



DoDEA

# SAFE Schools NEWSLETTER



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## Navigating the Newsletter

Thank you for sending us your DoDEA success stories! The Safe Schools Newsletter is your “interactive communication vehicle” to share security measures that have worked in DoDEA schools.

This “communication vehicle” is also fun to drive! Did you know that the newsletter has automated features? Here are the keys:

- ◆ Click on article titles in the table of contents to go to the article.
- ◆ Click on the green box at the end of articles to revisit the table of contents.
- ◆ To share your success story click [safeschools@csc.com](mailto:safeschools@csc.com). ■

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## Okinawa “Breakfast Club” Fosters Cooperation

Communication between schools and military commanders is a crucial component of safe school planning, but one that is often difficult to implement consistently. On Okinawa, educators and military officials meet for monthly breakfasts as a way of fostering working relationships. This ensures close communication and cooperation between the installation and the schools.



*Kinser Elementary School on Okinawa.*

The administrators tailor the breakfast format to the unique characteristics of the military community they are supporting. For example, according to District Safety and Security Officer Mike Liem, administrators at the six schools on Kadena Air Base hold a principals’ breakfast with the base commander. “This is a great way for the base leadership to discuss issues that concern the schools

and the community,” said Liem. “Some issues can be resolved more quickly through face-to-face conversations than through e-mails.”

Liem attributes the close working relationship between school administrators and their respective base officials to the relaxed setting and open exchange of ideas that takes place at the breakfasts. “In a formal meeting, you tend to be limited to the items on the agenda. Here, they can discuss any and all issues casually.” Topics discussed at a typical breakfast include traffic safety, the D.A.R.E. program, student activities, deployments, and antiterrorism procedures.

Liem pointed out that the breakfast meetings are just one of many innovative measures the district uses to enhance effective communication with military representatives. “Together, these procedures ensure safety across the board for our students,” said Liem. He added, “We are fortunate to have strong support from the military for our Safe Schools Program.” ■

## Worldwide Conference for DoDEA Psychologists

DoDEA school psychologists convened for a conference held in Alexandria, Virginia in February. The theme of the two-day conference was “Enhancing Student Learning and Mental Health.” For many of the DoDEA psychologists, this meeting was a welcome opportunity to meet face-to-face with other psychologists with whom they have daily e-mail contact. It was an opportunity for everyone to share ideas and learn new techniques for taking a proactive approach to student wellness. The Office of Pupil Personnel Services presented an impressive roster of speakers, many of whom are the preeminent leaders in their respective fields.

Keynote speaker Robert Books, Ph.D., who teaches at Harvard University, set the tone for the conference in a presentation about the power of resiliency in students. Dr. Books described how schools can nurture resiliency to improve the mental well-being of their students.

Marlene Wong, Ph.D., delivered several presentations to small groups throughout the course of the conference, specifically addressing how school counselors can deal with critical mental health issues to enhance student learning. Terry Dutton, a renowned autism consultant, offered an inspirational discussion of what researchers have learned from adults with autism spectrum disorders and the implications for understanding and helping students afflicted with this cognitive disorder.

The psychologists also heard a presentation from Jack Naglieri, Ph.D., who developed the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test for children with learning delays. Dr. Naglieri described a new tool called the Wechsler Nonverbal

Scale of Ability. Mark Pisano, psychologist for Ft. Bragg schools, introduced Naglieri to the conference and explained that the Wechsler Scale allows psychologists to fairly assess the intellectual skills of students who cannot speak English, or are deaf. “Because it measures intelligence non-verbally, he gave us a new way to think about assessing students,” said Pisano.

*Keynote speaker, Harvard Medical School professor Dr. Robert Brooks, discussed the power of resiliency in students with learning disabilities.*



Colonel Stephan Cozza, M.D., a leader in the field of medical research devoted to the ways children and families are affected by combat, also addressed the conference. Cozza spoke about the stages of deployment stress and offered signs that might indicate a student needs additional support.

On the final day of the conference, several DoDEA psychologists presented to the group. Terry Arbuckle from Ramstein High School led a session on prevention programs. Mark Pisano reported on a new DoDEA interest group which has been formed within the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). Pisano delivered the impressive news that in many districts, DoDEA meets the rigorous national standards set by NASP for student-to-psychologist ratios in high schools.

The participants’ enthusiastic response to the conference underscores the high level of personal commitment that psychologists bring to DoDEA. Several psychologists commented that they felt “energized and motivated” by the conference to continue the mission of providing total mental health to DoDEA students. “We were thrilled to be there,” recalls Pisano. “It was a celebration of our service to federal families.” ■

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## Differentiating Between the Grab-and-Go Bag and the First Aid Kit

During emergencies or evacuation drills, there is very little time to gather supplies from cabinets and drawers. Crisis Management Teams can pre-position two different types of supply kits to prepare for a crisis incident.

### Administrator's Grab and Go Bag

Medical First Aid Kits are different than the Grab-and-Go Bag that administrators keep in the school office to ensure they can continue to command and control the school from an alternative command post. Principals and administrators need a Grab-and-Go Bag in the office with supplies that will help them manage the school and coordinate with emergency responders. Grab-and-Go Bags should include, at a minimum a floor plan, area maps, walk talkies, a bull horn, an attendance roster, and information for assisting in the medical treatment of students and staff.

### School Nurse' First Aid Kits

The First Aid Kit provides resources for mobile medical treatment. This portable unit provides care-givers with the necessary first aid supplies to render assistance at the scene. Providing immediate first aid can save lives, prevent complications, and alleviate stress.

#### Grab-and-Go Bag Supplies

- Copy of emergency procedures notebook
- Clearly marked master keys to building
- Site map and facility blueprints
- Information regarding main shut-off valves for utilities (i.e., natural gas, electricity)
- Walkie-talkies or communication devices
- Bright vest that identifies staff in charge
- Student emergency contact information
- Student rosters
- Student medications
- **First Aid Kit and handbook**
- Bullhorn
- Flashlights and extra batteries

#### First Aid Kit Supplies

- **Alcohol-based hand sanitizer**
- **Disposable non-latex gloves**
- **Antiseptic wipes**
- **Sterile normal saline**
- **Anti-bacterial ointment**
- **Various sizes of bandages**
- **Sterile dressings and gauze pads**
- **Medical tape and splints**
- **Instant cold packs**
- **Scissors and tweezers**
- **Sterile eye wash**
- **Oval eye patches**
- **CPR breathing barriers**
- **Sanitary napkins**
- **Source of sugar for diabetics**
- **Mylar blanket**
- **Trash bags**

The school nurse needs First Aid Kits placed in strategic locations to make medical supplies immediately available. The First Aid Kit should be portable and easy to transport. Place first aid supplies in a duffle bag, backpack, or wheeled suitcase that is clearly labeled. Arrange supplies so it will be easy to tell an assistant where to find bandages or other items during a critical incident. Administrators can place duplicate kits in strategic areas throughout the school and surrounding areas, such as the school clinic or the designated evacuation site(s).

Careful planning and pre-positioning of supplies enables school staff to provide excellent first aid during a school emergency. To learn more about First Aid Kits visit the American Red Cross Web site at [www.redcross.org/services/disaster](http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster). ■

## FBI Offers Internet Safety Guidelines for Parents

The FBI has produced a guide which can help parents keep their children safe on the Internet. In a cover letter introducing *A Parent's Guide to Internet Safety*, Louis J. Free, former Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), writes, "Unfortunately the same advances in computer and telecommunication technology that allow our children to reach out to new sources of knowledge and cultural experiences are also leaving them vulnerable to exploitation and harm by computer-sex offenders." The guide, prepared by the Cyber Division of the FBI in August 2006, builds upon the knowledge and resources gained during the FBI's investigations. It also includes "lessons learned" from cases where law enforcement officers posed as children.

*A Parent's Guide to Internet Safety* is intended to be an informative resource for parents to help keep their children safe from sexual predators on the Internet. School administrators and teachers, however, can benefit from the warning signs and teaching points that are offered within the guide. To help keep students safe, teachers can remind students to never:

- ◆ Arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they meet on-line.
- ◆ Post pictures of themselves on the Internet or an on-line service.
- ◆ Share personal information such as their name, home address, school name, or telephone number.
- ◆ Download pictures from an unknown source (the pictures could include explicit images).
- ◆ Respond to messages or bulletin board postings that are suggestive, obscene, belligerent, or harassing.
- ◆ Presume that everything they read on-line is true.



Measures recommended in the guide include monitoring web sites visited by students and positioning computers in visible locations. According to the FBI, "It is much more difficult for a computer-sex offender to communicate with a child when the computer screen is visible to a parent or adult." The FBI also recommends using controls provided by your network, service provider, firewall, and/or other blocking software.

The FBI guide emphasizes that it is important to allow students to experience the educational benefits of the Internet. The guide specifically addresses the positive potential of the Internet: "While on-line computer exploration opens a world of possibilities for children, expanding their horizons and exposing them to different cultures and ways of life, they can be exposed to dangers as they 'hit the road' exploring the information highway."

Parents and educators can help students have a safe on-line experience by teaching them responsible use of the Internet. "There are dangers in every part of our society," notes the guide. "By educating children about these dangers and taking appropriate steps to protect them, they can benefit from the wealth of information now available on-line."

*A Parent's Guide to Internet Safety* is available on-line at [www.fbi.gov/publications/pguide/parentsguide.pdf](http://www.fbi.gov/publications/pguide/parentsguide.pdf). For information on cybersecurity programs for students, refer to the 2007 *DoDEA Prevention Programs Guide*. ■

## CDC Releases Official Numbers on Choking Game

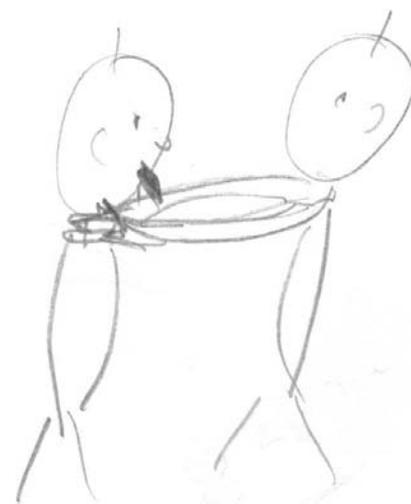
On February 15, 2008, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued a report attributing 82 deaths to the “choking game.” The CDC studied deaths occurring between 1995 and 2007 among children 6 to 19 years old. Administrators can use the report to educate students, staff, and parents/sponsors about the dangers of playing the choking game.

In the choking game, students experience a brief “high” through self-asphyxiation or cutting off the supply of oxygen to their brain. As the restraint is loosened and oxygen rushes to the brain, a sense of euphoria occurs which lasts several seconds. The CDC noted that students have played the choking game for generations. However, youth are increasingly attempting this while alone and the results can be fatal. Since 1998, the deaths that can be attributed to self-asphyxiation have tripled.

The choking game deaths are not limited to the United States. Deaths have also been reported in Canada, Germany, France, the U.K., Australia, and Korea. Both boys and girls have died from the activity. According to Dr. Thomas Andrew, New Hampshire’s Chief Medical Examiner and consultant on 20 choking game deaths, middle school students are particularly susceptible.

Administrators can help save lives by 1) telling students about the potential for harm, and 2) alerting staff and parents/sponsors to the warning signs. Students who play the choking game risk accidental death, brain injury, and physical disfigurement due to partial paralysis. The warning signs include:

- ◆ Blood shot eyes, or pin point blood spots in the iris.
- ◆ Unusual marks on the neck (i.e., bruises or a line from a ligature).
- ◆ Ties, bungee cords, belts, plastic bags, or ropes with unusual knots.
- ◆ Ropes tied to furniture.



*The picture above was artwork left by a victim of the choking game.*

Some students may argue that since they were not doing drugs or alcohol, they did not think they were doing anything “wrong.” Teach students that playing the choking game can cause brain damage or death. Adults who hear students discussing the game can alert them to the danger. Slang terminology used to describe the activity includes:

- ◆ Airplane.
- ◆ Blackout.
- ◆ The Fainting Game.
- ◆ Space Cowboy.
- ◆ Dream Game.
- ◆ Flatline.
- ◆ Pass-out.



The CDC report is available at [www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5706a1.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5706a1.htm). For additional information refer to the May 2007 or December 2005 DoDEA Safe Schools Newsletters available on-line at [www.dodea.edu/offices/safety/safeSchools.cfm](http://www.dodea.edu/offices/safety/safeSchools.cfm), or the Games Adolescents Shouldn’t Play (GASP) Web site at [www.gaspinfo.com](http://www.gaspinfo.com). ■

## Adventure Education in Livorno

A 2006 study published in the *European Journal of Psychology of Education* found that life skills training can be effectively incorporated into a school physical education (PE) program. The study focused on goal setting, making plans for achieving goals, and positive thinking. In the study, seventh grade students showed increased “understanding and retention of physical fitness knowledge, and self-confidence regarding goal setting.” In other words, students learned the crucial life skills of planning, perseverance, and positive thinking.

At Livorno Unit School in the Mediterranean district, Principal Cathy Magni has seen first-hand how a dynamic physical education program shapes the culture of student behavior in the school. Vicki O’Brien, who taught PE until recently at Livorno, used the Adventure Education course to teach important life skills such as teamwork and problem solving. “She taught them scuba diving; wall climbing, orienteering, plus she found opportunities for community interaction with adults,” said Magni. “It was a chance for the students to learn leadership skills, independence, and teamwork.”



“Adventure Education is experiential learning through the group dynamics of team building, trust activities and problem-solving initiatives,” said O’Brien, who now teaches at Aviano Elementary School. She also points out that Adventure Education provides opportunities for healthy risk-taking which can help students develop better critical thinking and self-assessment skills, rather than just giving them an adrenaline rush.



Principal Magni notes that because Livorno is a small school, most of the students know one another well and there is already a great deal of social cohesion within the school. However, Magni added, “Adventure Education really helped with relationship building among the kids.”

Francesca Zavacky, Senior Program Manager at the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) says this is no accident. “Quality physical education programs do impart a certain amount of self-efficacy among students and that self-efficacy can translate to success in other areas.”

According to Zavacky, this can give children the confidence to undertake new challenges in other settings. “Physical education programs also provide an opportunity for children to engage in critical thinking and problem solving,” she says. “A good PE program can impart an awful lot of life skills.”

NASPE offers several resources to help schools create more dynamic and effective physical education programs. Working with the CDC, NASPE recently created an evaluation tool which can be adapted for two to four minute walk-through evaluations. These evaluations allow principals to effectively monitor and evaluate their physical education classes.

The PE Teacher Evaluation Tool is available at [www.principals.org/s\\_nassp/sec.asp?CID=1389&DID=56726](http://www.principals.org/s_nassp/sec.asp?CID=1389&DID=56726). The NASPE monthly teacher’s toolkit with tips on PE course content is available at [www.aahperd.org/naspe](http://www.aahperd.org/naspe). ■

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