



# SAFE SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER



Volume 3 · Issue 3

November 2002

## Character Education Partnerships

First Lady Laura Bush endorsed the “Partnerships in Character Education Program” during an October 23, 2002 conference on Character and Community. She highlighted the Administration’s increasing efforts to support the nation’s schools and expand service opportunities for young Americans. Mrs. Bush announced that five states and 34 school districts were recently awarded \$16.7 million in grants to

*Continued on page 2*



## “I Think, Therefore I Am”

### ... Enhancing Social Competence to Prevent Incidents

Programs that help prevent incidents at school should be a part of your school’s Risk Reduction Plan. These types of programs can provide children guidelines for responding to provocations such as “think before you act.” Giving students some straightforward tools to employ, when faced with conflict, will help them deal with a situation in a more mature manner. The American Federation of Teachers recommends the “I Can Problem Solve” (ICPS) prevention program. ICPS is for Pre K-grade 6 and trains students to consider their actions and choices, anticipate

possible consequences, and develop more successful alternative responses prior to acting on their feelings. “Children are taught to identify their thoughts, feelings and motives that could generate problem situations.” The American Federation of Teachers reports that teaching children “to think, rather than what to think,” helps them avoid impulsive behavior and enhances students’ social competence.” For further information, visit: [www.aft.org/edissues/whatworks/wwschoolwidereform.htm](http://www.aft.org/edissues/whatworks/wwschoolwidereform.htm).

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

### News & Updates

Character Education Partnerships .....	1
Enhancing Social Competence .....	1
Share Your Ideas .....	2

### Safe School Planning

Implementing Risk Reduction Measures During Sniper Shootings .....	3
---	---

### Education Issues

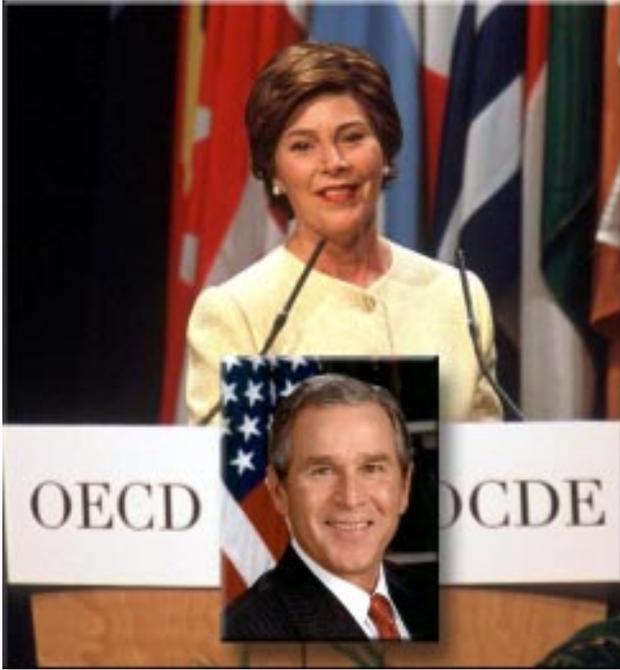
Creating Mentoring Programs .....	4
-----------------------------------	---

### Prevention Programs

Successful Anti-Bullying Program .....	5
Kindness Makes Sense .....	5

### Guest Article

Bully Inoculation Practices in Schools .....	6
--	---



*Character Education Partnerships . . . Continued from page 1*

help schools provide students with lesson plans that promote high moral character.

In her speech, Bush said, “Reading and writing are not all we need to teach our children — respect and responsibility are just as important.” Partnerships in Character Education make it possible for students, educators, parents, and community members to establish character education programs that teach caring, citizenship, justice, fairness, respect, responsibility, and trustworthiness.

Partnering organizations will work with grantee’s to design character education programs for youth. Parents, students, and community organizations will work together to administer programs. The programs will be evaluated for their effectiveness with respect to decreasing discipline problems, academic achievement, participation in extracurricular activities, and parental and community involvement. For further information, visit: [www.ed.gov/PressReleases/10-2002/10232002.html](http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/10-2002/10232002.html).



Please share your ideas on prevention programs and safe schools news with us.

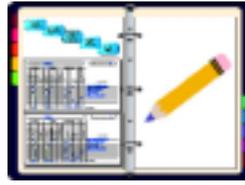
Consider submitting an article or just a few tips for your colleagues for the next issue of this DoDEA sponsored newsletter!

**Send your ideas or an article to [safeschools@dyncorp.com](mailto:safeschools@dyncorp.com) or phone us toll-free at: 1-(866) 711-6477.**

**DoDEA Safe Schools Program Managers**  
Ed Englehardt, Rose Chunik  
**Safe Schools Newsletter Editorial Staff**  
Bob Michela, Jennifer Bloom, Brian McKeon, Steve Lee

This is an unofficial publication produced by DynCorp, Inc. on behalf of the Department of Defense Education Activity Safety & Security Office. The material herein is presented for informational purposes and does not constitute official policy of the Department of Defense. All comments and questions should be directed to Bob Michela at: 703-461-2000 or [michelar@dyncorp.com](mailto:michelar@dyncorp.com)





# Safe School Planning

## Schools Implement Risk Reduction Measures During Sniper Shootings

Students in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area learned to live in stressful school lockdown conditions similar to DoDEA's Force Protection Condition (FPCON) Charlie. The shooting incidents that began on October 2, 2002 caused schools to swiftly implement their lockdown plans. As early as October 3, school administrators and local security officials decided to limit students' exposure to the threat of sniper-fire. Educators in Montgomery County, Maryland and Washington, D.C. shrouded windows and kept children indoors and out of sight. School districts in the fifteen surrounding counties announced heightened security measures, canceled outdoor and extracurricular activities, kept students indoors during lunch and delayed or rearranged plans for athletic events. Local security officials and police cars were visibly positioned at schools. Window coverings concealed students as they safely stayed indoors.

Although surrounding school districts addressed the threat similarly, some took less stringent measures than others. For example, some continued to have after-school athletic practices outside, but under the watchful eye of security guards.

The DoDEA Antiterrorism Program (Regulation 4700.1) acknowledges that risk reduction measures create hardship and recommends they be adopted only when the threat is clearly imminent. FPCON Charlie "applies when an incident occurs or intelligence is received indicating some form of terrorist action against personnel and facilities is imminent." The five fatal sniper-shootings, of citizens in Montgomery County, on October 2-3, 2002 constituted the incident that caused Montgomery County schools to implement school lockdowns. Some time later, a neighboring school district contemplated relaxing risk reduction measures until the perpetrators sent police

officers a letter that stated, "Your children are not safe anywhere, at any time."

Students coped with the type of adversity described in the FPCON Charlie guidelines (Regulation 4700.1), "Implementation of measures in this FPCON for more than a short period of time will create hardship and affect the peacetime activities of the unit and its personnel." News reports described how teachers were challenged to keep students occupied. Administrators in charge of schools that lacked gymnasiums, struggled to locate areas for students to play indoors. Teachers organized indoor games, helped students with homework, or simply allowed them to talk loudly. Some students had trouble concentrating during classes because they did not have an opportunity to release physical and emotional energy without their usual outdoor activities. Unfortunately, despite the heightened security measures, increased presence of local security officials, and implementation of school lockdowns that commenced October 3, four days later, a 13-year-old was wounded as he arrived at Tasker Middle School in suburban Maryland.

The cooperation among principals, law enforcement officials, and community leaders was similar to the coordinated response envisioned in the DoDEA Antiterrorism Program from school administrators, security officials, and military installation commanders. School and security officials coordinated their response to the situation. Principals publicized changes in school activities on the school websites and e-mailed parents updates using e-mail listserves. News reporters assisted in communicating the changes and encouraged parents to check the websites for further information. Security officials asked schools to begin lockdown procedures in response to the early incidents. In response to later incidents, schools canceled afternoon-Kindergarten and kept students at school to avoid putting more school buses on the road as security officials searched vehicles.





# Education Issues

## Creating Mentoring Programs

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, mentoring can “significantly improve school attendance and performance, reduce violent behavior, decrease the likelihood of drug use and improve relationships with friends and parents.” DDESS and DoDDS principals establishing a mentoring program can benefit from DoDEA’s close working relationship with the largest mentoring organizations: Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America and Big Brothers/Big Sisters International. These mentoring organizations can assist with the usual challenges: finding mentors, matching mentors with mentees, recruiting participants, and finally, sustaining and evaluating the program.

Thorough orientation training for adult mentors at the beginning of their participation is critical to a successful program. Mentor orientation training should familiarize adult mentors with realistic expectations, communication skills, social skills, and cultural and economic sensitivities. Mentors need to be patient and realize that the relationship with their mentee will take time to grow. Communications skills training will help mentors establish rapport with their mentees. Social skills training for mentors gives adults the skills they need to counsel their students on how to respond to challenging situations at home and at school. Educating mentors about mentees’ cultural and economic backgrounds enables the adults to better understand the students’ family and school situations.

Effective mentoring relationships require regular and frequent sharing between mentors and mentees. Using mentoring programs with other prevention programs increases the probability that students will accomplish social and academic goals and avoid “risky behaviors” such as substance abuse.

## Useful Mentoring Resources

★ *Yes, You Can: Establishing Mentoring Programs to Prepare Youth for College* by Andrew Lauland is available at: [www.ed.gov/pubs/YesYouCan/sect1.html](http://www.ed.gov/pubs/YesYouCan/sect1.html).

★ *Mentoring School-Age Children: A Classification of Programs* by Cynthia Sipe and Anne Roder is available at: [www.mentoring.org/partners/public\\_policy\\_council/mentoring\\_school-aged\\_children.adp](http://www.mentoring.org/partners/public_policy_council/mentoring_school-aged_children.adp).

★ *Best Practices of Youth Violence Prevention: A Sourcebook for Community Action* by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention is available at: [www.cdc.gov/ncipc/dvp/bestpractices.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/dvp/bestpractices.htm).

★ Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America: [www.bbbsa.org](http://www.bbbsa.org)

★ Big Brothers/Big Sisters International: [www.bbbsi.org](http://www.bbbsi.org)

## When Should I Phone for Technical Assistance?

### Call us when you need help:

- Implementing any of your Safe Schools Planning Tools
- Writing your Safe Schools Plan
- Justifying funds for a needed Safe Schools Program or physical security modification

These examples are just a few ways that Technical Assistance can support you.

**Please contact us at:**  
[safeschools@dyncorp.com](mailto:safeschools@dyncorp.com) or toll free at:  
**1-(866) 711-6477**



## Successful Anti-Bullying Program at Kadena Middle School

Kadena Middle School, located in Okinawa, Japan, benefited from a comprehensive, school-wide anti-bullying program instigated during the 2001-2002 school year. The school decreased bullying behavior by establishing anti-bullying policies and communicating those policies to students, school staff and parents.

The school surveyed students at the beginning and end of the school year. By comparing the results, the educators were able to see where they had succeeded and where they should concentrate efforts to improve the anti-bullying program.

Kadena Middle School counselors worked with teachers and administrators to define bullying behavior, write anti-bullying policies and teach students that bullying behavior would not be tolerated. The middle school created a brochure to educate students and parents about the harmful effects of bullying and publicized the school's anti-bullying policies.

Students were taught the "Ha Ha So" method to respond to provocations. Each letter reminds children of an action they can take to deal with bullies. For example, children use "self-talking" to mentally calm themselves and plan their response rather than immediately rebutting the bully and escalating the tension. Teachers remind students to "own-it" or take responsibility for their actions.

Survey responses regarding the locations of bullying incidents presented another opportunity for improvement. Surprisingly, students considered the bathrooms one of the safest places at school. However, they indicated that bullying most often occurs in the halls, on the school

grounds, and in the classroom. Informal communication from students indicated progress: students thanked the principal for "making our school safe." School counselors concluded that school security is important to students even though children might not verbalize it. For further information, contact school counselor Debbie Behnke, at: [Debbie\\_Behnke@pac.odedodea.edu](mailto:Debbie_Behnke@pac.odedodea.edu).

### HA HA SO Antibullying Method

-  Get Help - Tell an adult
-  Assert yourself/say "Leave me alone"

---

-  Use Humor or say "So?" or "Why?" repeatedly
-  Avoid trouble makers

---

-  Self-talking is a positive/assertive way/make a plan
-  Own-It Be sure YOU don't behave like a bully!

Source: Kadena Middle School Anti-bullying brochure

## Kindness Makes Sense

Kadena Middle School uses the "Kindness Makes Sense Program" (KMS) to improve student behavior. Every adult in the school has a supply of kindness stickers that they can give to students displaying exemplary behavior, such as: courtesy, sharing, helping others, caring for the school grounds. The stickers can be exchanged at the school office for prizes such as key chains, hacky sack balls or slinkies. Students cannot ask for stickers, adults must award them. Teachers reported that the results were dramatic and immediate. Since the KMS program was implemented in January 2001, students have been eager to respond to requests for assistance or cooperation.



## Bully Inoculation Practices in Schools

**“If you want to understand something, try to change it.”**

School bullies are as much a part of the landscape of American education as lunch lines and recess breaks. The typical view of bullying is that it is transient and inconsequential. Current research suggests that 15-30% of students report being victimized by bullies at school, and almost 10% are subjected to bullying on a regular basis. Bullying occurs more often among males than females and tends to increase through the elementary years and into middle school. Almost one third of 6th to 10th graders, approximately 5.7 million children in the United States, have been involved in some form of bullying. Additionally, research indicates that bullying and being bullied are associated with poorer social and emotional adjustment throughout the lifespan.

Although bullying in schools is not a recent phenomenon, the elevated attention to school violence has led to serious efforts to understand the social and psychological processes underlying bullying behavior. These efforts are enhanced by the knowledge that 1) bullying follows a predictable developmental trajectory, manifesting itself differently at various age levels and often increasing in frequency and intensity with age, and 2) what constitutes bullying differs dramatically for male and female populations. Following, we briefly address each of these aspects of bullying with particular emphasis on implications for prevention and intervention.

### A Developmental Perspective on Bullying

There is considerable evidence for the stability of aggressive behavior, including bullying, over time. In short, young children who engage in frequent and serious bullying often grow up to be bullies as adults, engaging in other acts of violence such as domestic abuse, assault, armed robbery, and other crimes against persons.

According to Michael Furlong at the Center for School-Based Youth Development at the University of California, Santa Barbara, bullying is a relationship issue among individuals or groups rather than a specific event. Bullying behavior is reinforced when bullies exert control over others, and successful bullies are reinforced more often, thereby ensuring

Thanks to a special relationship with George Washington University, DoDEA is able to present a series of articles by prevention program experts from the University of Hawaii who work on these issues daily.



their continued bullying. Given this pattern, bullies do not grow out of it. On the contrary, they tend to escalate their level of bullying over time. What we call bullying in childhood is referred to as spousal abuse or assault and battery in adulthood.

The developmental approach to understanding bullying and other forms of aggressive behavior is exemplified by the work of Gerald Patterson, John Reid, and their colleagues at the Oregon Social Learning Center. This approach emphasizes the reciprocal nature of parent-child interactions in development of aggressive behavior. Patterns of verbal and physical aggression are learned within the context of everyday social exchanges between family members. Such learning occurs through parental modeling of overly harsh, coercive, and inconsistent discipline tactics, including use of physical punishment. The reciprocal nature of this interaction is illustrated by the ongoing development of a “coercive family process” in which a child’s initial and subsequent noncompliance with parental demands may be met by more and more “extreme” measures to achieve compliance. As the child’s resistance increases, there is a tendency for parents to use even more coercive, aggressive strategies in an effort to gain compliance or, alternatively, to just give in. In either case, the child perceives aggression as an effective tactic for controlling others and reducing aversive events. At the same time, there is less opportunity for learning and practicing more pro-social and adaptive problem-solving skills. The child then brings these maladaptive behaviors to school, which leads to lost instructional time and is often the start of a trajectory of school failure and teacher/peer rejection.

A major implication of the developmental perspective on bullying is that, once established and left undeterred, bullying behavior is likely to increase over time in both frequency and intensity. Many experts have called for a “zero tolerance” policy on bullying in schools with specific emphasis on addressing “low level” aggressive behaviors such as teasing in an effort to prevent escalation to more serious acts of violence.

## Gender Differences in Bullying

Until quite recently, bullying behavior at school was considered to be a problem primarily among males. Prevalence estimates had indicated that males overwhelmingly engaged in direct forms of

bullying such as verbal abuse, fighting, and other forms of physical intimidation. Recently, however, researchers such as Nicky Crick at the University of Minnesota, have identified a form of bullying termed “relational aggression” that occurs primarily among females. Relational aggression is designed to harm social relationships through exclusion, gossip, and spreading of negative rumors.

Since relational aggression as a form of bullying is more covert than physical aggression, it often goes undetected by teachers and other adults. By increasing our awareness of the range of behaviors, both direct and indirect, that constitute bullying in schools, we are in a better position to identify the perpetrators early and to establish suitable prevention and intervention strategies.

## Conclusions

Bullying in schools continues to be a major component of low level aggression, which, left undeterred, often escalates to more serious acts of violence. By considering developmental and gender differences in bullying, schools are in a better position to intervene early and to establish policies designed to prevent the negative outcomes associated with chronic bullying. Research shows that comprehensive programs involving teachers and other staff, students, parents, and even the community are the most effective against bullying. In subsequent newsletters, we will provide more detailed information about establishing a school climate that not only deters aggressive behaviors but promotes more positive social interactions among all students.

## Resources on Bullying

The ERIC/CASS Virtual Library on Bullying in Schools can be found on the Internet at this URL: [ericcass.uncg.edu/virtuallib/bullying/bullyingbook.html](http://ericcass.uncg.edu/virtuallib/bullying/bullyingbook.html)

*ERIC Digest: Easing the Teasing: How Parents Can Help Their Children* (1999) can be found at this URL: [www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC\\_Digests/ed431555.html](http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed431555.html)

The US Department of Education publication *Preventing Bullying: A Manual for Schools and Communities* (1998) describes a comprehensive approach to bullying and includes curricula that may be used as part of a schoolwide program: [www.cde.ca.gov/spbranch/ssp/bullymanual.htm](http://www.cde.ca.gov/spbranch/ssp/bullymanual.htm)

