

FOREWORD

In this book Dr. Fibkins does three things. First, he describes many programs designed to keep students from smoking or to help students to quit. Second, he then discusses the objections to and criticisms of these programs. Third, and the most crucial, he offers a number of suggestions designed to improve such programs. I shall limit my remarks to the rationale undergirding his suggestions because it has relevance for educational interventions far beyond the arena of smoking.

For one thing, Dr. Fibkins emphasizes that if his proposals are taken seriously, they will require administrative, pedagogical, and attitudinal changes on the part of school personnel. These changes are not cosmetic; they are not add-ons to the existing order of things. I do not want to exaggerate the degree of change these programs will require but merely to emphasize that they should not be conceived and implemented as if school personnel will not be challenged to change how they think about and react to students. Challenges that require change inevitably arouse resistance in one form or another. The history of intervention programs is characterized by an inability or unwillingness to confront realistically the relationship between challenge and resistance.

From my standpoint, Dr. Fibkins' reasoned discussion and proposal about the role of students in the *development and implementation* of the program is right on target. Students, smokers or not, are resources that must not be ignored. They may be young, inexperienced in many ways, but they do know their peer culture in ways school personnel do not. And, far more often than not, they either want help or they want to help others; they respond willingly to opportunities to be other than students sitting in classrooms passively conforming to what others tell them to think and do. If what Dr. Fibkins proposes is taken seriously, the *practical* consequences for the program will be marked and, I predict, influence other aspects of the school experience of students and school personnel.

This is more than a book about smoking in children of school age. It is a book addressed to school personnel: how they must think and act in relation to a significant health problem. It is not a problem of their making, it is not a problem they alone can solve, but it is one they can do something about. This book points them in the right direction.

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