



DoDEA

SAFE Schools

NEWSLETTER



Volume V - Issue 4 December 2004

DoDEA Newsletters

Remember: All Safe Schools newsletters are available on the DoDEA web site at: www.dodea.edu/schools/newsletters.htm. ■

Schools Contest

Win an anti-bullying program when you submit your safe school prevention program or security success article for publication in a future newsletter. This program includes a backpack with a teacher's manual, 25 student workbooks, a "Bee Yourself" video and a "Bully Bully" music CD.

The backpacks will go to the first ten responders. Need help with your article? Just ask! Submit your story today to: jbloom4@csc.com. ■

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DoDEA School Celebrates Red Ribbon Week

DoDEA's Croughton American School (CAS), located in the United Kingdom, conducted a drug prevention awareness program titled Red Ribbon Week (RRW). From October 25th through the 29th, students and staff participated in five days of activities which promoted a drug-free lifestyle. Letters were sent home to parents explaining the activities. The principal asked parents to reinforce the drug-free message with their children.



Principal Wilma Holt, Croughton American School, reads to students.

RRW was organized in honor of U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration agent Enrique "Kiki" Camarena, who was killed in the line of duty in 1985. The National Family Partnership (NFP) organized the first RRW in 1988 and it is held yearly during the last week of October.

At the beginning of RRW, students wore their clothes backwards to symbolize "turning their backs on drugs." The next day students "socked it to drugs" by wearing crazy socks. On the third day, students wore sweat clothes to show that living drug free is "no sweat." Thursday was "hats off to those who say no to drugs" and students wore hats. Additionally, students planted red tulip bulbs around the school to symbolize a promise to stay drug free. In the spring, CAS students will see a visual reminder of their promises when the tulips bloom.

Guidance counselor Tricia Taylor stated, "It's essential that students are aware of the importance of respecting their bodies." Other DoDEA schools may want to have a RRW of their own to encourage students to stay drug free. For more information go to NFP's web site: www.nfp.org. ■

Replica guns

According to the September issue of *Education Week*, the growing presence of replica guns on campus or at school-sponsored events is a problem facing U.S. schools. Replica guns are sold as toys, however, when fired at close range they can seriously injure someone.

Many replica guns look authentic and are sold in sporting goods stores for \$15-\$200. These fake guns fire plastic air-propelled pellets at 190 to 350 feet per second. DoDEA's zero tolerance policy for weapons includes replica guns.



Recent incidents involving replica guns include:

- ◆ In California this past July, four teenagers were confronted by a police officer. The officer thought the boys were brandishing real firearms. The officer came close to shooting one boy who did not drop his replica gun.
- ◆ Baseball players in Utah were taking replica guns to games and shooting at one another in the dugout. One boy almost lost his life. As a result, the baseball coach was fired, two players were expelled, and three players were suspended.
- ◆ In September, two students in Utah were suspended, pending an investigation, for brandishing two replica guns at a football game.

Federal and state legislation to ban the sale of replica guns is currently pending. In California, a measure is pending that would mandate that new replica guns include an advisory warning the buyer, "Altering the appearance of the gun or brandishing it in public could be considered a crime."

Administrators can reduce problems with replica guns by reminding students that replica weapons are included in DoDEA's zero tolerance policy. Ensure that student handbooks include a policy stating that the possession of a replica gun at school will result in disciplinary action. Work with the PTO to ensure that parents are clearly aware of this policy. ■



Take Time to Talk

The "15+ Make Time to Listen... Take Time to Talk" initiative is sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA). This program gives parents and caregivers information about methods for communicating with their children about bullying. The campaign emphasizes that an investment of 15 minutes or more a day with your child can be instrumental in building a healthier and safer environment. SAMHSA provides three brochures:



"Take Action Against Bullying," "15+ Make Time to Listen – Take Time to Talk," and "About Bullying." They are free and downloadable at their web site: www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/15plus/aboutbullying.asp. ■

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U.S. DoE: Detering Terrorism

The U.S. Department of Education (DoE) recently endorsed many of the security measures that DoDEA administrators use to deter terrorist attacks and respond to incidents. Administrators responsible for implementing DoDEA's Antiterrorism Program (DoDEA Regulation 4700.1) and Internal Physical Security Regulation (4700.2) might already be familiar with the security measures recommended by Deputy Secretary of Education, Eugene Hickok. In his October 6 letter to education colleagues throughout the United States, he offers antiterrorism recommendations based on an analysis of the Beslan incident conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Homeland Security.

Many of these measures were discussed during last year's safe schools workshops with Bob Michela and Paul Hersey (i.e., reviewing Safe School Plans annually, conducting protective action drills and providing security awareness training.) DoE divided their recommendations into near and long-term procedures.



Near Term Measures – DoE suggests:

- ◆ Review your Safe School Plan.
- ◆ Review your protective action procedures at a faculty meeting. Include a discussion about how to respond to all hazards through lockdown, shelter-in-place, take cover or evacuation.
- ◆ Consider a closed-campus policy.
- ◆ Consider a single point of entry.
- ◆ Request patrols by local security/law enforcement officials.
- ◆ Ensure that officials will be able to contact school buses.

- ◆ Share the Red Cross brochure “Terrorism: Preparing for the Unexpected” with students, staff and parents. The brochure is available at: www.redcross.org/services/disaster/keepsafe/terrorism.pdf.



Long Term Measures – DoE suggests:

- ◆ Apply protective coating to exterior windows facing traffic. (Many DoDEA schools have already applied mylar coatings to their windows.)
- ◆ Install window and external door locks with quick-release capability.
- ◆ Establish a “safe area” within the school for shelter-in-place emergencies.

The Deputy Secretary's recommendations reinforce the concept that although schools cannot prevent terrorist attacks, they can discourage an attack by appearing more prepared than their neighboring “soft” targets. To access the DoDEA regulations mentioned in this article visit: www.dodea.edu/regs/regs_num.htm and select regulations 4700.1 and 4700.2. For Department of Education resources visit: www.ed.gov/emergencyplan. ■

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

Firearms are the second leading cause of death for 10 to 24-year-olds in the United States.

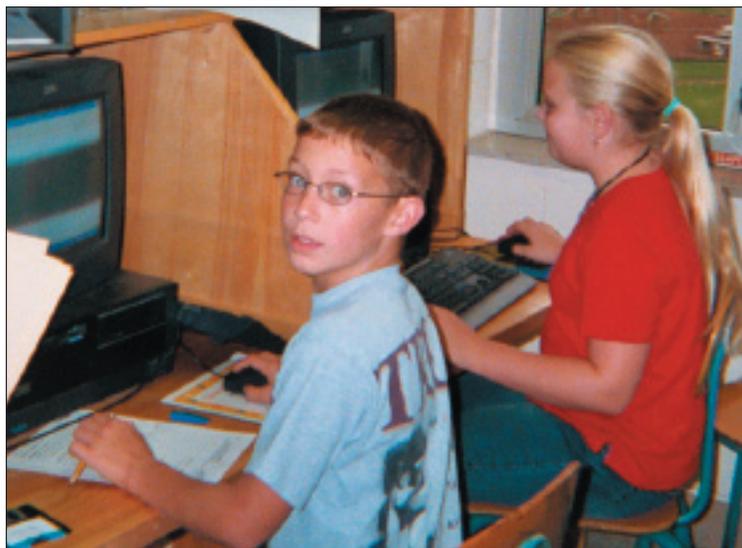
Source: Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Policy and Research. ■

Cyber-bullying

Cyber-bullying is “social cruelty accomplished through the use of technology,” says Nancy Willard, author of the book *Educator’s Guide to Cyber-bullying: Addressing the Harm Caused by On-line Social Cruelty* and Director of The Center for Safe and Responsible Internet Use (CSRIU). In a recent interview Willard said, “Cyber-bullying can lead to significant emotional harm to the victim, which could result in suicide and/or school violence.”

Willard said there are increasing problems with students using the Internet or other mobile devices to bully and harass their peers. The incidents include students who are:

- ◆ Sending cruel, vicious, and sometimes threatening messages.
- ◆ Creating web sites that have stories and jokes ridiculing others.
- ◆ Posting pictures of class mates on-line and asking students to rate them.
- ◆ Breaking into E-mail accounts and sending embarrassing material to others.
- ◆ Engaging someone in instant messaging, tricking that person into revealing sensitive personal information, and sharing that information with others.
- ◆ Taking a picture of a person in the locker room using a digital phone camera and sending it to others.



Willard offered the following suggestions to support the prevention of cyber-bullying in school and among students. These ideas fit nicely into the Safe School Planning Model in your Handbook. Highlights include:

Phase I: Identify Problems

- ◆ Survey students to determine the number of incidents.
- ◆ Identify obstacles that inhibit reporting.

Phase II: Determine Objectives

- ◆ Incorporate cyber-bullying concerns into school security objectives.
- ◆ Measure progress by including a question about cyber-bullying in future student surveys.

Phase III: Evaluate Measures

- ◆ Review school policies and procedures related to Internet and cell phone use in schools including procedures to handle reports of off-campus cyber-bullying.
- ◆ Evaluate your school’s cyber-bullying prevention and intervention strategies periodically for effectiveness.

Phase IV: Select Measures

- ◆ Conduct professional training to assist key staff in developing an understanding of cyber-bullying issues.
- ◆ Provide parent education that includes strategies to help parents detect cyber-bullying and intervene if their child is a victim or perpetrator.
- ◆ Incorporate lessons on cyber-bullying into life skills and bullying prevention classes.

Willard said, “The impact of the psychological harm inflicted by cyber-bullying may be greater than that of face-to-face bullying because there is no escape for the person who is cyber-bullied and there is a wider scope of dissemination of the hurtful material. Because cyber-bullying occurs in the hidden, on-line world of youth, adults are unaware of this issue. It is imperative that adults begin to address these concerns.” For more information on cyber-bullying go to: www.cyberbully.org or www.csriu.org. ■

The Value of Character Education

Character education expert Rushworth Kidder, director of the Institute for Global Ethics, explains how character education can enhance school climate and security. In an interview, Dr. Kidder stated that the most effective way to build a safe school is by creating a climate that respects students and teaches personal responsibility. “In that way,” Kidder said, “you reduce the incentive for students to take out their frustrations on one another or on the school property, and you create the conditions for students to care about each other. Our research shows that the tone at the top is the key. If your principal and other top decision-makers embrace the concept that ethics and values matter, they will matter.”



Kidder defines ethics as “the application of values to decision making,” and notes that character education helps students make more value-based, responsible decisions. Surveys, conducted by the Institute for Global Ethics, point to five core ethical values that are found world-wide and transcend culture, race, gender, age, and socioeconomic conditions. They are compassion, honesty, fairness, responsibility, and respect.

“If you start educating very young children about these values, says Kidder, they absorb these messages concretely. By the time they reach middle school, however, they begin to experience an internal tug-of-war around these concepts—not because they lack values, but because two of their values often come into conflict.” In an ethical decision, compassion may pull a student in one direction, while responsibility may pull him or



her in another. “The toughest dilemmas for all of us, even at middle-school age,” says Kidder, “are not right-versus-wrong issues, but right-versus-right issues.” Giving students concrete methods to reason through ethical dilemmas helps them make values practical.

For more on this issue go to: www.gloablethics.org/newsline/members/issue.tml?articleid=10280214563238. ■

Loyalty vs. Responsibility Dilemma: Maria hears Jose talking about bringing a gun to school. Should she report this and risk seeing Jose suspended, or remain silent out of loyalty to Jose? Ethical reasoning enables Maria to weigh the greater good of protecting other students and help Jose obtain help. ■

Suicide, Teens and Lack of Sleep

New findings indicate that adolescents who sleep fewer than eight hours a night are more likely to have suicidal thoughts and attempt suicide. Researcher Dr. Fiane Liu of Arizona State University’s Prevention Research Center, and China’s Shandon University School of Public Health, asserts that Suicidal behavior is also evident among those who experience frequent nightmares.

Liu analyzed survey responses from 1,362 students from three junior and two senior high schools in eastern China. The students were asked about their sleep patterns and problems and their suicidal behavior. Research results show that 19.3% of the students reported having suicidal thoughts



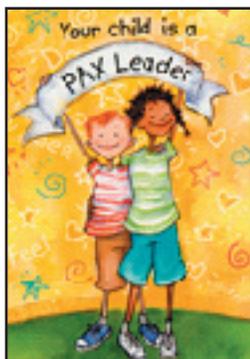
and 10.5% of the students reported a suicide attempt in the past six months.

Students who slept fewer than eight hours each night were about three times more likely to attempt suicide than those who slept a minimum of nine hours. Findings showed that the less sleep the adolescents had, the more likely they were to report having attempted suicide. For more on this story go to: www.journalsleep.org/citation/sleepdata.asp?Citationid=2461. ■

Good Behavior Game for K-6

The Pax Good Behavior Game (GBG) could help administrators decrease misbehavior that detracts from valuable teaching time. Designed for use in K-6 classrooms, this research-based behavior management program increases student academic time by decreasing disruptive student behaviors.

In the game student teams compete against each other to earn rewards for refraining from disruptive, inattentive, or aggressive behavior. GBG creates positive rather than negative peer pressure.



Children are taught that “tootling” is the opposite of tattling – it is telling people about the positive actions of others. Children also learn that “spleens” are things or actions that get in the way of classroom peace and productivity (i.e., not listening, interrupting or saying mean things). Because this game continues throughout the school day, it does not take up extra class time to teach.

Studies have shown that this program results in:

- ◆ 50-90% decrease in classroom disruptions;
- ◆ 30-60% decrease in referrals and suspensions; and,
- ◆ 25% more time for teaching and learning.

The on-line price for this game is: \$134.10. To purchase or learn more about the research behind this program go to: <http://www.interventioncentral.org/htmldocs/interventions/gbg.shtml>. ■

Telling, Tootling and Tattling:

Telling: Reporting an aggressive act aimed at you. (Do!)

Tootling: Singing someone else’s praises. (Do!)

Tattling: Getting someone else into trouble. (Don’t!) ■

Behavior Management Tips

Students behaving badly can ruin your school climate. In an *Education World Online* article titled “Creating a Climate for Learning,” teachers are given some tips to use for managing classroom behaviors. Below, we have listed a few of the tips that could help teachers create a better classroom climate. They are:



- ◆ Be patient with yourself and with your students.
- ◆ Don’t talk too much. Use the first 15 minutes of class for lectures or presentations, then get the kids working.
- ◆ Keep all students actively involved. For example, while a student gives a presentation involve the other students in evaluating it.
- ◆ Discipline individual students quietly and privately. Never engage in a disciplinary conversation across the room.

Behavior management skills can be taxing to implement at times, but the rewards can be great – a better school climate and more productive learning atmosphere. For more classroom behavior management tips go to: www.educationworld.com/a_curr/curr155.html. ■

How Can We Help You?

DoDEA administrators—remember: The Safe Schools Technical Assistance Team is here for you. Call us today for assistance with:

- ◆ Implementing any of your safe school planning tools;
- ◆ Writing your Safe School plan; or
- ◆ Justifying funds for a needed program or security modification.

Let us know how we can support you. Contact us today at: safeschools@csc.com or 703-461-2271. ■