



Dr. Carmen Arroyo, Acting Assistant Superintendent awards certificate to Counselor Ken Anderson.

Training in Puerto Rico - A Success

A workshop of 28 enthusiastic DDESS attendees from the Antilles Consolidated School System in Puerto Rico spent Friday, December 12, 2003 focusing on comprehensive safe school planning. The workshop was hosted by Superintendent Ray McMullen and arranged and coordinated by Felicia Van Heertum, Antilles Instructional Specialist.

All components of risk reduction and incident response planning were carefully reviewed with the attendees. Safety and security trends and FPCON requirements were also discussed as part of the day's activities.

The Showtime videotape *Bang, Bang You're Dead* was used to initiate a spirited discussion of bullying and contemporary school crisis issues. Counselor Ken Anderson, from Roosevelt Roads Elementary School captured the feelings of many in the workshop by describing the massive coordination and careful, proactive planning needed to adequately prepare for any school crisis – a valuable lesson that he and others in his school had learned as a result of the events associated with 9/11/01. Participants identified the “risk reduction” tabletop exercise and “chemical spill” crisis scenario as popular small group activities. ■

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DoDEA Home Office Update

There have been some changes going on in the DoDEA Headquarters. The office that oversees the Safe Schools Program is now called the DoDEA Office of Safety and Security. Having evolved from the Logistics Division's Safety and Security Office, it has been restructured to become the DoDEA Office of Safety and Security under the DoDEA Chief of Staff's Office. In addition to Ed Englehardt, Chief; Rose Chunik, Security Specialist; and Maxine Kean, Safety and Security Program Assistant; the office has expanded to include Dan Nofziger, Personnel Security Program Manager. The new office phone numbers are: (703) 588-3250, 3251, 3252, and 3253, respectively. The e-mail address remains the same: Safety and Security Office@hq.odedodea.edu. Safe Schools Newsletters and Intervention Strategies Guides are still located on the DoDEA website at: www.odedodea.edu/schools/newsletters.htm. ■

Anti-Bullying Strategies

DoDEA Safe School workshop attendees expressed an interest in having more ideas to prevent bullying. The Department of Education suggests the following practical actions to decrease bullying.

- ◆ Student discussions – Ask students to define bullying. Invite students to suggest ways to stop bullying and make it socially unacceptable.
- ◆ Reporting procedures – Publicize a classroom action plan, so students know exactly how to report bullying incidents (i.e., by anonymously using a phone “hot-line,” a “bully box” – anonymous tip box, or by referring the problem to a teacher or counselor).
- ◆ Collaborative projects – Teach cooperation by assigning students group projects that require them to work together.
- ◆ Rule making – Invite students to help establish classroom rules during class meetings. Allowing students to participate in establishing classroom rules ensures that they understand expectations and encourages them to take responsibility for creating a peaceful classroom.

As students learn about the harmful effects of bullying, intervention techniques, and reporting procedures, they can support each other’s efforts to correct bullying behaviors. Research shows that implementing anti-bullying measures at school, in the classroom and with individuals can significantly decrease bullying. For additional ideas, see *Preventing Bullying: A Manual for Schools and Communities* at: www.ed.gov/Edpubs. ■

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Teaching Hate Prevention

You have planned ahead for many different types of school emergencies, but have you discussed prevention of incidents motivated by prejudice, otherwise known as hate crimes? The Southern Poverty Law Center’s website: TeachingTolerance.org can help administrators with incidents which often occur in classrooms, hallways and schoolyards.

Teaching Tolerance defines incidents of bias as “any acts directed against people or property that are motivated by prejudice based on race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, social affiliation, ability or appearance. These acts include hate crimes – ranging from violent assault and harassment to vandalism and graffiti, as well as hate speech, literature and derogatory language and imagery in all media.”

At Teaching Tolerance a wide array of materials are available for administrators, school counselors, and teachers to help them react effectively to incidents of bias. Free resources that promote equity and respect include: classroom activities, teaching tools, a monthly e-newsletter, writing exercises, interactive games, video and text kits, handbooks, and posters.

For school officials, there is also a bias preparedness publication to download called *Responding to Hate*. This program is designed to help administrators prepare in advance to address hate incidents when they occur.

Information is available on creating school policies to address the bias. TeachingTolerance.org offers suggestions on how to write a “Respect” policy. For more, go to: www.tolerance.org/rthas/index.jsp. ■

Smooth Incident Recovery

After any critical incident it is important to let students resume normal routines as quickly as possible. Here are some suggestions to use when updating the final portion of your Incident Response Plan with regard to actions to help the school recover from an incident of violence. Administrators should:

- ◆ Resume learning as quickly as possible,
- ◆ Identify follow-up interventions available to students, staff and first-responders,
- ◆ Work with the Crisis Management Team to debrief and discuss lessons learned with staff and first-responders,
- ◆ Request reports on how the staff is assessing the emotional impact of the crisis on students; and
- ◆ Repair the physical facility.

Refer to your DoDEA Second Special Edition of *Safe Schools: A Handbook for Practitioners*, Chapter 2, for more on this topic. For additional ideas, go to the U.S. Department of Education’s guide: *Practical Information on Crisis Planning*, available at: www.ed.gov/emergencyplan. ■



Anti-Bullying on Limited Resources

School administrators can begin changing attitudes about bullying with a limited anti-bullying program. Mary Dolan of the Pennsylvania Center for Safe Schools emphasizes that beginning “some” anti-bullying education with the funds and support available is better than postponing the start of your program until you obtain funding and approval for a school-wide effort. Dolan supports anti-bullying programs that involve the entire school through school assemblies, provide intervention training for school staff, recruit students, parents and community members as anti-bullying allies, change attitudes from acceptance to a complete intolerance of bullying behaviors; and encourage student ownership of bullying through class meetings.

Administrators can begin a limited anti-bullying program in the following manner:

- ◆ Begin by teaching a group of educators how to intervene effectively in bullying incidents (See www.nwrel.org/request/dec01/addressing.html for more information),
- ◆ Arrange for increased supervision in vulnerable areas, such as hallways, bathrooms, and the playground; and
- ◆ Conduct a limited survey to learn about student, parent and staff perceptions of bullying.

For further information on anti-bullying programs, see the Prevention Programs section of DoDEA’s Safe Schools Handbook, DoDEA’s Intervention Strategies Guides (www.odedodea.edu/schools/ISGuides.htm) or go to: the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence at: www.colorado.edu/cspv/publications/factsheets/safeschools/FS-SC07.html, and the National Parent Teacher Association at: www.pta.org/programs/sycsch.htm#Helping. ■



Accidental Chemical Spill or Suspected Chemical Attack



As a result of the interest in the workshop practical exercise regarding an ammonia leak, this month's article focuses on chemical incidents. Our source for this article is The National Defense University's (NDU) Center for Technology and National Security Policy.

To prepare for a suspected chemical incident, NDU suggests the following:

- ◆ Develop a staff, student and family contact plan (how to get in touch via some communications method).
- ◆ Purchasing gas masks is NOT recommended.

In the case of a suspected chemical incident or attack, knowledge is essential. Administrators should share the following information with all teachers and staff in the building. Staff should be prepared for a hazardous chemical incident or attack and can take the necessary actions to call for emergency support to move students out of harm's way.

Many chemical agents cannot be seen or smelled. If several people are seen down on the ground coughing, vomiting, or seizing, they could be reacting to the presence of a toxic substance. If birds and animals are dying this is a sign of a chemical incident. Leave the area immediately and call for emergency support.

If an incident occurs indoors:

- ◆ Exit the building immediately.
- ◆ Avoid puddles of liquid.
- ◆ Once outside, if you were directly exposed to a chemical, shed your clothes immediately, it could save your life.
- ◆ Taking off your outer clothes can remove roughly 80% of the contamination.
- ◆ Look for a source of water and quickly and thoroughly rinse any skin that may have been exposed.
- ◆ Water is an effective decontaminant.
- ◆ Try to remain calm.

If an incident occurs outdoors:

- ◆ The most important thing to do is to get a barrier between you and the toxic cloud.
- ◆ Get indoors quickly (a building, school bus or car).
- ◆ Shut all windows, doors, and turn off the AC or Heat
- ◆ Plug all air drafts (e.g., under doors).
- ◆ Inform others that the wind should carry the gas away in a short period of time.
- ◆ Stay indoors and listen to the news.

In general, do NOT immediately rush to the emergency room unless you have inhaled chemical fumes, or have contamination on your skin. For more on chemical exposure symptoms or treatment suggestions, go to NDU at: www.ndu.edu/ctnsp/index.html. ■

Sexual Harassment Exercise

This exercise from the Discovery Channel School requires two class periods and is suitable for both middle and high school.

Procedures

Write “sexual harassment” on the board and ask students if they know what it means. Write down their ideas. Help them understand that sexual harassment is “any unwanted physical or verbal advance that has sexual overtones.”

Next, share with students “the kind of behavior that is usually considered a form of sexual harassment: sexual jokes, touching in an inappropriate way, inappropriate gestures, and spreading rumors about another person’s sexual behavior.”

Group Exercise

Inform students that sexual harassment can occur at every level, even elementary school. Help students better understand what sexual harassment involves and what they can do about it by letting students work in groups to brainstorm examples of sexual harassment. Then have them write a script for a scenario dramatizing the incident. The scenario should depict how the students would respond to sexual harassment and what they can do to prevent such an incident from happening again.

If they are having trouble getting started, suggest a few of the following incidents as examples of sexual harassment: touching a student inappropriately, drawing sexually explicit pictures and passing them around, provocative actions, telling sexual jokes, spreading rumors about a person’s sexual behavior, and calling other students names with sexual connotations.

Direct students to the following Web sites to learn about what is being done about sexual harassment in different schools and for use in writing their scenarios.

- ◆ Harassment in the Halls at: www.soroptimist.org/novdec99.htm
- ◆ Sexual Harassment in the Schools at: www.straussconsult.com/article2.htm



Give students time to work on their scenarios in class. Tell them to be prepared to hand in a complete, written script. During the next class period, ask the groups to present their scenarios.

In conclusion, ask students to summarize, in writing, their personal responses to this activity. Tell students that they do not have to share these written thoughts with anyone. Were they familiar with sexual harassment beforehand? Have they ever experienced sexual harassment? If so, were they aware of it at the time?

Parents and counselors should be advised of the objectives and content when this group exercise is implemented, to prepare them in the event that they need to provide additional information or support for their child, or for students who disclose that they have been victims of sexual harassment.

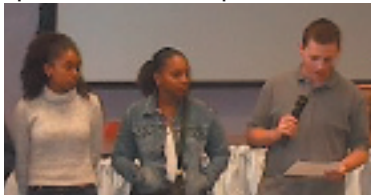
If administrators do not already have a sexual harassment policy at their school, consider viewing the DoDEA staff policy memorandum at: www.odedodea.edu/foia/iod/pdf/01eeo002.pdf. ■

Mix It Up in Georgia: A Visible Peace

Teaching Tolerance provides a free guide to “Mix It Up at Lunch” diversity training, at: www.tolerance.org/teach/respond/teens/index.jsp. Below, student Chika Oduah describes her experience implementing this activity.

Nov. 19, 2003 – Georgia high school student Chika Oduah finds friends and hope on Mix It Up at Lunch Day.

– By Chika Oduah



“Come on, let’s mix it up!”

“Where are you gonna sit?”

During lunchtime, these phrases were all that could be heard. In the cafeteria, in the rest rooms, down the hallways, and in the classrooms, students were chanting, mumbling, and yelling the catchy slogans. Never had I, Chika Oduah, heard anything so beautiful.

On November 18, the fear mentality was shattered, the boundaries were invisible, and the cliques became obsolete. For one day, the students of Chamblee High School had stood up from their comfort zones and had walked to the other side.

The Root of Ignorance

Any other day, things would have been different. “If you stand on the stage [at lunch] you can see the separation: Latinos over there, Blacks there, Whites there,” said senior Nicholas Chung.

I am disappointed by the amount of truth in Nicholas’s statement. I watch the social interaction among students everyday, and it frustrates me to see how strong the boundaries are. We operate on a fear mentality that forces us to stereotype and make false assumptions of others.

Sophomore Rahmel Fuller described the school’s social boundaries this way: “My white friends ask me, ‘Do a lot of black people do this?’ and I have to say, ‘I don’t know. I am not the spokesperson for the African American people!’”

Even a teacher at my school, Shervette Miller, remembers her school’s boundaries. “People [in high school]

thought I was a witch because I had dreadlocks,” she said. So with these facts and my observations of my peers, I realized that something had to be done.

There’s a Positive Solution

Nia Umoja is an extra-curricular group for the movement of multicultural unity. As its co-president, I proposed Mix It Up at Lunch and immediately started the promotion with the help of co-president, Ashley Southall.

With over 20 flyers, word of mouth, and the daily commercials that aired on the Chamblee Morning News, everyone knew about Mix It Up at Lunch Day.

Most people were receptive to the idea. Even with the great diversity at Chamblee, there are still close-minded views. The sneers, the snickers, and the stereotypes provoke ridiculous labels.

Mix It Up at Lunch Day was a success; over 300 students participated. There was a visible peace in the cafeteria. Students chitchatted, joked, and ate lunch with peers that they had never tried to talk to. I heard so many people say “Oh, this is so fun,” and “You guys should do this more often.”

“People need to see the other side,” said senior Daniel Chapital. “No one is gonna try to hurt anyone.” Daniel is exactly right. No one hurt anyone. The sophomores talked with seniors, the students with the rainbow-colored hair talked with the cheerleaders, the jocks talked to the poets, and so on.

Mix It Up at Lunch Day is a foundation needed for social unity. It is a seed of a harvest that will bring forth great fruits of enlightenment and change. With this realization, I went home with the smile of victory on my face, with the image of the cafeteria on my mind and with the phrase “Where you gonna sit?” on my lips.

Chika Oduah is a senior at Georgia’s Chamblee High School who firmly believes that “we, humankind, must destroy ignorance before it destroys us.” ■