



# EduFocus Number 1

## Comer School Development Programme

Often dubbed the Comer Process, this “operating system” is designed to “improve interpersonal relationships and school climate through three teams:

Teams	Function
<b>School Management &amp; Planning Team</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Includes administrators, teachers, support staff, and parents.</li> <li>Develop comprehensive school plan, which includes academic &amp; social goals.</li> <li>Creates critical dialogue around teaching and learning</li> <li>Assessment &amp; modification of plan</li> </ul>
<b>Student &amp; Staff Support Team</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Includes the principal and staff experts in child development and mental health (including school nurses, special education teachers)</li> <li>Connects all of the school’s student services, facilitates the sharing of information and advice, addresses individual student needs, accesses resources outside the school, and develops prevention programs.</li> </ul>
<b>Parent Team</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Involves parents and families in the school by developing activities through which they can support the school’s social and academic programs.</li> <li>Selects representatives to serve on the School Planning and Management Team</li> </ul>

Adapted from the Comer School development website.

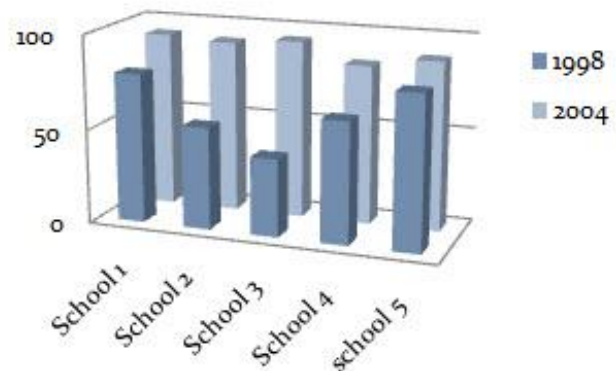
Teams are guided by three critical principles:

- ✓ Collaboration
- ✓ No fault problem solving
- ✓ Decision making by consensus.

**Comer School Development Programme (CSDP)** is a successful school reform program, which began in 1968, through Yale University in collaboration with the New Haven Public School System in Connecticut, by child psychiatrist, Dr. James P. Comer. The programme is built on the idea that adolescent and child development principles should guide performance improvement efforts. Hence the system incorporates all dimensions of child development- the physical, psychological, linguistic, cognitive, social and ethical. This is unlike the traditional approach to education, which tends to focus on linguistic and cognitive development only.

Research has shown that implementation of the Comer process evident from improvements in standardized test scores and a drop in disruptive and illegal behaviours. In North Carolina, Carol Ray, Principal of an elementary school explained that her teachers intentionally “weaved the developmental pathways into all areas of the curriculum”. She noted achievement gains in reading and math over a 6-year period as well as a closing of the achievement gap between African American and Caucasian American students.

### Gains in reading among grade 3 students



These results, based on North Carolina state tests, were also evident among 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students. Data presented by Carol Ray at the National Press Club on October 5, 2010.

### DISCLAIMER

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