

School Safety Update

The Newsletter of the National School Safety Center

January 2002

Pledging for Peace at School

Peace is a daily goal and a shared vision among staff, students, families, and the larger community at Martin Luther King Middle School in Atlanta, Georgia. Like many schools across the country, M.L. King Middle School knows the importance of the role of students in helping to make their school safe, secure and peaceful.

At M.L. King Middle School, a school-wide *peace pledge* that becomes a *peace contract* shared among students serves as the call to action for students to think, choose, and act in ways that promote principles of peace.

A closer look at student peace pledges in general and the activity of signing a peace contract can reveal a viable school safety strategy.

Begin with the fact that one of the greatest predictors of a specific behavior is the popular norm that surrounds it. To create the opportunity for students in a school to share their value for a peaceful school is critical to shaping the popularity and eventual adoption of that norm. When enough kids at school say that having a safe school is important to them, other kids listen. The desire for a safe school becomes the perceived norm. Student signatures on such peace pledges or contracts become the “authentic voices” that communicate the norm.

Sample pledge statements that voice a student value and student advocacy for peaceful ways are:

- **I believe that having a peaceful school is important for every student.** (*Expressing a personal value for peace.*)
- **I will choose peaceful words and actions at school.** (*Expressing peaceful intent.*)
- **I will be an example of peace for others to follow.** (*Modeling peaceful ways.*)
- **I will help others speak and act in peaceful ways.** (*Advocating for peace.*)

The simple statements that make up a peace pledge or contract can reflect and promote the underpinnings of the particular relationships, resources, strategies, and programs that a school is using to create and promote school safety and security.

The statements themselves serve as cues or reminders for students of the strategies, resources and tools that are available to communicate, negotiate, problem solve, and promote the peaceful environments they want.

Sample statements that demonstrate these are:

- **I will use and follow my school’s safety rules to be safe and peaceful.** (*Applying school safety rules.*)
- **I will control and express my anger in healthy and productive ways.** (*Applying learning from anger management programs.*)
- **I will say no when others pressure me to act in ways that hurt or harm others.** (*Applying peer pressure resistance skills.*)
- **I will solve my problems in peaceful ways.** (*Applying negotiation skills or accessing peer mediator programs.*)
- **I will avoid or walk away from violent situations or events.** (*Using a safe and peaceful strategy to avoid harm.*)
- **I will get help from an adult when I need it to be safe.** (*Accessing adult support.*)
- **I will report unsafe or dangerous situations to help keep safe.** (*Applying reporting strategies.*)

Peace pledges and contracts at school are a worthwhile and meaningful activity. They can help support and develop the autonomy of students to be safe and peaceful as they negotiate their way through a day, week or year of learning at school. The greatest benefit of a school that is secure and peaceful for all students

is the fact that students who feel safe and comfortable are also free to achieve their academic best.

The following tips and strategies can help develop school peace pledges and strategies that work:

- Engage students in a focus group to develop the pledge/contract.
- Use student language as often as possible.
- Include a brief statement regarding the role of adults in maintaining a peaceful school.
- Post the pledge in locations for all students and visitors to see.
- Send a copy of the pledge to parents.
- Integrate the principles of the pledge into other school activities.
- Review and revise the pledge with the ongoing input of students on yearly basis.

Peaceful principles and actions are valued by many organizations and agencies that support the expression and practice of these principles in today’s schools. For example, the National Association of School Psychologists offers the following key messages in support of peaceful discourse:

- Violence and hate are never solutions to anger.
- All people do deserve to be treated with fairness, respect, and dignity.
- Vengeance and justice are not necessarily the same.

Lessons learned in school about peace and peaceful actions not only help to create safe and peaceful schools, they also served us well in the recent time of need following the terrorist attacks on our nation on September 11, 2001. These lessons will continue to do so as long as they are valued and continue to be taught and shared in our schools, families and communities.

More Sleep Increases Student Attendance

Beginning in the 1997-98 school year, the Minneapolis School District changed the starting time of its seven comprehensive high schools from 7:15 AM to 8:40 AM, and the dismissal time from 1:45 PM to 3:20 PM. The decision to begin school at a later time was based on medical research indicating that most adolescents are not alert and ready to learn early in the morning.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the new policy, the school board commissioned researchers at the Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (CAREI) at the University of Minnesota to examine the impact of the later start upon its students, staff, families, and community members.

Researchers analyzed attendance data from the data repository for the State of Minnesota, MARSS. Data is entered into the MARSS data base for every school district in the state. Minneapolis data was available for 1995-2000. The study covers data from two years when the school district high schools began classes at 7:15 AM and from three years when high school began at 8:40 AM. Student life-style surveys were also administered in December 1997 and January 2001.

Initial findings

- Attendance rates for the all the district's high school students improved from 1995 to 2000.
- Since 1995, an increasing number of students are staying in the same school for at least two years. The number of students who transfer in or out of the district or move from school to school has also dropped.
- Minneapolis high school students continue to get an hour more sleep each school night than students whose high schools begin an hour earlier than Minneapolis schools. This finding lays to rest the concern that a later start would mean that students would just end up staying up an hour later on school nights.

For students whose schedules require an earlier start, Minneapolis high schools offer an additional "zero" period before the start of the official school day. This gives students the option of leaving school early to participate in after-school activities or for older students to work.

For more information, visit www.education.umn.edu/carei/Programs/start_time.

Calif. Supreme Court says okay to detain students

Recognizing that while minors are on school grounds they are free to "come and go at will" and are "subject to the ordering and direction of" school personnel, the California Supreme Court recently ruled that "detentions of minor students on school grounds do not offend the Constitution, so long as they are not arbitrary, capricious, or for the purposes of harassment."

The court reasoned that "special needs exist in a public school context because students are required by law to be in school, and districts have a constitutional obligation to provide students with safe, secure and peaceful campuses."

According to the court, when a school official stops a student to ask a question, the "student's liberty has not been re-

strained over and above the limitations he or she already experiences by attending school." During school hours, stopping a student on school grounds or calling a student from class into the hallway, or directing a student to the principal's office are not considered "detentions" within the context of the Fourth Amendment. Security officers who are not acting in conjunction with law enforcement agencies are considered by the court to be "school officials." The court specifically rejected the proposition that school security officers should be held to the higher "reasonable suspicion" standard used for searching students when merely detaining minor students on school grounds.

(In *Re Randy G.* (2001) __ Cal.Rptr.2d __)

Recruiting 'Eyes and Ears'

The Modesto Police Department has launched a new community policing strategy—a program to train garbage-truck drivers and mail carriers to be the "eyes and ears" of law enforcement.

Since garbage-collection drivers and postal service employees typically have regular routes they follow in communities, they are in prime positions to take notice of and report suspicious activity in local neighborhoods. Drivers and carriers often are familiar enough with the neighbors they work in to know what cars belong to what homes. They notice unfamiliar cars in driveways and suspicious-looking people in neighborhoods.

Schools may want to consider using a strategy similar to this one—enlisting the help of and training neighborhood service personnel and vendors who follow daily routes to any report suspicious activities on campus or in the community surrounding the school much like a "neighborhood watch" program. This strategy could include postal carriers, garbage truck drivers, utility meter-readers, road construction crews, package carriers, milkmen, and even school district bus drivers—any type of service provider that is routinely in the school neighborhood.

Last summer, such service providers were trained by the Modesto Police Department to report crimes or other emergencies using a special tipline for cell phones or to call police dispatch or their own dispatchers when they see any suspicious person, vehicle or activity. They were taught how to gather as much information as they can when witnessing a crime or accident. Training also stressed that they are not to intervene or become directly involved, but to call for help.

Source: *The Modesto Bee*, "Police recruit 'eyes and ears'" (August 30, 2001, Section B-1)

Tips for Engaging the Faith Community in Violence Prevention

The National Funding Collaborative on Violence Prevention offers the following tips for engaging the faith community as a partner in local violence prevention efforts. NFCVP is a partnership among public and private grantmakers, experts in violence prevention, and community collaborations. NFCVP provides support and resources to community collaboration to prevent violence through citizen engagement and community empowerment. Lessons from their work are being captured in a series of “tipsheets” on a variety of aspects related to community-based violence prevention. For more information, please contact: National Funding Collaborative on Violence Prevention, 815 15th St., Suite 801, Washington DC 20005, 202/393-7731 or visit www.nfcvp.org

ENGAGING THE FAITH COMMUNITY IN VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Members of the faith community—clergy and lay people of all religions—can be a powerful voice in addressing local violence prevention issues. They bring with them the moral force of their faith, the strength of their numbers, and their position in the community. How can you engage them and keep them active in your violence prevention efforts?

Getting Started

- **Be inclusive!** Reach out to a wide variety of religious leaders and congregations. This shows that your perspective is broad, that you’re interested in diversity, and that you believe that everyone has something important to offer. It also builds trust around the table.
- **Bring the faith community to the table from the start of your initiative.** The best way to assure that all participants have a sense of investment and ownership in it. No one likes to feel like an afterthought, and you will gain valuable insight by including members of the faith community during the planning stage.
- **Understand the context of the faith community.** Which denominations/con-

gregations are traditionally activist, and which have conflicting opinions about violence prevention? Other factors to consider are: Does the clergy have another job or other time restriction? Do congregation members live in the community where services are held? What is the governance structure of the religious institution? How much influence do clergy and lay leaders have in their congregations and in the community? Also, be sensitive to the religious and cultural demands of different faiths (for example, don’t invite Muslim clergy to a meeting on Friday, their Sabbath.)

- **Enlist clergy who are already committed to your initiative to reach out to other clergy.** By and large, people trust those with similar backgrounds, beliefs, and concerns. Thus, clergy are likely to listen to other clergy because they share certain assumptions and understand many of one another’s issues and constraints.

- **Help members of the faith community make the connection between violence prevention and their spiritual mission.** Members will be much more likely to join your initiative if they see violence prevention as an extension of their spiritual work. It’s important to approach congregations not as institutions or as individual groups, but as unified members of faith communities.

Keeping Faith Communities Engaged

- **Ask for something specific.** It’s easier to get a commitment to a specific activity—especially one that has clear boundaries of time and effort—than to a vague process. People are much more comfortable when they know what’s expected of them, and how their role will contribute to the broader initiative.

- **Choose your requests carefully.** Build your initiative on principles that are agreeable to everyone involved. There is so much variety in the makeup and philosophies of different faith groups that is sometimes tricky to define an

issue in such a way that virtually everyone can support it.

- **Offer training.** Even those congregations that enthusiastically embrace violence prevention may not know how to address it. Training around specific violence prevention strategies by experienced members of the faith community and those who are directly affected by violence can provide folks with the tools, information, and confidence to get involved.

- **Keep in touch with everyone in the faith community, whether they’ve joined your initiative or not.** This way, you spread information about your initiative, increase the chances that more clergy and congregations will participate, and confirm your sincere desire to include everyone. Newsletters, invitations to meetings and events, and indirect contact through a clergy group can all serve the purpose of maintaining contact.

Potential Pitfalls

- **Don’t fail to recognize the limitations of the capacities of the faith communities.** If you ask clergy or congregations for more than they can deliver, you’re setting them up to fail, and effectively shutting them out of the initiative.

- **Don’t ignore the fact that faith communities have their own agendas, and that these may be challenged by broad-based community work.** As much as they may want to be involved, it may be beyond the ability of community members to embrace your approach.

- **Don’t underestimate the difficulty of bringing together congregations of different faiths around a single issue.** Some denominations and congregations may be more comfortable with social activism than others, and doctrinal differences may keep clergy or congregations from working together. For these reasons, using an interfaith council as the vehicle for engaging the faith community in violence prevention can be tricky.

Preventing Unintentional Injuries and Violence

Injuries are the leading cause of death and disability for people ages 1 to 44 years in the United States. Moreover, between 10 percent and 25 percent of child and adolescent injuries occur on school premises. The Year 2010 National Health Objectives encourage schools to provide comprehensive health education to prevent unintentional injuries, violence, and suicide. Because a fifth of the U.S. population can be found in schools—students and adults included—school-based programs can effectively reach most of the nation's children and adolescents, as well as many adults.

The CDC's School Health Guidelines to Prevent Unintentional Injuries were designed to help state and local education agencies and schools promote safety and help school be safe places for students to learn. These guidelines were developed from a panel of national experts and are based on an extensive review of research, theory, and current practice in unintentional injury, violence, and suicide prevention; health education; and public health.

Key principals

Unintentional injury, violence and suicide prevention programs for young people are most likely to be effective when they:

- Become a national priority and are reinforced by community-wide efforts in which school and community leaders as well as families commit to implementing and sustaining unintentional injury, violence, and suicide prevention.
- Are part of a coordinated school health program through which school personnel, students, families, community organizations and agencies, and businesses can collaborate to develop, implement, and evaluate injury prevention efforts.

Recommendations

The guidelines consist of eight recommendations for schools from pre-kindergarten through the 12th grade to help prevent injuries that occur on school property and elsewhere. Every recommenda-

tion is not appropriate or feasible for every school to implement. Schools should prioritize the recommendations on the basis of their needs and available resources.

1. Establish a social environment that promotes safety and prevents unintentional injury, violence and suicide.

- Ensure high academic standards.
- Encourage students' connectedness to school.
- Designate a school safety coordinator.
- Establish a supportive climate that does not tolerate harassment or bullying.
- Develop, implement, and enforce written policies, including disciplinary policies.
- Infuse prevention strategies into multiple school activities and classes.
- Assess programs and policies at regular intervals.

2. Provide a physical environment, inside and outside school buildings, that promotes safety and prevents unintentional injuries and violence.

- Conduct regular safety and hazard assessments.
- Maintain structures, equipment, and grounds.
- Actively supervise all student activities.
- Ensure that the school environment is weapon-free.

3. Implement health and safety education curricula and instruction that helps students develop the knowledge, attitudes, behavioral skills, and confidence needed to adopt and maintain safe lifestyles and to advocate for health and safety.

- Choose programs and curricula that are grounded in theory or have evidence of effectiveness.
- Implement prevention curricula consistent with national and state standards for health education.
- Encourage student involvement in the learning process.
- Provide adequate staffing and resources.

4. Provide safe physical education and extracurricular physical activity programs.

- Develop, teach, implement, and enforce safety rules.
- Promote unintentional injury prevention and nonviolence through physical education and sports participation.
- Ensure that spaces/facilities meet or exceed recommended safety standards.
- Hire physical education and activity staff trained in injury prevention, first aid, and CPR, and provide ongoing staff development.

5. Provide health, counseling, psychological, and social services to meet students' physical, mental, emotional, and social health needs.

- Coordinate school-based services.
- Establish strong links with community resources.
- Identify and provide assistance to students in need.
- Assess the extent to which injuries occur on school property.
- Develop and implement emergency plans.

6. Establish mechanisms for short- and long-term responses to crises, disasters, and injuries that affect the school community.

- Establish a written response plan.
- Have short- and long-term responses and services in place after a crisis.

7. Integrate school, family, and community efforts to prevent unintentional injuries, violence, and suicide.

- Involve family members in all aspects of school life.
- Educate and involve family members in prevention strategies.
- Coordinate school and community services.

8. For all school personnel, provide regular staff development opportunities that impart the knowledge, skills, and confidence to effectively promote safety prevent unintentional injuries, violence, and

suicide, and support students in their efforts to do the same.

- Ensure that staff are knowledgeable and skillful about unintentional injury,

violence, and suicide prevention.

- Train all personnel to be positive role models for a healthful and safe lifestyle and support them in their efforts.

For more information on the CDC's *School Health Guidelines to Prevent Unintentional Injuries and Violence*, visit www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash.

Supreme Court Preview: Must educators demonstrate a special need?

Until 1995, the very notion that the constitutional right against unreasonable searches and seizures would give way to random, mandatory and suspicionless drug testing on school campuses was unthinkable. In 1995, the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Vernonia School District v. Acton*, ruled in favor of a drug-testing policy designed to prevent the rise of a drug cult on campus, but which did not rely upon individualized suspicion.

In the six years since that decision, questions have been raised about many of the details left unaddressed by the *Acton* ruling:

- What limits exist on student drug testing? What rules apply?
- Is the *Acton* decision limited to the testing of athletes?
- May educators test students for drugs on the basis of prior drug use?
- Will the extracurricular/curricular distinction matter?
- What level of "special need" must the educator demonstrate before drug testing is justified?

The answers to these questions are forthcoming. In the 2001-2002 term, the Supreme Court Justices have agreed to clarify the subject of student drug testing by taking on the case of *Earls by Earls v. Bd. of Education* coming from the state of Oklahoma. With this case, the Court will weigh in on the developments that have occurred since the *Acton* ruling when it granted to educators broader search powers.

In *Earls*, the Supreme Court will review the appeal of a school district whose student drug testing policy was thrown out by the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals. The policy was broader than the drug-testing policy accepted by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Acton* — but not by much.

The facts

In the Tecumseh (Oklahoma) School District, the drug testing policy applied to all students participating in competitive extracurricular activities. In all other respects, the policy was similar to the one in the *Acton* case. Test results were considered confidential. Students who tested positive for amphetamines, marijuana, cocaine, opiates, barbiturates or benzodiazepines, as well as students who refused to be tested, were not allowed to participate in any extracurricular activities. No academic sanctions were imposed, and no students were reported to the juvenile justice system for drug use.

Students Lindsay Earls and Daniel James filed suit to challenge the policy. They believed the 4th Amendment protects students involved in nonathletic extracurricular activities from the suspicionless, mandatory drug test. Furthermore, they said the school had not demonstrated a "special need" for drug testing sufficient to override 4th Amendment protections.

The finding and the reversal

The federal court found in favor of the school district, ruling the drug testing did not violate the 4th Amendment's prohibition against unreasonable searches. Later, a divided Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals panel reversed this decision, holding that there was not enough support and documentation presented by the school district to validate the drug testing.

The Supreme Court now has the task of sorting out the confusion caused by these conflicting lower court rulings as well as others that have occurred since the 1995 *Vernonia v. Acton* ruling.

In most cases since *Acton*, the educators' power to search has expanded—particularly when the search is limited to

possible *possession* by students of items that threaten school safety and/or violate the law.

Conversely, most lower courts have been reluctant to allow the expansion of student *drug testing*. School drug-testing policies have been routinely invalidated when there is no connection between the current campus climate and student drug use. The *Earls* case belongs to this line of cases. The Tecumseh school district failed to demonstrate that there was some identifiable drug abuse problem among a sufficient number of students.

The predictions

The *Earls* case should do two things. First, it will reveal the degree to which the Justices still agree that forcing groups of students to submit to drug testing is constitutional. There is little chance that the Court will change its mind and overrule *Acton*, but it remains to be seen if they will apply the rules on drug testing for students other than athletes. Second, the *Earls* case will provide needed clarity on the rules, eliminating the need for educators to defend every such policy in court.

The U.S. Supreme Court may simply not allow expansion — a result with which many educators would not take issue. For these educators, the broad usefulness of their power to use reasonable suspicion for detaining and searching students on campus is sufficient and is a workable condition.

If the justices permit the expansion of suspicionless drug testing, they will have to agree on how much proof educators will need to support such a program.

Prepared by Bernard James, Special Counsel to the National School Safety Center.

A New Tool for Community Policing Partnerships

Community policing has been “the way to police” for several decades. Increasingly, law enforcement agencies partner with communities to implement problem solving to address crime and disorder problems.

While law enforcement has embraced community policing and while crime levels have concurrently dropped, implementing community policing does not come naturally nor is it easily put into practice. In fact, many agencies report that one aspect of community policing — working in collaboration with partners — has proved particularly challenging. In response to this challenge, the U.S. Department of Justice’s Office of Community Oriented Policing Services commissioned Circle Solutions, Inc. to develop *Collaboration Toolkit: How to Build, Fix, and Sustain Productive Partnerships*.

A viable new tool

The *Collaboration Toolkit* provides a nuts-and-bolts resource for law enforcement and their partners to use to form successful collaborations. It provides a vision for which to strive, action steps to achieve the vision, and tools to plan and chart the partnership’s progress.

The *Toolkit* is helpful to partners in the formative stages of collaboration building. Mature collaborations can use the *Toolkit* to address specific challenges, assess the efficacy of the partnership, and implement new ideas.

Accomplishing goals

A community policing partnership requires that a number of agencies and individuals make a commitment to work together and contribute resources to obtain a common, long-term goal. The *Collaboration Toolkit* provides actions steps, tips, and tools for obtaining and sustaining nine components of a successful collaboration:

1. Stakeholders with a vested interest in the issue
2. Trust among and between the partners
3. Shared vision and common goals
4. Expertise among partners to solve community/school-based problems
5. Teamwork strategies
6. Open communication
7. Motivated partners
8. Sufficient means to implement and sustain the effort, and an
9. Action plan.

Solutions to common barriers

Outlining potential pitfalls, the *Toolkit* offers solutions to the following kinds of common barriers:

- How can the partnership deal with apathy in the community regarding critical issues?
- What can be done to enhance information sharing among partners?
- What can be done to ensure the partnership remains productive, timely, relevant and accountable to its goals?
- How can the partnership respond in positive and effective ways to turf

battles and power struggles that impede progress?

- How can the partnership continue to access resources that are limited or difficult to secure?

It is important to recognize that not all law enforcement relationships must be collaborative — nor should they all strive to be so. Collaborative relationships operate along a continuum, and the appropriate working relationship may vary depending on the issue at hand.

Law enforcement agencies or personnel should engage in collaboration with other organizations or individuals when the stakeholders:

- have a common vision and a long-term goal;
- are committed to working together as a team; and
- cannot achieve the goal more efficiently as independent entities.

The *Collaboration Toolkit* demonstrates by example when law enforcement agencies and personnel should engage in collaboration versus other types of working relationships.

Where to get the Toolkit

The *Collaboration Toolkit* can be downloaded in whole or in part at the COPS in Schools website: www.copsinschools.org or the Circle Solutions, Inc. website at www.circlesolutions.com.

Program challenges to young people toward tolerance, respect and nonviolence

The *Do Something Kindness & Justice Challenge* invites young people across America to honor the dream of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by performing acts of kindness (helping others) and justice (standing up for what’s right) for two weeks following the King National Holiday (January 21 through February 1, 2002). The initiative is a two-week component of *Do Something*’s year-round leadership program in schools.

The *Do Something* Kindness and Jus-

tice Challenge teaches young people the values Dr. King lived for — tolerance, responsibility, respect, nonviolence and courage — and inspires students to put these values into practice by taking positive action in their schools, homes and communities.

In January 2001, more than 4 million students from all 50 states participated in the program, performing acts of kindness and justice to keep Dr. King’s dream alive.

Do Something offers a two-week, age-appropriate classroom curricula that is tied to NAEP core curriculum content standards and can be aligned with character education and service-learning initiatives. *Do Something* also provides extensive on-line resources for educators and teens to promote tolerance and social justice in their schools and communities.

Visit www.dosomething.org for more information.

Getting Connected: Resources on the Internet

For both educators and law enforcement, the use of the Internet to support their work as school safety partners is crucial. For school resource officers, information from the Internet can bolster the activities of community policing in schools and support their roles as a community liaison, problem solver, and educator. Many topics related to youth, families, and school communities are relevant to their work.

For school administrators, the use of the Internet is a viable resource for supporting their work to promote safe and welcoming schools—but it can be both an advantage and a challenge. While access to timely and quality resources is readily available, there may be too much information and too many resources to manage.

This list provides information about websites directly related to a few of the key school safety issues. The sites have been reviewed for interest and credibility and annotated for your own review.

Bias/Hate Behavior and Crime

- The Southern Poverty Law Center is an outstanding resource for those who are working to prevent, respond to or heal the wounds of bias/hate motivated behaviors or crimes in their communities. Visit the site for information regarding their most recent initiative, “The National Campaign for Tolerance,” and to access many of the free materials offered. Noteworthy are the following titles: *Responding to Hate at School*, *10 Ways to Fight Hate*, and *101 Tools for Tolerance*. <http://www.splcenter.org/>
- The Simon Wiesenthal Center is a resource for both schools and law enforcement. The center is home to the Museum of Tolerance. For children who can not visit the museum, a video conferencing program entitled “Bridging the Gap” is available. The center offers tolerance training for school teams and a special training for law enforcement officers and other law professionals entitled “Tools for Tolerance.” Visit the site for other resources. <http://www.wiesenthal.com/>
- Media Awareness Network from Canada presents quality resources for un-

derstanding and teaching students about hate and on-line hate behaviors. The article entitled “Challenging Online Hate” addresses hate, bias, stereotyping, racism, hate crimes, and the use of the Internet by hate groups for recruiting. <http://www.media-awareness.ca/>

Children & Youth: Mental Health

- About Our Kids is a site created by the New York University Child Study Center. Of special interest and help is the section entitled “Is my kid OK?” The information in the sections titled “Middle Years and Teens,” profiles the developmental stages and social challenges of children and youth in these age groups. The site also responds to the mental health needs of youth related to crisis events. <http://www.aboutourkids.org/>
- American Academy of Pediatrics has joined forces with other leading medical societies to present credentialed medical information about children’s health on the Medem site. A variety of topics regarding social, emotional, and physical health are addressed. There are connections entitled “Children’s Health and Especially for Teens.” The site responds well to topic specific searches, i.e., “teen suicide.” <http://www.medem.com/>
- Talking With Teens About Tough Issues is a national initiative by Children Now and the Kaiser Family Foundation to encourage talk about tough topics. The site was developed for parents but offers good insight and information to anyone tackling tough issues with children and youth. <http://www.talkingwithkids.org/about.html>
- Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA offers a resource aid packet to schools regarding topics such as suicide, grief and loss, post traumatic stress disorders, sexual assault, hostage situations and family violence. The section about responding to a crisis at school offers toolkit items — topic overviews and outlines, checklists, instruments and reproducible handouts, and information sheets. <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/>
- Red Cross Disaster Counseling Materials are designed to help families and

communities cope with the physical and emotional responses to crisis events. One of the many outstanding features of this site is that many of the printable materials are available in multiple languages. Titles available are: “When Bad Things Happen,” “How Do I Cope With My Feelings?” “Helping Young Children Cope with Trauma.” <http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster/keepsafe/attack.html>

Diversity & Gender

- *Hateful Acts Hurt Kids* offers numerous real world scenarios for helping elementary students (K-5) talk about and understand diversity issues related to race, color, religion, culture, disability and gender. The scenarios promote discussion about prejudice and discrimination; sensitize students to the unfairness and hurt of prejudice; build problem-solving skills for the targets of prejudice; and model appropriate behaviors for students who are bystanders. <http://www.usdoj.gov/archive/kidspage/bias-k-5/index.htm>
- *Hatred In the Hallways* is an on-line report from Human Rights Watch. It deals with the rights of sexual minority/questioning youth to grow intellectually and emotionally in our schools, while free of discrimination, harassment, and violence. Included are related issues such as depression, substance abuse, runaway, suicide, and other risky behaviors. The report contains legal standards and recommendations for federal, state, and local levels to develop or review legislation and policies regarding nondiscrimination. The report promotes staff training and critical support services and programs for youth. <http://www.hrw.org/>
- Real Boys is a website dedicated to the work of Harvard professor Dr. William Pollack. Pollack’s work centers around three widely-believed myths about boys, which he calls the “Boy Code”: Boys will be boys; Boys should be boys; and Boys are toxic. While the site promotes the sale of Pollack’s books, each book title has a place to click on to learn more. The connections are a free introduction to the body of work being done by Pollack and numerous other re-

searchers on the impact of gender on learning, violence, and other key social issues. <http://www.williampollack.com/>

- Teaching Tolerance is a branch of the Southern Poverty Law Center that emphasizes education as a strategy for combating prejudice and discrimination. The model lessons and materials offered, support respect for differences in the classroom. The site also offers grants to schools with innovative initiatives. Some of the cost-free resources are: *Teaching Tolerance* magazine; *Starting Small*, an anti-bias program for early childhood teachers; *The Shadow of Hate*; and *A Place At the Table*. <http://www.tolerance.org/teach/>

Hazing

- *Educating to Eliminate Hazing* is the work of Hank Nuwer. The site offers definitions, myths and facts, alternatives to hazing, and a chronology of high school hazing incidents. It offers activities to promote schools that are free of hazing. A list of states in which hazing is against the law is provided. <http://www.stophazing.org/>

- *Initiation Rites In American High Schools: A National Survey* presents the results of a study completed by Alfred University. The study presents definitions, motivations, prime targets, consequences, and recommendations regarding hazing in high schools. http://www.alfred.edu/news/html/hazing_study.html

Promoting Safe and Peaceful Schools

- Educators for Social Responsibility's mission is to make teaching social responsibility a core practice in education so that young people develop the conviction and skills needed to shape a safe, sustainable, democratic, and just world. The site offers free lessons and many quality resources. <http://www.esrnational.org/>
- National Center for Conflict Resolu-

tion Education offers good information for funding conflict resolution programs and tools for assessing school needs. It is also a basic site for connecting to other conflict resolution sites. <http://www.nccre.org/>

- Study Circles provides downloadable discussion guides and support for establishing and facilitating dialogue regarding critical community issues such as racism, violence, and youth issues. The site offers a new guide created in partnership with the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Community Relations Services that provides support for responding to recent terrorist activities and their impact on the future of our nation and communities. <http://www.studyircles.org/>

School Bullying

- *Blueprints for Violence Prevention* presents information regarding research-based bullying prevention tools, resources and programs and their implementation. The page is presented by the Colorado Center for Violence Prevention. http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/model/bully_materials.html

- Ken Rigby's bullying pages reflect the work of this professor of Social Psychology from South Australia. The site offers a basic introduction to bullying and presents related issues. The information helps build an international perspective on the topic, while offering sound insights and information to any school community working to understand and prevent bullying and its consequences. <http://www.education.unisa.edu.au/bullying/default.html>

- U.S. Department of Education's *Preventing Bullying: A Manual for Schools and Communities* contains information to promote understanding, prevention, and response to school bullying. <http://www.cde.ca.gov/spbranch/ssp/bullymanual.htm>

School Safety Update is published by the National School Safety Center to communicate current trends and effective programs in school safety to subscribers and members of NSSC's **International Association of School Safety Professionals**. Annual subscription to *School Safety Update* is \$99. Annual IAASP membership is \$119. (Outside the United States, subscriptions are \$139 and memberships are \$159.) Correspondence should be addressed to: NSSC, 141 Duesenberg Drive, Suite 11, Westlake Village, CA 91362, telephone 805/373-9977, FAX 805/373-9277.

The National School Safety Center was established in 1984 by presidential directive under a grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Education. NSSC currently operates as a private, nonprofit corporation.

Points of view or opinions in this document do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the National School Safety Center.

Copyright © 2002 by the National School Safety Center. ISSN 1094-9720

Ronald D. Stephens, Executive Director
June Lane Arnette, Associate Director
Bernard James, Special Counsel
Hilda Clarice Quiroz, Program Specialist
Michael G. Rivas, Program Specialist

Editorial Advisory Board

James E. Copple, Executive Deputy Director, National Crime Prevention Council
Arnold P. Goldstein, Professor Emeritus, Syracuse University, School of Education, Center for Research on Aggression
Stuart Greenbaum, President, Greenbaum Public Relations
Curtis S. Lavarello, Executive Director, National Association of School Resource Officers
Pamela Riley, Executive Director, National Association of Students Against Violence Everywhere (S.A.V.E.)
William G. Scott, Director of School Safety and Student Support Services, Kentucky School Boards Association
Melvin T. Seo, Administrator, Safety and Security Services, Hawaii Department of Education
Mary Tobias Weaver, Program Administrator, School Safety and Violence Prevention Office, California Department of Education
Marleen Wong, Director, Mental Health Services/District Crisis Teams, Los Angeles Unified School District

School Safety Leadership Training

May 15-16, 2002 — Westlake Village, CA

Call 805/373-9977 or visit www.nssc1.org