



DoDEA

SAFE Schools

NEWSLETTER



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Congressional Anti-Bullying Initiative

Anti-bullying legislation introduced in the U.S. Congress indicates the high priority lawmakers are placing on anti-bullying programs as a means to prevent school violence. During Fall 2005, Representative Jerrold Nadler (D-NY), and more than a dozen co-sponsors, introduced H.R. 3787: "The Anti-bullying Campaign Act of 2005."

This proposed legislation will require the Secretary of Education to report on the extent and types of bullying in U.S. schools and to fund prevention efforts. The bill has been referred to the House Subcommittee on Education and the Workforce. For further details see: www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=h109-3787. ■

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Parental Involvement Strengthens DoDEA

At schools throughout DoDEA, the end of the school year is a time to celebrate the involvement of parents in their child's education. In a recent phone interview, Aukamm Elementary School Counselor Michelle Cook explained that many schools in the Heidelberg District sponsor "Parent Appreciation Teas" as the culminating activity of their School-Home Partnership. School staff arrange the receptions to recognize the parents who participate at school.

Ms. Cook explained that Aukamm Elementary School benefits from strong community support. "The PTA is awesome," said Cook, adding that out of approximately 200 families, 93 parents volunteered for specific duties.

Parental Involvement is a strength that distinguishes all DoDEA schools according to an independent review conducted for the Undersecretary of Personnel and Readiness by the Institute for Defense Analysis (IDA Paper P-3544, October 2000). The IDA report credits the cooperation between the military installation and education officials for fostering strong parental involvement.



"Teachers estimate that more than 90 percent of the parents attend parent-teacher conferences, and that the military parent attends whenever possible. Some commanders have a policy that states the military parents' place of duty when a parent-teacher conference is scheduled is at the conference."

Review of DoDEA Schools: Volume I, IDA, October 2000

Abundant resources are available for administrators who would like to use the summer break to plan new ways to involve parents during the 2006-07 school year. The National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education offers suggestions for specific actions at www.ncpie.org. The Parent Institute offers several pamphlets and reminder cards that school administrators can distribute to parents to advise them on how to help with their child's education at www.par-inst.com/educator/resources. ■

Teen SERT Teaches Students Emergency Response Skills

Give teens the opportunity to wear fake blood and moulage (make up that simulates injuries) and they respond with a level of enthusiasm usually reserved for Halloween. Participating in simulated crisis scenarios is



just one part of an innovative program to provide teens emergency response training. Teen School Emergency Response Teams (Teen SERT) is a nine-week curriculum that familiarizes students with the effects of natural disasters, terrorist attacks, and hazardous materials incidents – and teaches them what they can do to help! The training equips high school students to:

- ◆ Support emergency responders.
- ◆ Provide immediate assistance to victims.
- ◆ Organize volunteers at disaster sites.

Teen SERT is the student version of the Citizen Corp's Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT). The Department of Homeland Security has identified the program as an opportunity to involve students and parents in emergency preparedness. Teen SERT training disperses valuable response skills throughout the community to help citizens become more self-reliant.

At a recent U.S. Department of Education conference on Crisis Management, adult moderator Ms. Haley Rich described how the Teen SERT program is being implemented in schools. In Texas, Forest Brook and Smiley High Schools (in the North Forest Independent School District) collaborated with Navy ROTC and community response agencies to implement Teen SERT training

during the 2004-05 school year. Ms. Rich assisted with the original Teen CERT pilot program at Pueblo West High School in Colorado. Pueblo students volunteered for a one-hour per week course that taught the following topics:

- ✓ Disaster preparedness.
- ✓ Basic fire safety.
- ✓ Medical operations.
- ✓ Light search and rescue.
- ✓ Terrorism.
- ✓ Disaster psychology.
- ✓ Team organization.

In Pueblo, community emergency responders collaborated with school officials to let students practice putting out controlled fires. Students also participated in a disaster drill where they played the role of victims.

Five hundred students completed the Teen SERT program at Pueblo West High School during the first 24 months of operation. Teen SERT graduates stated they feel “less helpless” and believe they “can make a difference” if they are thrust into a crisis incident.

Ms. Rich credits the training with saving six lives in the community.

- ✓ Two students recognized heart attack symptoms and took appropriate action.
- ✓ A mentally challenged student saved a seven-month old baby by using the Heimlich maneuver.
- ✓ Two siblings were saved by using the Heimlich maneuver.
- ✓ A mother wanted to move her son who had been injured playing ice hockey. Her daughter (Teen SERT certified) kept her from moving the victim. The movement might have severed the boy's spinal cord.

Each school can adjust the Teen SERT program to local needs. In addition to empowering students with emergency response training, the program provides an opportunity to increase parental involvement and foster collaboration between school officials and emergency responders. For information on the Teen SERT program contact Haley Rich at teensert@hotmail.com. ■

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The material herein is presented for informational purposes and does not constitute official policy of the Department of Defense. All comments and questions should be directed to Bob Michela at: rmichela@csc.com.

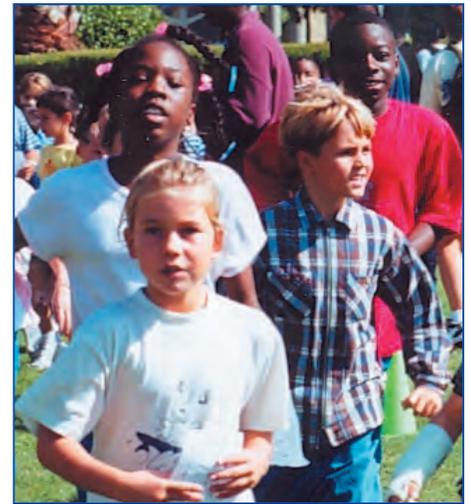
Use Summer to Refocus Security Efforts

The summer offers administrators an opportunity to review their Risk Reduction Plan and school environment to start the new school year right. Invest a few minutes now while you are “student free” to quietly review your progress. Remember the security objectives established by your Safe School Committee at the beginning of the school year?

The Objective Writing Template, Tool 7 in the *DoDEA Safe Schools Handbook*, listed both **Risk Reduction** and **Climate Improvement Objectives**. Ideal security objectives include specific, measurable goals. The examples listed below are based on objectives taken from actual Safe School Plans.

Risk Reduction Objectives

- ◆ Reduce bullying by 15 percent as measured by:
 - 1) Discipline referrals, and
 - 2) Student survey administered during the first month of the school year.
- ◆ Reduce thefts by 50 percent as measured by incident reports.
- ◆ Tighten access control and visitor sign-in procedures to ensure that all visitors are positively identified in accordance with DoDEA Regulation 4700.2 “Internal Physical Security.”



Climate Improvement Objectives

- ◆ Ensure that all students feel welcome and secure.
- ◆ Welcome parents and invite them to join as partners in their child’s education.
- ◆ Enhance school climate with a clean and attractive physical facility.

Once you have reviewed your objectives, look through the “Inventory of Policy, Program and Physical Security Considerations” (*DoDEA Safe Schools Handbook: Chapter 3, Section 4*). This list of solutions that worked in other schools might inspire you to think of adaptations suitable for your school.

Inspirational leaders often achieve their greatest insights – not while concentrating on a task at work – but rather while relaxing with their families or enjoying the mountains or the ocean. A brief look at your security objectives and potential solutions, might result in an innovative answer to your security challenges. ■

Prepare for Next School Year

Here are actions that will help you prepare for the 2006-07 school year.

- ✓ Look in the rear view mirror. Review your incidents and surveys to make refinements to your Risk Reduction Plan.
- ✓ Prepare surveys to administer in the fall to measure your progress.
- ✓ Update your Incident Response Plan. Check grab-and-go kits and emergency supplies.
- ✓ Schedule drills for the upcoming school year.

Please share results that indicate you achieved your security objectives (safeschools@csc.com). ■

Marijuana: A Serious Drug Problem

There is a serious drug problem in America. Marijuana is a much bigger part of the problem than most people realize. According to the *2005 Monitoring the Future Survey* sponsored by the National Institute for Drug Abuse (NIDA), 16.5 percent of U.S. youth admitted to using marijuana. The *2002 National Survey on Drug Use and Health* published by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) stated that:

- ▶ “Marijuana is the most widely used illicit drug in America.”
- ▶ “Of all youth age 12-17 in drug treatment in 2000, nearly 62 percent had a primary marijuana diagnosis.”
- ▶ “The average age of initiation for marijuana use generally has been getting younger.”



According to the NIDA, “More young people are now in treatment for marijuana dependency than for alcohol or for all other illegal drugs combined.” This fact is compelling and should prompt administrators, teachers and parents to learn what the experts say about marijuana and teens. The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has published an open letter to parents with this information. The following quotations from the DEA letter are provided as prevention information to help educate students about the dangers of marijuana use/abuse.

- ✔ “Marijuana is not a benign drug. Use impairs learning and judgment, and may lead to the development of mental health problems” — American Medical Association.
- ✔ “Smoking marijuana can injure or destroy lung tissue. In fact, marijuana smoke contains 50 to 70 percent more of some cancer causing chemicals than does tobacco smoke.” — American Lung Association
- ✔ “Marijuana can impair perception and reaction time, putting young drivers, their passengers and others on the road in danger. Teens, the highest risk driving population, should avoid anything that might impair their ability to operate a vehicle safely.” — American Automobile Association
- ✔ “Marijuana use may trigger panic attacks, paranoia, and even psychoses, especially if you are suffering from anxiety, depression or having thinking problems.” — American Psychiatric Association
- ✔ “Marijuana can impair concentration and the ability to retain information during a teen’s peak learning years.” — National Education Association
- ✔ “Recent research has indicated that for some people there is a correlation between frequent marijuana use and aggressive or violent behavior. This should be a concern to parents, community leaders and to all Americans.” — The National Crime Prevention Council
- ✔ “Marijuana can be addictive.” — National Institute on Drug Abuse

Many of the things that Americans “know” about marijuana are myths or misconceptions. Marijuana is far from harmless. These statements from experts provide a different perspective on the dangers of marijuana. By knowing the facts and sharing what experts have to say about marijuana with teens, we take an important step forward in getting teens beyond denial that marijuana “isn’t dangerous.” Once youth know the facts, it is easier to prevent and reduce its use. To learn more about marijuana and how to keep teens drug-free, visit www.theantidrug.com.

Summertime is traditionally a time when students experiment with drugs. For administrators seeking facts to use for an end-of-the-school-year reminder, NIDA provides the latest information on a variety of drugs including: methamphetamine, nicotine, alcohol, anabolic steroids, and hallucinogens such as LSD at www.drugabuse.gov/infofacts/HSYouthtrends.html. ■

DoDEA Uses i-SAFE to Teach Students Online Safety

Students and teachers in DoDEA schools have started using new techniques to teach online safety and security. DoDEA has partnered with i-SAFE America, Inc. to bring Internet Safety education to all DoDEA schools. The i-SAFE program is being taught to more than 100,000 DODEA students in 15 districts in 13 countries. i-SAFE America is a non-profit foundation whose mission is to educate and empower youth to safely and responsibly take control of their Internet experience. This program provides students with the knowledge to recognize and avoid dangerous, destructive, or unlawful behavior and to respond appropriately.



The U.S. Congress endorses this program and supports it through funding from the Department of Justice and Department of Defense. The integrated teaching and learning activities are age appropriate and vary from grade to grade. The i-SAFE K-12 curriculum consists of five core lessons approved by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention:

- ▶ **Community:** Recognize that the cyber community is as tangible as the student's physical community.
- ▶ **Cyber Security:** Understand the principals of e-mail protocol, including the personal consequences involved with e-mail such as viruses, flaming, hate e-mail, etc.
- ▶ **Personal Safety:** Understand how to recognize danger signs in online communications; how to avoid and/or respond assertively to a variety of dangerous situations.
- ▶ **Predator Identification:** Understand the techniques used by cyber predators to contact, communicate, entice, entrap and exploit victims; how predators use chat rooms and students' screen names to gather information; how to recognize inappropriate situations and avoid becoming the victim.
- ▶ **Intellectual Property:** Understand that there are acceptable legal and ethical behaviors related to information and technology.

The program has been in place since the 2004-05 school year. Now in the second year of the program, some schools, such as Lakenheath High School in England, have been putting extra emphasis on collaboration at home. Administrators and teachers persuade parents to take an active role in learning about Internet Safety through



online surveys at the i-SAFE Web site that stimulate parents' thoughts about the topic. Additionally, parents and students have the opportunity to volunteer as i-SAFE Mentors where they participate in community and school based-events and activities aimed at increasing Internet Safety awareness.

Tips on teaching cyber security to students are available at <http://ilearn.isafe.org>. The materials are produced by i-SAFE America. For suggestions on age appropriate curriculum, including free lesson plans, visit www.i-safe.org. DoDEA educators who file an implementation plan for their school can access i-SAFE through a special DoDEA portal at <https://auth.isafe.org/pdpvideo/dodea.php>. ■

Teaching Responsibility

Educators and parents often express frustration that students do not behave responsibly. The life skills curriculum *Connecting with Others: Lessons for Teaching Social and Emotional Competence*, shows youth that obtaining the freedom and independence they desire requires learning how to demonstrate responsibility.



In *Connecting with Others*, authors Dr. Rita C. Richardson and Elizabeth T. Evans provide detailed lesson plans on eight skill areas, including:

- ✓ Self-Awareness;
- ✓ Communication;
- ✓ Responsibility;
- ✓ Assertiveness;
- ✓ Conflict Resolution;
- ✓ Cooperation and Collaboration;
- ✓ Love and Caring; and
- ✓ Time Management and Organization.

There are separate editions of *Connecting with Others* for various grade levels (i.e., grades K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12). Each lesson plan includes the goal, objectives, materials, procedure, instructions, reinforcement exercises, summary and practical applications.

Lesson 5: “Taking Responsibility” defines responsibility as the willingness and ability to accept duties, consequences, and accountability for personal behaviors. Students share their views on concepts such as “delay of gratification” and “self control.” The lesson explains how youth can use the “thinking steps” taught throughout the curriculum (Stop, Think, Plan and Check) to help them interrupt and examine their behavior in order to make better choices.

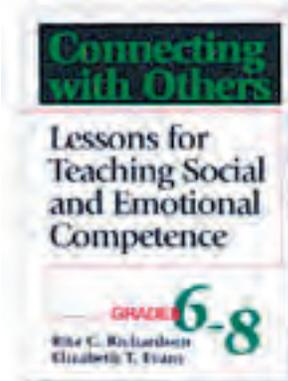
Students practice interrupting their behavior (Stop), examining whether that is what they really want to do (Think), choosing a healthy option (Plan), and consider-

ing the consequences of their decision to see if that is really what they want to do (Check). These thinking steps offer students a thought process they can use to solve a variety of problems.

Teachers guide student discussion of the following topics:

- ▶ Recognize the motives and challenges of adolescents’ quest for independence:
 - ◆ Freedom from rules.
 - ◆ Acceptance from friends.
 - ◆ Peer pressure.
 - ◆ Balancing individuality with group identity.
- ▶ Acknowledge that independence requires personal responsibility:
 - ◆ Freedom brings obligations.
 - ◆ Acknowledge mistakes; Avoid blaming others.
- ▶ Review benefits of becoming a responsible person:
 - ◆ Self-motivated.
 - ◆ Self-disciplined.
 - ◆ Personal satisfaction “feels wonderful.”
- ▶ Identify personal responsibilities and strategies to meet them:
 - ◆ Students’ main responsibility is to learn and prepare for adult life.
 - ◆ Home situations require multiple responsibilities.
 - ◆ Some adolescents are required to accept “adult” responsibilities.
 - ◆ Time management and organization.
 - ◆ Techniques to reduce the stress of meeting responsibilities (i.e., exercise or meditation).

The lesson emphasizes that responsibility is earned.



The more students fulfill obligations and accept consequences for their actions, the more independence they will enjoy. For additional information on “Taking Responsibility” or the entire *Connecting with Others* curriculum, visit: www.researchpress.com/product/item/4917. ■