
TOPIC

SCHOOL VANDALISM:
An Emerging Concern?



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SCHOOL VANDALISM: An Emerging Concern?

Topic No. 1
September, 1977

SCHOOL VANDALISM

I Introduction

How serious and significant a problem is vandalism in Ontario schools? How is vandalism defined and how are acts of vandalism in the schools currently identified? Who is responsible for handling vandalism when it occurs against school property? What are the existing policies and methods, and are they appropriate and effective?

These questions elicit a broad range of answers, reflecting a variety of subjective judgements on the parts of school principals, trustees, school board administrators, police, academics and parents. Their responses indicate that vandalism in the schools is a difficult and complicated issue. Not only is there no agreement as to what constitutes vandalism, let alone its causes or extent, it is also difficult to separate from other issues such as vandalism in society generally (both to public and private property), the quality and design of our urban environment, the role of the adolescent in society, and changes in community-held values.

Still, vandalism has increasingly been isolated as an area of concern. For example, a large number of reports and newspaper articles over the past three years have pointed to vandalism as a growing problem in Metro Toronto and its neighbouring municipalities. In 1975 a Hamilton trustee called for a board of education inquiry into problems of violence and vandalism in that city's schools; in April, 1977 a board of education subcommittee was formed to study school vandalism. A report on vandalism in Scarborough was produced by that borough's Recreation and Parks Committee in September, 1976, and made recommendations for implementation by the school board. Both Etobicoke and North York now have board of education studies in progress. The City of Mississauga released a comprehensive Task Force Report on Vandalism (June 1976) which represented a ten month, community-wide effort to deal with the problem. Similarly, the Youth Services Network in Metropolitan Toronto has formed a Task Force to look at the entire problem of vandalism, including school vandalism.

While vandalism in the schools is undoubtedly bound up with problems outside of the school and school system, it is, in our view, a legitimate focus of attention. Schools are self-contained institutions with clearly demarcated boundaries; property damage must be paid for from the school board budget; and, while schools may be targets for vandalism in part because they are easily accessible and convenient places where children and adolescents congregate, they are also presumably special targets with particular symbolic significance.

Vandalism in the schools is perceived by many as a serious problem in terms of both dollar cost and as a social indicator. Some who have the American experience in mind and see vandalism as a significant indicator of more profound social ills, view it as a problem of potentially crisis proportions. Others stress that precisely because it is a symptom or indicator,

vandalism in the schools should not be allowed to distract us from the deeper problems facing society. Keeping these views in mind, this report begins with the premise that vandalism in the schools is one part of a larger problem, but a problem worthy of examination nonetheless because it has particular dimensions and offers opportunities for effective action.

The fact is that there is no single answer to any of the questions posed at the beginning of this report. As this *Topic* will show, each school board has a different working definition of vandalism, a different reporting procedure and different policies and methods for handling the problem. Indeed, the identification of vandalism and the responses vary from school to school and incident to incident.

The purpose of this *Topic* is to assist both decision-makers and the public to respond intelligently to the vandalism problem by:

- 1) summarizing what is known about the nature and extent of vandalism in several large Ontario municipalities
- 2) summarizing how these municipalities are dealing with vandalism in the schools, and
- 3) making recommendations as to how to better promote responsible behaviour

This brief study is based on the literature on vandalism, on publicly available reports and on information gathered from a series of interviews with trustees, school principals, school board administrators, policemen and community spokesmen. The school boards of Hamilton, the Regional Municipality of Peel and of the six area municipalities in Metro Toronto were selected for study.

II Causes of Vandalism

A survey of the literature reveals that there is no single agreed upon cause of vandalism.

One set of explanations ties the motivation for vandalism to the attitudes held about the institution of "school". Students are bored, they are frustrated, and they feel that the goals towards which the school system is pushing them are neither attainable nor necessarily their own.

For example, a study on school vandalism prepared by the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare found this to be the disturbing truth in American schools:

"The most serious aspect of vandalism is the set of messages it conveys: that students see school

as alien territory, hostile to their ambitions and hopes; that the student feels no pride in his school."¹

A second explanatory theme is that vandalism is a manifestation of more general social unrest. Vandalism, according to this theme, is due to adolescent dissatisfaction; it is argued that it is the result of the anonymity produced by big cities; and it is suggested to be the means by which middle class youths demonstrate their individuality.

One approach for looking at the causes of vandalism which has gained general acceptance is a typology put forward by Stanley Cohen in "Politics of Vandalism".² This study demonstrates that each act of vandalism has its unique motivation in the individual. Cohen submits that the motivations for vandalism are 1. play (as in pranks) 2. predatory or acquisitive 3. tactical (that is, political) 4. vindictive 5. malicious/wanton (as in a release of frustration). This typology is useful from the point of view that it clearly includes motivations for all acts resulting in property damage where there is an element of will.

What is clear is that the causes are complex human responses which are unique to each vandal and to various situations. Because understanding the underlying behavioural aspects of acts of vandalism may be a difficult task (made almost impossible because very few vandals are apprehended), out of necessity school boards deal with vandalism by treating the symptoms; nonetheless, those underlying causes must be kept in mind if vandalism is to be significantly reduced.

III Extent of Vandalism

What is known about the extent of vandalism in the schools? Is it considered to be a serious problem? Should it be?

The chart, Appendix C, shows the reported costs of vandalism for the school boards examined. While these figures indicate that the costs of vandalism vary greatly from board to board, they are not satisfactory indicators for comparative purposes because they reflect a variety of reporting methods. They also do not take into consideration the rate of inflation which might present a very different cost picture when comparing a major item of vandalism such as glass. In order to get any picture of what the extent of vandalism is, it is important to understand what each board is reporting.

The actual procedures undertaken to report incidents do not vary greatly among the boards. Ordinarily, caretakers make damage or repair reports to principals and principals are left to finally decide whether the damage is due to vandalism. Then principals are required to forward reports to their boards, usually through a regional supervisor. The key factor which accounts for the variation is what is considered to be damage due to an act of vandalism.

1. H.E.W. Report quoted in Architecture Research Office, Analysis to Reduce Property Damage in Schools, Harvard University, Cambridge; 1975 p. 111-8
2. S. Cohen, "Politics of Vandalism", in New Society, Vol. 12 (December 1968), pp. 872-878

The Toronto Board of Education reports as vandalism any damage for which 50% or more of the total damage was the result of a malicious act. (Thus, for example, painting of bathrooms where there is a great deal of graffiti might be charged to vandalism even though painting is a normal maintenance procedure.)

East York's "vandalism" report is in fact a "summary of equipment losses (including accompanying vandalism)" report. Glass breakage is noted separately, although no formal records are kept. The reporting procedure in the schools demands that all items which need replacement (due to theft or damage) must be reported, but that otherwise damage costs become part of general maintenance costs. Where damage can be rectified by the school, it is never reported as vandalism. A new accounting procedure has been implemented for 1976 which should produce more detailed reports; still, only large costs for replacement are likely to be reported, and not more subtle types of damage.

The York Board of Education keeps comprehensive reports which they maintain for insurance reasons. In addition to separating glass breakage from other damage, all damage is reported to the Board as accidental, careful, wilful or vandalism (malicious). In order to have any damage repaired or equipment replaced, it must be reported.

The Scarborough Board of Education keeps record of glass breakage as an indicator of vandalism. Because it is an objective measurement, it leaves no room for arbitrary decisions, and, while, of course, some glass breakage is not a result of vandalism, in the long run, it is considered to provide a good indication of the extent of vandalism. Other means of reporting damage are not used because the Board feels that it is difficult to isolate vandalism from other causes of damage, although all damage/replacement is reported.

In Etobicoke, all damage is supposed to be reported to the Board of Education as window breakage, malicious damage (defined as intent to do damage), theft, burglary or arson. Together, these costs are considered to represent the extent of vandalism.

North York changed its reporting procedure in 1976, and for this reason no earlier data are available. The new procedure provides that any damage which is the result of malicious mischief is recorded as vandalism. The Board has tried to standardize procedures for differentiating between accidents and vandalism. Thus, for example, if one window is broken, it is considered to be an accident, whereas if more than one is broken, it is recorded as vandalism. Similarly, in the case of broken thermostats, where there is damage around it, it is considered to be vandalism whereas if there is no damage, it is recorded as an accident.

The Separate School Board of Metro Toronto includes as vandalism the cost of repairing or replacing all damaged property, including damage caused by accidents. For reporting purposes, vandalism is broken down into glazing, office equipment, building (damage to internal and external surfaces), audio-visual equipment, instructional equipment, furniture and fire.

The Hamilton Board of Education records any damage which occurs outside of the school as burglary, vandalism or glass breakage, although all three categories are considered to be vandalism. Internal damage is reported in general maintenance, but is not included in any record of vandalism.

The Peel Board of Education considers any damage which is the result of irresponsible behaviour to be vandalism. As a result, any damage beyond normal wear and tear is included as vandalism costs, at the principal's discretion.

We can see that the reporting methods differ in terms of the definition of vandalism and the amount of discretion exercised by principals. In view of this variation, it is difficult to ascertain the extent of vandalism in the schools. This is certainly not to suggest that there is a hidden school vandalism crisis. It does suggest that the extent of vandalism is unlikely to be adequately reflected by the extent of reported incidents.

Nonetheless, it is obvious that vandalism is a problem. The reported cost alone in Metro is \$1,775,200 for 1976 and this takes no account of social costs. Educators and police in all of the municipalities (with the exception of educators in East York) indicated that it is a problem of various degrees of seriousness. Most educators feel that it is not an increasing problem, but rather that it is being more extensively reported than in the past.

At the same time, there is little doubt that society is willing to accept some cost of vandalism, if only because the cost of prevention at some point becomes higher than the cost of the damage. Still, unless it can be demonstrated that the extent of vandalism is at that "no return on investment" point, in times of education cutbacks, vandalism is a cost which must be reduced.

IV Reducing Vandalism

A. Approaches & Methods

There seem to be three approaches towards combating vandalism.

The first, and most common approach is to attack symptoms, especially by setting up deterrents to vandalism, such as those suggested by Sections I, II and III, Chart 1. It should be noted that these are means of dealing with vandalism, not solutions to the problem. Nonetheless, they do protect the public investment, raise the morale of teachers and students, and may help to improve the climate for learning.

The second approach is to attack the causes of vandalism by reducing the motivation for committing the acts. Examples of this approach are found in Section IV of the chart which follows:

The third and ideal approach is the comprehensive approach dealing with both symptoms and causes. The outstanding example of this approach in this area is the City of Mississauga Task Force on Vandalism. Formed to determine what steps were needed to reduce the level of vandalism in the City of Mississauga, it brought together representatives from the Peel Board of Education, the Peel Regional Police, the business community, the social service agencies and the media to deal with the problem of vandalism. Background studies were conducted using data collected by the regional police and the board of education. Using these studies, the Task Force made a series of recommendations which took into account the fact that the identities of the vast majority of vandals remains unknown. These recommendations included the adoption of a standard vandalism damage report, the development of a city-wide visual display to make the community aware of the vandalism problem, and the introduction of a restitution programme whereby apprehended vandals would have to work to repair or repay their damage.

CHART 1

METHOD	PURPOSE	ADVANTAGE	DISADVANTAGE
I PHYSICAL DESIGN			
1. acrylic coating on windows (i. e. lexan)	-reduce likelihood of vandalism -reduce cost of vandalism	-difficult to break	-melts and scratches easily -more expensive than glass -may be a hazard during a fire
2. window grills	-reduce likelihood of vandalism -reduce cost of windows	-not as expensive as lexan -more effective where windows are within reach	-gives school a "jail-like" appearance
3. no exterior windows	-prevent vandalism	-no windows to break	-can be a very bleak atmosphere for learning
4. eliminate ornamental work	-reduce cost -reduce likelihood of vandalism	-not costly -eliminates opportunity for vandalism	

METHOD	PURPOSE	ADVANTAGE	DISADVANTAGE
5. eliminate appendages which give ready access to the roof	-reduce likelihood of vandalism	-prevents access to building and exterior equipment such as air conditioning motors, elevator shafts, etc.	
6. outdoor lighting; parking areas; spot lights in dark alcoves; street lighting	-reduces likelihood of vandalism	-reduces obvious places for vandals to hide -passers-by can see targets of vandals	
7. fences: allow access to children but not to cars	-reduces likelihood of vandalism -reduces cost of vandalism	-reduces chance for non-students to enter school grounds -also, prevents damage that can be done with a car	
8. providing access to drinking fountains and washrooms without going into building	-reduces likelihood of vandalism	-children using playground won't be tempted to break into building to use facilities	-facilities themselves subject to vandalism
9. solid exterior doors with adequate hardware	-reduces cost of vandalism -reduces likelihood of vandalism	-makes access into building more difficult -reduces need to replace broken hardware after halfhearted attempts at entry	
10. cafeterias and administrative offices should be visible from the street	-reduce likelihood of vandalism	-passers-by can see most usual target of vandals	

METHOD	PURPOSE	ADVANTAGE	DISADVANTAGE
11. cafeteria kitchen should be separated and locked from dining area	-reduce likelihood of vandalism	-makes entry into kitchen, where "valuables" kept more difficult	
12. use damage-proof materials	-reduce likelihood of vandalism	-makes it difficult to damage through carelessness	
II SECURITY-LEGAL			
1. surveillance systems	-to reduce likelihood of vandalism -to catch vandals		
(a) electric detector (infra-red "light" beam)		-easy to install -effective	-easily detected
(b) sound detector		-easily installed and hidden	-can't be used in noisy areas or where machinery located
(c) vibration detector		-easily installed and hidden -can adjust sensitivity	-can't be used in area which vibrates due to machinery
(d) high frequency motion-detector (area filled with sonic waves)		-detects all movement -can spot stay behinds and intruders	-can't use in drafty area -can't use room while "on"
(e) closed circuit T.V.		-shows exactly what's going on	-expensive -need a "surveillance" camera

METHOD	PURPOSE	ADVANTAGE	DISADVANTAGE
(f) switches, tapes, foil, mats (used to set up circuit when circuit broken, alarm rings)		-reliable -inexpensive	-perimeter protection -not enough in itself
(g) capacitance detector (wire which radiates an electromagnetic field. Person coming near, detunes field)		-easy to install and hide -janitor can work in room while "on"	
(h) radio-frequency motion detector (RF waves fill area)		-very penetrating, therefore, intruder can't hide in closets, etc. -can use anywhere	-can't work in area when "on" -when used outside, can set off alarm due to passers-by
(i) remote door control		-saves janitor's time	
(j) taut-wire detector (use on top of fences)		-hard to spot -inexpensive	-needs back-up of another system
2. signs (i.e. "this school is patrolled" or "trespassers will be prosecuted" or "no \$ left in this school")			

METHOD	PURPOSE	ADVANTAGE	DISADVANTAGE
3. patrols	-reduce likelihood of vandalism -catch vandals		-expensive
(a) rotating mail delivery		-no additional cost beyond cost of mail delivery	
(b) staggered custodians hours		-same	
(c) hired security guards		-will apprehend vandals	-expensive
(d) police patrols		-will apprehend vandals	-most police forces too short-staff to make this viable
(e) vandal-watch ¹ trailer project		-lower-cost than security guards	-must weed out undesirable participants
(f) patrol dogs		-reduces no. of personnel needed to patrol large campuses	-expensive
(g) community vigilance programme ²		-low cost -may have positive effects on community "spirit" as a whole	-difficult to create the enthusiasm needed

1. This programme was pioneered by the Elk Grove (California) Unified School District.
2. An outstanding example of success in this sort of programme is in Anoka, Minn. An elementary school construction site was being extensively vandalized. The school board sent a mailer to households neighbouring the site. The mailer explained that vandalism was threatening education plus adding to the pressure to increase taxes. Not only did vandalism stop — insurance rates were reduced.

METHOD	PURPOSE	ADVANTAGE	DISADVANTAGE
6. procedures			
(a) teachers carry own keys instead of having a central key "board"	-reduces likelihood of vandalism	-no keys to tempt vandals	
(b) keep lights on in the school on a rotating basis at night	-reduce likelihood of vandalism	-inexpensive way to make vandals think someone is in the building	
(c) all visitors to main office	-to reduce likelihood of vandalism	-can control access of non-authorized persons on school property	-may create tensions in schools where parents want direct access to children
(d) mark all property	-facilitate recovery	-can identify property	
III MAINTENANCE			
1. repairs done quickly	-reduce cost of vandalism	-discourages further damage	
2. remove stones from school yards	-reduce likelihood of vandalism	-removes an opportunity to break windows	
3. student janitors	-reduce cost of vandalism	-student learn cost of vandalism -peer pressure	
IV POLICY			
1. community involvement	-to reduce likelihood of vandalism	-creates an atmosphere where child need not express his feelings through acts of vandalism	-requires a great deal of co-operation and patience

METHOD	PURPOSE	ADVANTAGE	DISADVANTAGE
4. prosecution ¹	-retribution to reduce likelihood of vandalism	-strong deterrent -brings problem into the open	-needs the co-operation of the school board, the principals, and the community; not always offered
5. restitution	-restitution -teach responsibility	-can be asked for without prosecution, or as part of sentencing ² -can be cash payment by parents and/or student or student can "work off the debt"	-need co-operation of school board, principals, community, police and judiciary -low recovery rate

1. When dealing with an act of vandalism, the Metro police have the following procedure: if an act occurs and is discovered outside of school hours, the police will initiate an investigation and follow-through; if the act occurs and is discovered during school hours, the police only become involved when called in by the school principal. Once the incident is reported, a uniformed officer will commence the investigation. The depth of the investigation will depend upon the level of co-operation received from the principal. If the police suspect someone and if the suspect is an adult, the "usual" legal process is initiated; however, if the suspect is a juvenile, Youth Bureau officers take over the case. Plain clothed officers will continue the investigation. Every contact made with the child is reported to the parents. The officers try to work with the parents, and to find motivations for the act. Where there has been a confession if it is the first offence, the Youth Bureau will generally caution the culprit, try to make arrangements for restitution, and set up a file on the child which is destroyed when he reaches age 16. If it is a second or subsequent offence, the matter is usually brought before the court.

2. When juveniles are found guilty, the judge can impose and enforce a number of conditions on the youth as the terms of probation (s.30(1)(g), Juvenile Delinquents Act) or, in instances where negligence can be proven on their part, the judge may order restitution by the parents (s.22(1)).

METHOD	PURPOSE	ADVANTAGE	DISADVANTAGE
(a) block parents			
(b) parent participation in the classroom			
(c) media			
(d) stress parental responsibility			
(e) development of recreational facilities and programmes			
(f) use schools after hours			
2. student involvement	-reduce likelihood of vandalism	-see above	
(a) meaningful student council			
(b) student awareness programme			
(c) student incentive programme			
(d) student pride programme			

METHOD	PURPOSE	ADVANTAGE	DISADVANTAGE
3. involvement of school in students' concerns	-reduce likelihood of vandalism	-see previous page	
(a) meaningful curriculum		-reduces frustration	
(b) interesting presentations		-reduces boredom	
(c) extra curricular activities		-reduces number of idle hours	
(d) teachers encouraged to be interested in students			
(e) development of schools that do not emphasize diplomas for students who cannot cope with the regular system		-deals with the problem of the individual	
(f) counselling			
(g) values courses		-process of understanding own values -children should come to realize that vandalism is wrong and its to blame	

Recreation and Parks Committee of the Borough Council, the Board is in the process of integrating a "values" programme into existing courses.

The Etobicoke Board of Education has instituted a number of programmes to reduce vandalism. These include "Operation Brand" -- an effort to ensure that all Board property is properly marked; "Operation Vigilance" -- a programme to encourage school neighbours to "keep an eye" on school grounds; security patrols where each location is checked twice every 24 hours; the well-publicized installation of a surveillance system; night deliveries to schools; close co-operation with the police and a policy of prosecuting all apprehended vandals; the use of lexan windows. A further study on how to deal with vandalism is now underway.

North York Board of Education is also presently looking at ways to combat vandalism costs. Preventive measures now in effect include: lexan windows; screens on windows to rooms which contain valuable equipment; thermostats are covered; outside lights have "unsmashable" covers; removal of implements which allow access to roofs; hard-to-damage wall and ceiling surfaces as well as bathroom fixtures; 2-3 shifts of caretakers. The Board has installed electronic surveillance equipment in the schools; but, they prefer not to publicize this as they do not wish to alert vandals. The Board policy is to prosecute vandals although, as is probably the experience in other school boards, the principals are reluctant to prosecute, preferring to handle incidents internally and making arrangements for restitution if they can. The Board is also in the process of setting up a "programme" whereby for every dollar a school saves from vandalism, it can get back 50¢ up to \$12,500 to apply to other special projects.

The Separate School Board of Metropolitan Toronto is using many of the "standard" preventive techniques. They have installed protective screens on windows, local intrusion alarms in sensitive areas and electronic surveillance equipment in schools with high levels of vandalism. Lexan is sometimes used to replace broken windows. The police are called in when the principal feels it is warranted (usually when there is a forced entry). Similarly, the discretion as to when to demand restitution is left to the individual principal and is rarely invoked.

In an attempt to understand and treat the causes of vandalism, the Board has made a particular effort to ensure that apprehended vandals see school psychologists.

Like other boards, the Hamilton Board of Education is presently forming a committee to study further ways of combating vandalism. Preventive measures which have been taken to date include: the installation of surveillance equipment in almost all of the schools in conjunction with a protection service which responds to all calls; improved interior and exterior lighting; the design of new schools with vandalism prevention in mind; the tagging of

1. The Scarborough Board of Education rejected the idea of instituting a course on values just like mathematics or history. Instead, the Board has developed guidelines for teachers to assist them in imparting societal values while teaching the regular curriculum.

B. Programmes and Policies

What kind of approach is being taken by the school boards under study and which methods are they using to combat vandalism?

The City of Toronto Board of Education over the last five years has developed a comprehensive system for dealing with the "symptoms" of vandalism. They have installed automatic surveillance equipment, unbreakable glass windows, and window safety screens, encouraged up-to-date inventories and the lock-up of equipment and good maintenance, and have improved interior and outdoor lighting. As for dealing with the causes, the Board has made efforts to encourage community and student involvement. They have maintained neighbourhood schools, instituted "curriculum" changes such as programmes designed to make students aware of their physical surroundings, and tried to maintain a good relationship with the police,¹ the school and the community. School board officials feel that the surveillance system, good maintenance and a good community relationship have been the most effective tools against vandalism.

The East York Board of Education does not consider vandalism to be a serious problem and considers this to be "a testament to the success of the Board's positive initiatives".²

However, the Board has installed and publicized an electronic surveillance system which is as much a fire detection mechanism and a "watch" for utility functions as a means of vandalism prevention. School design methods, as well as a programme of preventative maintenance are considered to be effective preventative methods.

East York has also developed an extensive programme to encourage good community relations. At a personal level, it has developed a Spontaneous Art programme to facilitate children in acting out their hostilities.

The York Board of Education has used the traditional preventative techniques such as the installation of electronic surveillance equipment, the marking of all Board equipment for easy identification, the use of Tescan where window breakage is high and the staggering of caretakers' hours. In addition, the Board encourages principals to notify the police where vandals have been apprehended or where there has or may have been forced entry (i.e. where windows have been broken) and to demand restitution. "Community involvement" is an area left up to individual principals.

The Scarborough Board of Education has used "preventative" techniques to reduce vandalism such as the installation of an audio-monitoring system, an active policy to prosecute trespassers and require restitution from vandals, publicizing the extent of vandalism and the installation of an alarm system. The Board considered the idea of implementing a "vandalism fund" programme in the schools but dropped the idea because it was too difficult to administer in a just manner. By way of dealing with causes, on the recommendation of the

1. See p. 11, footnote 1 *infra* for discussion of police procedures.

2. Letter dated August 8, 1977, Mr. Phillips, Trustee, East York Board of Education.

all Board equipment and its entry on a computer inventory; the placement of custodians in "problem" schools; a public relations campaign to make students, staff, and parents aware of the problem as well as householders who live close to schools with high vandalism rate; the use of appropriate materials including lexan windows. The Board has also tried to work closely with the police by prosecuting apprehended vandals who do not make restitution.

The Peel Board of Education has taken many of the usual measures for preventing vandalism such as the use of hard-to-damage materials, the marking of Board property and the installation of surveillance equipment (like North York, unpublicized in order not to alert the vandal). In addition, the Peel Board of Education has undertaken a number of innovative steps towards reducing school vandalism. They have developed a school display with the objective of showing students that vandalism is a crime and to teach them what their responsibilities are. In one school they even tried the installation of blackboards in graffiti-prone washrooms. Most important, however, has been the development of a restitution programme through the co-operation of the Peel Regional Police, the juvenile court judges, the school board and the community. Through this programme, apprehended vandals arrange to make restitution to their victims by "working-off" the value of the damage caused by their malicious acts. Where a vandal is brought to court, this arrangement may also be made at the time of sentencing.

As Chart I indicates, there is a great variety of possible methods that can be used to reduce the cost and incidence of vandalism. The experience in the areas studied has been that generally, symptom-oriented methods are used (items I, II, III on Chart I) as a defence against vandalism and that many of these techniques must be used together to be effective in reducing vandalism. For example, the installation of an electronic surveillance system is not a sufficient effort. It must be accompanied by a programme to identify all board property, and a policy of prosecuting apprehended vandals and/or demanding restitution.

On the other hand, it is only rarely that the school boards have also taken the offensive and attempted to deal with the underlying causes of vandalism.

V Conclusions

A. Problems

This *Topic* points to a number of problems which arise in any attempt to reduce school vandalism.

1. The extent of reported vandalism depends on the definition used, and there is no single agreed upon definition.
2. There is no uniformly adopted, comprehensive reporting method. The uniform adoption of a reporting method would
 - (a) result in a more accurate record of the nature and extent of the school vandalism problem

- (b) facilitate the evaluation of potential and implemented methods for dealing with vandalism
 - (c) serve as a means of monitoring the problem and provide an early warning system for future problems
 - (d) increase the accountability over school board budgets with respect to maintenance and repair costs
 - (e) provide a valuable sociological indicator
3. There is a lack of impetus for good record-keeping by school boards and principals.

In the past, most school boards have been quite lax in the demands made for vandalism reports from their principals. Even where principals are required to submit reports, there is a wide variation in what each principal considers to be vandalism, and this is reflected in what is reported. Finally, principals in some instances may be reluctant to report the true extent of vandalism because they fear school boards will interpret high vandalism as a sign that they have been derelict in their responsibility under the Education Act to supervise their schools or, that they have failed to instill societal values in their students. These are obstacles to a full accounting of the costs of vandalism.

4. School boards and principals do not always give full support to the police.

Most of the school boards have a policy in favour of co-operating with the police and in fact, administrators had nothing but praise for the Youth Bureau; however, principals have the discretion to decide when to bring an incident to the attention of the police. Principals may decide against involving the police for a number of reasons: to avoid the extra paper work; to preserve a rapport with a student who is a suspect, especially when the school has the appropriate social services to cope with the vandal's problem; and to prevent alienating the community.

In many circumstances, this situation presents problems. The police officers who deal with vandalism on a daily basis seem content when school principals deal with incidents successfully, and make arrangements for restitution where the identity of the vandal is known so long as major incidents are brought to their attention; however there are three situations with which they are unhappy. The first is that principals tend not to report "missing" goods. This makes recovery and return more difficult, especially when items have been "gone" for several years. These officers seem to feel that if all vandalism was reported, it would improve their ability to deal with it. Secondly, principals will often try to handle an incident by themselves, only to discover that they are unable to. When the police are finally called in, it

is too late because memories fade and alibis are developed. The third difficulty is that even when principals do call in the police, the level of co-operation that the police can expect varies. And, because principals prefer that students not be interviewed at the school, the co-operation of the principal can be critical in an investigation.

5. Many communities do not actively support efforts to reduce vandalism in their areas.

School administrators and police officers whom we interviewed felt that there is little support because people do not feel that vandalism is a serious problem. The consequences of this thinking are threefold: parents do not always teach their children that school property belongs to them all and must be treated accordingly; the community is not vigilant in watching schools for signs of intrusion or damage; and principals are not supported in their efforts to reduce vandalism, especially when it involves co-operation with the police.

6. With the exception of the City of Mississauga Task Force, efforts to reduce vandalism in the areas studied have been piecemeal.

The result of the piecemeal approach has been that the causes of vandalism are not treated and there is a tendency to concentrate on one type of solution whereas a great variety of solutions is needed.

B. Recommendations

1. Numerous definitions of vandalism have been proposed, any one of which would serve well. For example, vandalism is:

"the wilful or malicious destruction, injury, disfigurement or defacement of any public or private property, real or personal, without the consent of the owner or person having custody or control of the property in question"

(City of Mississauga Task Force Report)

"the wilful destruction of property where no other crime is involved"

(Youth Services Network Conference on Vandalism)

"any damage which is the result of irresponsible behaviour"

(Board of Education for the Regional Municipality of Peel)

Our preference is for the last definition, because it is simple, it is broad and it places the emphasis on responsible or irresponsible behaviour rather than on difficult-to-determine "wilfulness". It should be noted that this definition is the basis for a recording method, and not a basis for determining criminal liability.

We acknowledge that there may be opposition to the implementation of the definition because records based on it would appear to indicate that vandalism had increased at an alarming rate; however, we feel confident that administrators, the media and the public would recognize that apparently increased costs were due to better record-keeping and not increased vandalism.

2. A comprehensive recording method should be developed and adopted by all of the school boards and in fact by the whole community. Because the "vandalism damage report", developed by the Mississauga Task Force,¹ exists and is being used, it seems to be an appropriate form to use. To be widely used, however, it would have to gain the support and encouragement of Police Commissions, as well as the school boards. This type of support would not be enough, however, to ensure that complete records were received. Because a large part of the existing problem with regard to keeping records is due to the varying use of discretion by those responsible for reporting vandalism, it appears desirable to limit that discretion. The adoption of the "50% formula" used by the City of Toronto would result in more uniform reporting.
3. School boards must be convinced that record-keeping is important, and insist that principals make complete reports. To further this end, the recording method must be simple so as not to cost almost as much in manpower to record as the incident itself cost!
4. The police must assume the responsibility for convincing the school boards of the need for co-operation by showing that the goals of both groups are the same. Part of this process will be, no doubt, to show them that there is no need to be concerned about police procedures, or about police involvement being counter-productive to the aims of the educators. In addition, a common sense procedure should be worked out between the police and school boards for reporting to the police. For instance, those incidents for which police investigation is unlikely to bring any results (i.e. "missing" equipment; window broken outside of school hours) should be reported to the police on a monthly basis. On the other hand, where an investigation might prove fruitful, the police should be notified immediately in accord with the agreed upon procedure.

1. See Appendix A. It should be noted that the name of the vandal, even where known, is not included. This is a property damage report, not a basis for a criminal record.

5. The school boards must make it the responsibility of the principals of individual schools, or family of schools, to enlist the support of the community, and, must support the efforts that principals make. In addition, with the co-operation of the police, and other interested agencies, they must enlist the assistance of the media in an effort to make communities, including their young people, aware of the vandalism problem.
6. The "task force" approach seems to be the most appropriate way to deal with vandalism. People from various institutions, and agencies, as well as those with a general interest and specific knowledge can be brought together to seek solutions and implement them.

Presently, the Youth Services Network in Metro Toronto is setting up a task force to study vandalism using the Mississauga model.

In conclusion, we believe that the following steps should be taken:

- * a definition of vandalism be generally adopted and that preferably it be: "Vandalism is any damage caused by irresponsible behaviour";
- * the Mississauga Task Force "Vandalism Damage Report" be adopted with the City of Toronto "50% formula" as a guideline for implementation;
- * a media campaign be developed to increase the awareness of students and the general public of the costs of vandalism. This should result in a commitment from school boards and principals to keep better records and to report incidents to the police;
- * the police make a greater effort to allay the fears principals have of involving them in incidents of school vandalism;
- * the police make a greater effort to allay the fears school board officials have regarding police involvement in school vandalism incidents.

If measures are taken in these directions, we believe school vandalism, its costs and its social consequences, can be dealt with so as to avoid the possibility of a future vandalism crisis.

APPENDIX A

CITY OF MISSISSAUGA "VANDALISM DAMAGE REPORT"

DETAILS OF INCIDENT

DAY OF INCIDENT		DATE		ADDRESS (LOCATION) Bramalea City Centre
Sun. <input type="checkbox"/> (1)	Wed. <input type="checkbox"/> (4)	04 mm 15 dd 77 yy		
Mon. <input type="checkbox"/> (2)	Thurs. <input type="checkbox"/> (5)	TIME		
Tues. <input type="checkbox"/> (3)	Fri. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (6)	8:00AM-6:00PM <input type="checkbox"/> (1)	6:00PM-8:00AM <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (2)	
Sat. <input type="checkbox"/> (7)		UNKNOWN <input type="checkbox"/> (3)		

TYPE OF DAMAGE	
Glass Breakage <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (1)	Theft <input type="checkbox"/> (6)
Structural <input type="checkbox"/> (2)	Equip. (Non-Vehicle) <input type="checkbox"/> (7)
Outdoor Defacement <input type="checkbox"/> (3)	Vehicle-Indoor <input type="checkbox"/> (8)
Fire <input type="checkbox"/> (4)	-Outdoor <input type="checkbox"/> (9)
Break-In <input type="checkbox"/> (5)	Other (Specify)* <input type="checkbox"/> (0)

TYPE OF PROPERTY			
School Board - Public <input type="checkbox"/> (1)	Residential <input type="checkbox"/> (6)		
- Elementary <input type="checkbox"/> (2)	Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> (7)		
- Separate <input type="checkbox"/> (3)	Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (8)		
- Secondary <input type="checkbox"/> (4)			
Other Public <input type="checkbox"/> (5)			

APPENDIX A (cont'd)

COST OF REPAIR \$ 100.00	WAS PROPERTY INSURED Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> (1) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> (2) No <input type="checkbox"/> (3)	To Police Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (1) No <input type="checkbox"/> (2) To Other (Specify)* Yes <input type="checkbox"/> (1) No <input type="checkbox"/> (2) * <input type="checkbox"/>
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THE OFFENDERS		DISPOSITION OF CASE *	
Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> (1)	Age(s) Sex(s)	Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> (1)	
One Individual <input type="checkbox"/> (2)		Charge <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (2)	
A Group <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (3)	20,23 M	Caution <input type="checkbox"/> (3)	
Previous Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (4)	20,23 M	Restitution <input type="checkbox"/> (4)	
Vandalism? No <input type="checkbox"/> (5)		Other (Specify)* <input type="checkbox"/> (5)	

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

INDIVIDUAL REPORTING INCIDENT	
NAME OF AGENCY REPORTING INCIDENT Peel Regional Police	AGENCY SECTION
Const. Smith	April 20, 1977
REPORTING SIGNATURE	REPORT DATE

APPENDIX B

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APPENDIX C

REPORT OF COSTS OF VANDALISM FOR SCHOOL BOARDS

TORONTO

Enrollment: 93,000
Gross total budget 1977: \$185,000,000

	TOTAL	GLASS BREAKAGE
	Vandalism Costs	
1971	593,500	147,400
1972	608,400	175,700
1973	581,200	160,200
1974	607,500	172,800
1975	684,200	184,400
1976	751,700	199,800

EAST YORK

Enrollment: 14,480
Gross total budget 1977: \$24,762,000

	VANDALISM COSTS	
1974	\$31,000	(includes all glass breakage and equipment losses)
1975	\$41,000	(includes all glass breakage and equipment losses)
1976	\$28,000	(includes glass breakage due to vandalism plus equipment losses)

SCARBOROUGH

Enrollment: 85,000
Gross total budget 1977: \$149,000,000

	GLASS BREAKAGE
1971	118,100
1972	115,100
1973	112,300
1974	177,200
1975	196,900
1976	176,900

YORK

Enrollment: 20,755 (estimated 1977)
Gross total budget 1977: \$41,180,200

	TOTAL	GLASS BREAKAGE
	Vandalism Costs	
1973	54,300	12,500
1974	25,000	12,600
1975	41,600	22,600
1976	47,500	23,800

ETOBICOKE

Enrollment: 52,000
Gross total budget 1977: \$94,783,000

	TOTAL VANDALISM COSTS
1972	193,600
1973	159,200
1974	99,100
1975	1,182,000 (large fire)
1976	138,600

APPENDIX C (cont'd)

NORTH YORK

Enrollment: 93,365
Gross total budget 1977: \$162,557,000

	TOTAL VANDALISM COSTS
1976	450,000

HAMILTON

Enrollment: 46,673
Gross total budget 1977: \$88,284,000 (estimation)

	BURGLARY	VANDALISM	GLASS
1973	25,000	12,500	68,000
1974	22,100	16,700	106,200
1975	20,500	18,600	113,200
1976	29,700	26,500	131,500

METRO SEPARATE SCHOOL BOARD

Enrollment: 91,200
Gross total budget 1977: \$138,000,000

	TOTAL VANDALISM COSTS
1974	211,900
1975	219,600
1976	182,500

PEEL BOARD OF EDUCATION

Enrollment: 79,910
Gross total budget 1977: \$141,049,000

	TOTAL
1974	300,000 + (estimation)
1975	194,000
1976	144,700

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September 1977.

* Principal Author, Evelyn Brown

Membership

CORPORATE

A. E. Ames & Co. Ltd.
Bank of Montreal
Bank of Nova Scotia
Bell Canada
Board of Trade, Metro Toronto
Bovis Corporation Ltd.
Bramalea Consolidated Development
Brascan Limited
Cadillac Fairview Limited
Canada Malting Co. Ltd.
Canada Packers Foundation
Canada Permanent Trust Co.
Canada Wire & Cable Ltd.
Canadian Freehold Properties Ltd.
Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce
Canadian National Railways
Canadian Pacific Railways
Confederation Life
Consumers' Gas Co. Ltd.
Crown Life Insurance Co.
Dofasco Ltd.
Dominion of Canada Gen'l Insurance
Dominion Securities Corp. Ltd.
Donlee Manufacturing Ind. Ltd.
T. Eaton Co.
Falconbridge Nickel Mines Ltd.
Gibbey Canada Ltd.
Group R
GSW Appliances Ltd.
Gulf Realty Co. Ltd.
IBM Canada
The Imperial Life Assurance Co.
of Canada
Imperial Oil Ltd.
INCO Ltd.
Independent Order of Foresters
Jackman Foundation

Kodak Canada Ltd.
John Labatt Ltd.
A. E. LePage Ltd.
Lever Brothers Ltd.
Maclean-Hunter Publishing Co. Ltd.
Manufacturers Life Insurance Co.
Maple Leaf Mills Limited
Marathon Realty Company Ltd.
L. J. McGuinness and Co. Ltd.
Russell J. Morrison
Northern and Central Gas Corp.
Ostrandere Jewellers
Parking Authority of Toronto
Proctor and Gamble of Canada Ltd.
Redpath Industries
The Royal Bank of Canada
Royal Insurance Company
Royal Trust Co.
Samuel Son & Co. Ltd.
Shell Canada Ltd.
Robert Simpson Co.
Simpsons Sears Ltd.
Steel Co. of Canada
Sun Oil Co. Ltd.
The Toronto-Dominion Bank
Toronto Real Estate Board
Toronto Star Ltd.
Trans-Canada Pipe Lines Ltd.
Turner and Porter Funeral Directors Ltd.
Union Carbide Canada Ltd.
Victoria & Grey Trust
Weber Reproductions Ltd.
George Weston Ltd.
Wood Gundy Limited
F. W. Woolworth Limited
Y & R Properties Limited

PROFESSIONAL

Armstrong & Molesworth
Arthur Anderson & Company
Blaney, Pasternak, Smela and Watson
John Bousfield Associates
Mary Collins Consultants Ltd.
Currie, Coopers & Lybrand Ltd.
A. J. Diamond Associates
Dilworth, Secord, Meagher & Assoc.
Govan, Kaminker, Architects
and Planners
Eric Hardy Consulting Ltd.
I.B.I. Group
Jarrett, Gould & Elliott
Mackie & Slavik

Marshall Macklin and Monaghan
Mathers & Haldenby Architects
Murray V. Jones and Associates
Norman Pearson Planning Consultants
Osler, Hoskin and Harcourt
Peat, Marwick and Partners
Price Waterhouse & Co.
Proctor and Redfern Group
P. S. Ross & Partners
Thorne, Riddell & Co.
Weir and Foulds
Woods, Gordon & Co.

GOVERNMENTAL

Burlington
Reg. Mun. of Durham
Borough of East York
Borough of Etobicoke
Township of Gloucester
Reg. Mun. of Hamilton-Wentworth
Kingston
London
Metropolitan Toronto
Ministry of State for Urban Affairs
Ministry of T.E.I.G.A.
Mississauga
Reg. Mun. of Niagara

Borough of North York
Oakville
Ottawa
Reg. Mun. of Ottawa/Carleton
Reg. Mun. of Peel
Richmond Hill
St. Catharines
Sarnia
Sudbury
Toronto
Town of Vaughan
Borough of York
Reg. Mun. of York

LABOUR

Ontario Federation of Labour
Sudbury and District Labour Council

Labour Council of Metropolitan
Toronto