



DoDDS-Europe Summary Coming

Thank you to Steven Reinbrecht and all of the administrators and DSSOs who made the DoDDS-Europe Safe Schools Training successful. Since this newsletter was written while the trainers were in Europe a complete summary will appear in the May newsletter. ■



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Stop Bullying Now!

In March, Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson announced a bullying and youth violence prevention campaign. The campaign entitled “Take a Stand. Lend A Hand. Stop Bullying Now!” is designed to stop bullying, including verbal and physical harassment. “Bullying is something we cannot ignore,” Secretary Thompson said.

Bullying occurs repeatedly over time, is intended to cause harm, and involves an imbalance of power between the child who bullies and the child who is bullied. Among boys, bullying typically involves pushing, shoving, and other forms of physical intimidation. Girls tend to bully through gossiping, social exclusion, and verbal teasing.

The impact of bullying on children’s educational success and personal well being is significant and can be long-lasting. According to researcher Dan Olweus, one-in-four children who are bullies at a young age will have a criminal record by age 30. Studies have shown that bullies often behave badly in school and are more likely to smoke, drink alcohol, and receive lower grades.

The “Stop Bullying Now!” Campaign includes a web-based animated story featuring a cast of young people who deal with bullies in the classrooms, hallways, and grounds of a middle school. With help from teachers, parents, and other adults, the bullied characters get support from fellow students who make it clear that bullying is “not cool.”



The web site offers webisodes, information about bullying prevention programs, activities for kids, and tools to help schools solve individual bullying issues. For more, go to: www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov. ■



New Guide Planned

The Spring 2004 Prevention Programs Guide will be sent to you this May. In addition to the new prevention program information included in your *Second Special Edition of Safe Schools: A Handbook for Practitioners*, this guide offers 22 additional resources to support your school's prevention efforts.

Programs were selected based on evidence of effectiveness using recommendations from the Department of Education's Safe, Disciplined, and Drug-Free Schools Expert Panel, the University of Colorado's Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence and other sources.

Less expensive programs were chosen to present affordable options to DoDEA administrators. Finally, the programs can be implemented by school staff rather than requiring training from presenters outside the school community.

The Prevention Programs Guide covers ten topics: Anti-Bullying, Behavior Management, Character Education, Conflict Resolution, Parental Involvement, Sexual Harassment, Substance Abuse, Gangs, Hate Issues, and Suicide Prevention. ■

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DoDEA Antiterrorism Efforts Earn A+

The DoD team inspecting DoDEA's Antiterrorism program declared it one of the best AT programs in DoD and recommended DoDEA's AT program as an example for the Combatant Commands.

Experts from the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, Joint Staff Antiterrorism/Homeland Security Directorate, Defense Intelligence Agency and Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict conducted a Headquarters AT assessment from March 29 through April 1, 2004. The inspectors lauded DoDEA's risk management, planning, training & exercises, funding and program review. Their final report specifically praised DoDEA's:

- ◆ Student AT Awareness videos,
- ◆ Annual training for faculty prior to the start of the school year (Level I Plus Training),
- ◆ Effective means of tracking funds, and
- ◆ Committed staff.

Office of Safety & Security Chief Ed Englehardt and the entire Safe Schools team would like to thank the administrators and District Safety & Security Officers who implement the AT program. Your efforts continue to prevent tragedies, save lives and allow our education mission to continue in hostile operating environments! To learn more about the DoDEA Antiterrorism Program, see: www.odedodea.edu/log/safety_security/index1.htm. ■

DoDEA School Enhances School Climate

One school administrator used information taught at the recent Bavaria District Safe Schools Training to further enhance her school's climate. Dr. Gloria Yokley from the Vilseck Elementary School held separate assemblies for grades "multi-age", 3, 4, 5 and 6. Emphasizing positive ethics and sharing the ways students can use role models to succeed in life, Yokley communicated her care and concern to her students. After the assembly Dr. Yokley was approached by a teacher who thanked her for her ongoing efforts to reinforce students by commending them for their good behavior. ■

Keys to Improving Surveillance

The Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) concept of surveillance recommends physical alterations that enable you to see intruders approaching your school or view students from a distance. Use windows, landscaping and lighting to improve the visibility of your property. Suggestions for strengthening your CPTED surveillance include:



- ◆ Trim bushes to a height of 3 feet and branches to minimum height of 8 feet.
- ◆ Place a window on the exterior wall of the school office with a view of the arrival/departure area.
- ◆ Place a window on the interior wall of the school office to provide a view of the hallway.
- ◆ Inspect your school at night to determine where enhanced lighting could deter vandalism.

Since behavior improves with increased supervision, modifications that improve your ability to supervise students could enhance school climate. For more information, go to: www.cpted-security.com/cpted18.htm or www.ericfacility.net/ericdigests/ed449549.html. ■

Parent Letters



Communications to parents, whether notes sent home, e-mails or letters mailed, can support your safe school planning efforts. Letters to parents can assist two-way communication and help build positive and lasting relationships. Below are a handful of ways to communicate with parents:

- ◆ Invite parents to get involved in your safe school planning efforts by participating in a survey or joining a safe school committee.
- ◆ As a part of your Risk Reduction planning efforts, tell parents how to contact administrators after hours, in the event that they learn of a possible threat to the school.
- ◆ Share the school's procedures for protecting students, such as how and where to pick them up and your plan for communicating with parents, should any emergencies occur at school.
- ◆ Following a school incident, work with mental health professionals to provide parents with an outline of the psychological support their children will receive and information about how parents can continue this support at home.

Parent support for your Safe School Plan increases when they can participate in your planning efforts and understand how their actions can contribute to their children's security and education. ■



A Whole School Approach

How does a school help its climate when it is suffering from low level violence (i.e., verbal threats and insults)? In her study published in the April issue of *Children and Schools*, Dr. Debra Woody, University of Texas Social Work researcher, explained how a whole school approach to conflict resolution helped curb less extreme acts of violence at a school experiencing academic difficulties. Dr. Woody found that one school's tailor-made conflict resolution training program:

- ◆ Increased students' knowledge of a non-violent means to resolve conflict;
- ◆ Facilitated a more positive attitude about non-violent options; and
- ◆ Reduced the frequency of violent confrontations.

According to Woody this conflict resolution model was successful because unlike many others, it included school-wide participation and continued for the entire school year. Said Woody, "It was a systematic approach; the principal of the school made it mandatory training. Every student, teacher, administrator and secretary received the training and was required to use the skills. The ongoing training increased the likelihood that students internalized the skills and maximized the long-term effects of managing anger and resolving conflict."

The three phase conflict resolution program began with 4-hour training sessions for 20 students at a time.

Students learned communication enhancement and conflict resolution through negotiation. The training stressed the acceptance of and appreciation for diversity. Faculty and staff training comprised the second phase. Phase three offered daily follow-up training. In homeroom, teachers would facilitate discussions about a particular concept that had been presented in the training. All new students, faculty and staff received mandatory training as well.

At the end of the school year, students tested positively on their conflict resolution skills. Additionally, teachers reported a more cooperative classroom atmosphere and fewer violent altercations. Teachers said that they noticed that many students were now resolving conflict through non-violent means and as a result were less aggressive.

Woody says that because conflict is inescapable, resolving disputes is a part of the school "culture" and is the responsibility of all personnel. "The next phase," Woody stated, "is to add parents to the process. While some problems are school related, there is a component that has roots at home. Ideally, parents would learn the skills and be able to offer resolutions at home based on the same skills children have learned at school."

For more information on this study, go to: www.naswdc.org/pressroom/2001/032301b.asp. ■

----- FAST FACT -----

On the Playground . . .

- One incident of bullying occurs every seven minutes.
- Adult intervention takes place in 4% of the incidents.
- Peer intervention takes place in 11% of the incidents.

Safety Tips for Teachers

Trying to control an unruly student or break up an altercation can put a teacher in harm's way. Labor Relations Press (LRP) Publications' video "Safety Tips for Teachers" offers the following advice to help teachers steer clear of potentially unsafe situations:

General Tips:

- ◆ Speak in a controlled and respectful tone when intervening with unruly students.
- ◆ If a student is out of control in your class, stay calm; they will often follow your demeanor.
- ◆ If a student disrupts the class, acknowledge their need, and ask to meet with them after class.
- ◆ If a student is angry and wants to leave class, do not physically block the doorway. Instead, verbally note that their actions will have consequences.
- ◆ When your tolerance is low, don't argue or descend to the student's level. Explain the consequences for the student's continued actions. Next, in a steady voice the entire class can hear, ask them to stop or tell the student the entire class will suffer in some way if they do not cease. Often this implied peer pressure will stop the student in his/her tracks.
- ◆ If a student is rude or attempting to get you angry, speak to the student quietly and responsibly.

If you are in a situation where you must break up a fight, remember:

- ◆ Most fights can be stopped by using a commanding and stern voice
- ◆ Use the students' names
- ◆ Give specific commands to the students
- ◆ Avoid physical force (when possible)
- ◆ Separate the aggressor from the victim (if absolutely necessary)
- ◆ Get medical attention for the participants (if necessary)
- ◆ Debrief the relevant teachers
- ◆ Discipline the students

While often a challenging task – maintaining respect, staying calm and refusing to respond to provocations will minimize your exposure to physical harm. ■



Preventing Gangs at Your School

Administrators without a youth gang problem often ask how to prevent the start of gangs. The Indianapolis Gang Identification Manual offers these practical gang prevention tips:

Read the Signs of Gang Involvement: Graffiti, tattoos, wearing specific colors, hand signs, symbols on clothing, desks, notebooks, book bags and jewelry.

Eliminate Graffiti: Photograph, report and remove graffiti as soon as it is discovered. Leaving graffiti on the walls can cause unnecessary disruptions to the educational process, attract rival gangs, and invites more graffiti. Pictures of graffiti preserve evidence for use in later gang interventions and provide intelligence to law enforcement officials.

Alert Parents: Share the telltale signs of gang involvement through parent forums and letters. Warn parents that once a student is involved in a gang, it is tough to leave.

Educate Staff: Share youth gang warning signs with staff.

Ask Staff to Report Suspected Gang Behavior and to Tell You:

- ❖ The gang behaviors they observed;
- ❖ Where they observed the behavior; and
- ❖ Who was involved.

Enforce Discipline: Be decisive, firm, and fair when enforcing the school's policies regarding student involvement in gang activities. For additional ideas, see: www.iir.com/nygc/acgp/implementation.htm. ■



Hate Prevention

A program entitled Partners Against Hate (PAH) is a joint initiative of the Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the Department of Education's Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program. Through outreach, education, and training, PAH addresses the cycle of bias, hatred, distrust, and violence among youth.

PAH helps students:

- ◆ Confront prejudicial attitudes before they escalate – PAH offers a [downloadable guide](#) for teachers;
- ◆ Explore diversity and build life skills for positive inter-group relations – PAH tells students how to break down stereotypes, recognize prejudice, and prevent hate crimes; and
- ◆ Become a catalyst for change – use PAH guidelines to [start a peer leader program in your school](#).

The PAH [Hate Response Network](#) helps administrators create a school climate where youth can feel secure, accepted, independent, and responsible. Other resources for schools include downloadable lesson plans, information on multicultural children's books and parent information. For more information on PAH, go to: www.partnersagainsthate.org/educators/. ■