



**DoDEA**

# SAFE Schools

## NEWSLETTER



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### April is Alcohol Awareness Month

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) designates April as "Alcohol Awareness Month." In 2003, 23 percent of Americans (54 million) participated in binge drinking within 30 days prior to taking the SAMHSA National Survey on Drug Use and Health. That same year, approximately 22 million adults abused alcohol or were alcohol dependent. See page 6 of this newsletter for alcohol abuse prevention programs for students. For more information on Alcohol Awareness Month, visit the SAMHSA Web site at <http://ncadi.samhsa.gov>. ■

### DoDEA Survey Shows Positive Results

On March 15, the results of the DoDEA 2006-07 School Year Customer Satisfaction Survey were announced. Overall, 74% of parents rated DoDEA schools favorably. Survey results indicated that parents feel involved and students feel safe at school. Participation in the survey increased dramatically from prior years. Responses were received from 37,236 students (75%), 20,121 parents (23%), and 6,491 teachers (93%).

The survey noted that DoDEA schools are working hard to open lines of communication with parents and community members. When surveyed, parents indicated that these efforts are working. The following communication channels were rated "very effective":

- ▶ School Visits by Parents
- ▶ School Newsletters
- ▶ School Open Houses
- ▶ Monthly Parent Orientations



An overwhelming majority of the DoDEA school community said that they feel safe in school. Survey results indicated that 99% of teachers, 97% of parents, and 88% of students did not consider fighting or violence to be major problems.

DoDEA schools also received praise for welcoming new students. The survey noted that DoDEA students transfer quite regularly. Asked how effectively their school welcomes new students, 71% of students and 79% of parents gave DoDEA a letter grade of "A" or "B."

For resources available to help welcome students to new schools, see page 4 of this newsletter. For additional information, visit the DoDEA web site at [www.dodea.edu/pressroom/releases.cfm](http://www.dodea.edu/pressroom/releases.cfm) or view the survey results at <https://webapps.dodea.edu/css0607/reports/>. ■

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## Mail Security Reminders

In February, police in England arrested a school custodian suspected of sending a series of letter bombs through the British postal system. Newspapers reported that police believe the suspect sent seven explosive devices containing glass fragments in padded envelopes over the course of a month. Ten people were injured opening the letters.

In the United States, the FBI is investigating a separate series of threatening letters and pipe bombs sent to investment firms in the Midwest. The letters were signed by someone calling himself “the Bishop” and included numerous threats against a variety of groups.

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), U.S. Postal Service (USPS), and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) have published indicators of suspicious mail or packages. Suspicious mail often bears one or more of the following indicators:

- ✓ No return address, return address is different from location where mailed, or mailed from an unusual or unknown location.
- ✓ Incorrect spelling, poorly typed address, incorrect title, or only title and no name.
- ✓ Restrictive markings such as Confidential or Personal.
- ✓ Excessive postage.
- ✓ Unusual odor.
- ✓ Oily stains on the package, protruding wires, string, or tin foil.



**1** Handle with care. Don't shake or bump.

**2** Isolate it immediately

**3** Don't open, smell, touch or taste.

**4** Treat it as suspect. Call local law enforcement authorities

**If a parcel is open and/or a threat is identified . . .**

- ✓ Package has unusual size, shape, weight, or balance of weight in the package. Envelope is rigid or the contents are lopsided or uneven.
- ✓ Excessive string or tape to secure the package.

Chapter 2, section 2-12 of the *DoDEA Safe Schools Handbook* outlines specific steps educators should take when handling a suspect package:

- ✓ Instruct all personnel working in school to ensure that nobody touches the suspect mail.
- ✓ Call first responders for assistance.
- ✓ Notify the Superintendent's office.
- ✓ Use the school's evacuation procedures to remove students and staff from the building.
- ✓ Do not allow anyone to return to the building until the “all clear” signal has been given.

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This is an unofficial publication produced by CSC on behalf of the Department of Defense Education Activity Office of Safety and Security. 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 safeschools@csc.com.

For additional tips see the DoD Antiterrorism Level 1 briefing at <https://atlevel1.dtic.mil/at/>. For more information on mail security, go to [www.usps.gov](http://www.usps.gov). ■

## Security Awareness Training

Security awareness training enhances school security by increasing the number of individuals who might notice a potential threat. It also raises the sensitivity of individuals to the various indicators of pending threats. DoD Instruction 2000.16 “DoD Antiterrorism Standards” (Section E3.25) identifies those individuals who must complete Level I AT Awareness training. These individuals learn both what to look for, as well as the Force Protection Conditions (FPCONs) that specify the security measures implemented at installations in response to levels of terrorist threat.

In 2005, the Department of Education sent U.S. public schools a list of “Surveillance Indicators” based on an unclassified analysis conducted by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). According to the analysis, the following activities might be indicators of surveillance activity:

- ◆ **Observing entrances** – A person taking an unusual interest in security at entrance points, barriers or access control measures.
- ◆ **Testing response** – An increase in anonymous telephone or e-mail threats to facilities, in conjunction with the occurrence of suspected surveillance.
- ◆ **Disguised pedestrians** – Prolonged static surveillance conducted by people disguised as panhandlers, flower vendors, or street sweepers. Be vigilant if these vendors have not previously frequented the area.

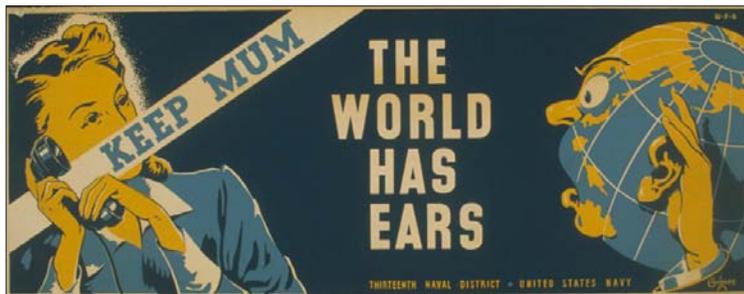
For additional tips on security awareness, consult the *DoDEA Safe Schools Handbook*, Chapter 4, section 4-15, or your Area or District Safety and Security Office. For copies of DoDI 2000.16 visit [www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/ins1.html](http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/ins1.html). ■

## Security and Student Blogs

During World War II, a series of public service posters produced by the Works Progress Association (WPA) warned soldiers and their families to never reveal information about military unit locations, strength or equipment. Additionally, family members were cautioned not to write about military installations or even the effect enemy actions may be having on operations. Today, these posters may seem quaint, but with many children of deployed soldiers using on-line journals called Web logs, popularly known as “blogs,” to communicate with distant friends and family members, the message remains relevant.

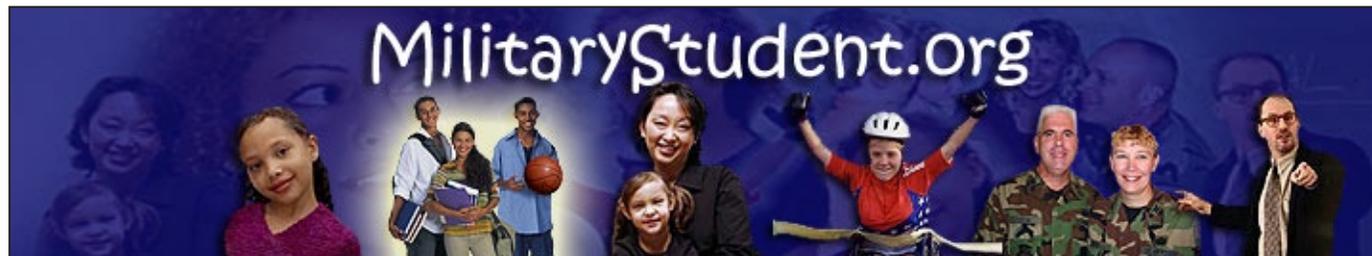
Microsoft reports that about half of all blogs are written by children. Blogs create an opportunity for journaling and for kids to communicate with one another. However, a study by the Children’s Digital Media Center at Georgetown University found that most children volunteer too much information. Sixty percent, for example, posted their contact information on-line. According to Laurie Brown, Chief of Army Community Services at Ft. Myer, seemingly inconsequential details about deployments can be useful to someone trying to gain information about a unit.

The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children collaborated with the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to create Netsmartz.org to help children understand the importance of blog security. Netsmartz offers a program called *Blog Beware*. To learn more about this resource, go to [www.netsmartz.org/news/blogbeware.htm](http://www.netsmartz.org/news/blogbeware.htm). For information on ways to use WPA public service announcements in the classroom, visit the Library of Congress Web site at [www.memory.loc.gov/learn/collections/poster/langarts.html](http://www.memory.loc.gov/learn/collections/poster/langarts.html). ■



## Tools for Helping Students PCS

Although the frequent transfers that DoDEA families face can be stressful, they also offer students the opportunity to see new places and meet new people. The Department of Defense (DoD) provides numerous on-line resources including **MilitaryStudent.org** and **Military Teens On the Move (MTOM)** that DoDEA students, parents, and teachers can use to make the Permanent Change of Station (PCS) process less stressful.



**MilitaryStudent.org** provides students, parents, military leaders, and educators with tools and information needed to make informed choices regarding the appropriate educational setting for each child. The Web site has toolkits and separate Web-based resources for each group on how to make the educational transitions for DoDEA students as smooth as possible. The parent section offers resources to help families better handle the logistics of moving and the various difficulties children can face at a new school. The Web pages for students provide information on moving tips, teenage employment, managing finances, college research, and how to network with fellow students of military parents. The educator section offers a wealth of information on topics including educating military students during deployments, helping children adjust to new locations, and partnerships and best practices from schools on various installations.

**MTOM** is a social networking Web site for students sponsored by the DoD Children and Youth Division that focuses on relocation, schools, and staying in touch with old friends. It helps students cope with the fact that even though they may not want to move, it is something they have to do. The Web site offers two separate sections, one for younger students and another for teenagers. Each section provides strategies for dependent children to manage the stresses of family, friends, and school. While helping them understand their roles and responsibilities as a military student, MTOM encourages students to independently:

- ▶ Communicate with friends, family, or another trusted person about the anxiety they experience during a PCS.
- ▶ Plan, prepare, and execute their unique role in a family's PCS.
- ▶ Research information on their new installation.
- ▶ Learn about the culture, lifestyle, or trends in their new community.
- ▶ Get involved at their installation.
- ▶ Use the resources in their community to their advantage.

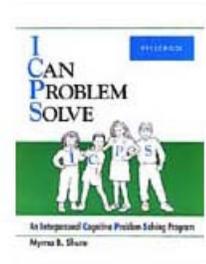


In addition to helping students plan different components of a move, MTOM provides numerous on-line resources to: help students with schoolwork; find youth centers and sponsorship programs at installations; and contact friends through on-line social networks. The site presents a PCS as a time for military students to take advantage of new opportunities. Concurrently, it prepares students and families for the struggles that they may experience before, during, and after a move.

MilitaryStudent.org offers resources for educators, students, and parents at [www.militarystudent.dod.mil](http://www.militarystudent.dod.mil). For information and social networking for military students going through a PCS visit the MTOM Web site at [www.dod.mil/mtom](http://www.dod.mil/mtom). ■

## Improving Problem-Solving Skills

The *I Can Problem Solve* (ICPS) prevention program is an award-winning behavior management tool for preschool and elementary grades. It was developed by Myrna B. Shure at Drexel University with funding from the National Institute for Mental Health (NIMH). The program has been proven effective across a wide range of IQs (80-140+) and personality types. Children learn thinking skills to help them resolve disputes with classmates and conflicts with teachers. The program is especially effective for non-assertive, shy students and for those who tend to dominate their peers socially.



The focus of ICPS, which offers workbooks for different groups of grade levels, is to teach children “how to think, not what to think.” Additionally, it teaches children to evaluate their own ideas and independently develop solutions to problems. Using games, stories, role-playing, and puppets, ICPS guides children as they develop better problem-solving skills.

Each ICPS guide includes approximately 80 user-friendly activities. The program is based on the premise that “there is more than one way” to solve problems. The materials educate teachers and young students about the importance of problem solving. For example, the teacher’s guides offer scripted dialogue that teachers can use when confronted with typically difficult student behaviors. These behaviors include:

- ✓ **Shy, passive** – children who tend to answer in mono-syllables, use little body movement, and are generally non-responsive to teacher comments.
- ✓ **Disruptive** – children whose fussing tends to take attention away from the rest of the class causing others to become bored, restless, or agitated.
- ✓ **Dominating** – children who tell long stories and cause the rest of the group to lose interest.
- ✓ **Silly** – children who intentionally give nonsensical or irrelevant answers.



The program helps teachers cope with these difficult behaviors. It gives detailed advice on how to incorporate behavior management techniques in the classroom.

The ICPS curriculum can be integrated into most course work. Research conducted by NIMH found that the program improved student behavior in several ways including reduced impulsivity and better management of shyness. Additionally, the NIMH research found that the program was particularly effective with young children (kindergarteners). These findings were replicated in later studies involving special needs children, including those with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Asperger’s Disorder.

This program was reviewed in the 2006 *DoDEA Prevention Programs Guide*, available on-line at [www.dodea.edu/offices/safety/safeSchools.cfm](http://www.dodea.edu/offices/safety/safeSchools.cfm). For more information on ICPS contact Dr. Shure at [mshure@drexel.edu](mailto:mshure@drexel.edu). To learn more about the ICPS program visit [www.researchpress.com/product/item/4628/](http://www.researchpress.com/product/item/4628/). ■

## Alcohol Abuse Prevention Programs

In 2003, a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) survey reported that 33% of adults age 21 or older started drinking alcohol between ages 15-17. According to the Hazelden Foundation, one of the world’s largest private alcohol and drug rehabilitation centers, “Research on adolescent alcohol and other drug use suggests that factors within a teen’s social environment, personality, and behavior are all important determinants of substance use. Alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drug use are viewed as the result of a complex interaction of influences at each of these levels.”

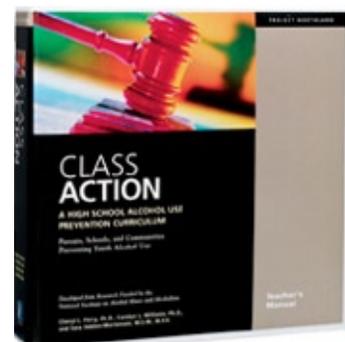
The Hazelden Foundation claims that these behaviors are learned socially, serving specific functions and purposes for adolescents. According to Hazelden, teens also experiment with alcohol to test limits, demonstrate independence, gain peer acceptance, or simply relieve the stresses of being a teenager.

*Project Northland*, produced by the Hazelden Foundation, is a series of prevention programs for underage drinking and related substance abuse that seek to address this problem. Hazelden offers separate *Project Northland* curricula for different age groups. *Project Northland* uses an understanding of factors that influence alcohol and other drug use as a basis for designing school and community-level programs to prevent adolescent alcohol experimentation and use. The project identifies three types of influences that affect substance abuse:

- ▶ **Environment** – Influences in a student’s life that encourage or discourage alcohol use including role models, social support, opportunities to drink, and community standards.
- ▶ **Personality** – Perceptions that affect the likelihood of a student using alcohol. These include knowledge, personal values, and attitudes toward alcohol use.
- ▶ **Behavior** – Conduct that affects alcohol use directly. This may include previous alcohol use, future intent to drink, and strategies to resist peer pressure to use alcohol.

*Class Action* is *Project Northland*’s classroom curriculum designed for high school students. It presents underage drinking as a community-wide problem, giving students the opportunity to debate the legal intricacies of alcohol related cases involving teenagers. *Class Action* emphasizes the broader social and legal consequences of underage drinking, rather than the usual focus on individual responsibility. The curriculum is based on a model of “social influences” for alcohol prevention and its stated goal is to work toward “increasing awareness of the social availability and social consequences of alcohol consumption.” Some of the stated program objectives include:

- ▶ Make students aware of the legal issues surrounding underage drinking.
- ▶ Help students recognize underage alcohol use as a community-wide problem.
- ▶ Discuss and debate the legal intricacies of alcohol-related issues.
- ▶ Learn about the social, emotional, economic, and legal consequences of underage alcohol use.
- ▶ Shift student norms concerning alcohol use in a positive direction.



For more information about *Project Northland*, *Class Action*, and other prevention programs offered by the Hazelden Foundation, visit [www.hazelden.org](http://www.hazelden.org). To read about more SAMHSA surveys involving youth alcohol consumption, visit <http://ncadi.samhsa.gov>. For information about other substance abuse prevention programs, see the *DoDEA Prevention Programs Guide* at [www.dodea.edu/offices/safety/safeSchools.cfm](http://www.dodea.edu/offices/safety/safeSchools.cfm). ■