

## School Shootings!

In the wake of the shooting in Florida of Chris Penley at Milwee Middle School in January of this year there is a renewed interest in shootings that occur on school grounds.

In this incident at Milwee, Penley pointed a gun, later to be determined to be fake at a SWAT officer, resulting in the 15 year old being killed. Was this an incident of "suicide by cop", quite possibly. We will return to this later in this storey.

Further examining of the statistics from a 2005 report from the National Center for Education Statistics showed this.

Between 1992 and 2002 nine times a person was killed nationwide by "legal intervention" on school property. Which translates to when an officers was found justified in using deadly force. The report did not specify if students were the nine persons killed.

During that period including the nine deaths there were 462 violent deaths—including 261 homicides and 55 suicides.

According to Schoolsecurity.org, which is an organization run by Kenneth Trump nationally recognized expert on school security and safety in 2003-2004 there were 49 school related violent deaths.

They included the following breakdown:

- Shootings.....23
- Suicides .....5
- Murder-Suicide ..6
- Fight related .....4
- Stabbing .....10
- Other .....1

According to his study these incidents including incidents that occurred inside or on school property including private and parochial. Occurred on the way or from a school session, while attending school or a clear result of school related incident.



In regards to the January 14, 2006 incident in Longwood Florida, Penley brought a pellet gun which resembled a 9mm handgun in his backpack to school. A scuffle occurred between Penley and another student when the pellet gun was observed. When Penley forced the stu-

dent into a closet and then left, he began walking around the school with the gun.

School Security and a School Resource Officer responded to the scene and within a few minutes over 40 officers including SWAT team and negotiators arrived on the scene.

Penley was later followed into a bathroom near to full classrooms of students. Negotiators tried unsuccessfully to speak with Penley.

Penley made statements that he was going to kill himself or die while roaming the school.

A few minutes later Penley crossed the hallway and pointed a gun at a Deputy, resulting the Deputy shooting the boy.

According to friends of Penley he was a victim of bullying by other students and in particular had voiced problems about a potential fight with another student.

This incident once again illustrates the need for a comprehensive approach to bullying, including outreach, education and awareness. This tragedy could possibly have been averted.

## A reminder about Needs

In a previous volume there was a book review in regards to gang members living at home with their mothers while they continued to sell drugs and work a minimum wage job to pay the bills. What was clearly identified in that book was that drug dealers at the street level are not making millions of dollars and that long term benefits do not exist.

But what many of us also learned from that book and the research that was conducted by Abraham Maslow's was that in all things "need" is an important motivator in all things.

For those who have not seen Maslow's Hierarchy of needs here they are.

1. Psychological: hunger, thirst, bodily

comforts, etc.

2. Safety and security; out of danger
3. Belongingness and love: affiliation with others, being accepted.
4. Esteem: to achieve, to be competent, gang approval
5. Cognitive: to know, to understand and explore
6. Aesthetic: symmetry, order and beauty
7. Self-Actualization: to find self-fulfillment and realize one's potential
8. Self-Transcendence: to connect to something beyond the ego and to help others find self fulfillment and realize their potential.

Many of America's youth have so many of these issues going on that they are not apparent, beyond the first needs of hunger, thirst and food. If we examine the remain-

der we learn that young people desire all of these at the same time, with urgent immediacy.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs are broken down further into deficiency needs and growth needs. If the deficiency needs are met then the person will seek out the growth needs. Deficiency needs are items 1 through 4 and growth needs are items 5 through 8.

We must seek to inspire young people to seek out and learn about themselves in items one through four first, guiding them as they move through these areas and then allowing them to move into items 5 through 8 on their own, to learn their own path through trial and error,