Pestalozzi

Training Resources

Education for the prevention of discrimination (DISC)

"The connection between labelling and teacher's expectations in order to develop strategies for the prevention of Discrimination in the inclusive classroom"

by

Author: Ksenija Liščević – Serbia
Editor: Ana Žnidarec Čučković

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Theme: The connection between labelling and teacher's expectations in order to develop strategies for the prevention of Discrimination in the inclusive classroom.

Expected outcome:

Help the participants to recognize the connection between labelling, as a special kind of discrimination and teacher's everyday practice.

Target group

Type of training	School level / age	Subject area
Initial and in-service training	Elementary school	Cross-curricular

Brief description of the unit

Very often in our educational practice it is overlooked that the pupils are being labelled. Labelling is an intentional and unintentional teacher's activity, which is considered discrimination. Quality education in an inclusive classroom where every pupil has an equal chance for learning and development needs to recognize this practice. Labelling can be very dangerous and it is against the main goal of inclusive education – every pupil has to have the same chance. The goal of this training is to underline the traps the teachers fall into during their everyday practice. The plan is to work with a group of 24 participants.

Methods/techniques used

Cooperative Learning, group discussion, analysis, synthesizing, argumentation, mind map, text method, window, poster making, poster gallery and individual work.

Time 300 minutes

Preparatory activity	▶ 30 minutes
Activity 1 - Labelling in the classroom	▶ 90 minutes
Activity 2 - Inclusive Classroom	▶ 90 minutes
Activity 3 - What to tell and how to do it	▶ 90 minutes

Tips for trainers:

> ➢ Be focused and follow the time line plan.

Resources

➢ Self-adhesive notes	
➢ The definition of discrimination (Appendix 1)	
➢ Flip chart paper	
➢ Color markers	
➢ Article about labeling (Appendix 2)	
➢ One flip chart paper for every group	
➢ Markers (4 colors)	
➢ A4 paper	
➢ Pens for each person	
➢ Note book for each person	
➢ 4 color markers	
➢ Scissors	
➢ One matrix (3x3) with nine pictures (one for each participant, Appendix 3)	
➢ Equivalent, a large one for the facilitator	
➢ Three red circles for each participant	
➢ Three big red circle marks for the facilitator	
➢ An article (As a child, Appendix 4)	

Preparatory activity: Warm-up activity

30 minutes

	Notes
▶ **General aim:** ➢ to prepare participants for training activities ▶ **Specific aims:** ➢ to make participant understand what discrimination means ➢ to be sure that we are all talking "in the same frame"	
▶ **Methods/techniques used:** ➢ Cooperative Learning ➢ group discussion ➢ analysis ➢ synthesizing	
▶ **Resources:** ➢ self-adhesive notes ➢ the definition of discrimination (Appendix 1) ➢ flip chart paper ➢ markers	
▶ **Practical arrangements:** ➢ Participants are sitting in groups of four with a table in the middle (five groups) ➢ Groups are formed when participants choose papers from a box (papers contain letters A, B, C, D and E).	
▶ **Instructions/procedure:** ➢ When the facilitator says discrimination, each participant writes his\her <u>first association</u> on the self – adhesive notes (a word or a very short sentence) and puts their notes on the blackboard ➢ All participants and facilitator make and name clusters of gathered removable self-adhesive notes according to meaning – feelings, acts, what to do…(mind map) ➢ They read the definition of DISC individually from the poster with definition ➢ They discus together, trying to point the other main "parts" of the definition of discrimination: prejudicial treatment of an individual, membership in a certain group or category, excluding or restricting, class or category	

rather than individual merit ➢ Facilitator draws a visual scheme which represents the definition of DISC and names all the clusters (every point of shown definition) even if there are no participants' notes which refer to that cluster.	

|	
▶ **Tips to trainers/anticipated difficulties:** ➢ To include all participants in the discussion and to ensure that the final scheme (mind map) represents the group's common stand.	
▶ **Debriefing/reflecting:** ➢ What do you think about our mind map (poster)? Is something missing? Do you want to add something? Some new cluster according to your practice? Why is (are) this (those) new one(s) also important for us when we are talking about DISC? Can you make any connection between DISC and your own practice?	

Activity 1 Labelling in the classroom

90 minutes

	Notes
▶ **General aim:** ➢ to make participants understand that labelling does exist in teacher's practice as an intentional and more, unintentional behaviour ▶ **Specific aims:** ➢ to reflect their own practice ➢ to understand what is in the base of labelling ➢ to be aware of labelling as a sort of DISC	

▶ **Methods /techniques used:**
➢ Cooperative Learning (4 roles, 4 colours)
➢ text method
➢ window
➢ poster making
➢ poster gallery

▶ **Resources:**
➢ article about labelling (Appendix 2)
➢ one flip chart paper for every group
➢ markers (4 colours)
➢ A4 paper
➢ pens for each person
➢ note book for each person
➢ scissors

▶ **Practical arrangements:**
➢ They are sitting in groups of four with a table in the middle
➢ The groups are the same, as in the previous activity

▶ **Instructions/procedure:**
➢ How much do you know about labelling in the classroom? Take a position in the room according to your knowledge – if it is approximately 25% stand in the left corner, 50% in the right, 75%...100%. Explain your position (one person from each corner)
➢ At the beginning of the activity they are sitting in groups of four
➢ Each of the five groups has the same text, divided into 4 parts – one for each person (role) in the group - tracers (green marker) - to help the members of the group stay on task; writers (blue marker) – they ensure every member's involvement during individual writing assignment; time – managers (black marker) – their job is to help the others to be on time and encouragers (red marker) have to ensure equal access and participation for all of the group members.
➢ Every member of each group reads their own part; their task is to underline the meanings of their article and to explain the essence of the article to the other three members of the group
➢ Each member of the group writes 3-5 sentences on the flip chart paper (using his colour, in the empty space – A,B,C or D)
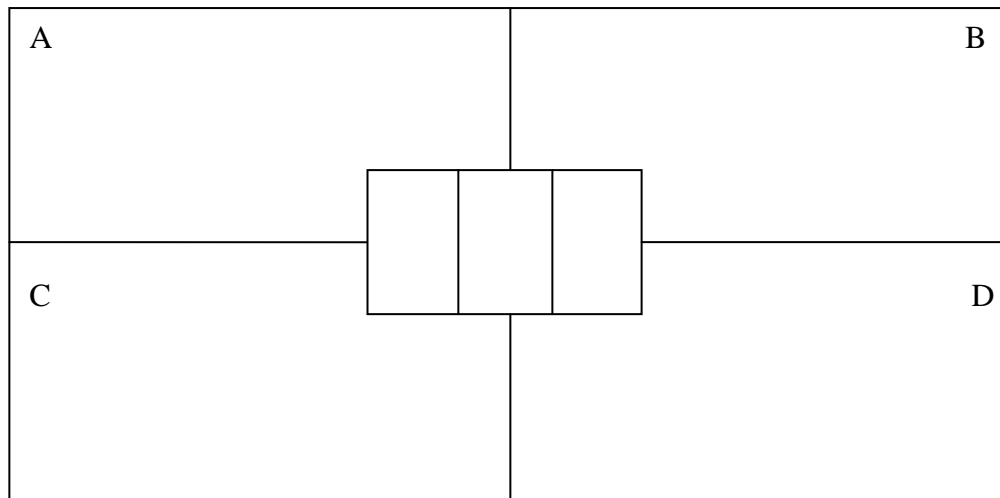
> ➤ After they discus labelling in the group, they choose (at first individual, then group decision) 3 labels which in their opinion and experience teachers usually use (3 small squares in the middle)
> ➤ They cut their big poster into four pieces making a four collared gallery on the wall – one line for each colour (five of each colour as a product of five groups) and a special gallery with 5x3 labels (3 small squares in the middle)
> ➤ After they finish, they "walk" through the gallery for 15 minutes; they sit down in groups and fill a questionnaire only for they own, private use; they may walk around if necessary, looking at posters

<div align="center">

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO ME?

</div>

1. What am I doing well? _____
2. What is the most important thing I learned? _____
3. Do I need to change something in my practice? What? _____
4. Who might be my partner during this process of changing? _____
5. How do I feel now? _____

> ➤ Facilitator asks if somebody wants to read her/his answers.

	Notes
▶ **Tips to trainers/anticipated difficulties:** ➢ Time management during gallery activity and questionnaire job	
▶ **Debriefing/reflecting:** ➢ How much do you know now about labeling in the classroom? Take a position in the room according to your knowledge – if it is approximately 25% stand in the left corner, 50% in the right, 75%...100%. Who wants to explain their own position? Please compare it with your position from the beginning, when we started this activity. How do you feel now? What more do you need to move to the other position?	

Activity 2: Inclusive Classroom

90 minutes

	Notes

▶ **General aim:**
    ➢ to make participants understand the meaning of inclusive education in the inclusive classroom
    ➢ to make participants understand that inclusive classroom is the synonym for **Equal** Education for all
 ▶ **Specific aims:**
    ➢ to reflect on their own practice; do they use judgment and labeling
    ➢ to make them understand the main principles of inclusive classroom	

▶ **Methods /techniques used:**
    ➢ group discussion
    ➢ individual work
    ➢ argumentation	

▶ **Resources:**
    ➢ one matrix (3x3) with nine pictures (one for each participant – Appendix 3)
    ➢ equivalent, a large one for the facilitator
    ➢ three red circles for each participant
    ➢ three big red circle marks for the facilitator
    ➢ A4 paper	

▶ **Practical arrangements:**
  - They are sitting in groups of four with a table in the middle

▶ **Instructions/procedure:**
  - We are talking about the term inclusive classroom – what is inclusive classroom, why inclusive concept of education, what does it mean for every pupil; (All children deserve a chance to work hard and be the best they can be without teachers telling them what they can be and how far they can go)
  - Every participant gets a matrix with nine pictures of pupils
  - The facilitator asks each of the participants to make a choice according to their own perception - which child or children he/she would like to have in his/her own class and why
  - Every participant has to put one, two or three red marks on a picture of the chosen child/children and to write down the reason why he/she chose that one;
  - Group results are presented by the five tracers
  - The facilitator marks each group's result on the big matrix on the blackboard/wall
  - At the end we have a clear picture – the facilitator puts one, two and three large red circle marks for the pupils (pictures) chosen by most participants
  - The facilitator asks the participants to read the reasons why (answers on the question from the beginning)
  - He moderates the discussion - the descriptions (he is sleeping) or interpretation (he is bored)
  - Where is the line between the interpretation of children's behavior (manifestation) and labeling? Example: this boy is hard working (behavior) or he is nerd (label); he talks in class, distracts other pupils (behavior) or he is the worst pupil in class.

▶ **Tips to trainers/anticipated difficulties:**
  - Trainers have to be focused during the process because it is so easy to slip into a mistake. Sometimes it is very difficult to understand participant's explanations of behavior and/or labeling

▶ **Debriefing/reflecting:**
  - What do you think about the children which are not on top? Why is that so? Are there any elements of discrimination? Let's have a look at our mind map/poster (warm – up activity).
  - Are you satisfied with the group's choice? Why?

Activity 3: What to tell and how to do it?

90 minutes

	Notes
▶ **General aim:** ➢ to make participants understand how painful labeling can be ▶ **Specific aims:** ➢ to encourage participants to formulate their answers to people who have been labeled ➢ to make participants aware that individual commitment is a form of change	
▶ **Methods /techniques used:** ➢ individual reading ➢ individual writing ➢ window	
▶ **Resources:** ➢ an article (As a child, Appendix 4) ➢ three color markers ➢ A4 paper	
▶ **Practical arrangements:** ➢ Participants are sitting in groups of three ➢ Groups are chosen the same way as in the first activity (six or seven symbols, each for one group)	
▶ **Instructions/procedure:** ➢ Members of the group take three markers with both hands at the same time ➢ Each member chooses one marker with their eyes closed ➢ They are discussing how to separate the flipchart paper into three equal parts ➢ They draw the separation lines on the flipchart paper in three colors ➢ The facilitator asks those who have the red marker to raise it – they write the comments on the first part of an article, those with blue markers on the second part and those with green markers on the third ➢ Every participant gets the whole article, separated into three parts; everyone reads the whole article ➢ The facilitator asks them to imagine that they are twelve years old ➢ Their task is to post a comment on the part of the article corresponding their marker color ➢ Every group member reads his\her comment, and the other two members write down their thoughts on this comment (with their colored marker).	

▶ **Tips to trainers/anticipated difficulties:** ➢ If you can not divide the group into groups of three, the trainer can leave one group of four (two members use the same color) or the trainer can participate as a member of a group.	

▶ **Debriefing/reflecting:**
   ➢ How did you feel leaving a comment to the person who has been labeled?
   ➢ Did you feel the same writing comments for all three parts? Why? Why not?	

Evaluation and assessment

We are going to use the STAR technique:

Situation – describe one situation from this training which was your favourite according to the general aim of this training
Task – which tasks do you use in this situation?
Action – which activities helped you achieve that task?
Result – what results did you achieve?

Do you want/need to put some notes on our DISC mind map/poster from the beginning?

Discrimination is the prejudicial treatment of an individual based on their membership in a certain group or category. It involves the actual behaviours towards groups such as excluding or restricting members of one group from opportunities that are available to another group.
Treatment or consideration based on class or category rather than individual merit.

Appendix 2: **An article about labelling**

_____1.
Labelling in the Classroom: Teacher Expectations and their Effects on Students' Academic Potential
Jacqueline Ercole

The Transition to High School

Initially, many scholars hypothesized that the transition to high school was difficult for all students. Yet recent research has suggested that these difficulties are likely characteristic of only some students (Wargo-Aikins, Bierman, & Parker, 2005). For those students who have had a difficult time transitioning, common patterns have begun to emerge to explain why some students are more dissatisfied than others and demonstrate more negative outcomes. Current research has indicated that the decrease in teacher support that is typically found once students enter high school can make the transition more difficult (Barber & Olsen, 2004). In their research, Barber and Olsen (2004) state that as children progress to higher levels of education, their autonomy should increase, and thus they should have a less personal relationship with their teachers. Yet Barber and Olsen (2004) indicate that this decrease in dependency on teachers is not beneficial for students, because it is developmentally regressive, contradicting the adolescent need for positive interpersonal connections, not only making the transition harder for students, but making students like school less. The importance of positive interpersonal connections between teachers and students, specifically in regards to a student's academic potential, is also reflected in the Cornell process model of motivation, which states

that students perceived social context in the school setting (i.e. teachers) directly influences the self system (i.e. engagement in school) consequently impacting academic outcomes (Caraway, Tucker, Reinke & Hall, 2003).

This division in interpersonal connections at the high school level is ultimately attributed to the change in classroom size. Once students reach the high school level, the student-teacher ratio inevitably grows, making it difficult for students to collaborate with their teachers in regards to the material they will be taught (Davis, 2003). In turn, this inability to collaborate with their teachers in high school is very problematic for students, because in order to be motivated to learn, students need teachers who put their students' needs and interests first, which, given the increased size of the high school classroom, is a difficult task to accomplish. This change in classroom environment that is seen at the high school level also tends to place a greater emphasis on student evaluation and on the recognition of a student's academic potential, ultimately creating competition in the classroom between students. Such an emphasis is clearly evident once students are segregated into specific classes as a result of their academic achievement level (i.e. special-ed, honors, AP, etc.) These classes, although created to enhance a student's academic potential, could actually be denying students the full benefit of school membership, especially for those students in the lower levels. These students begin to lose confidence in their ability to perform well academically, ultimately causing them to like school less (Ames, 1992). While lack of interpersonal relations with teachers, loss of autonomy in the classroom, and the increased competitiveness that is placed on students' academic performance at the high school level certainly leads to dissatisfaction for some students once in high school, effecting their ability to transition, a topic that has not been as thoroughly researched, or applied to the transition difficulties some students face at the high school level, are teachers' expectations of students.

_____2.

Teacher Expectations

According to Schultz (1983), the expectations teachers have of their students inevitably effects the way that teachers interact with them, which ultimately leads to changes in the student's behaviour and attitude. In a classic study performed by Robert Rosenthal, elementary school teachers were given IQ scores for all of their students, scores that, unbeknownst to the teachers, did not reflect IQ and, in fact, measured nothing. Yet just as researchers predicted, teachers formed a positive expectation for those students who scored high on the exam vs. those who scored low (Harris, 1991). In response to these expectations, the teachers inevitably altered
their environment in four ways (Harris, 1991): First, the teaching climate was drastically different depending on if a "smart" child asked questions, or offered answers, vs. if a "dumb" child performed the same behaviours. The former was met with warm and

supportive feedback while the latter was not. Second, the amount of input a teacher gave to a "smart" student was much higher, and entailed more material being taught, vs. if the student was "dumb". Third, the opportunity to respond to a question was only lengthened for students identified as smart. Lastly, teachers made much more of an effort to provide positive and encouraging feedback to the "smart" children while little attention/feedback was given to the "dumb" students, even if they provided the correct answer. This discrepancy between how the high IQ vs. low IQ children were treated by their teacher illustrates how problematic extrinsic rewards can be in the classroom setting, not only because not all students are rewarded for their behaviour, but because these rewards, or lack there of, soon become internalized by these students as a method of maintaining behaviour and ultimately determining their self worth (Ames, 1992). Thus because students' self perceptions, such as self efficacy, goal orientation, and/or autonomy, are robust indicators of motivation and performance in school (Furrer & Skinner, 2003) the students who are continually rewarded by their teacher begin to see themselves as good students, and become motivated to learn and do well, while those who do not receive positive feedback inevitably abandon their motivation to do well, causing their academic potential to suffer, becoming the very individuals their teachers expected them to be. Yet if students are continually progressing to higher grades and different schools, these initial teacher evaluations should have little impact on these students once they have new teachers. Unfortunately, because many teachers rely on previous evaluations from other teachers as a way to evaluate incoming students (Harris, 1991), these labels inevitably follow the student throughout their academic career, making it difficult, if not impossible, for those labelled as poor students to ever reach their true, academic potential. The idea that these teacher expectations, these labels teachers inevitably assign their students, have long term effects on students' adjustment in school is an area that has not been thoroughly researched in the adolescent literature.

_____ 3.

Yet the long term implications of labels on deviant behaviour has been thoroughly addressed in the criminological setting, and thus this study will examine how Labelling theory can inevitably be applied in the classroom to explain deviant academic vs. deviant criminal behaviour. *Labelling Theory Applied to the Classroom* Although the concept of Labelling theory, specifically the idea that criminal labels carry a stigmatizing effect on those individuals who have been identified as "criminals", originated as early as 1911 by criminologist scholars, it wasn't until 1951 that this theory was formalized by Edwin Lemert (Lilly, Cully, & Ball, 2007). Lemert stated that there were two types of deviance: Primary deviance, which is when an individual gets caught committing a criminal act, and secondary deviance: the reaction society has to the individual now identified as being a criminal (Lilly, Cully, & Ball, 2007). It is this latter form of deviance that enabled Labelling theory to gain such immense popularity in the 1960's, forcing criminologists to reconsider how large a part society plays in not only formulizing the laws of society, but in

determining the future of its criminal population. Thus while primary and secondary deviance has traditionally been used to explain criminal behaviour, in this study, it can easily be applied to the school setting, particularly in regards to explaining how students identify themselves as "bad" vs. "good". This comparison is particularly evident in Rosenthal's experiment, where primary deviance would be the individuals who scored poorly on the exam, and secondary deviance would be the way the teacher now treated these children as a result of their low scores. Thus just like an individual who is labeled a criminal is forever seen as an outcast in the eyes of others, reducing them from a whole person to that of a tainted, discounted one (Link & Phelan, 2001), so too is the poor student. As Labelling theory clearly illustrates, both the social and academic deviant, once labeled as such, are forced to carry these labels with them, performing the very behaviour society expects of them, inevitably leading to confirmation bias. William Chambliss identified this bias when he examined society's reaction to two groups of high school boys: the Saints and the Roughnecks Lilly, Cully, & Ball, 2007). Although both sets of boys had an equal amount of delinquency between them, because of their less desirable status (i.e. lower social class) the Roughnecks were assumed by police, and regular citizens alike, as being more likely to participate in deviant behaviour (Lilly, Cully, & Ball, 2007). Thus as this example illustrates, secondary deviance leads to the formulation of stereotypes, which is troubling, considering how persistent stereotypes are.

Understanding how persistent stereotypes are in the criminological literature inevitably helps explain why prior teacher evaluations can be so problematic, particularly for students who have been evaluated negatively. Because these teachers only know these students as poor students, they consequently do not put in the effort to challenge these students academically, and thus because their poor reputation is constantly following them, these students never get the opportunity to prove that they can be good students and, instead, perform the only way they know how to: poorly. This phenomenon has been defined as a self-fulfilling prophesy, and just like criminal labels have the unanticipated consequence of pushing labelled individuals into future criminal careers (Lilly, Cully, & Ball, 2007), negative academic labels may be pushing students into greater academic failure. Thus it is the goal of this study to illustrate that negative academic labels, like negative social labels, are inevitably carried by students throughout their academic career, specifically from middle school into high school, ultimately affecting their ability to transition. Alienation, as a result of being negatively labelled, is another consequence that has been thoroughly researched in the criminological literature. As a result of individuals being labelled as criminal, there is a fear of getting too close to these individuals, too close to these stigmatized persons, much like the discomfort we feel when having to sit next to a physically disabled individual (Hilton & Von Hippel, 1996). In fact, many will try to avoid this predicament at all cost, resulting in the isolation, as well as alienation, of the stigmatized person. This feeling of not belonging, as a result of a negative label, is not just limited to criminals, but has also been documented in adolescent research, particularly with students who do not perform well academically.

_____ 4.

Because many teachers do not interact with their poor students, these students ultimately lack support from their teachers, support which, during a stressful transition (i.e. middle school to high school), is imperative for a student to have in order to increase their overall adjustment and functioning in school (Rosenfeld, Richman, & Bowen, 2000; Barber & Olsen, 2004). Thus as a result of this alienation, these students are at an increased risk of engaging in health compromising behaviour, such as smoking and drinking, as a means to cope with the stress of not feeling accepted (Samdal, Wold, Klepp, & Kansas, 2000). Research has also shown that difficulty in school may be one of the best predictors of delinquency in American society (Lotz & Lee, 1999) Thus it is the goal of this current study to illustrate that individuals who have been labelled as "bad" students are more likely to feel disengaged from the schooling process, and thus as a result of this alienation, have high engagement in unhealthy behaviours. While labels can be applied to anyone, regardless of race, gender, and education level, the research conducted in the criminological setting clearly illustrates that those on the bottom of the socio-cultural hierarchy (i.e. minorities, the poor, etc.) are those that are the most prone to carrying these stigmatizing labels. Racial profiling is a perfect example of this: In police records, there are more incidences of police citing, searching, arresting, and using force against minority drivers vs. white drivers (Lilly, Cully, & Ball, 2007). Although criminologists opposed to Labelling theory have argued that cops are more likely to arrest someone due to the seriousness of the offense vs. their racial makeup, proponents of Labelling theory have shown that even when seriousness of offense is controlled, the relationship between race/social class remains for police intake of individuals (Wellford, 1975). Thus official crime statistics may well be inaccurate in their portrayal of who commits the most crimes due to this systematic bias that is enforced by police officers with minority groups (Lilly, Cully, & Ball, 2007). This evidence is troubling considering the implications it unduly has for minority groups: By utilizing discriminatory practices (i.e. racial profiling) those with higher social status and power are able to persuade minorities that they are inferior, ultimately making them less likely to challenge these discriminatory practices, keeping them in existence (Link & Phelan, 2001). This discriminatory practice is unfortunately also evident in the academic setting, specifically for students enrolled in urban and rural schools. Because these schools tend to be in sections with little income, they often do not have the resources to offer an extensive number of AP classes like suburban schools do, putting minority students at an even greater disadvantage academically by placing them in the lower level courses (Solorzano & Ornelas, 2002). As a result of this, minority students are more likely to feel disengaged from the schooling process, because they have no means, or support, to challenge themselves academically (Barber & Olsen, 2004)

inevitably causing these students to either "cool out", a process that involves just going through the motions of school, vs. trying to succeed academically (Frtizberg, 2001), or, in the most severe cases, drop out (Caraway et al., 2003; Little & Garber, 2004). In fact, the drop out rate between white and minority students is so disproportionate, with many more minority students dropping out vs. white students, that it has led some researchers to conclude that our society is guilty of institutional racism, where only the culture of the white race is taught and tested in school, not the culture of minority students (Fritzberg, 2001). Thus one of the goals of this study is to investigate if students in lower SES schools are at a greater disadvantage than students in higher SES schools, specifically because both their minority standing, and unequal access to educational resources, puts them at a greater risk of being labelled as poor students, leading them to become disengaged, and thus not perform well academically.

An area that has received little attention, in both the adolescent and criminological setting, is that of positive labels, thus it cannot be assumed that these labels, while positive, are always advantageous. As mentioned before, in high school, the classes are divided in a hierarchical fashion, with AP and honour classes being on top. In order to get a better understanding of how students in these higher level classes view themselves, a recent study was conducted at Northwestern State University investigating 14 high achieving adolescents from various high schools around the country (Moulton, Moulton, Housewright & Bailey, 1998). According to this study, while many students reported positive perceptions towards their label as gifted students (i.e. special experiences, internal gratification, unique, etc.) they also listed negative aspects associated with this same label, specifically the increased pressure and high expectations from parents and teachers. In relation to this, the authors also found that many counsellors, teachers, and administrators virtually ignored the developmental needs of the gifted and only focused on their cognitive abilities (Moulton et al., 1998). It was also found that even high achieving students are not immune from feelings of academic inadequacy. According to Little and Garber (2004), people who exhibit high levels of investment in certain areas (i.e. school) are particularly susceptible to becoming depressed following stressful events related to their respective sensitivities (i.e. bad test grade). This finding is especially compelling when taking into account that the transition from middle school to high school results in a decreased GPA for most students (Barber & Olson, 2004; Smith, 2006). This decline in academic achievement is especially troublesome for adolescent girls, specifically in regards to their self-motivation and confidence in their academic abilities (Little & Garber, 2004). This achievement loss, as well as the loss of both self-esteem and self perception, exhibited by the female students in this study, has been shown to be highly correlated with increased drop out rates in high school (Alspaugh, 1998). Thus even high achieving students can feel disengaged from the learning process, feelings that could potentially have long lasting effects on future academic endeavours, discouraging these students from reaching their potential. With this in mind, another goal in this study is to investigate if these high performing students, because of their positive labels, still manage to do well in high school, even if they had a difficult time transitioning.

Appendix 3: Matrix

Appendix 4: As a child, from Internet

PART 1

As a child, I was 'labelled.' I was one of the 'good kids,' one of the 'smart children' and I could have gotten away with pretty much anything had I not been so painfully shy. I learned very early that if I could keep up that label, homework could slide; I received special privileges and was the darling of the school. That was more than thirty years ago. It took me years to shake off the effects of this label, although it would be considered desirable by many. I learned on my own how to make things happen for myself and through my philosophical explorations; I became a strong, intelligent, highly ethical person, which is not what the label I received in school prepared me to be as an adult. Unfortunately, the practice of labelling students is still in place today.

As a teacher and a parent, I see children labelled every day. Teachers and administrators, even parents, label these children as 'the good child,' or 'the bad kid,' or 'the smart child.' This is unfair not only to the child, but to his or her classmates as well. Children are very perceptive and they can pick up on a teacher's or parent's feelings toward them. This creates a bias, a prejudice that spreads to the other children and teachers while it pollutes the child's own image of him or herself.

Even if a child has a, per se, 'acceptable' label such as smart or good, this can be destructive because the child has a tendency to place himself or herself above other classmates. It can also place undue pressure on the child to excel in everything. They forget to just be a kid. Additionally, teachers may tend to favour this 'good' child and let them slide on infractions of behaviour and even assignment deadlines while peers may single them out as the 'teacher's pet.'

PART 2

On the other hand, the 'bad child' is looked upon as a menace to the classroom, a nuisance that must be endured and tolerated. This child may also be subject to increased disciplinary actions and even the most minor infraction can land him or her in the principal's office. Teachers are less tolerant of the 'bad child,' and that prejudice spreads to the child's classmates. This child is doomed from the start because this attitude presents an environment that is not conducive to success. All the child sees is failure, therefore, he or she feels that is their destiny or fate.

I have seen this again and again in the classroom. Many teachers see a child as one way or another and they are labelled. Once that child in labelled, it sticks with them unless someone steps in and stops it. Children should be celebrated for their strengths

and they should be encouraged and guided to play upon those strengths. They should not be condemned because they have an unfair label. I am both a parent and a teacher. I have seen children walk into my classroom carrying the burden of a label such as 'stupid' (yes, a teacher actually said this student was stupid), 'bad,' and even 'the model student.' I also saw all of these children fall into roles that did not allow them to grow and reach for more than they had already achieved.

I have seen teachers walk into a classroom that was notorious for ill-behaved students and they would write behaviour referrals for the most minor infractions. I knew these children and recognized how unfair this was. I was the teacher who volunteered to take on this 'ill behaved' class and they have thrived with the encouragement and guidance I have given them. I don't let them slide on the behaviour infractions and I expect a lot from them, but I am fair and they recognize that. They work hard in my class and I reward them with praise and respect. I can tell you right now that my 'bad kids' are some of the best, coolest kids I have ever encountered. They are insightful, funny, smart and quick-witted. Once you look through the behaviour, not focus on it, and see the child beyond something wonderful happens, they blossom. I focus on the child and his or her personal gifts. That is my focus. The behaviour is there for a reason, but I do not make that the centre of my relationship with the child.

PART 3

I have a daughter who is epileptic with absence seizures and she is dyslexic. Sometimes homework and class work can be a struggle due to her special challenges. Sometimes homework does not get done because she is just overwhelmed. One of her teacher's has labelled her and has harassed and humiliated her in front of her classmates. My daughter is very quiet and extremely shy and she loves school. She tries so hard but this teacher has marred her experience. She has lost some of her spark and does not talk about how much she loves school and math any longer. This math teacher has single-handedly created an environment where my daughter no longer feels happy and safe. In this woman's classroom, my daughter feels like a failure because of the vicious words and actions of this one woman.

All it takes is one teacher to ruin a child's educational experience and we, as parents, must stay ahead of the game and know just what is going on in our children's classrooms. My daughter has me, fortunately, to do damage control. I also strongly reprimanded the teacher as well as informed the principal of her actions. I got the strong feeling that my words fell upon deaf ears, but it is not over. I will be taking it higher and I will not stop until something is done so that my little girl is no longer forced to endure this woman's abuse and harassment.

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