



# SAFE SCHOOLS

# NEWSLETTER



Issue 7

March 2001

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Happy  
 Saint  
 Patrick's  
 Day



## Safe Schools NEWS

### California Tragedy: A Reminder of the Complexity of School Violence

On March 5, 15-year-old Charles Andrew Williams brought his father's .22-caliber revolver to Santana High School, in Santee, California and opened fire on his classmates with a smile on his face. Two students died and 13 people were injured in the attack.

In interviews with San Diego County sheriff's investigators, Williams expressed no remorse for the shootings. Investigators said they couldn't pinpoint his motive. "We don't know if he was mad at the school, mad at students, mad at life, mad at home," said Sheriff's Lt. Jerry Lewis. "He was an angry young man."

President George W. Bush responded to the incident by saying, "All adults in society can teach children right from wrong, can explain that life is precious." Many have characterized Bush's statement as an overly simplistic answer to an incredibly complex problem.

As this event, and other school shootings illustrate, angry and disturbed teenagers are not affected by the basic issue of right and wrong. It is highly unlikely that Williams did not know that killing people was



“wrong”. In a videotape he made for friends months before the attack, Williams filmed his father’s locked gun cabinet and referred to it as the “no trespassing cabinet.” His father had forbidden him to open it.

The FBI, which has extensively studied the profiles of school shooters, has developed guidelines that could help authorities assess whether someone is capable of a threat (see the October 2000 DoDEA Safe Schools Newsletter). FBI spokeswoman Jan Caldwell said, “We’ve seen these kids come from very good homes where they have two loving parents...There really is no menu for this.”

However, one of the common denominators in the 18 school shooting cases studied by the FBI and others, seems to be that almost all the shooters were bullied. “I can’t tell you how many calls I get a year about bullying as a precursor to these kinds of episodes,” says Ted Feinberg, assistant executive director for the National Association of School Psychologists. “We need to make sure that we don’t allow bullying any more than we tolerate sexual harassment.” Unfortunately, many researchers say parents consider bullying a part of growing up. Increasingly, however, psychologists and school officials are seeing bullying as an unacceptable phenomenon that leads to deeper and more damaging violence—especially among boys.

But the bullying aspect is only one ingredient to this volatile mixture. Another may be a deeper societal disconnection. More than at any time in the past, children are not developing a sense of belonging to their families or communities.

While noting that these mass shootings happen in predominately white, upper-middleclass, suburban neighborhoods, some sociologists blame this loss of community on the physical environment. “The classic suburb is less a community than an agglomeration of houses, shops, and offices connected to one another by cars, not by the fabric of human life,” wrote Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, in their essay *The Second Coming of the American Small Town* on suburban life.

The fear of a loss of community is echoed by Edward J. Blakely and Mary Gail Snyder, professors of Regional Planning in California. In their book, *Fortress America: Gated Communities in the United States*, they claim that “In an open city people of different colors and incomes must negotiate their mutual fate together. In some respects, they learn to value one another more highly, and social networks are expanded.” Exclusive gated communities, the authors say, lead to misunderstanding, stereotyping, and fear.

Also, in families where both parents work outside the home children are increasingly spending more time without supervision. Experts say in essence, the latchkey kids are treated like adults before they’re ready for the responsibility.

Add to that the images of violence portrayed in film, television, and video games, and ill-adjusted American teens too often resort to violence when beset by deep-seated frustration. Even the news can become a factor with the rise of “copy cat” school shootings. Within days of the Santee shooting the following incidents were reported:



- **3/5/01:** On the very same day as the Santee shooting, an 8-year-old in Philadelphia, PA brought a 9-mm gun to school and threatened to kill a classmate.
- **3/6/01:** At Wheatland High School in CA, a boy was arrested after he allegedly threatened to bring a gun to school and kill people. He was released after authorities determined he did not have immediate access to guns.
- **3/7/01:** A 14-year-old girl shot a classmate in the shoulder during lunch at Bishop Neumann Junior-Senior High in Williamsport, PA.
- **3/7/01:** In Twentynine Palms, CA, two 17-year-old boys were arrested at their homes Tuesday night on suspicion of conspiracy to commit murder and civil rights violations. At one of the boys' homes, deputies found a rifle. At the other boy's home, there was a list of 16 fellow students at Monument High School that the pair planned to target.
- **3/7/01:** Police arrested a 15-year-old boy at Kentwood High School in Seattle, WA, for allegedly bringing a gun to school. The boy did not fire the gun but police shut down the school for more than an hour after apprehending him in a classroom. According to witnesses the suspect cocked the gun and pointed it at classmates, asking: "Who thinks I'm crazy?"

"The common element here is guns," says Laurence Steinberg, a professor at Temple University in Philadelphia. "How many events like this do you get in Britain, France, Japan, and Canada? They have kids and bullies there, too." Furthermore, according to the National Association of Federally Licensed Firearms Dealers, the number of guns in America has increased dramatically in recent years, going from 205 million in

1992, to 230 million in 1997, and the number continues to rise. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention reports that the death rate from guns for U.S. children, ages 14 and younger, is nearly twelve times higher than the combined rate in twenty-five other industrialized countries.

But was it always this way? Wasn't there a time when school massacres didn't happen in America? Yes, there was. Unfortunately, there isn't a simple formula that will get us back to a time where the very idea of a student coming to school to murder his or her classmates was unfathomable.

Bullies have always been around. However, other influences such as lack of community identification, latchkey kids, violent movies, video games, song lyrics, and the massive accumulation of guns in America, are relatively new phenomena. So too are these shootings. Unfortunately, this goes far beyond the simple teaching of right and wrong.

## DoDEA Safe Schools Program Evaluation

By March 23, 2001, a program evaluation will be e-mailed to all school administrators and superintendents who received the DoDEA Safe Schools workshop training and handbook. DoDEA is interested in the evaluations from the school administrators responsible for implementing the Safe Schools Program to learn how it can be made more helpful to you. We are asking that participants provide responses by April 6, 2001.



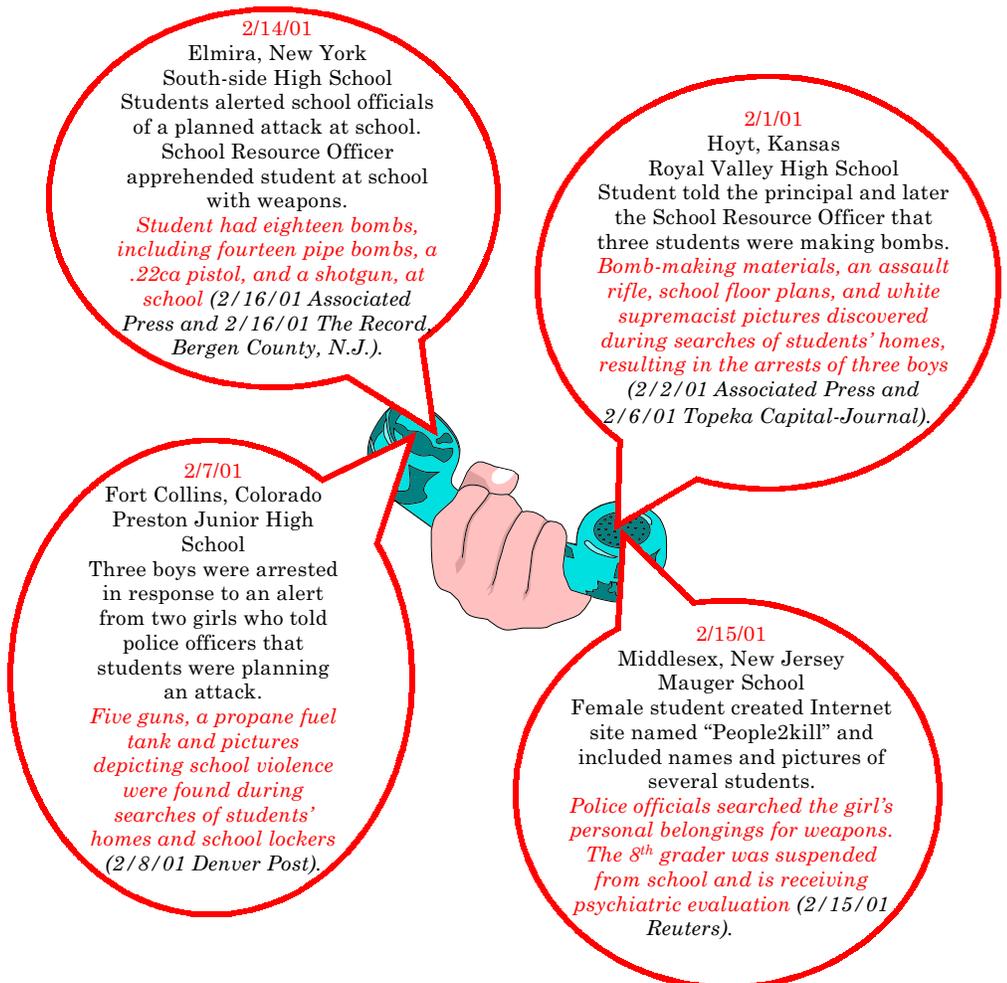
## Preventing Hate Incidents at School

On Thursday, 3/1/01 at Andress High School, El Paso, Texas, four hundred students were involved in a school fight that resulted in the arrests of thirteen students and required a response from more than one hundred police officers and a police helicopter (3/2/01 *Associated Press* and 3/3/01 *El Paso Times*). According to news reports, a sixteen-year-old student said that the racism that contributed to the riot was more frightening than the police officers' use of batons and pepper spray, "It's more difficult because they hate each other because of their skin."

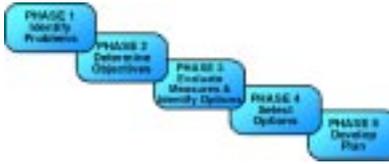
There were three responses to the incident from school administrators. School District Superintendent Gilbert Anzaldúa planned community meetings and an evaluation of school policies on racial comments and racially motivated fights. Principal Robert Ortega addressed the students on the PA system. And counselors were available to discuss the incident with students. The December 2000 DoDEA Safe Schools Newsletter included a discussion of how to evaluate school policies. For an example of effective hate prevention education see the Intervention Strategies article in this newsletter (p. 5).

## Student Reports Prevent School Violence

Recent news reports also included descriptions of incidents prevented because students alerted school officials of possible school violence. Some students appear to be learning that alerting school officials protects lives and helps troubled youths get the counseling and assistance they need. The accompanying graphic highlights four of these incidents.



# Applying the 5 Phase Process



## Physical Security Review

The **Physical Security Review (PSR)** is the process by which you evaluate your existing physical security

### PHASE 3 Evaluate Measures & Identify Options

measures (e.g., anti-theft devices, doors/locks/keys, surveillance systems, sensors, badging systems, metal detectors, barriers, and security personnel). During the **PSR** you will identify both *improvements to existing measures* and *new measures that you can adopt*.

The PSR requires an inspection of the entire school. There is no short cut to this aspect of the process. Start with the outside and work inwardly to the center of the school. When inspecting the school perimeter, look at the school from an outsider's perspective. For schools with security forces already in place (e.g., PONDS), make certain that you know their assigned responsibilities and what you can expect from their presence.

The DoDEA Safe Schools Handbook provides a checklist that you can use to organize and record the



results of your Review. The checklist is found at the yellow tab titled Tool #7. It lists two questions that you must address for each of the eight risk reduction categories:

1. *Do you have the physical security measure?*
2. *Is it acceptable?*

Judge the acceptability of physical security measures according to

- The extent to which the measure helps meet the appropriate objective
- Financial cost
- Political feasibility
- Ease of implementation
- Administrative considerations

To judge the effectiveness of a physical security measure, consider the following questions:

- Is it operable?
- Are operators trained to use it?
- Have you promulgated a policy describing its implementation?
- Is it being used appropriately? At the right times? In the right places?

The answers to these questions will guide your selection of physical security measures.

Don't forget to use the Red/Yellow/Green rating system to rank order your priorities according to the objectives you established in Phase 2 of the process. Spend your time and energy on the most important needs (the red ones) that help you attain the objectives that you believe will address the problems you identified in Phase 1. Check on policy implementation by school staff. Good policies are only effective if implemented.

Expensive physical security devices may not be as effective as a solid policy or intervention program or a combination of the two. The 5-Phase Process combines the Policy and Program Review (PPR) with the Physical Security Review (PSR) to ensure a comprehensively thought-out approach to the optimum selection of options.

## Managing the News Media

The media's presence during a crisis situation will be the most powerful *outside force* that can potentially interfere with the effectiveness of your incident response efforts. In most crisis situations, *the Command's Public Affairs Office will be the direct interface with the media.* However, media personnel are trained and experienced in getting to the scene and into the midst of the chaos. It is possible for an administrator, teacher, or student to be confronted directly by a reporter who has somehow gained access to the scene.

Tips that should be remembered in case a reporter confronts you face-to-face.

- Refer all questions to the Public Affairs Officer.
- One person should address the issue.
- Anyone speaking to the media should “speak to what can be spoken to” and “don't speak to what can't be spoken to”; in other words, no guess work.
- State the main point early on – up front!
- Always avoid “off-the-record” statements.
- A communications plan should be coordinated with everybody throughout the command (e.g., school, compound, base, headquarters, etc).
- Know the property lines and legalities of restraining the media.

- The primary responsibility of the school during a crisis situation, and after, is to meet the needs of the students and staff.
- Establish relationships with media personalities *before a crisis occurs.*

If you or others must prepare for a press conference, don't go in “cold”, plan thoroughly. There should be a fundamental philosophy regarding interface with the media. In military communities, a district or command policy will be established. The Public Affairs Office will have already conducted planning and preparation for dealing with the media.

Prepare suggestions for families that choose to talk with reporters, including:

- It is entirely an individual's choice to be interviewed.
- If an individual chooses to meet with the media, consider a neutral location.
- An individual can have someone represent him / her.
- A written statement often gives the interviewee more control than submitting to questions.
- An interviewee does not have to agree to pictures being taken.
- If there are inaccuracies in the story as reported, request the story be corrected.

Remember that the reporters want a story. Reporters may take what is said out of context and put their own “spin” on the story line. Therefore, be prepared for disappointment.

## Hate Prevention Education

A *hate crime* can be defined as a crime motivated by prejudice against a person, property or group of people. A *hate incident* can be defined as harmful words or actions motivated by prejudice against a person or property, that do not constitute a crime according to U.S. law. Hate prevention education teaches tolerance to increase opportunities to celebrate diversity and decrease hate incidents or hate crimes.



### Example of Effective Hate Prevention

“Healing the Hate” consists of ten units of classes used to teach tolerance in middle schools and youth groups. The Department of Justice (DoJ) Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) funded the research and provides the lesson plans on their Internet site. To view these lesson plans, visit <http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org> and use the search capability to find “Healing the Hate.” Each lesson plan includes the purpose, objectives of the lesson, instructions for preparation, materials

needed, and participatory activities for students. Students gain an understanding of causes and effects of prejudice and the role of aggressors, victims and bystanders in conflict.

Youth learn about institutionalized prejudice, resistance, and how to encourage social change. Lessons about the U.S. Civil Rights movement encourage students to think critically about messages in television shows and newspapers. Participatory and writing exercises enable students to empathize with victims and enhance students’ teamwork, communication, listening, and critical thinking skills. Dramatic presentations by students, and guidelines for service learning projects, involve youth in hate prevention education.

### Sources of Information

Southern Poverty Law Center: *Responding to Hate at School* (<http://www.splcenter.org/teachingtolerance/tt-index.html>)

DoJ OJJDP: *Preventing Youth Hate Crime* (<http://www.usdoj.gov/crs/pubs/prevyouthatecrim.htm>) and Technical Assistance ([http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/archive/topics/hate/technical\\_assistance.htm](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/archive/topics/hate/technical_assistance.htm))

Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights: *Protecting Students from Harassment and Hate Crime*, a handbook for schools (<http://www.ed.gov/pubs/Harassment/>); Checklist for Hate Crime Prevention: (<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OCR/checklist.html>).

## **DARE Admits Lack of Impact and Builds New “State of the Art” Program in Response**

The war on drugs seems to have evolved into a battle of containment. However, the struggle to keep children off drugs is still being fought by politicians, police, the U.S. military, doctors, parents, teachers, and school administrators. Unfortunately, even with all of these groups working together, the rate of drug abuse has not significantly decreased among children.

One of the programs most commonly used in U.S. schools is Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE). This \$226M program is being used in 80% of U.S. schools. However, recent studies indicated that children who complete the DARE program in elementary school are just as likely to become involved with drugs as those who do not. One six-year study by the University of Illinois found that the program’s effects wore off by senior year of high school. In fact, it

detected some increased drug use by suburban high school students who had completed the DARE program.

The November 2000 DoDEA Safe Schools Newsletter reported that school districts in Salt Lake City, UT, Minneapolis, MN, Austin, TX, Seattle, WA and Omaha, NE discontinued DARE funding. Ross Anderson, mayor of Salt Lake City, said, “we should put our resources behind programs that work.”

Proponents of the DARE program note that the training is inexpensive, and it enables police officers to establish rapport with young people and to connect in a positive way with them. Opponents claim that none of this matters if the program does not meet its objective of keeping children off drugs. They claim the simplistic “just say no” message is ineffective, and that when you teach kids that marijuana is just as dangerous as heroin, they lose respect for the entire message when they realize that is not true. “Kids are too smart...They want to be told straight up that there is a difference,” Jerry Elsner of the Illinois State Crime Commission said recently.

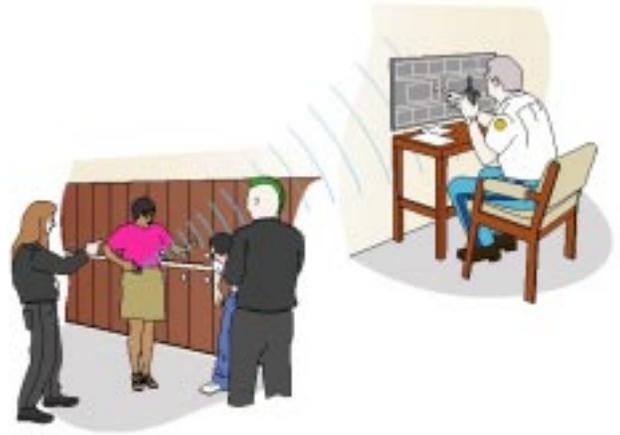
DARE leaders acknowledged that their strategy has not had sufficient impact and say they are developing a new approach to spreading their message. Herbert D. Kleber, Medical Director, National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse, Columbia University and director of DARE’s scientific advisory panel, stated “Our feeling was, after looking at the prevention movement, we were not having enough of an impact.”

In response to its critics, DARE accepted a \$13.7M grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to rewrite its classes. The University of Akron and



DARE America used the funding to develop the next generation of substance abuse prevention programming. “There’s a gap between what we know and what we practice,” said Nancy J. Kaufman, vice president of the foundation. “We knew we had better prevention technology that was not being applied, we knew there was this increase in drug use among young people, and we said, ‘You know what, we think we can change this. Let’s stop the rhetoric and fighting and see if we can’t craft something better.’ We want to take the knowledge gained through prevention science and see it applied in the real world. DARE is the perfect vehicle. We have designed a state-of-the-art program and will test its effectiveness.”

The new program, which will be offered to seventh and ninth graders this fall, will put more emphasis on involving kids in an interactive way with role playing. The kids will also be given actual statistics to help support the number of drug free kids and dispel any preconceived notions that kids may have that “everyone” is doing drugs. Local police officers are now coaching, rather than lecturing students, helping guide children through hypothetical situations involving peer pressure and drugs. Perhaps William F. Alden, a former DARE Deputy Director, best summed up the sentiment by saying “Neither the message nor the messenger was sacred...only the mission.



## School Security Technology: Benefits of Location at Military Installations

School security technology considered by U.S. public schools includes:

- ▶ Duress alarms
- ▶ Security lighting
- ▶ Motion sensors
- ▶ Access control
- ▶ Anti-theft devices
- ▶ Security fencing
- ▶ Student identification badges
- ▶ Surveillance cameras
- ▶ Metal detectors
- ▶ Baggage X-ray equipment

DoDEA schools usually benefit from their location at military installations because much of the security civilian schools strive for is provided by the military. For example, at military installations in Japan, student identifications are not considered necessary because a military identification is required for access to facilities. DoDEA schools located on military installations might not require security fencing. Security equipment that might interest DoDEA schools includes limited use of surveillance cameras, security lighting and duress alarms.

## Duress Alarms

As discussed briefly in the DoDEA Safe Schools Handbook (p. 32), duress alarms enable a teacher or school staff member to discretely alert the school office of a crisis incident. Schools selecting duress alarms would then be able to include the equipment in their

Incident Response Planning (IRP). For more information regarding duress alarms consult the National Institute of Justice Research Report *The Appropriate and Effective Use of Security Technologies in U.S. Schools* (<http://www.ncjrs.org/school/home.html>).

| TYPE                          | COST PER SCHOOL* | DESCRIPTION   | ADVANTAGES   | DISADVANTAGES  |
|-------------------------------|------------------|---|--|--|
| IDENTIFIES LOCATION           | \$10K            | <i>Teacher activates duress alarm.<br/>Device sends electrical signal through wires to school office where a visible or audio alarm is activated at a console.</i>  | <i>Known location, i.e., beneath teacher's desk.<br/>Can be configured to include existing PA system and wiring to allow two-way communication.</i>  | <i>Might not be accessible during a crisis incident.<br/>Nuisance alarms from students.<br/>System identifies location, not the person activating the alarm.</i>             |
| IDENTIFIES TEACHER            | \$50K            | <i>Pager type device worn by teacher sends wireless alarm signal to sensing unit in classroom wall.<br/>Sensing unit forwards the signal to the alarm console.</i>  | <i>Using existing PA system decreases installation and equipment costs.<br/>Can include two-way radio.</i>   | <i>Walls, windows, roofs, floors might interfere with alarm signal.<br/>Number of sensing units limits location identification.<br/>Radio equipped device is cumbersome.</i> |
| IDENTIFIES TEACHER & LOCATION | \$100K           | <i>"Smarter" version of previous system.<br/>Pager type device sends wireless signal to sophisticated sensing unit.<br/>Sensing unit forwards signal to alarm console and produces a symbol indicating individual's location.</i> | <i>Device identifies, locates and indicates movement of individual activating the alarm.<br/>Can be used inside and outside of the school depending on the number and location of sensing units.</i> | <i>Cost</i>  |

\* Approximate cost per school provided by the NIJ Report, *The Appropriate and Effective Use of Security Technologies in U.S. Schools*.



## Violence in Schools

*By Olga Zeveleva, 5th Grader*

*“I think that we, as the kids, should do all that we can to try to understand the disastrous wrong of violence.”*

Violence in schools was always a tremendous problem in the schools of the United States and the world in general. It may start at the smallest incidents like someone pushing someone else out of line in Kindergarten. The tendency towards violence starts usually at a young age, based on how the child is brought up and what the child is exposed to. This predisposition may grow to such immoderate measures such as school shooting or other occurrences.

Yes, violence in schools was always a problem. However, today, sources like counselors, teachers, and media seem to be paying more attention to these incidents. This is a good sign and it means that school improvement is paid attention to and is important to officials. Many people are led astray in terms of media paying more attention to school violence. They may think that just because it is mentioned more often now than before, there is bound to be more of it. This may and may not be correct – only heavy statistics will show this accurately.

The question *Why is there such a tendency towards school violence?* will bring up many more questions, one of which will be *Why is there such a tendency towards violence at all?* Violence does not dwell only in kids, but in adults just the same. However, today’s aggressive adults

were most likely yesterday’s aggressive school kids, so if violence as a child is prevented, likely, so is violence as an adult.

This leads me to another branch of this subject – parents. I mentioned earlier that the environment in which children are raised affects their behavior as a school child. If children are raised with the rules of *if you did it, you get it* or *if you were hurt, you can hurt*, then these rules will most probably stick through their entire lives, and spill out in emotional bursts during their school years. Teachers are not always able to erase those traces of the parents. Children need attention and parent’s time to explain what is right and what is wrong. Not all children have the privilege of this, while all rightfully should.

I believe that adults, having great influence, should do all that they can to try to prevent and protect kids from violence. I think that we, as the kids, should do all that we can to try to understand the disastrous wrong of violence. If we all work together and hold back violence in schools, we will help make this world a better and safer place. I think that kids are the future, and if we stop violence in schools, the future will become a lot brighter. After all, who wants to live in a world filled with hate and aggression?

*Garmisch American School,  
Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany  
Olaf Zwicker, Principal; Dovie Jones,  
Teacher; Brenda Lynch*



## Violence in Schools

*By Katelyn Reed, 4<sup>th</sup> Grader*

*“Bullies usually don’t leave you alone until you do what they say.”*

Violence in school is wrong. Bullies make schools violent. Bullies can make other people feel really bad and very hurt too. Bullies bully people for lots of reasons. Some of those reasons are jealousy, just to be mean, and some people are in gangs and they dare each other to bully people. Bullies usually don’t leave you alone until you do what they say. Bullies might even smoke or do drugs. If they smoke and do drugs they are probably going to force you to smoke or do their drugs.

I think schools can prevent bullies by having a rule that says if you get reported by a teacher for bullying you get suspended from school for a while or have detention for a while.

Bullies will do anything to get attention and show off. Bullies will start fights, use bad language, they will do drugs and bring them to school, they lie a whole lot, and they might even try to kidnap you, so be careful!!!! Bullies are BAD.....REAL BAD!

Weapons are brought to school a lot too. Weapons are something that can even harm the teacher. Some people bring weapons to school too because they want attention and they bring them to school to be mean. The weapons that kids usually bring to school are pistols, knives, brass knuckles, and other small weapons that kids can sneak out of the house.

*Hainerberg Elementary School, Wiesbaden, Germany  
Julie Gaski, Principal; Deborah Holland, Teacher*