

# Elementary school pupils discuss booze, drugs

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"No big deal," one boy said. The others added. Jenny wrote on the board: "Marijuana should be legalized. Alcohol should be illegal."

THE CLASS responded. Marijuana "messes you up," one boy said. Another student was against lowering the drinking age because kids might "get carried away and drink too much." They were all in favor of drug education programs.

"What are people called who take drugs?" Jenny asked. "Dummies," one said. "Burrouts," another said. But, Jenny cautioned, "They're not bad people. They're just confused."

Having high school students talk about drugs, Farrar said, is "effective because they're like these kids' older brothers and sisters."

BOTH JENNY and Brian agreed that the kids, especially sixth graders, need someone "to tell them what was really going to happen in junior high."

'What are people called who take drugs?' Jenny asked. 'Dummies,' one youngster said. 'Burrouts,' another said.

"They have lots of questions," Jenny said. Farrar said it is hard to evaluate the effects of such a drug program.

"The immediate response is favorable," said Farrar who is now in the process of tabulating evaluations, pre-tests, and post-tests.

Drug programs have to fight the powerful forces of peer pressure and signals like "seductive" beer commercials, said Farrar, who taught psychology for eight years before heading the

drug program three years ago. Farrar believes in the past 10 years there has been "a shift in the drug problem. The more spectacular aspects have disappeared," Farrar said.

RECALLING THE days when stu-

dents tried LSD and ambulances rushed to schools, Farrar said, "There's no high visibility today but the problem is worse."

Drugs are becoming part of the life style for some of the youth, he said.

"It's easier for them to carry six pills in their purses than a six-pack," he added.

"Drugs have become a chronic problem. The chronic behavior is more dangerous because it becomes ingrained and leads to adult problems," Farrar said.



Fifth-grader Steve Hamby of Livonia's Roosevelt Elementary School applies peer pressure to classmate Derak Barbane as part of a drug education program.

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according to Carlos Murphy.  
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