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—Dennis Raimi
high school senior

Seniors react to Dukakis, Bush debate

By Casey Hans
staff writer

The talk Monday was about the strengths and weaknesses of the men who would be president as Farmington High government teacher Michael Hayek prompted discussion about Sunday's presidential debates.

"They ripped on each other," "Dukakis is a better speaker," "I personally like George Bush — he's better qualified."

The class of Farmington High seniors reacted to the televised question-and-answer session Sunday night between Vice President George Bush, the Republican candidate, and Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis, the Democratic candidate.

Questions were directed by selected members of the national

press corps; replies and rebuttals from the two candidates were timed. An estimated 100-million viewers tuned in.

National polls this week will determine which candidate "won," although the Farmington High students who watched agreed the debate would not influence voters one way or the other. Many of the students said they watched only a portion of the debate, or not at all due to time conflicts.

JENNIFER SMITH said she planned to catch up on the debates this week, but couldn't watch Sunday night because she was working. "A lot of people were coming in after the debate and talking about it," she said.

In general, most students appeared disgusted by the personal jabs the two men made at each other.



Farmington High government teacher Michael Hayek (left) and his class of seniors discussed Sunday's presidential debate

"Make fun of each other. It's all they did," said Dennis Raimi. "Every time you turned to it, people (the audience) were laughing. What was this, a comedy?"

Teacher Hayek noted that "the audience was rude to them too, especially to Dukakis."

But overall student discussion focused not on how the candidates fared, but about some of the issues raised: Soviet/U.S. relations, the American Civil Liberties Union, abortion, defense spending and the nation's economy.

"What happens in a situation where the parents can't take care of the child?" said Dennis Higgins, questioning the reasoning in the abortion debate. The class was split on their opinion on the hotly contested issue.

THEY ALSO discussed the physical aspects of the debate: how the

candidates dressed, how questions were formulated, the difference in the candidates' heights and how they compensated with differing podium heights, and varying camera angles used.

Scott Pasini said that although he thought Dukakis presented himself well, he supported Bush. He also said "Bush was better looking — well-groomed."

Hayek explained that the conservative look, with a bit of television makeup, was how most candidates approached debates. "Did you notice their clothing? They always wear a white shirt and a dark blue or gray suit. Very conservative," he added.

Hayek called Sunday's debate "dead even" and predicted the upcoming debates with vice presidential candidates would be "another dirty debate."

and its impact. Student Dennis Raimi (right) thought the candidates' jabs at each other were unnecessary.



Dennis Higgins



Scott Pasini

Council sets child abuse prevention month

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ed Kielpinski to make the prevention of child abuse his cause.

"It just bothered me," he said. "Most kids are scapegoats for parents who can't deal with stress. Child abuse breeds child abuse. Some of these children, should they happen to grow up ... beat their wives ... pets."

As part of his effort to increase awareness, Kielpinski last week toured the St. Vincent & Sarah

Fisher Center at 12 Mile and Inkster to gain an understanding of what at least one local facility is doing to help abused and neglected children.

"There's a great deal more recognition of child abuse," said Catherine Lamb, Sarah Fisher Home program director. "People have now been sensitized to reporting it."

Five years ago, Lamb said, children entered residential care with troubles and problems that had to be investigated for their cause. "Now we're finding as children

are coming into the residential care, there has been physical, sexual abuse substantiated prior to their coming in. Ninety percent of them coming in, it's been reported."

THE SARAH Fisher Home provides care and treatment for abused, neglected and emotionally disturbed children ages 5-14. The children live in groups of 12 in one of five cottages at the 12 Mile and Inkster facility.

"We provide intensive experience in supervision, therapy helping them

to heal old wounds," Lamb said.

The goal of the residential program is to return the children to permanent family settings. "Parents of many of the children themselves have not learned good parenting skills," Lamb said. Attempts are made to work with the parents of the children in residential care. "When children are able to go home, we work in therapy with them," she added.

But there are some families where parents are not available for their

children. These children either enter foster or group homes or are adopted by other families, Lamb added.

Concerned about situations where newborn babies are abused — often through ignorance — Kielpinski also was given a tour of the facility's prenatal and residential maternity program (Marillac Hall), the teen mother and infant program (Louise) and the young mother and infant program (Lancaster/Gordon group homes).

PREGNANT TEENS and teen

mothers are taught how to care for their babies the proper way. They also are required to attend school and gain a job skill.

Many of the teens have little or no family support and must learn how to take care of themselves and their babies properly, said Jackie Kelsay, St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center community relations director.

The teens learn parenting skills that it is hoped will help prevent abuse and neglect such as that suffered by Jubilee Holloway.

Police chief says Hills has child abuse cases

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Farmington Hills is not without its child abuse problems, but national averages still have it beat.

"Farmington Hills does not have any worse of a problem ... but there is a problem out there," Farmington Hills police Chief William Dwyer said.

So far in 1988, 17 cases of abuse or neglect have been reported in Farmington Hills. That's compared to 40 in 1987, 25 in 1985, 27 in 1984 and 14 in 1983.

"The police department does not have the primary responsibility in these cases," Dwyer said.

People call either police or the state Department of Social Services. The DSS, Dwyer said, is required under the state's Child Protection Law to begin investigating a child abuse or neglect report 24 hours after it's reported.

In Oakland County, 3,699 child abuse and neglect cases are expected to be reported by year's end. That's compared to 3,587 in 1986-87, 3,845 in 1985-86 and 3,670 in 1984-85.

National statistics show the full spectrum of increasing child abuse and neglect — mostly by parents, step-parents, guardians, grandparents, other relatives and friends.

MORE THAN 2,000 children die each year in the United States. That means that six children die each day or one every four hours. The public is reporting more cases of abuse and neglect. But for every reported incident, it's assumed about 300 cases go unreported, Dwyer said.

The state Child Protection Law protects anyone who makes a report or assists in making a report of actual or suspected abuse or neglect from civil or criminal liability, he said.

Catherine Lamb, Sarah Fisher



William Dwyer

Home program director, believes statistics show child abuse is increasing and more people are reporting it.

Child abuse, she said, tends to increase during periods of high unemployment and poverty. "There's a loss of self-esteem. These situations make people respond more stressfully."

Dwyer presented characteristics of the abuser: abuses drugs and alcohol; was abused as a child; uses "harsh, unreasonable discipline which is inappropriate to the child's age, transgressions and conditions."

Abusers also offer unconvincing

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—William Dwyer
Hills police chief

and contradictory explanations or have no explanation for a child's injury. Though the abuser may seem concerned about the child, they often "see the child as bad, evil, a monster or witch," Dwyer added.

IN ADDITION to concern for the abused child, Lamb said there must also be concern for the cycle of abuse. Abused children grow up to become abusers. For example, 80 percent of prisoners in state prisons were abused children, Dwyer said.

"Most children who have been abused become abusers themselves unless there's been some intervention," Lamb said.

But there are answers. "If we're going to change things we have to accept the responsibility of how we're going to interrupt the abuse cycle," Lamb said.

Services are available for parents to learn how to parent and how to handle stress and difficulties that could lead parents to lash out at children.

Hot lines, appropriate day care and Parent Anonymous are programs that can help parents, Lamb and Dwyer said.

"If people can't cope well, there is the danger of children experiencing abuse," Lamb added.

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