

Open partial agreement on the prevention of, protection against and organisation of relief in major natural and technological disasters

RISK PREVENTION AT SCHOOL

1. Risk culture:

- **Educating school children to the knowledge of risks**
- **Making them aware of risk prevention**
- **Teaching them how to behave in an emergency situation**

2. Making schools and public places frequented by school children safe

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“Schoolchildren and their teachers are among the groups most receptive to disaster preparation education and training”¹

WHO (World Health Organization)

¹ Unofficial translation

Risk culture and in general all activities to raise awareness to risk prevention, why are they a priority in the school sector?

- Children represent the society of the future
- Children are more curious and less conditioned than adults and therefore more receptive to risk prevention messages
- Children are the best “transmitters” of information to their families and therefore help to disseminate risk prevention messages
- From another point of view, children are most vulnerable to risk.

In a word, children are the best channel for the establishment of a risk culture.

Risk prevention should above all be learned at school, and schools should be as invulnerable as possible to the various types of risks they may face. Two major themes will be dealt with:

- I. Risk culture:
 - Educating school-age children to the knowledge of risks
 - Making them aware of risk prevention
 - Teaching them how to behave in an emergency situation
- II. Making schools and public places frequented by school-age children safe.

I. RISK CULTURE

In a school environment, risk culture comprises on the whole two types of activity:

1. General education concerning the knowledge of risks
2. Knowledge of the risks specific to the child’s own environment.

I.1. General education for children on the knowledge and prevention of risks and how to behave in an emergency situation.

General education on the knowledge and prevention of risks should be undertaken at two levels:

- I.1.a. General concepts which should form part of the “civic education” teaching programme, comprising, inter alia, the principles which presuppose sustainable development, human rights, solidarity, European construction, the knowledge of risks and their prevention.
- I.1.b. Taking into account the risk concept in specialized teaching programmes: in literature, mathematics, natural sciences, physics, chemistry, history, geography, etc....

I.2. The knowledge of risks specific to schools placed in its context

On the basis of the identification of risks specific to the school frequented by a child, sessions on raising awareness to risk prevention and on how to behave in an emergency situation should be organized in accordance with the safety plan drawn up by the school in question.

II. THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF RISK

➤ Natural risks:

- Seismic risks
- Volcanic risks
- Flooding risks
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➤ Technological risks:

- Fire risks
- Industrial risks
- Risks linked to transport
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➤ Risks of everyday life:

- Domestic risks
- Health risks
- Traffic risks

➤ Social risks:

- Risks linked to the instrumentation of violence

➤ Risks linked to armed conflicts

III. RISK KNOWLEDGE AND PREVENTION

- Their effects
- Prevention, behaviour to adopt

With regard to natural, technological and domestic risks, the effects and the messages to be transmitted in terms of prevention and how to behave in an emergency situation, are set out in Appendix 1.

Methods for transmitting messages

1. Oral presentations: classes and lectures with distribution of a text
2. Poster campaigns on risks
3. Audio-visual materials: films, videos, CD-ROMs
4. Using games:
 - presentation and playing of games: eg, game of seven families for the prevention of natural risks, Cata-stop, etc
 - producing drawings of children's perception of different types of risks, their effects and prevention and how to behave should they occur.
5. Visits to risk sites.
6. Simulation of an emergency situation and how to behave

School safety plan for major hazards

The elaboration of the various stages of implementation of the school safety plans based on the "SESAM plan" and the new "Special plan for making schools safe which was recently adopted in France, is set out in Appendix II.

IV. SOCIAL RISKS: INSTRUMENTATION OF VIOLENCE

IV.1. Amongst the most important social risks, we shall concentrate on the risks linked to **the use of violence and therefore to its "instrumentation"** whereby persons or groups place school age children in risk situations (see appendix III). The forms of instrumentation of violence are varied, the most common being:

- Racket
- Fights
- Sexual aggression
- Theft
- Blackmail
- Drugs
- Terrorism

In school establishments, one should first of all analyse the times and places at risk in relation to the instrumentation of violence as well as the potential actors. This includes:

- a. A study of the places frequented by the child:
 - the journey between home and school
 - in front of school
 - in school, in the corridors, the toilets, the playground
 - after-school activity premises: stadium, theatres, association/club premises, places of worship, cyber cafes, etc...
- b. the child's timetable:
 - the time of the journey from home to school
 - the time spent in after-school activities
 - the time outside of the home
- c. the potential actors:

- persons belonging to the school
 - persons who do not belong to the school: minors or adults
- d. According to the place and the time and the potential actors, analysis of the various forms of the instrumentation of violence.

These four analyses will enable us to establish a four dimensional matrix:

“Places, times, effects, actors”

which will be known as **“a matrix representative of the risk of the instrumentation of violence”** for a child attending the school under study.

MATRIX RIV (f,t,l,a)

In the Final Declaration adopted at the close of the Conference on “Local partnerships for preventing and combating violence at school” organized at the Council of Europe from 2 to December 2002, it is emphasized that “Violence at school is not a new phenomenon, but it would appear that it has changed considerably in nature over recent years, particularly on account of the school environment’s growing inability to isolate itself from the tensions and difficulties of all sorts that characterise society in general, and the local communities in which schools are located in particular.

... Since the underlying causes of violence at school are partly the result of external phenomena, any action, particularly preventative action, should bring together not only the various elements in the education system but also all the players from the local community.

Consequently, the development of partnerships is a precondition for the short, medium and long-term effectiveness of prevention work, and represents a clear added value in comparison with any action, however laudable, that may be implemented separately by each of the parties.

... The principle of partnership, whilst not necessarily calling into question the powers and specific rules applicable to each of the parties, does imply de-compartmentalisation and the establishment of cross-disciplinary ties between the parties or services concerned.”

The principal partners are:

- the school community, in all its forms, especially teachers and their organizations, administrative and managerial bodies, social and medical services and all non-teaching staff. Particular attention should be given to the role of pupils, including very young pupils, parents and their representatives;
- the local and regional authorities and their various services;
- all youth organizations;
- representatives of civil society, especially non-governmental organizations involved in cultural activities, and faith communities;
- the social, economic and political worlds in general;
- the media;
- representatives of research circles;

- the national authorities.

Where school establishments are concerned, they should:

- play their full role in introducing initiatives, even and especially before any violent incidents occur also through including violence prevention in the curriculum in an appropriate manner;
- take particular action to develop a favourable climate within schools, by encouraging de-compartmentalisation of the roles and functions of the various internal players in school life;
- encourage the opening up of schools to the communities in which they are located;
- guarantee the democratic functioning of schools, with particular recognition of the rightful place of pupils and their parents.

The Secretary General of the Council of Europe, in his report on the implementation of the decisions of the 109th session of the Committee of Ministers concerning the Council of Europe and the international action against terrorism, indicated:

“.....Ensure that religious diversity is taught in the same way as linguistic and cultural diversity, alongside education for democratic citizenship;

Ensure that young people are made aware of, and receive training in dialogue at school and that a growing number of young leaders on both shores of the Mediterranean receive training in mediation and conflict prevention;

Link practical initiatives to promote cultural diversity with practical measures to promote intercultural dialogue, through the use of pilot-projects in towns and regions which are particularly representative of the coexistence/interaction of of several cultures;

Ensure respect for the cultural heritage that has developed over the years in a particular territory, whatever the current political situation there.”

Training sessions for **mediators** should be set up who would be in charge of children attending schools and out-of-school premises in a specific district.

IV.2. The prevention plans and security measures for school children in the case of risks linked to the instrumentation of violence

The prevention and security measures for school children will be based on the analysis of the various forms of instrumentation of violence existing in his/her own school and environment thus on the establishment the RIV(f,l,t,a) matrix characteristic to the school.

In concrete terms this will be achieved by means of working meetings bringing together partners according to the various forms of instrumentation of violence, i.e. representatives from:

- the teaching corps

- school administrative and technical staff
- the pupils
- the pupils' parents
- the medical staff
- the social services
- the police force
- the local authorities
- the public transport systems used by the children
- the local district Associations/clubs and from NGO's.
- the different religions (according to the problems examined).

According to the type of risk examined, the following should be defined:

- the action to be taken for raising children's awareness to the knowledge and prevention of the risks identified. Representatives from the police force should be associated with these sessions in order to "demystify" the anonymity and the impunity of those responsible for reprehensible activities;
- the setting up, where necessary, of "tutors" associated to each child. These tutors could be a child who has been in the school for a longer length of time and with whom the younger child could confide in;
- the organization of sessions in the school whereby the various Associations could come and inform the children of the activities available to them so that they avoid feeling isolated and idle;
- the presence of pupils' parents when school comes out so as to control the traffic and to "purify" the surroundings around the school exit
- the training of mediators in each district and in the schools in charge of settling "differences" out-of-court with regard to school children in the schools and their environments.

IV.3. The important role to be played by the "Mediators" to guard against the instrumentation of violence

One should be reminded that mediation enables, thanks to the intervention of a third party, to restore communication between two parties in "conflict". Thus the function of mediator will have its place equally at international, European, national, regional and local levels. Mediation applies to the following fields: political, intercultural, criminal, firms, the family, and finally the social field. It is the latter which is of the greatest importance to us.

In the issue concerning the prevention of the instrumentation of violence in school children, the school and community mediators have an essential role to play.

The function of mediation is not a novelty. In days gone by, parish priests, school teachers, family doctors, very often acted as an intermediate between two persons in "conflict".

School mediators should be posted in schools where there is an unusual rate of violence and crises. Taking this into consideration, school mediators intervene on the one

hand as a preventive measure to guard against violent behaviour, and on the other hand during a crisis situation to help restore the calm. Mediators are called upon to intervene outside of the school and this is why it is important for them to participate in determining the MIV (f,i,t,a) matrix. These actors must maintain close relations and ensure follow-up with the administrative departments such as: the social services, the police, the law, community associations, etc.

In order to be accepted by young people, the mediator must respect a certain number of principles which have been clearly defined in the charter drawn up by the pupil mediators of Sarcelle in 1995:

1. The mediator is not a supervisor or someone who will criticize you. He does not take sides, does not pass judgment but is there to find a solution to your problems.
2. The mediator does not force anyone to come and see him, but proposes his help with mutual respect in mind.
3. The mediator is there to listen to you.
4. The mediator does not repeat what you have said to him: he is discreet and has a right to your confidence.
5. The mediator will do his utmost to help you, but cannot always find a solution to all of your problems.

Training for school and community mediators (defined by "Generation Mediateurs").

The school and community mediators should receive training set up under the control of the Ministry of Education and of the Ministry in charge of health and social affairs. This training should focus on the following themes:

- Knowledge of oneself and confidence in oneself and in others, in a spirit of positive assertion
- Emotions: expression and verbalization
- Conflicting situations in everyday surroundings: observe them and think about how one normally functions and reacts
- Admit that the other person has a different opinion to one's own. Do not mix up the object of the conflict and the person
- Workshop for listening and communicating
- Role play: take a step back from the conflict situation
- Creativity and imagination for finding a solution to conflicts where both parties want to "win"
- Training of the pupils so that they may become on a voluntary basis, classroom or playground mediators.

The status of school and community mediators

School mediators should be found at two levels:

1. the mediator of the school- should be a project leader responsible to the head of the school and he should be detached from a team of mediators who depend upon the education authority of the Academy upon which the school itself depends;
2. the school mediators, for example one or two for each class: sixth year, fifth year, fourth year, etc.. These school mediators should be recruited from the pupils in the school and in certain cases they should be elected by their class mates.

The community mediators should be project leaders attached to the Directorate of Health and Social Services at local level.

Natural risks

Volcanic eruption

1. The effects of volcanic eruptions

- harm to humans generally connected with the consequences of lava and toxic gas emissions, landslides, tsunamis (tidal waves), insalubrity: transmission of diseases, viruses, etc
- damage to property connected with the engulfing and destruction of buildings and infrastructure (water and electricity distribution, roads, etc)
- environmental damage: flora and fauna. The 'positive' aspects connected with the fertility of volcanic soils should be noted, however.

2. The messages to be transmitted

- Listen to the radio and follow the instructions given,
- Follow the instructions on relevant notice boards,
- In the event of gas or ash emissions, protect your nose and mouth, preferably with a damp cloth,
- Keep away from the volcano,
- Only evacuate when ordered to do so by the authorities, following emergency procedures.

Earthquakes

1. The effects of earthquakes

- harm to humans connected with:
 - direct and indirect effects: collapse of buildings, destruction of industrial infrastructure and roads, bursting of dams, etc; insalubrity: transmission of diseases, viruses, etc
 - tsunamis (tidal waves: lake).

2. The messages to be transmitted

- Earthquakes are sudden occurrences since, in the current state of knowledge, it is not possible to predict them and there is therefore no operational warning.

- During an earthquake

Within a building:

- Place yourself near a wall or a load-bearing pillar, under a strong piece of furniture (a table), keep away from windows,

Outside a building:

- Do not stand under electric cables or anything that may collapse, stay in your vehicle,

Always be aware of the danger of falling objects.

- During an earthquake
 - Listen to the radio,
 - Do not light any type of flame, turn off gas, heating, electricity, ventilators,
 - Do not enter a damaged building,
 - Follow security procedures (schools, public buildings, etc).

Flooding: of plains, after torrential rains

1.a. The effects of flooded plains:

- harm to humans: drowning, isolation; lack of food and medication; insalubrity, risk of epidemics,
- damage to property: infrastructure (pipes, roads, electricity cables, overturning of vehicles and other equipment, destruction of bridges, etc.)

1.b. The effects of flooding after torrential rains

- Harm to humans: injury as a result of overturned material, insalubrity, etc, problems connected with dead and injured animals, etc
- Damage to property: destruction of buildings and infrastructure, destruction and/or obstruction of bridges and pipes, overturning of material and equipment, etc.

2. The messages to be transmitted:

During flooding:

- listen to the radio, turn off electricity, move to previously identified high points, upper floors of houses, hills
- avoid telephoning

- only evacuate if the authorities order you to do so or if the flood forces you to do so.

After the flood:

- Air rooms
- Disinfect
- Only switch on the electric current if electrical installations are dry
- Do not go into a flooded area on foot or in a vehicle.

Fires

1. The effects of fire:

- Harm to humans: burns, intoxication, injuries connected with the collapse of burned structures, etc
- Damage to property: destruction of buildings and infrastructure.

2. The messages to be transmitted:

- attack the fire at the base of the flames with water or an extinguisher; in the event of fire in an electrical installation, first turn off the current; stifle burning oil or petrol with a damp cloth
- to assist someone whose clothes are on fire: lay the person on the ground and stifle the flames with material made of natural fibers
- if you cannot put the fire out, leave the room, shutting the door tightly
- if you are hemmed in by fire and smoke: shut yourself in, block the space under the door with damp cloths, water the door, avoid creating draughts; show yourself at the window.

➤ **Technological risks: industrial risk**

A major industrial risk is an accidental event on an industrial site which results in immediate serious consequences for staff, neighboring communities, property and the environment.

1. The various possible effects:

- mechanical effects as the result of an explosion: effects on human beings – lungs and eardrums

- effects of heat on human beings, property and the environment connected with the combustion of an inflammable substance or an explosion
- the toxic effects of inhalation of a toxic chemical substance – chlorine, ammonia, phosgene, etc – following a leak.

2. The messages to be transmitted:

- listen to the radio
- evacuate or stay indoors according to the nature of the risk
- turn off ventilators, gas, electricity and heating
- do not go to pick children up from school

➤ **The risks of everyday life**

These types of risks account for a very high percentage of injuries and deaths. They are connected with ordinary everyday situations at home and in the street.

In the home

- connected with the use of electricity: electrocution when touching sockets or using defective domestic electrical appliances
- burns when upsetting receptacles put on hot plates or gas burners
- inhalation or absorption of toxic household products
- starting fires through misuse of heating equipment or matches
- falling down stairs, etc.

In the street

- traffic accidents, etc

The messages to convey involve making children and parents aware of measures to prevent everyday risks at home and measures to prevent traffic-related accidents.

APPENDIX II

Making schools safe from major accidents

Objective: Developing measures to enable schools to deal with the gravity of a major accident or disaster while awaiting the arrival of the emergency services.

Implementation is in three stages:

- preparation
- realization
- maintenance

A school safety plan should, when drafted, include the following:

- definition of the various tasks that have to be done when managing a crisis and the formation of an emergency team among whom these tasks will be distributed
- allowing for the possible degrees in the scale of an accident and its consequences
- special considerations in respect of:
 - activities taking place outside the school premises (sports, walks, etc)
 - premises where there are boarders
 - school communities that include pupils or adults with disabilities
 - informing the partners involved: the authorities, civil protection services, etc

I. Preparatory phase

A. *Identifying potential risks to the school*

The table of risks should be drawn up in co-operation with the authorities responsible for the locality in which the school is situated, the relevant scientific circles and the civil protection services.

B. *Making contact with local authorities* in order to link up the school safety plan with the emergency plans made by the authorities.

C. *Formation of an emergency team responsible for:*

- supervising pupils and staff,
- liaising with families, the authorities, civil protection and emergency services.

D. *Prior information* to pupils and parents

Emergency team: distribution of responsibilities

- Head teacher:
- activating the alarm
 - activating the safety plan
 - ensuring the various posts are set up
 - establishing contact with the authorities and transmitting their instructions to the staff
 - drawing up a list of members of the emergency team and assigning one or more of the following tasks to them:

Internal organization:

1. seeing that assembly operations run smoothly
2. establishing and maintaining internal contacts
3. supervising pupils and assembly operations
4. making a list of those absent
5. identifying people who are injured or trapped
6. managing the waiting period
7. ensuring internal logistics
8. turning off ventilation, heating, gas and electricity, if necessary
9. controlling access to the school

Contact with the emergency services

- informing the emergency services of developments in the situation: numbers, where people are confined, assembly points, any injuries
- meeting and accompanying the emergency services when they arrive: information on persons injured or trapped, and those who are safe
- handing over the plans of the building indicating master switches and places with specific functions: electrical, storage, etc.

Contact with families

- reminding them not to come to collect their children, to avoid telephoning, to listen to the radio: in order to follow instructions
- reassuring and informing them, following the head teacher's instructions

Relations with the press

- follow the head teacher's instructions as to what information is to be given to the press

Prior information to staff and pupils about the school safety plan and the various phases of its implementation

Information to parents

- in the event of an alarm, do not go to the premises affected
- listen to the radio and follow the authorities' instructions
- do not go to collect children from school: there is a plan to ensure their safety
- do not telephone, do not swamp the networks
- treat with caution often fragmentary or subjective information that does not come from the authorities

II. Implementing the school safety plan

When should the alarm be sounded?

The head teacher will sound the alarm and activate the safety plan:

- when he or she is alerted by the authorities
- when he or she witnesses an accident which may have a major effect on the school or its environment

How should the alarm be sounded?

How the alarm is to be sounded will have been decided in advance by setting up an internal mode of alarm: human voice, alarm mechanism, loudspeaker, etc.

The sounding of the alarm will result in the immediate activation of the school safety plan and the application of all instructions: emergency team, etc.

What instructions should be applied immediately?

- listen to the radio: in order to obtain official information and any instructions about the risk or accident,
- *Emergency team*: go to the place corresponding to the tasks assigned to them
- *For staff*
 - continue to supervise the pupils,
 - see that the assembly operation runs smoothly
 - think about groups with special needs: pupils and staff with disabilities or who are trapped
 - make a list of those absent
 - indicate incidents
 - manage the waiting period
- *For pupils*
 - Calmly proceed to the planned internal or external assembly point(s)

Where and how are pupils and staff to be placed in safety?

According to the school's lay-out and environment, one or more internal or external points will be chosen to place pupils and staff in safety.

Selection criteria:

- ease of access
- location: upstairs in the event of flooding
- orientation: windows not exposed to prevailing winds in the event of storms or major pollution
- quality of the building
- possible confinement: accessibility of water and sanitation, with as few openings to the outside as possible, an area of about 1m² per person, the maximum capacity of which has been calculated in advance
- means of internal communication

Possible places:

- classrooms
- assembly hall(s)
- external assembly point(s) which may be different from those to be used in the event of fire
- appoint a person responsible for each place or point

How to manage communication with the outside

When there is an alert the members of the emergency team formed during the preparatory phase of the safety plan have a special part to play, along with the head teacher, as regards communication where it has been maintained or re-established.

Liaising with the authorities:

- gather, note and pass on to the authorities concerned any information about the situation and its development,
- pass on the instructions of the administrative authorities.

Liaising with the emergency services:

- inform the emergency (civil protection) services at regular intervals of any developments in the situation: numbers of people, places of confinement or external assembly points, those injured, etc,
- meet and accompany the emergency services when they arrive.

Liaising with families:

If they make contact:

- remind them not to come to collect their children and that they should avoid telephoning
- tell them which radio station is broadcasting locally the information given by the authorities
- inform them tactfully, respecting the authorities' instructions.'

Relations with the press:

These must comply with the instructions and directives given by the authorities

Essential documents and resources

- list of members of the emergency team (with replacements) and details of their responsibilities
- plans of the school with access, entrances, exits, important points: electricity meter, taps, lavatories, etc
- selection of assembly point(s) and plan of access
- list of people: pupils and staff so that those absent can be easily identified.

Ongoing vigilance and updating of the safety plan

On the basis of regular drills: at least one a year

Regular updating.

APPENDIX III

Alice Miller, in her article *"The Wellsprings of Horror in the Cradle"* (<http://www.nospank.net/miller17.htm>), October 2001, writes this: "Whoever they are and however dreadful their crimes, deep down inside every dictator, mass murderer, terrorist cowers the humiliated child they once were, a child that has only survived through the complete and utter denial of its feelings of helplessness."

Likewise, Bernard Giossi in "Regard conscient" (<http://www.regardconscient.net/archives/0209enfanceterro.html>), stresses that a child whose parents repeatedly tell him that his life is useless and who experiences this rejection day by day through the blows, humiliations and mistreatment inflicted, deeply internalizes the parents' fear of their own life.

The systematic devaluation of the child's life by the parents brings him to such a state of insecurity that he becomes easy to manipulate for the religious, military or political powers that hold sway over society. For instance, the suicide bombers are the product of all the social conditions and their youthful age, around twenty, seems to be the sole "common detonator" of their commitment; this play on words, together with the highlighting of their age, points to adults' projection of stereotypes of uncontrollability and dangerousness onto youth.

In fact these young people all have in common a complete lack of future and a drastic reduction of their life potential which are due to the monstrous demands of upbringing imposed by adults and to the violence of the repression undergone.

By dint of being manipulated and instrumentalised, the individual identifies so absolutely with his parents' terror of living that he has no further possibilities than to become an embodiment of terror and death in order to make them recognizable at last.

In a satirical article published in the London daily "Al-Ayat", the Egyptian playwright Ali Salem ridiculed the incitation to extremism given by Arab media. In so doing, he suggested opening a kindergarten to teach terrorist values. He defines its syllabus like this: "I am looking for sponsors to set up a modern kindergarten for the extremist training of children under 4 years of age only (because from 5 up, a child has nothing new to learn). In this way, I could guarantee that in high school and university these children will remain extremists. Nothing alive and no scientific programme will be capable of weakening or taming their extremism. The cleverest will work for us as journalists pour and be our grey matter, our editors-in-chief, our radio comperes and our clerks in all walks of life. Give me your children, and I promise to make good extremists of them. I swear to you that everyone who shows extremist ability will be admitted to the Supreme Academy of Terrorism, even if their standard of terrorism is inadequate. They need simply have a sincere aspiration, aptitude for terrorism, or be terrorists by nature."

In his analysis of political violence in children, Louis Duclos (http://www.conflits.revues.org/article.php3?id_article=213) writes that children, a dangerous age group as soon as they develop muscles, nevertheless do not deny political entrepreneurs a little fragile assistance; defenseless and undefended, they apparently excel, when the atmosphere is right, at making "Pakistani rugs" from the age

of four. In politics, a blend of comparative lack of discrimination, fervent willingness and well-organised defence mechanisms makes the adolescent the ideal instrument of public violence by proxy.

In particular, immersing whole age groups in idleness, literally throwing them onto the pavement and making them available for recruitment into all kinds of causes creates the ideal conditions for a group entry into political violence. ... Their political violence, if only because they are its first victims, sometimes performs a mobilising role that may be decisive in the survival of resistance ideologies, as can be seen in Northern Ireland and in the Gaza occupied territory.

Jean-Pierre Rozeczveig, President of the organization "Droit des Enfants International", writes in a study on the situation in France regarding child violence (<http://www.droitsenfants.com/violencefrance.htm>) that Julien Dray is correctly in asserting that some of these disoriented children are absorbed by a Mafia-like society which spreads its tentacles in many housing estates against a background of economic recession and upheaval. Quite literally, the drug industry has a stranglehold on certain areas. The traffickers use lost young people, often abraded by social injustice, very quickly prepared for anything to earn a little money and above all to win respect and standing that their parents do not have, that school no longer promises them. Often without cultural resources ...

In their article on the topic "Who are the most violent ten and eleven year olds? An introduction to future delinquency?" Jane B. Sprott and Anthony N. Doob (1998) (<http://www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/sp-ps/arb-dgra/publications/research/abw-98-29e.shtml>) state that generally, delinquent behaviour is thought to be the result of complex interactions of individual traits with social (family, peers), situational (school, home) and neighbourhood factors. The more risk factors children experience, and the more realms (individual, social, situational, and neighbourhood) they experience them in, the more at risk they are.

Herbert Jacques, Sylvie Hamel and Ginette J. Savoie in "Jeunesse et gangs de rues" (youth and street gangs) published in Montreal by the Institut de recherche pour le développement social des jeunes say that in many respects young gang members differ from non-members. In fact they come predominantly from single-parent, socio-economically disadvantaged families where supervision and parental models are deficient. In the area of personality, these young people have a strong sense of isolation, low self-esteem and a rather sinister view of reality. At school they tend to show quite large learning deficits that gradually lead them to drop out. In general they are more inclined than young people of the same age to misuse alcohol and drugs. In addition, they are encountered in environments more distinctly marked by social disorganization and poverty. Their initial contacts with the gangs occur in pre-adolescence and often at school. Conversely, these young people do not seem to differ from their opposite numbers as regards intellectual development.

