



Concerned parent: Cynthia Rose, who has children at Warner and Highmeadow, speaks at the meeting as school board trustee Jack Cotton (back row, right) listens.



All about trauma: During the meeting, Diane Abel of the Michigan Head Injury Alliance speaks about brain injuries.

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... before it gets any larger than it is." The meeting was the result of two fighting incidents in the Farmington schools, including one Dec. 8 at Farmington High in which a student was hospitalized with a concussion. The boy's mother, Joanne LaFleur, was instrumental in forming Citizens Against Violence, which invited an expert on closed head injuries and SOSAD. Goal: Stop violence Martin is a spokesman for SOSAD, which was formed by Clementine Barfield in 1987 after her son was killed. The Detroit-based organization's goal is to stop violence. Many welcomed Martin's call. A few seemed to question the need to have outsider SOSAD speak on the subject, though. "How do you know how many fights go on in schools?" asked

one student. "... The students go there. They know how many fights there are and who's in it. Why do you come here and say there's so many fights?" Building and Student Services director Don Cowan was present, as were board members Helen Prutow, Susan Rennels and Jack Cotton. Also attending were Farmington acting public safety director Gary Goss, along with Thomas Godwin and Duane Fox from the Farmington Hills Police. Low self-esteem Martin cited low self-esteem as a primary factor in many altercations. Fighting, he added, is a self-defeating behavior. He attributed a lack of self-esteem in children to many things: trauma in the home (divorce, alcoholism and abuse) and peer pressure.

Martin said forming a conflict resolution program is a staff. Also, he asked children, parents, administrators and teachers to work together in finding a solution. "Our children are walking tin bombs," Martin said. "... If you don't release the pressure, you're going to explode." Some people used the meeting to vent their feelings. Dave Clnard, a senior at Farmington High, questioned whether publicity surrounding fighting incidents at his school also contributes to the problem. Do more, parents say One parent said the schools need to do more; another accused the schools of ignoring the problem. Cowan responded: "I think the implication is many times we're not doing anything regarding conflict resolution, regarding ap-

ers... We are. Can we do more? You darn right. And we'll probably continue to do more." LaFleur said the purpose of the meeting wasn't to place blame, but to open a dialogue. It did. Afterward, one visibly upset parent showed Martin photos of her son's bruised and swollen eye, resulting from a fight Jan. 8 at Farmington High. Martin offered his support. Another parent wondered if the message was heard by everyone for which it was intended. "I wish the parents of the students who are violent were here," said Linda Kurtz, who has a child at Farmington High. "Those are the ones we need to reach. That's where the core of the problem is." Kurtz said the meeting offered a good forum. Clnard agreed. "I think this started out with the wrong intentions, but ended up doing the right thing."



No finger pointing: Joanne LaFleur, whose son was injured in a school fight, emphasized that the meeting was not to lay blame.

STAFF PHOTOS BY SHARON LEMIEUX

Marillac from page 1A

... vices, said he knew of "no dollar amount cut from Marillac's programs." "They had a small contract with the state — six beds total," Cable said. "When those six were filled, where do you go from there? Other revenues had to be found." Jack Kelsay, St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher's community relations coordinator, said that in

past years the state, if asked, would pay for more than the contracted six residents. "It was just a matter of calling the state and asking for more," she said. Kelsay emphasized that the St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center

"is not going to quit caring for pregnant women." "We'll do just about everything we can to help them on an outreach basis," she said. "We'll hold them find places to live, hold goods, food and jobs."

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