In the U.S., the odds of a child dying at school by homicide or suicide are about one in a million,¹ which means that in school, children are safer than en route because the risk of death for youth under age 15 in a car accident is more than 140 times as great. The frequency of school homicides in the U.S.

peaked in the 1992-1993 school year and has generally decreased since 1997.²

So, what's the problem if schools are safe? All behaviors mean *something*. Youth who turn to violence nearly always seek other (behavioral) means of communicating first.³ While the odds are low that you have had a shooting at your school, the odds are 100 percent that your students need to be heard.

Adventist schools are often located in seemingly safe, smaller communities. Yet, such tight-knit communities can actually create a subculture where messages about urgent needs are not shared with caring adults because of unspoken rules of silence, or because such needs are seen as moral faults. In the relatively small Heath High School in Paducah, Kentucky, "a mass murder was inconceivable."⁴ But in 1997, a young teen fired eight rounds into a prayer circle there, killing three students and wounding five others.

Is such an event equally "inconceivable" at your school? This may depend on whether your teachers listen to their students. In a survey of students' and teachers' perceptions, 64 percent of teachers believed that they listened carefully to what students had to say, but only 35 percent of students believed that teachers listened carefully to what students said—a difference of nearly 30 percent, with two-thirds of students feeling unsupported by teachers.⁵

Teachers may dismiss requests for help if a child seems to have done something to "deserve" the teasing or bullying, or if the child seems to be overreacting. Even if this is true, the pain is real to the child, and seeking help *means something*: The child needs



help! He or she needs to be taught how to behave in a way that doesn't "invite" retaliation. But the child also needs your help in getting the bullying to stop.

Even more than public school teachers, Adventist teachers have a mandate to "listen." This is part of our calling to help youth build loving connections with God and others. "Teachers often fail of coming sufficiently into social relation with their pupils. They manifest too little sympathy and tenderness, and too much of the dignity of the stern judge. . . . To be harsh and censorious, to stand aloof from his pu-

pils or treat them indifferently, is to close the avenues through which he [or she] might influence them for good. . . . The work [the teacher] is doing day by day will exert upon his [or her] pupils, and through them upon others, an influence that will not cease to extend and strengthen until time shall end."⁶

So, how can we listen to our youth? Students threatening violence toward themselves or others feel hopeless and helpless. They seek to regain control but typically lack social skills, self-soothing skills, or problem-solving skills. Aggressive youth tend to interpret social cues incorrectly (e.g., positive or neutral behaviors are interpreted as hostile), view others as blocking their goals, can think of few non-aggressive responses to interpersonal problems, view aggression as an acceptable way of achieving their goals, and have difficulty crafting socially acceptable responses.⁷ Youth may also develop aggressive behaviors because they see that aggression sometimes "works."⁸ These kinds of behaviors communicate that such youth need support to learn and

Table 1

Characteristics of School Attacks and Attackers

- Eighty-one percent were angry at someone over a perceived grievance (e.g., bullying).
- Nearly all experienced/perceived a major loss (e.g., social status, relationships, health, etc.).
- Sixty-three percent had no disciplinary history, but 78 percent had a history of thoughts of or attempts to commit suicide.
- Motivations included revenge, seeking attention/recognition, attempting to solve an overwhelming problem, and/or fulfilling a wish to die (e.g., "suicide by cop").
- Only 27 percent of attackers were viewed by others as associated with unpopular groups; attackers rated themselves as loners considerably more often than did their peers.
- All attackers were male (although there have been shootings by females).
- Only 50 percent had expressed interest in violence of some form (writings, media, books).
- Usually attackers used guns and had relatively easy access to and experience using firearms.
- Ninety-three percent made specific plans for the attack in advance—they did not "snap."
- In 93 percent of the cases, some aspects of the attackers' plans were known to someone (usually peers) in advance.
- Students were slightly less frequently the pre-planned targets of attacks than were administrators or staff members (41 percent versus 54 percent of cases).
- Attackers did not typically directly make threats against the targeted person(s) before the attack occurred.
- Seventy-six percent of attackers were white. Only 12 percent were black, 5 percent were Hispanic, 2 percent were Asian, and 5 percent were from other ethnic or racial groups.
- Family status (two-parent, single-parent, blended, split, foster, etc.) was varied as well as quality of family community status and involvement.
- Most attackers' academic achievement was fine, although performance ranged from superior to failing.
- Attackers were as young as 11 years of age.
- Some attackers had been involved in mainstream religious groups.

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practice new social and coping skills.

Which behaviors predict an imminent attack? It's difficult to say precisely. An extensive evaluation⁹ of the youthful shooters in nearly 40 school attacks between 1974 and 2000 revealed the characteristics listed in Table 1 on page 12.

Because characteristics of shooters are so varied, and a combination of factors can lead to attacks, trying to profile potentially dangerous students is not a good idea—it would misidentify innocent students and fail to identify others who don't fit the profile. However, there is a commonality. Everyone has needs for belonging/affection, esteem, and self-actualization. For every one of the shooters, these needs were not met.

Are the factors in Table 1 (guns, bullying, suicide, etc.) present in Adventist schools? Absolutely. However, because these factors often occur in students who never become violent, a check list must be replaced by an understanding of the importance of paying attention to these behaviors—not because the youth is expected to be violent but because the behavior is a message that he or she needs care, support, and attention.

Clearly, certain behaviors *must* be investigated, such as: (1) ideas or plans for hurting oneself or others, (2) interest in or statements about attacks, (3) access to weapons, and (4) approval of violence to solve problems. Although less urgent than the previous four, behavior changes in style of self-care, relating to others and daily events, activities and activity level, or health can signal suicidal or homicidal thinking. Each of these behaviors also communicates a need for support. While a follow-up interview must be scheduled to clarify whether there is clear intent and risk of imminent danger, it is equally essential to listen to and support the youth because making threats means he or she needs support and attention.

Whose Problem Is It?

School violence is everyone's problem: Each person coming into contact with students can either improve the safety of the school or increase its risk. But teachers are the school's first defense. To prevent students being "unnoticed," at the beginning of the year, teachers should review their records and talk with the

previous year's teachers about each student. Administrators must be included in discussions about students of concern since they have access to the entire student file and can spot the cumulative risk factors both inside the school and in the community.

There are many things that teachers, with the support of administrators, can do to build the relationships necessary to minimize the risk of violence at school:

- **Be a supportive adult.** To support youth with problem behaviors and recognize when something is amiss, an ongoing relationship is crucial. Administrators must not dismiss worries expressed by caring adults on the basis that the adult is "too close" to the child to be objective—these caring adults are the most credible. The support of an adult who is

consistently available to and interested in a youth is a primary factor to help young people overcome traumas and stressors.

Here is one way¹⁰ the principal can systematically ensure connection for each student: (1) create a list of students; (2) have teachers put stars next to students with whom they have a positive connection; (3) ask teachers to make concerted efforts to connect with students who have no or few stars, searching for small positive points that might be traditionally viewed as "expected of all" but represent exceptions for a troubled student. Persistence, consistency, and a refusal to be put off by unpleasant behaviors is essential.

- **Prevent bullying.** This is part of "hearing" students. Bullying should never pass without comment—doing so will likely be seen by both the perpetrator and victim as condoning it.

- **Watch for behavior changes.** Increased anger or withdrawal, academic changes, writing about death, eating changes, etc., often indicate a need that teachers can address if they maintain at least a conversational relationship with each student.

- **Meet self-esteem needs.** Teachers can help each student meet his or her needs for significance and belonging; competence and mastery; power and independence; and virtue and generosity.¹¹

- **Teach appropriate behaviors.** Teachers should provide positive, specific feedback about appropriate behaviors and rely less on punishment to manage negative behaviors, since punishment typically does not help the student learn the desired behavior. One study showed that 90 percent of teachers believed they praised students when they did well, but only 43 percent of students felt praised.¹²

- **Integrate social-skills training into the curriculum.** A positive classroom climate can be achieved if teachers provide training in problem-solving and social skills as *part* of the curriculum. Students trained to manage stress and relationships respond pro-socially instead of aggressively. See the list of curriculum-based,

empirically proven programs in the Resources section of this article.

School violence is also the students' problem. In nearly every case, a fellow student knew about the attack in advance. Student involvement does not just happen: the principal and teachers must get students involved. Inform students corporately and remind them frequently that to

maintain school and personal safety, students must tell a trusted adult when they hear other students say they want to obtain weapons; talk, write, joke, or otherwise communicate ideas relating to homicide or suicide; plan or threaten an attack, even if the statements are made in anger and contain little specificity (e.g., "Something big is gonna happen!"). Students must be reminded that both those in a radically different group as well as their close friends need support when desperate messages are communicated. Failure to share such statements with adults who can access support and ensure safety is dangerous.

Because youth may be uncomfortable sharing such information with an adult at school, administrators must ensure that students can submit such reports anonymously. There may be a hotline number students can call in your area—contact local school and government agencies or search the Internet.¹³ Administrators must take these reports seriously.

Telling an adult goes against the code of youth, so students filing a report must feel certain that their identities will not be re-



vealed. Advise them that seeking support for someone's safety is not "tattling," any more than seeking medical care for a peer with a broken bone is "tattling." Adults must handle reports in a reasonable, fair, supportive, and confidential way, neither over- nor under-reacting (see below).

The principal must make sure that students know about every re-

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source available for reporting concerns and seeking support. A printed brochure on how best to approach and inform adults will decrease the barriers to reporting. Tell students that violent youth usually talk about their plans in advance as a way of communicating a need. Peers have the opportunity to prevent violence and meet the needs of these youth.

Making Sure At-Risk Students Get Help

Principals must also ensure that at-risk youth get psychological help. Current trends in psychology are receptive toward religion. Psychologists follow a code of ethics that prohibits religious discrimination and promotes working within the *client's* worldview. In the past, some Christians have not sought help from psychologists, believing that

problems should be solved through prayer. Prayer is essential, but God also expects people to help one another. The first thing God proclaimed "not good" was Adam being alone—he needed a helper.¹⁴ God expected His people to listen to priests, proph-

Table 2

Eleven Key Questions for Violence Risk Assessment

Is there evidence, preferably from multiple sources, that the youth:

- has a motive or goal?
- has communicated (written, spoken, e-mailed, blogged, hinted at) ideas of violence?
- has excessive interest in school/mass violence or associated weaponry?
- has already performed actions related to an attack (developed a plan, obtained weapons, etc.)?
- has the capacity and means to attack (e.g., cognitive and physical abilities/access)?
- is feeling hopeless, desperate, suicidal, or overwhelmed?
- has no meaningful connection with a responsible adult or peer?
- views violence as a viable, advantageous, or realistic way to solve a problem?
- expresses a story consistent with others' reports/concerns?
- has aroused concern in others who interact with him or her?
- is experiencing or may experience life events or social pressures that would increase risk?

ets, and judges to correct their misbehaviors. Jesus' interactions with Nicodemus reveal that He expected him to provide guidance to His people. Spiritual gifts include the ability to counsel or teach. Keep in mind that the youth who has an inappropriate view of God is unlikely to benefit from prayer until he or she gains a clearer understanding of God's love—something that can be addressed in therapy.

Psychologists provide targeted interventions that address the specific needs of youth, family, and school. Treatment plans identify specific goals, tell how they will be addressed, and describe



what will be considered evidence of improvement. If a youth is referred initially because of a school's concern about his or her risk for violence, the psychologist will determine whether the youth presents an imminent threat, identify steps to keep the counselee and others safe, explore a variety of solutions, and try to reduce the youth's sense of hopelessness.

The principal should deliberately network with local mental health professionals. This might involve telephoning local psychologists when no crisis is pending to ask how they would deal with referral of a potentially violent youth from a private Adventist school. If a psychologist seems particularly helpful, the principal can ask him or her to address the teachers about various topics of interest. Some psychologists might even present such seminars free of charge as a community service. This will enable the school staff to get to know the psychologist and his or her approach, and to see him or her as a resource. It is also helpful for principals to network with crisis-management teams in local public schools to learn about available resources for private-school students and to develop a network of professional colleagues with whom to consult. Trying to make such connections *after* a crisis occurs is far riskier.

Dealing With Threats

When a student behaves in a threatening way, how should teachers respond? The school staff must protect those under their care, *including the threatening student*. The principal and board must develop a plan before a crisis occurs.

Threats must be acted on decisively and fairly. Reports that mention violence require *immediate action*. If a student is already acting on violent ideas (e.g., heading toward the school with a gun), then police must be contacted instantly. But, because direct threats have not typically been part of the pattern of school

attacks, administrators must not wait until a threat is issued to intervene, gather additional information, and refer youth for supportive services. It is important to obtain information from a variety of sources with whom the youth has been in contact because seemingly innocuous information, when pieced together, can reveal grave danger that may not be obvious to any single person.

The principal must distinguish between a student who *makes* a threat (e.g., during an angry interchange) and one who *poses* a threat (e.g., intends to act or has a plan). Although both youth must be heard and taken seriously—with immediate support and resources put into place on their behalf—those who *pose* a threat are an imminent danger, thus immediate action is required.

Interviews with the youth and others should always seek information about the youth's access to weapons, expertise in using firearms, and current efforts to obtain weapons and munitions. Fein et al. identify 11 key questions to use in assessing whether a student poses an imminent risk of violence (see Table 2 on page 14).¹⁵ These must be investigated in a way that does not stigmatize the youth or increase his or her pain and discomfort.

Answers to these questions should be based on facts (not opinions or emotions). The administrator should obtain information from the following sources, in the order listed:¹⁶ (1) school records and teacher interviews; (2) classmates and other adults who know the youth; (3) parents/guardians (making it clear you are seeking to help the youth); and (4) the youth himself or herself (using direct but non-accusatory questions); and (5) the identified targets (if any). Answers to the questions in Table 2 should enable you to understand the youth's needs and current risk, and prevent expulsions for playful or accidental behavior. Youth often say outrageous things that do not reflect their intent. Although discipline and supportive resources for managing student behavior are warranted for playful/accidental behaviors, expulsion would be harmful. Behaviors mean something, so addressing the need will prove

most beneficial.

If the risk assessment reveals an imminent threat, or if there is insufficient information to determine whether there is an imminent threat, then law enforcement must be involved. The school should have a policy stating when/if such a student may return to school. However, suspension, and especially expulsion, carry with them many negative outcomes, they should not be lightly added to the problems of a youth already experiencing many risk factors. Suspensions decrease school connectedness, increase risk for acting-out behaviors, and negatively affect academics and attendance—all factors linked to aggression. The goal of an assessment is to intervene to manage and reduce the risk of aggression.

An appropriate safety precaution is to require the youth to regularly visit a psychologist who can (1) help ensure that the counselee's needs are met, (2) communicate ways the school can offer support, and (3) assess the imminence of the threat. Once it is determined that the youth poses no threat, the school can develop plans for having him or her return to the classroom, with input from the psychologist, the youth, his or her family, and key school personnel. This approach should be explicitly stated in the school's policy handbook.

Referral for mental health services is one part of a larger plan of monitoring and management that will ensure that the youth's long-term needs are met. Policies for continued school enrollment should require regular reports from the psychologist, verifying attendance at therapy. When the psychologist and others verify that the youth has learned and demonstrated the use of non-violent solutions for problems, then therapy should no longer be required for continued school enrollment. Although continued therapy may be beneficial, reporting to the school should be terminated at this point.

School policies should also require that the youth's specific grievances be addressed as part of the process. The requirement of change by school personnel will help convince the youth that his or her concerns are important, valid, and seriously addressed. Such action serves to confirm a commitment to his or her future by school personnel and a belief in the effectiveness of non-violent ways to resolve conflict. Policies should also require that the school undergo a post-threat self-study to ensure that students' needs are addressed prior to threats of violence.

Legal Issues

The school's policies should be reviewed with a lawyer to ensure that no legal rights are violated and legal mandates are followed. It is unlikely that procedures designed to identify and address reasonably foreseeable violence will be found to be unlawful. However, in the U.S., schools receiving federal fund-

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ing must follow the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) requirements regarding disclosures of student information, and policies relating to searches of a student's property or person.

The school handbook must identify circumstances when guardians will be notified about an interview of their child, when they must be invited to the interview, and when legal representation should be allowed, offered, or provided to a youth during an interview. Policies should specify that documentation be kept of all actions taken during a risk assessment and whether these reports will become a part of the youth's school file or be kept in a separate record. It is advisable to have an assessment *team*, rather than a single person.¹⁷

The summary of legal issues is: Procedures must be reasonable. Policies must balance the goal of ensuring student safety with that of developing an attentive and emotionally supportive school climate. Many school attackers described bullying (some of which met the legal definitions of harassment and assault) as contributing to their angry attacks. School policies should institute consequences corresponding with the legal prohibitions against harassment and assault that adults are afforded. To be effective, safety plans and policies must be shared with the school community. As a requirement for enrollment, older students (and parents, if the child is a minor) should sign an affirmation that they have read and agree to abide by school conduct and safety codes.

Summary

Youth whose needs are not being met are at risk of engaging



in extreme behavior. Schools must find ways to establish and nurture relationships with every student, or else risk violence. Every school employee must recognize that behaviors have meaning and seek to determine and ameliorate the reasons for withdrawn, socially aggressive, and self-destructive behaviors. All staff must truly listen and communicate genuine praise and positive support for students.

Although there is no profile of a school shooter, most feel aggrieved and bullied. They hint at their intent to other students. This highlights the need for adults at school to develop relationships with all students so they feel safe telling an adult that a fellow student is suffering. Early referral for psychological services helps prevent student disconnection from a social support system and increases the number of caring, trusted, responsible adults in a youth's life.

Policies against bullying, and integrating social skills and problem-solving skills training into the curriculum will reduce violence. Finding ways to

help each student feel significant, competent, powerful, and virtuous will improve student connectedness to school—a factor that prevents a large variety of problems, including violence. Schools should develop ways for youth to share their concerns, while maintaining anonymity. Students must be told about available resources. Fair policies must be in place and consistently followed that identify steps for meeting students' needs and maintaining safety. Specific follow-up procedures should be implemented to ensure that youth will continue to receive support after an initial threat is resolved. And schools should use any crisis as an opportunity to make functional and structural changes that better meet student needs and avert future crises.

We are called to demonstrate “love [as] the basis of creation and of redemption. . . . the basis of true education.”¹⁸ “It is the experience of love that is transformational.”¹⁹ Now is the time to lovingly listen. *Can you hear me now?* Students are asking. As we do these things, we will be able to answer with a resounding Yes! ✍



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Resources

Report: *Threat Assessment in Schools* by Robert A. Fein, et al. (2004)
URL (free PDF): <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/threatassessmentguide.pdf>

Report identifies steps for assessment of risk, development of policies and procedures, and how to develop school environments that reduce risk. If you can read only one additional source, this is the one to read. It is rich in extremely applicable guidance and useful information for school staff, especially the school principal.

Report: *Final Report and Findings of the Safe School Initiative: Implications for the Prevention of School Attacks in the United States* by Bryan Vossekuil, et al. (2004)

URL (free PDF): <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/preventingattacksreport.pdf>

Report produced collaboratively by the U.S. Secret Service and the U.S. Department of Education that identifies key behaviors and characteristics of individuals who resort to multiple-victim attacks in school settings. The report is based on extensive evaluations of 37 school attacks between 1974 through mid-2000. An essential reference.

Book: *Reaching and Teaching Stressed and Anxious Learners in Grades 4-8* by Barbara E. Oehlberg (Corwin Press, 2006)

Google link (preview): <http://books.google.com/books?id=C38AhlxvIv0C>

Gives specific assignment ideas for incorporating social skills development into the curriculum and also recommends classroom teacher behaviors to overcome children's distress, trauma, and feelings of helplessness.

Guide: “A Problem-Solving Approach to School Violence Prevention” in *The Handbook of School Violence and School Safety* by Shane R. Jimerson and Michael J. Furlong (Routledge, 2006)

URL (preview): <http://books.google.com/books?id=OGI4XmJOHywC&printsec=frontcover#PPA78,M1>

Chapter 5 of this handbook provides an excellent and comprehensive checklist to guide implementation of a complete violence prevention program that addresses the three levels of prevention (primary, secondary, and tertiary). The checklists provide an excellent guide for the principal and school board to follow while implementing school safety policies and procedures.

Booklet: *Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools* by K. Dwyer, D. Osher, and C. Wargner (U.S. Department of Education, 1998)

URL (free PDF): <http://cecp.air.org/guide/guide.pdf>

Covers specific recommendations for developing a safe school environment and noticing and responding to potential risks.

(Continued on next page)

Resources

Resource: *Decision Tree for Implementing a Threat Assessment Process*

URL (preview): http://books.google.com/books?id=X4befoE3quUC&pg=PA218&sig=ACfU3U3gCl24LBlfWs6ux7-0m1F_p_RDiA&safe=active#PPkA179,M1

Chapter 9 of Cornell (2006) covers a specific process for handling situations of threats and potential violence. A one-page decision tree describes a specific process to follow in implementing the threat-assessment process. The process is entirely reasonable to use in a private school setting. Details about types of questions to ask at each step in the process probably need to come from the Vossekuil, et al. (2004) or Fein, et al. (2004) resources.

Resource: *Guidelines for Assessing Threatening and Dangerous Behavior in Schools* by Judith F. Shell, Frances Mueller, and Ronda Pretzlaff Diegel (Oakland Schools, 2003)

URL (free PDF): <http://www.oakland.k12.mi.us/pdf/GATDBS.pdf>

A comprehensive template for gathering information about a potentially violent situation that incorporates all of the areas that Vossekuil et al. (2004) and Fein et al. (2004) identified as essential and relevant for establishing imminence of danger.

Resource: *PAX: Real Solutions to Gun Violence*

URL: <http://www.paxusa.org/speakup/about.html>

Provides the toll-free national hotline where students can report weapon-related threats of violence (1-866-SPEAK-UP [773-2587]). Also offers materials and information for schools for promoting this important resource.

Website: <http://www.schoolsecurity.org>

The National School Safety and Security Services Website provides information, statistics, and helpful resources for maintaining safe schools.

Social Skills Program: *The PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) Curriculum* by C. A. Kusché and M. T. Greenberg (Channing Bete Co., 2005)

URL (info/order): <http://www.channing-bete.com/prevention-programs/paths/>

Cornell (see Endnote 2) recommends the use of the PATHS program, which is presented by the classroom teacher in three 20-minute sessions each week in elementary classrooms. It includes 130 lessons to be incorporated into other subjects. It has been shown to decrease behavior problems and lower peer aggression in participants.

Social Skills Program: *Second Step Program* by Committee for Children (Committee for Children, 2005)

URL (info/order): <http://www.cfchildren.org/programs/ssp/overview/>

Cornell (ibid.) recommends the use of the Second Step program, which provides about 20 lessons of 20 to 50 minutes for preschoolers to 9th graders about empathy, impulse control, problem solving, and anger management. It has been shown to improve prosocial behaviors and decrease aggression and disruptive behavior in participants.

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6. Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 1903), pp. 280, 281.
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9. Vossekuil, et al., *The Final Report and Findings of the Safe School Initiative: Implications for the Prevention of School Attacks in the United States*, op cit.
10. Fein, et al., *Threat Assessment in Schools: A Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and to Creating Safe School Climates*, op cit.
11. E.g., see L. K. Brendtro, S. J. Larson, and J. A. Calhoun, *The Resilience Revolution: Discovering Strengths in Challenging Kids* (Bloomington, Ind.: Solution Tree, 2006).
12. Skiba, et al., "The SRS Safe Schools Survey," op cit.
13. In the U.S., students can call the national hotline 1-866-SPEAK-UP to anonymously report threats.
14. Genesis 2:18.
15. Fein, et al., *Threat Assessment in Schools: A Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and to Creating Safe School Climates*, op cit.
16. Ibid.
17. While private K-12 schools in the United States are not subject to FERPA regulations if they do not receive federal funding, Section 99.10 implies that certain aspects of the law do apply to all U.S. schools, and the regulations definitely apply to all postsecondary institutions. Since the goal of FERPA is to protect students' rights, it will be beneficial for schools to regard it as a minimum standard to be followed. It can also serve as a guideline for schools in other countries that are attempting to craft policies in this area. See <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>; and [http://law.cornell.edu/cfr/under Title 34, see Section 99.31](http://law.cornell.edu/cfr/under%20Title%2034,see%20Section%2099.31).
18. Ellen G. White, *Education*, op cit., p. 16.
19. David G. Benner, *Surrender to Love: Discovering the Heart of Christian Spirituality* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), p. 26, italics in original.