"Schools can become healthier places, where anger and alienation will be replaced by positive and pro-social attitudes and behavior among all students."

–Kevin Dwyer, Assistant Director,
National Association of School Psychologists

VIOLENCE PREVENTION
SAFE SCHOOLS INFORMATION BRIEFS

The intention of the set of information briefs contained in this section of the Handbook is to provide brief concise reviews of strategies and programs that are associated with fostering healthy personal-social development of children and youth and, in turn, with making schools safe. The information briefs, which are reproducible, draw upon the most current thinking of researchers and professionals on the various topics that they address.

The section begins with a set of briefs that provide a conceptual overview of the approach taken in this guide. The subsequent briefs then present a picture of the kinds of programs and services that school districts and communities can put in place to prevent violence and other types of student problem behaviors and to build the assets necessary for the healthy development of our young people.

Violence Prevention
Safe Schools Information Briefs

Continuum of Programs and Services

A. Violence Prevention
   1) Safe Schools
   2) Comprehensive Science-Based Prevention
   3) Frameworks
   4) Positive Behavioral Supports
   5) Environmental Design

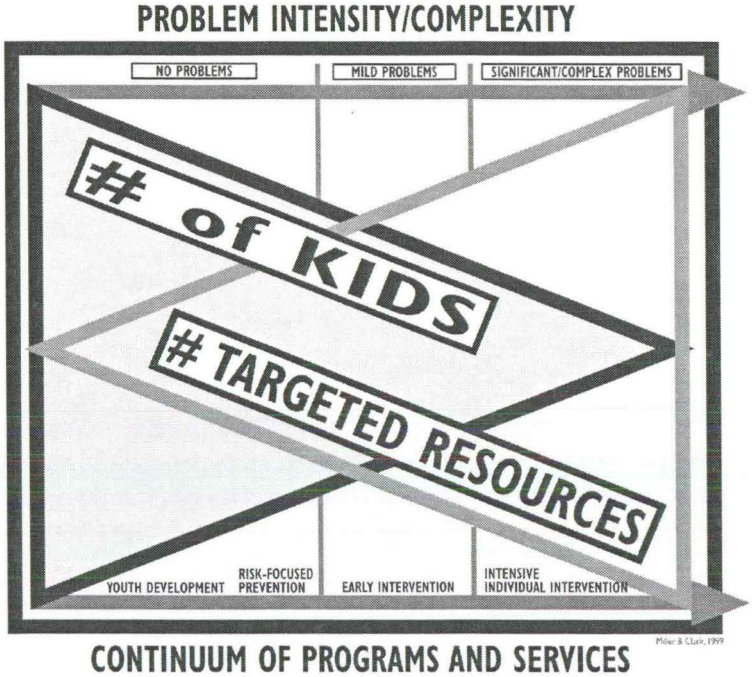
B. Positive Youth Development
   1) Resiliency'
   2) Character Education
   3) Youth Leadership/Student Empowerment
   4) Parent Involvement
   5) Service-Learning
   6) School-Wide Discipline
   7) Restorative Justice
   8) Peer Group Strategies

C. Risk-Focused Prevention
   1) After-School Programs
   2) Mentoring

D. Early Intervention
   1) Problem Solving Teams
   2) Bullying and Harassment
   3) Teen Suicide
   4) Juvenile Court School Liaisons

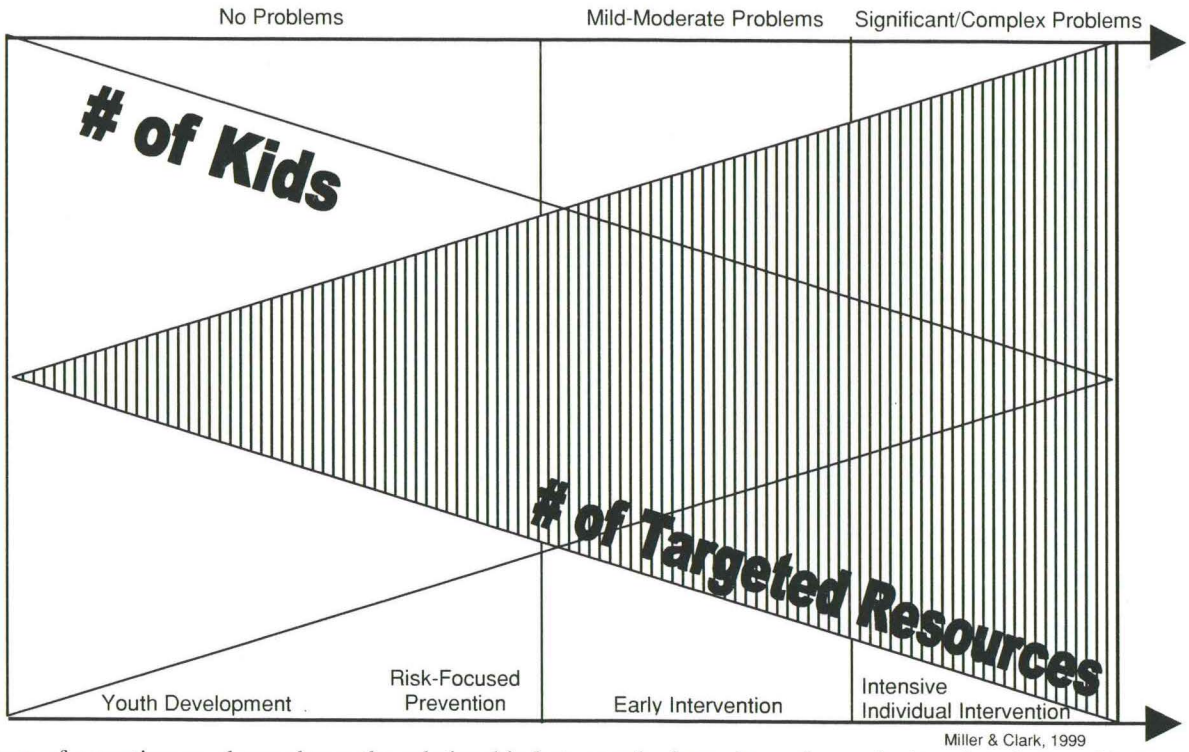
E. Intensive Interventions
   1) Wraparound
   2) Alternative Educational Settings
   3) Zero Tolerance

F. References



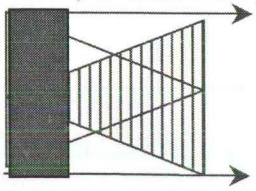
Continuum of Programs and Services

In order to foster the healthy social, emotional, intellectual and behavioral development of Iowa's children and youth and to prevent the development of problem behaviors such as violence and substance abuse, schools join community partners to provide a continuum of programs and services to meet the many needs of students and their families. Research shows that the promotion of positive youth development for all kids, along with prevention and early intervention efforts, reduces the number of kids who will experience moderate or significant social, emotional and behavioral problems. The provision of a continuum of effective programs and services is an investment in our future.

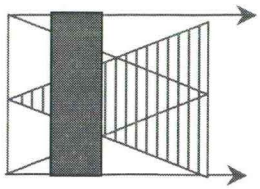


The diagram of a continuum above shows the relationship between the intensity and complexity of student problems and the array of services that needs to be developed to prevent and address problems. The top of the model indicates that most students do not experience significant social, emotional, or behavioral problems. Students who experience mild to significant problems are relatively fewer in number. For those who do experience problems, the number of targeted resources needed to address the problems increases considerably. The bottom of the model shows the corresponding types of programs and services that must be in place in order to respond effectively to this range of student needs. The model can serve as a guide to schools and communities as they develop the necessary components of a full continuum of programs and services that ensures that the right service is delivered to the right student and his or her family at the right time.

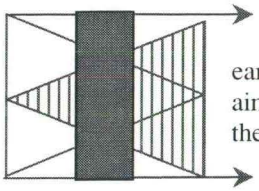
Youth Development programs support the healthy social, emotional, and behavioral development of all students. Youth Development, *primary prevention,* is the ongoing growth process in which all youth strive to: 1) meet the basic personal and social needs to feel cared for and to be safe, valued, useful, and spiritually grounded and 2) build character, skills and competencies that permit functioning and contribution in daily life. Universal positive youth development strategies address the entire school population with messages and programs aimed at building skills and preventing problem behavior. Strategies that promote healthy lifestyles, build social competence and character, empower students through leadership development and involvement with adults in decision-making, and engage students in service to their school and community are examples. These strategies will be sufficient for 80 percent – 90 percent of the student population.



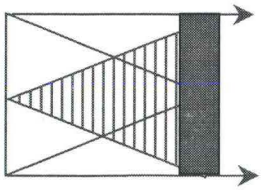
Risk-Focused Prevention efforts, also known as *secondary prevention* or *specialized group interventions*, target specific high-risk behaviors that affect some students. Students at risk for problem behavior represent about 5 percent – 15 percent of the student population. *Risk-focused prevention strategies* target subsets of the total population that are deemed to be at-risk for problem behavior by virtue of their membership in a particular population segment--for example, dropouts, students who are failing academically, or children of adult alcoholics. Risk-focused prevention targets an *entire subgroup* regardless of the degree of risk of any individual within the group. One individual in the subgroup, for example, may not be at personal risk for substance abuse, while another person in the same subgroup may be abusing substances. The prevention program is presented to the entire subgroup because the subgroup as a whole is at higher risk for substance abuse than the general population. An individual's personal risk is not specifically assessed or identified and is based solely on a presumption given his or her membership in the at-risk subgroup. Risk-focused strategies may include mentoring, substance abuse and violence prevention curricula, alternative and after school programs, and teen pregnancy prevention programs.



Early Intervention efforts, such as student assistance teams, provide a way to respond to students who are experiencing a variety of social, emotional and behavioral difficulties. *Early intervention strategies* are for individual students who are showing beginning signs of problem behavior, such as falling grades, disruptive behavior, smoking, and consumption of alcohol and other gateway drugs. The mission of early intervention is to identify these individuals and target them with special programs. The aim of early intervention is not only the reduction in the problem behavior, but also reduction in the length of time that behavior continues, delay of onset of the problem behavior, and/or reduction in the severity of the behavior. Early intervention strategies may include building or student assistance programs, positive behavior supports, school-based services, curriculum adaptations and modifications, etc.



Intensive Individual Interventions (also known as tertiary prevention) must be available for the small number of students (1 percent – 7 percent) whose difficulties are chronic, significant and complex. Some of these students may receive these interventions in special education and some may require other school-based services such as counseling in conjunction with community mental health services or other social services. *Intensive individual intervention strategies* are intended for students who exhibit significant, complex problems. Such strategies may include the wrap-around process, multi-system approaches, substance abuse treatment, etc.



In the process of addressing the social, emotional, intellectual and behavioral needs of students, best results are achieved when programs and services are designed to be in place and readily accessible at all points on the continuum. Good youth development programs will not address all of the needs of those students who will develop mild, moderate, or significant problems. The availability of effective intensive and individualized interventions for students with significant, complex problems are necessary when prevention efforts are not sufficient.

Information Brief

Violence Prevention

After each school shooting, the most often posed question was "Why?" followed by "Could they have prevented it?" Lessons learned indicate that there is no single explanation of the cause for the shootings, nor is there a simple answer for what to do to prevent future tragedies. Nevertheless, there is a great deal of knowledge about what works and steps that schools can take to increase the likelihood that "it will never happen here." A plan for creating a safe school is complete only when it includes a comprehensive violence prevention program with a crisis management plan that includes strategies for preparedness, response, and recovery.

> ***"All the crisis planning in the world can never truly prepare a school and community for the trauma associated with the violent death of children. This is compounded when the violence is perpetrated by another child or adolescent on a school campus."***
>
> *- Karen Kleinz, NSPRA*
> *National Association of Elementary School Principals*

INTRODUCTION

During the 1999-2000 school year, 3.5 percent (13) of Iowa school districts reported 20 disciplinary actions taken against students for carrying firearms to school. By the same token on the 1999 Iowa Youth Survey, six percent of students from 329 school districts reported that they had carried guns to school in the last 12 months. Although national statistics show a decreasing trend in overall violence in schools, two areas have raised the question, "How safe are our schools?" Both have received national attention – school shootings and bullying. In order to address these issues, allay the fears of students, school personnel, parents, and the public, and create a school environment that supports teaching and learning, there is an array of effective prevention and preparedness strategies that schools can undertake to meet the challenge.

> ***"In the longer term, we will be searching for answers, none of which will be easy. Answers must come from our families, our faith, our communities, our schools and our neighborhoods. I am convinced that one of those answers must be to listen more closely to what our children are telling us."*** *- Drew Edmundson, Oklahoma Attorney General*

The prevention strategies described in this brief are based on the following premises:

- *Day-to-day minor disruptions and incivility* can escalate into serious, life-threatening violence. Because there is a relationship between minor disruptions and serious violence, it is critical that schools do all they can to reduce the risk posed by daily disruptions.
- *Violence is preventable:* The sudden eruption of unexpected violence in each of the school shootings and their apparent unpredictability may cause some to question whether or not such violence is preventable. There is no guarantee that schools will be violence free if they implement comprehensive prevention programs. However, on the average, those with such programs will see a reduction in disruptive behavior and will lower their chances for serious violence.

> ***"The intensifying and automatic use of punishment as opposed to prevention of misbehavior and violence in schools, makes the schoolhouse toxic for too many children."***
>
> *- I.A. Hyman & P.A. Snook*

- *There is no "silver bullet."* The initial response by schools to the recent shootings was to take immediate "quick fix" solutions by installing metal detectors and surveillance cameras, expanding zero tolerance suspensions and expulsions, profiling students thought to be potential perpetrators, and adopting school uniforms. While these strategies may provide short-term solutions, they do little to yield long-term and meaningful results. There is little to no data supporting any single strategy to keep schools safe. Instead, the most effective programs are comprehensive, multi-strategy approaches.
- *Effective prevention requires ongoing planning and commitment.* Programs that effectively address school safety issues are the result of ongoing commitment and collaborative planning. No strategies can be effectively implemented without the full involvement of and cooperation with students, families, and community members.

THE PREVENTION OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE

Characteristics of Prevention Strategies

The natural reaction of school administrators to the recent incidents of school shooters was to take steps to secure their schools, giving themselves, their students, parents, and communities the perception of safety. To address their feelings of vulnerability, many invested in the purchase of expensive security devices such as metal detectors, identification card scanners, and surveillance

cameras. Still others hired security personnel to guard their campuses.

> ***"What schools are doing is creating conditions that are comparable to prisons. It's based on fear, and it's an understandable reaction given the circumstances, but the problem is that they're not looking at other solutions.***
>
> *- Renate Nummeia Caine, Professor Emeritus*
> *California State University, San Bernadino*

Such actions have raised concerns among experts in violence prevention. While they acknowledge that there may be a role for such actions, they also caution that when administrators define school safety as the absence of serious violent behavior, policy makers and other stakeholders may mistakenly adopt expensive, narrowly focused strategies such as investing in security technology without addressing school climate (Sprague and Walker, 2001). They warn that the prison-like atmosphere created by such measures can have a negative psychological impact on students and on the learning environment (Easterbrook, 1999).

> ***"Although necessary and appropriate, law enforcement and technological supports need to be balance with the overall mission of schooling, which is to promote academic excellence, socialization, citizenship, and healthy lives for our children."***
>
> *- J. Sprague & H.M. Walker*

Robert Linquanti and BethAnn Berliner of the Western Regional Center for Drug-Free Schools and Communities have created a system for categorizing violence prevention strategies that may help administrators achieve a balanced approach. They begin by dividing strategies into three categories: "Responding to Emergency," "Moving Away from Crisis," and "Preparing Today for the Future." In turn, three dimensions – temporal, behavioral, and focal – define each of these categories.

Temporal represents the timeframe for implementing and expecting benefit from a given strategy, from immediate results to long-term benefits.

Behavioral identifies the locus of control inherent in the strategy. Short-term crisis management strategies typically rely upon controls external to and independent of the responsibility of the student. On the other hand, strategies that teach students life skills and that have a lasting impact on their attitudes and behaviors develop self-control and self-management that rely on an internal locus of control.

Focal refers to the scope of a strategy, whether it is narrowly focused for a specific purpose, such as metal detectors specifically targeted to reduce the number of weapons brought onto school grounds, or creating a positive, inclusive school climate and culture through school-wide approaches.

For an example of this categorization of strategies, see the table on page 4 of this information brief.

Violence Prevention Strategies

There is no single solution to school violence. Consistently, programs that effectively reduce violence are proactive rather than reactive and use multiple components to successfully address the complexity of school disruption and violence. Five steps should be included in each initiative.

1. Secure the school.

Environmental Design - The physical layout of the school and grounds rarely receives consideration when addressing school safety issues. Yet today's architectural knowledge and techniques can enhance safety and improve security in the design and retrofitting of schools. Creative environmental design can improve the smooth operation of a school, prevent interpersonal conflict, and reduce opportunities for vandalism, violence, and the victimization of others (e.g., bullying and harassment). Such thoughtful planning can be cost-effective and make schools "cathedrals of learning" rather than "fortresses of fear" (Edwards, 2000).

> ***"...an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of metal detectors."***
>
> *-Linda Lantieri*

Other strategies that help secure the school are closed campuses, identification badges, improved communication systems, confidential reporting systems, use of school resource officers, and increased supervision. Target hardening schools with metal detectors and surveillance cameras also may be used although there is no evidence to date of their effectiveness in preventing school violence.

2. Address the peer culture and its problems.

An important target of prevention efforts should be the peer culture if schools are to be successful in becoming safer, more civil environments. "The norms, actions, beliefs and values of a broad sector of today's peer culture are socially destructive and demeaning" (Walker, 2001). As young people try to negotiate the complex and difficult task of gaining acceptance among peers, there are some who do not "fit."

Bullying and harassment are often the *modus operandi* of this toxic peer culture, resulting in isolation and rejection of a youth seeking his or her place. Unfortunately, peers often encourage such behavior and adults tacitly support it by not responding. Although changing this culture is a formidable task for which a school is not solely responsible, schools are a primary place, in addition to the family, that can address it effectively. Programs that create a positive peer culture of caring and civility hold

promise for achieving this result. Such programs include the *Resolving Conflict Creatively Program*, *Second Step*, the *Anti-Bullying Program*, *Bully Proofing Your School*, *Steps to Respect*, *By Kids, For Kids*, and *Not My Friends, Not My School.* School-wide discipline programs that establish behavioral expectations and predictable, consistently implemented rewards and consequences can become the context for practicing lessons learned in instructional programs.

3. Involve parents in making the school safer.

Parents, like school personnel, are concerned about the safety of schools. They have a great deal to offer in making that environment safe. Parent involvement can begin at home where parents can teach their children nonviolent ways to handle anger and to deal with conflict, especially bullying. In addition, parents can strive to provide their child with consistent discipline and supervision.

4. Create a positive, inclusive school climate and culture.

Although much of the attention regarding school violence has been on the characteristics of the perpetrators, Sprague and Walker (2000) identify a variety of school practices that are factors in the development of antisocial behavior and potential violence. These include 1) poor instruction that contributes to academic failure; 2) failure to individualize instruction to adapt to individual differences; 3) failure to assist students from at risk backgrounds to bond with the schooling process; 4) inconsistent and punitive disciplinary and behavior management practices; 5) unclear rules and expectations for appropriate behavior; failure to correct rule violations and reward adherence to them; and 6) lack of opportunity to learn and practice prosocial interpersonal and self-management skills.

The challenge is to create a school culture that is based on positive values about how we treat each other – staff to staff, staff to students, student to student, and students to staff. Among these values are civility, integrity, caring, and respect. The research of Gottfredson and others shows that environmental strategies that promote a positive, inclusive and accepting school climate are key components for addressing violence in schools. Strategies proven effective in creating such a culture are proactive school-wide discipline systems, systematic social skills instruction, academic/ curricular re-structuring, early screening and identification of antisocial behavior, and behaviorally based interventions. Universal approaches that train and encourage the entire school population to stay in control of their anger and responses to conflict are beneficial to the entire school community.

> ***"...what we do in our schools on a day-to-day basis in terms of discipline may be related to serious crime and violence."***
>
> *- R. Skiba and R. Peterson*

5. Develop a written school safety and crisis response plan.

School safety plans include both the strategies for prevention that may be incorporated into the district's Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) and a crisis management plan that includes preparedness, crisis response, and recovery procedures for a wide range of potentially dangerous situations. Although we may not be able to predict when or where a violent incident will occur, we can be prepared to deal with it when it does. School districts should involve a safety team that is composed of administrators, teachers, building support staff, students, parents, law enforcement, community emergency management personnel, and law enforcement. The team should disseminate plans widely accompanied by comprehensive training to ensure proficiency.

SUMMARY

Although there is no guarantee that any single act of violence in a school can be prevented, it is clear that schools can implement an array of strategies to avert such tragedies. Experts tell us that comprehensive prevention programs that include short, medium and long term strategies ranging from crisis management plans to the changing of school cultures have great promise for reducing the likelihood for such occurrences. By implementing comprehensive programs that improve the overall school climate, we may be able to reduce the risk for serious, violent behavior and, at the same time, improve the environment for learning.

LEARN MORE ABOUT IT:

- **Web sites:**
  - Indiana Educational Policy Center: http://www.indiana.edu/~iepc/
  - Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior: http://www.uoregon.edu/~ivdb
- **In this Handbook:** See "*Success4* Critical Elements," "*Inclusive Schools Communities and Schools*," (a vision of the State Board of Education), the information briefs in this section, and the *Crisis Management* planning section of this handbook.

A Menu of Options for Making Schools Safe

Developing Life Skills and Attitudes **Temporal:** *Long-Term* **Behavioral:** *Internal Control* **Focal:** Youth Development & Risk-Focused *Prevention*
Behavior Skill Development
Character Education
Service-Learning
School Resource Officers (SROs)
Peer Group Strategies
Youth Involvement/Youth Empowerment
Restorative Justice
After School Programs
Mentoring
Parent Involvement
Asset Development
Multi-Cultural Education

Intervening Before Crises **Temporal:** *Medium-Term* **Behavioral:** *Shared Control* **Focal:** *Early and Intensive Intervention*
Design, Use and Supervision of School Space
Proactive School-wide Discipline Practices
Problem Solving Teams (BATs, SATs)
School Liaison Officers
Alternative Education Programs
Wrap Around Services
Support Groups
Family Assistance Programs
School-Based Services

Responding to Emergencies **Temporal:** *Short-Term* **Behavioral:** *External Control* **Focal:** *Crisis Intervention*
Crisis Management Plans
Collaboration between school and community crisis responders
Security and Surveillance Equipment
Security Personnel
Threat Assessment
Student Identification and Dress Codes
Zero Tolerance Policies

Adapted from R. *Linquanti, & B.A. Berliner, Rebuilding Schools as Safe Havens: A Typology of Selecting and Integrating Violence Prevention Strategies*
Western Regional Center for Drug-Free Schools and Communities

Information Brief

Safe Schools

Not so long ago, the concept of "safe schools" caused school leaders to concern themselves with school safety patrols, fire and tornado drills, and hall monitors to supervise gum chewing, running, and inappropriate displays of affection. Today, the concerns have changed, and administrators are asking such questions as, "Should we install metal detectors or surveillance cameras in our schools? Do we need a school resource officer? Could it [a school shooting] happen here? How can we protect students from dangerous intruders?" The answers are not simple, but they do exist, in a comprehensive approach to school safety that includes strategies for prevention and early intervention into emerging problem behaviors carried out in collaboration among students, school personnel, parents, and the community.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS ADDRESSED:

- *Districts and schools ensure that safe, welcoming, accessible physical environments, inviting and conducive to learning, are provided.*
- *The school is a caring, respectful, encouraging community.*
- *The school has a variety of programs and services intended to prevent or intervene early with students' social, emotional, and behavioral difficulties.*
- *The school, in collaboration with the community, provides a full and accessible array of specialized programs and services to address the needs of students experiencing social, emotional and/or behavioral problems.*

INTRODUCTION

The issue of general school safety has taken on new importance over the past decade as we witnessed the tragic acts of violence committed by and toward children in the school environment. Today more than ever, we see a need to develop safe, disciplined school surroundings, free from the damaging effects of drugs and violence.

Along with studying the effects of tragedy on school safety over the past few years, we must note that school crime continues to decline nationally, down nearly one-third between 1992 and 1998. It is encouraging to know that the number of students who reported carrying a weapon to school in 1999 was down 5 percent from 1993 (*The Safety Zone*, Fall 2000).

Violence among youth has its origin in society at large. School districts should address the root causes of violence through education and forge partnerships with the community to create safe learning environments for all children.

SAFE SCHOOLS DESCRIBED

What characterizes a safe school?

Thriving schools foster learning in a safe environment where behaviors are socially appropriate. Academic achievement is a strong focus. Schools nurture positive relationships between students and staff. A safe school has the involvement of parents and the community at large. Safe schools are well prepared with plans for prevention, intervention and crisis response.

Can early warning signs help in the identification of a troubled child?

When viewed in context, early warning signs can signal a troubled child. It is the responsibility of the school staff, parents and others working with youth to see to it that misinterpretation of these signals does not cause undue stereotyping of students. The warning signs should be used to help identify student needs and to intervene appropriately. Some signs include:

- *Withdrawal from social contact* that often stems from feelings of depression, rejection, persecution, unworthiness and lack of confidence.
- *Feelings of isolation and loneliness,* though they do not always result in violent behavior. These feelings may be indicators that the child has internal issues that hinder development of social affiliations.
- *Feelings of rejection* that are experienced by many adolescents and can be emotionally painful. A troubled child may respond to rejection in negative ways, which may include violence.
- *Being a victim of violence* at or away from school, which may cause the student to become violent.
- *Feeling picked on or persecuted,* which may cause a troubled student to withdraw socially. If this child is not given the tools with which to address these feelings, he or she may vent them in inappropriate ways.

How do I get help for a troubled child?

Prevention approaches are effective in decreasing the number of behavior problems in the school community. But prevention alone can't eliminate the problems of all

children. Approximately 5 - 10 percent of students will need more intensive interventions to decrease their high-risk behaviors (*Early Warning, Timely Response — A Guide to Safe Schools,* August 1998). The following steps lead to effective practices for improving the behavior of a troubled child:

- *Establish a partnership with the child, school, home and community.* Effective schools can be the coordinating partner to collaborate with child and family service agencies, law enforcement and juvenile justice systems.

- *Inform parents and get them involved as soon as possible when early warning signs are observed.* Inform parents of your school discipline policies and about their child's behavior at school — both good behavior and bad. Parents need to know how they can support the school's efforts with their child.

- *Provide the entire school community — teachers, students, parents and support staff — with training in response to imminent warning signs.* When faced with a potentially violent student, many school staff members are afraid that they may do or say the wrong thing.

- *Encourage students to be responsible for their own actions and support their efforts.* Involve students in planning and implementing violence prevention in your school.

- *Put the resources available in your school to good use.* School-based programs and staff can be valuable assets in your pursuit of a safe school environment. Programs such as special education, safe and drug-free school programs, pupil services and Title 1 provide the necessary components for effective school safety.

What can we do to develop and implement plans for dealing with violence in school and for improving general school safety?

Services, Strategies and Suggested Training:

- Focus on the academic achievement of all students in the school community.
- Involve families and the community by making them feel welcome and necessary to the well being of the school.
- Discuss safety issues in a way that teaches children about the dangers of violence and offers appropriate alternatives for dealing with difficult feelings.
- Design and implement effective school discipline policy and a system for analyzing violent incidents in your school.
- Provide ongoing training and support for all school staff in violence prevention, intervention and crisis response.
- Offer extended-day programs that provide a variety of services such as counseling, tutoring, creative outlets and help with homework.
- Use alternative school settings for students exhibiting violent behavior and students that bring weapons to school.
- Redesign parts of the school facility to eliminate dark, secluded and unsupervised areas.

SUMMARY

School administrators now have to face the fact that a violent situation will occur in their district at some time, and they need to be prepared with intervention procedures. Although crime in schools is on the decline, crises involving sudden violence in schools are traumatic because they are so unexpected.

The safety of our schools has to take priority in order to generate the setting in which students can flourish both academically and socially. It takes the cooperation of parents, schools, and community leaders to produce and implement plans to end the violence and create a safe and nurturing school environment.

LEARN MORE ABOUT IT:

- **Web sites:**
  - U.S. Department of Education, Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program: http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDFS/
  - National Resource Center for Safe Schools: http://www.safetyzone.org/
  - National School Safety Center: http://www.nssc1.org/
  - U.S. Department of Education: www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/OSEP/earlywrn.html
  - National Association of Attorney Generals and National School Board Association joint Web site: www.keepschoolssafe.org
  - National Governors Association Center for Best Practices: www.nga.org
  - National Campaign Against Youth Violence: http://www.noviolence.net/
  - The Safe Schools Coalition of Washington: http://www.safeschools-wa.org/
  - Keep Schools Safe: http://www.keepschoolssafe.org/
- **In this Handbook:** See additional briefs in this section on *Environmental Design, A Continuum of Programs and Services, School-Wide Discipline, Risk-Focused Prevention, Early Intervention,* and *Wrap Around.* In other sections of the manual, please refer to *Early Warning, Timely Response, Safeguarding Our Children: An Action Guide*, and "*Success4's* Critical Elements." For information beyond the scope of this handbook, see the Resources Section.

Information Brief

Comprehensive Science-Based Prevention

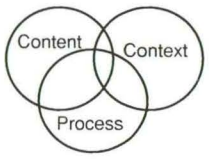
Whether the focus is academic achievement or the healthy development of our children and youth, the question that confronts schools and child-serving community organizations is "What works?" Many research fields, including health, education, psychology, and juvenile justice have sought answers. The answer that emerged from their efforts was comprehensive programming using a wide range of science-based strategies. Educators, confronted with a myriad of decisions from how many new school buses to purchase, to whether or not they will be able to find a teacher for eighth grade math, to the challenges that their children are completely safe at school, are overwhelmed with the charge to develop and implement effective programs. What is comprehensive? What is science-based? How can we prevent violence among our young people?

INTRODUCTION

Prevention of youth violence begins with positive youth development and the implementation of programs and services that reduce the incidence of problem behaviors. Only on those rare occasions when these efforts fail will it be necessary for schools to move into a crisis management mode, implementing procedures for which they have planned adequately and been properly trained.

For years, schools have invested human and financial resources to implement strategies that they believed would reduce substance abuse, violence, and disruptive behaviors and that would contribute to safe and disciplined learning environments. Despite good intentions, there was little evidence that the strategies implemented were producing desired results. At the same time, prevention researchers began to identify strategies that would have desired effects.

We now know that there are practices that have been proven effective in ameliorating problem behaviors.



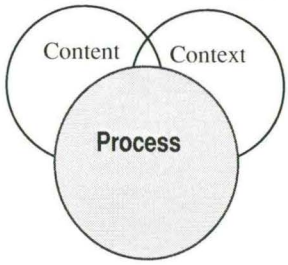
They are both comprehensive and science/research-based. Comprehensive approaches use a continuous improvement *process* of planning and implementation to address the *content* of violence prevention and the *context* in which the plan is implemented. Attention to context, process, and content occurs simultaneously.

PROCESS: THE PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVENESS

School personnel confront the daunting task of deciding what programming is most likely to meet the needs of students in their district. The task begins with using a scientific process for program planning and implementation that is likely to lead to success. In 1998, the U.S. Department of Education put forth the Principles of Effectiveness that establish a process for science-based practice. These principles are:

Principle 1: Base programs on a thorough assessment of objective data about the problems they address in the schools and communities they serve.

Principle 2: Establish a set of *measurable goals and objectives* to meet the identified needs and determine the activities to achieve them.



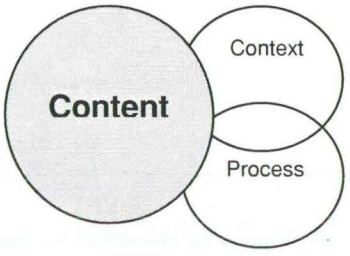
Principle 3: Design and implement activities based on research or evaluation that the strategies used are effective in addressing the goals.

Principle 4: Periodically *assess progress* toward achieving goals and objectives. Use evaluation results to refine, improve, and strengthen the program, or to refine its goals and objectives as appropriate.

CONTENT: COMPONENTS OF A COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM

Comprehensive programming is a multi-faceted approach to address risk and protective factors for violent and disruptive behavior in order to promote the healthy development of our children and youth in multiple domains (schools, peers, families, community and the environment).

The content of prevention is the information and knowledge about root causes and consequences for a range of problem behaviors, as well as the strategies to prevent them. Research-based frameworks related to asset development or risk and protective factors identify those elements that contribute to the reduction of problem behaviors. They can guide the selection of strategies that improve program effectiveness.



Researchers have identified an array of strategies that are most likely to produce desired results. A truly comprehensive approach incorporates activities that implement all the strategies listed below for all children from early childhood through grade 12.

Prevention strategies directly affecting youth

- *Information dissemination* increases knowledge and changes attitudes through activities such as classroom discussions, media campaigns, and special events. This strategy also includes the distribution of information to students and employees about community resources.
- *Environmental approaches* address those factors that are external to individuals but nevertheless affect their behavior. Although they directly target factors to create respectful, orderly environments conducive to learning, these approaches may include activities designed to develop a sense of individual responsibility and respect for the rights of others and to resolve conflicts without violence. Environmental strategies often incorporate activities that influence social norms and expectations, as well as policies and their implementation. School-wide strategies such as school-wide discipline systems have proven to be among the most effective violence prevention strategies (Gottfredson, 2001).
- *Prevention education* is developmentally-based instruction for all children and youth from early childhood through grade 12 that:
  - teaches important skills, such as social, conflict management, and problem-solving skills;
  - promotes a sense of individual responsibility and provides information and effective techniques for resisting peer pressure
  - addresses the legal, personal, social and health consequences of violent and disruptive behavior and the use of illegal drugs.
- *Problem identification and referral processes* recognize individuals exhibiting problem behaviors and refer them for assessment and intervention.
- *Alternatives* offer opportunities for participation in constructive, developmentally appropriate activities that build assets in environments that protect youth from situations that put them at risk.

Prevention strategies not directly affecting youth

- *Parent and community involvement activities* promote active engagement of parents in their child's education and coordination with community groups and agencies, including their participation in the district's needs assessment, goals, and program implementation;
- *Professional development* includes training for school staff in the strategies to be delivered directly to youth.

SCIENCE/RESEARCH-BASED AND THEORY DRIVEN

For years schools have operated programs that sounded good and that they believed to be effective, yet when desired outcomes were examined, the results were disappointing. The prevalence of problem behaviors among young people had not improved. In fact, in many cases it had worsened. Meanwhile, the field of prevention science has learned a great deal about what works. Now schools and communities are called upon to use scientifically defensible prevention programs. How can a school know if a program is science-based?

> ***"These changes [to science-based practices] can be difficult to make if current prevention programs are popular with staff, participants, or funding sources."***
> *- Tom Griffin, 1999*

Tom Griffin, evaluator of the Central Center for the Application of Prevention Technologies (1999), describes science-based programs as, "approaches that have been developed and evaluated using scientific processes. These programs are grounded in a clear theoretical foundation and have been carefully implemented and evaluated. Regardless of differences in program focus, research design, or evaluation methodology, it is important that all prevention efforts reflect the scientific process and be designed and implemented in ways that are likely to be effective."

Not all evidence of program effectiveness is derived from equally rigorous evaluation procedures. Five levels of evidence can serve as guidelines to assist schools in their selection of potentially effective programs:

Level One	Anecdotal evidence
Level Two	Appearance in a non-refereed journal or publication
Level Three	Peer review of program implementation and evaluation
Level Four	Meta analysis showing effectiveness across a broad array of program strategies
Level Five	Replications appearing in a variety of refereed professional journals, and strategy can be replicated exactly.

THE EXPERT PANEL PROCESS: WHAT WORKS

> ***"Our intention is to demonstrate a process that will help educators make informed decisions about their prevention efforts and to prescribe which programs or strategies they should use."***
> *- Bill Modzeleski*

In order to identify the most effective prevention programs, the U.S. Department of Education convened a 15-member team of educators, researchers, evaluators, and program developers, as well as representatives from local and state education agencies, businesses, institutions of higher education, and the legal and medical

communities. The criteria used by the panel to review and evaluate prevention programs can guide schools' selection of potentially effective programs for their own prevention efforts.

- **Research:** The program reports findings on at least one methodologically sound evaluation that demonstrates effect on substance use, violent behavior, conduct problems, or one or more scientifically established risk and protective factors that are predictors of these behaviors;
- **Goals:** The program's goals with respect to changing behavior and/or risk and protective factors are clear and appropriate for the intended population and setting;
- **Rationale:** The program clearly states the underlying rationale and the content and processes are clearly aligned with its goals;
- **Fit to target population:** The program's content takes into consideration the characteristics of the intended population, setting, and needs implied by these characteristics;
- **Engaging quality:** The program implementation process effectively engages the intended population;
- **Alignment with mission:** The program is integrated into the schools' educational mission;
- **Replication potential:** The program provides necessary information and guidance for replication in other appropriate settings.

The expert panel (for a listing of the panel, see http://www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/ORAD/KAD/expert_panel/2001exemplary_sddfs.html) identified nine exemplary and 33 promising programs that promote healthy, safe, disciplined, and drug-free schools.

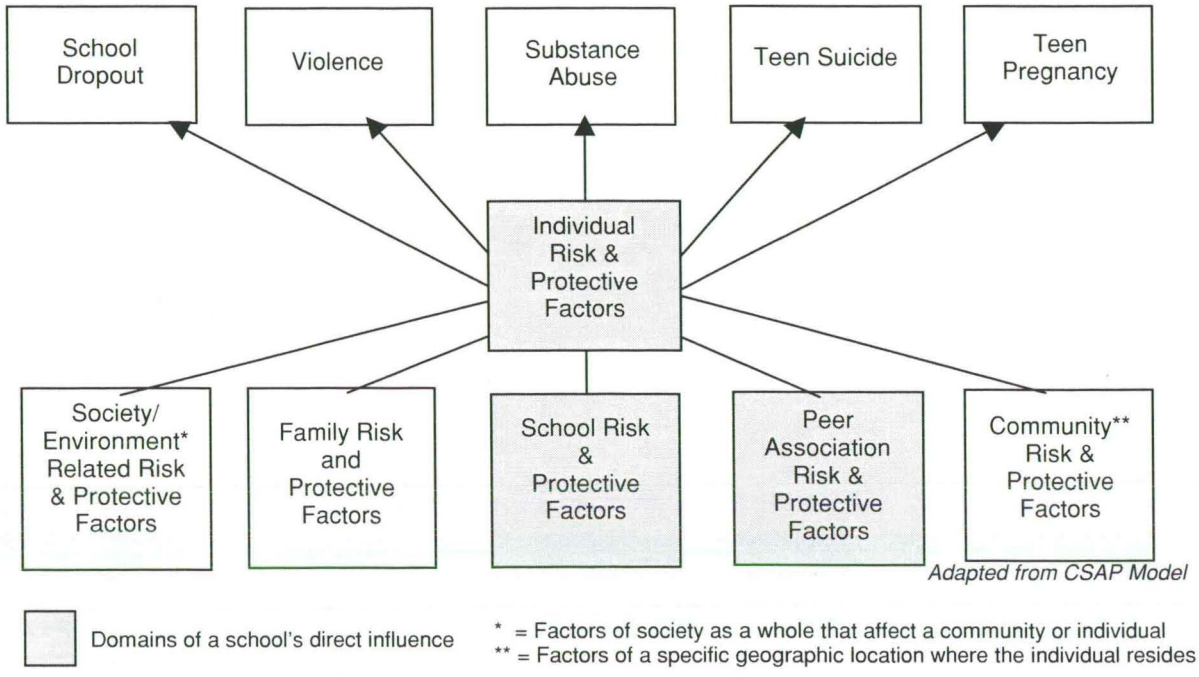
Context For A Comprehensive Program

The context is the system that uses prevention programming. This context begins with a school district and the principles (i.e., vision, mission, and beliefs) that guide its policies and decision-making. A district sets the direction and the tone for the work in its buildings. The Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) serves as the governing document. District policies and practices frame the work at the building level. Comprehensive programming includes work at the building, classroom, and individual student levels. The success of any program may be largely dependent upon the readiness of the system to support the effort in leadership, attitude, and resources.

Summary

With so many demands placed on school administrators to provide programs that meet the developmental needs of students, we should welcome the trend away from fragmented and faddish programs. Now is the time to assess the needs of the district's students and to establish measurable goals to meet those needs. This provides the opportunity to: examine all of the district's prevention programs, pulling together those with the prospect of positively affecting the goal; eliminate redundant and ineffective strategies, and adopt proven effective programs that have great promise of meeting the identified needs; and finally, monitor the effectiveness of the comprehensive program put in place using scientifically-based evaluation procedures.

Web of Influence



PROGRAMMING TO ADDRESS RESEARCH-BASED RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS THAT SCHOOLS CAN INFLUENCE DIRECTLY

FACTOR	SAMPLE STRATEGIES	POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES
DOMAIN: INDIVIDUAL (Attitudes, knowledge, skills, problem behaviors, biological & psychological dispositions)		
• Attachment & commitment to school • Social and emotional competency • Resilient temperament • Successful academic performance • Perceived norms for violence & drug use • Belief in societal rules • Religiosity • Negative attitudes toward delinquency • Negative attitudes toward drug use • Rebelliousness • Early, persistent antisocial/aggressive behavior • Early initiation of delinquency • Early initiation of drug use • Impulsivity/low self-control/sensation seeking • Expectations of drug effects • Affective disorders (e.g., depression, anxiety) • Physical/sexual abuse	**Education & information strategies** • Knowledge on risks associated with violence and substance abuse • Information on positive healthy behaviors • Curricular information on violence and substance abuse • Social competence • Positive relationships with adults **Problem identification & referral processes** • Individual behavioral interventions • Counseling/therapeutic interventions **Alternatives** • Recreational, enrichment, and leisure activities • Educational enhancement activities –e.g., tutoring and study skills	**Education & information strategies** • ***Prevention curricula*** – classroom and school-wide violence prevention, conflict resolution, job skills, conflict resolution, job skills, social competency instruction, leadership, and decision-making skills **Problem identification & referral processes** • Problem-solving teams, e.g. BATs, SATs • Functional behavioral assessment and behavior intervention planning • Individual and group counseling for stress reduction • Mentoring **Alternatives** • After school programs
DOMAIN: SCHOOLS (Bonding, climate, policies, performance)		
• Clarity of norms/rules about behavior • Consistent enforcement of rules for behavior • Availability of drugs • Availability of guns	**Environmental strategies** • Creation of respectful, orderly environment, conducive to learning through communication of norms or expectations for behavior. • Bonding to prosocial culture	**Environmental strategies** • Policies, rules, regulations or laws about behavior/ discipline • Pro-social, instructional school-wide discipline programs that include high expectations and consistent enforcement of rules • Classroom management
DOMAIN: PEERS (Norms, activities, bonding)		
• Attachment to prosocial others • Peer rejection in elementary school • Exposure to association with delinquent peers • Exposure to association with drug-using peers	**Education & information strategies** • Peer resistance education and skill building **Environmental strategies** • Peer reinforcement of prosocial norms	**Environmental strategies** • Youth involvement in addressing student conduct • Peer group strategies **Alternatives** • After school programs • Classroom & peer support groups
DOMAIN: FAMILIES (Function, management, bonding)		
• Family attitudes and skills toward violence • Family management practices • Attachment/bonding to family	**Parent involvement activities** • Family involvement in school • Family/parenting skill training • Services to improve family management practices	**Parent involvement activities** • Parent-child communication programs • Parent-school communication programs
DOMAIN: COMMUNITY (Bonding, norms, resources, awareness/mobilization)		
• Norms about violence & drugs • Linkages among community member	**Community involvement activities** • Interaction between school and community groups within the school	**Community involvement activities** • Joint planning • Shared programming • Cross-agency training

LEARN MORE ABOUT IT:

- **Web sites:**
  - USDE Exemplary Programs – http://www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/ORAD/KAD/expert_panel/2001exemplary_sddfs.html
  - CSAP Model Programs - http://www.samsha.gov/centers/csap/modelprograms
- **In this Handbook:** See information briefs in this section.

Information Brief

Frameworks

Many frameworks offer schools guidance based on research and/or professional literature to assist them in their selection and organization of programs and services they provide students and families. These frameworks enhance the quality and effectiveness of the school's efforts to meet the needs of diverse populations of students by drawing upon programs and proven positive youth development practices, and preventing or ameliorating problems experienced by children and youth. The frameworks described in this document also provide an approach that integrates the work of schools with families and communities.

INTRODUCTION

The frameworks selected for description in this brief range from one that provides a comprehensive structure for viewing a complete continuum of programs and services provided by effective schools (*Success4* Critical Elements), to two that focus on positive youth development (Search Institute's Asset Development and America's Promise), and one that addresses risk-focused prevention (Hawkins and Catalano). All of the frameworks described address the collaborations of kids, families, schools, and communities.

SUCCESS4

Success4 is a statewide initiative to foster the healthy social, emotional, intellectual, and behavioral development of Iowa's children and youth. The initiative provides schools with a comprehensive framework to achieve this mission. (See the document entitled "Critical Elements" in this handbook.) The framework is based on an extensive review of the research and professional literature and consultation with nationally recognized experts. It contains a set of critical elements identified by that study that describe a socially, emotionally, intellectually, and behaviorally healthy and competent youth and a school that works with families and the community to foster that health and competence.

Critical Elements are essential features of improvement efforts and are considered crucial to the achievement of desired results. They should form the framework for assessing needs and planning strategies in improvement efforts. For each Critical Element, there is a set of indicators and essential practices rooted in research, the professional literature, and/or successful experience that promise to yield desired results.

"Kids" Critical Elements: *Success4* has identified 23 Critical Elements that characterize socially, emotionally, intellectually and behaviorally healthy and competent students, based on work related to resiliency, asset building, character development, and employability skills. These elements are organized as Social (Interpersonal Relationships), Emotional (Personal Adjustment), Intellectual (Cognitive Functioning), and Behavioral (Personal Conduct).

"Capacity-Building" Critical Elements: 19 Critical Elements identify areas that ensure school staff has the human, material, time, and financial resources to work effectively with students, their families, and the community for the healthy development of children and youth. The elements fall into three (3) categories: Schools, Families, and Communities.

"System Development" Critical Elements: 13 Critical Elements outline the development of an organization to continuously improve itself and live out its mission and vision. Critical elements for system development include guiding principles (i.e., shared beliefs, vision and mission) that are used to make decisions, a collaborative culture that supports learning and change, creation of shared leadership structures, and widespread ownership of and commitment to the improvement effort.

> ***"Successful schools reflect what research says: young people need both challenging content and emotionally and socially supportive school environments to achieve academically. They are not competing priorities, but reinforcing aspects of total student development."***
>
> *- Draayer & Roehlkepartain, August 1995*

Schools may use the *Success4* framework to identify priorities as part of their Comprehensive School Improvement planning process. They also may use *Success4* in combination with other frameworks to achieve the desired results for students as identified by the district's needs assessment and student learning goals. Unlike the other frameworks, the *Success4*

framework helps schools build a full continuum of programs and services to address the needs of all students.

ASSET DEVELOPMENT - SEARCH INSTITUTE

Current trends show a shift in thinking for work with youth – a shift toward promoting positive (strength-based) youth development and a shift away from a problem-solving orientation. Since 1989, the Search Institute of Minneapolis, MN, has conducted research grounded in the literature on resilience, prevention, and adolescent development. The study involved a survey of more than 500,000 youth, in grades 6 through 12, in more than 600 communities across the country and a review of more than 1,200 articles, chapters, books, and research reports (Scales and Leffert, 1999).

In an effort to identify a strengths-based approach, the Search Institute developed a framework of developmental assets. The framework is a research-based theory that the Institute continues to test. It incorporates 40 developmental assets critical to young people's healthy growth and development. These assets purport to protect young people from problem behaviors, as well as to promote positive attitudes and behaviors. When viewed together, they offer a set of benchmarks leading to healthy development. As of 1998, the Institute's "Healthy Community • Healthy Youth" initiative had helped more than 300 communities nationwide enlist institutions and individuals to build developmental assets in youth.

The 40 assets identified by the Search Institute are grouped into eight (8) categories:

INTERNAL	EXTERNAL
Commitment to Learning	Support
Positive Values	Empowerment
Social Competencies	Boundaries & Expectations
Positive Identity	Constructive Use of Time

Research shows that when young people have enough assets, they are much more likely to lead healthy, positive, productive lives (*Youth Update*, February 1994). Overall, 62 percent of youth surveyed experienced less than 20 assets. Young people in the United States simply do not have the basic building blocks for healthy development.

The research findings point to a holistic approach to helping youth succeed. Assets must be integrated into the major areas of school life, including curriculum and instruction, organization and community partnerships. The Search Institute researchers found that children who feel better about school do better in school. Young people with 31-40 assets were more likely to report getting good grades than young people with 0-20 or even 21-30. The following assets are associated with academic achievement and good grades: school engagement, achievement motivation, youth programs, bonding to school, adult role models, time at home, and interpersonal competence. On the other hand, only 25 percent of students surveyed by the Search Institute reported that they had a caring school climate (*Source Newsletter*, October 1999).

> ***"A major reason that we are faced with so many crises among our youth – from violence, pregnancy, school dropouts, suicide – is that society no longer provides them with the developmental infrastructure (assets) they need to grow up healthy."***
>
> *- Peter L. Bensen*

The more assets that youth experience, the more likely they are to make positive choices and avoid unhealthy behaviors. Many of the assets don't require a lot of money to advance. Because they are built primarily through relationships, what they do require is time and commitment. Young people need caring adults and friends who support, encourage, and guide them. There needs to be a commitment to nurturing the qualities that guide choices and create a sense of centeredness, purpose, and focus, shaping dispositions that encourage wise, responsible and compassionate judgments.

Everyone can build assets. The framework encourages all members of a community to become involved in asset building. It makes clear that everyday acts of asset building by ordinary citizens are equally as important as, if not more important than, efforts by skilled professionals. The assets clearly show important roles that families, schools, faith communities, neighborhoods, youth organizations, and others in the community play in young people's lives.

> ***"Ultimately, rebuilding and strengthening the developmental infrastructure in a community is conceived less as a program implemented and managed by professionals and more the mobilization of public will and capacity. A major target for this level of community engagement is the creation of a normative culture in which all residents are expected by virtue of their membership in the community to promote the positive development of children and adolescents."***
>
> *- Peter L. Bensen*

Youth are of great value when involved in leadership, service, and other positive activities through which they can contribute to their communities and the world. Communities can most effectively instill developmental assets in youth when many sectors in the community come together to develop a vision for positive youth development and to work together to

surround every child and teenager with the repeated assets of support, discipline, structure, and values.

America's Promise

America's Promise is a Washington, D.C. based organization that was founded in Philadelphia, PA, following the Presidents' Summit for America's Future on April 27-29, 1997, with General Colin Powell as Founding Chairman. All living presidents, and First Lady Nancy Reagan representing her husband, urged the nation to make youth a priority. Included in this call to action was a challenge to the nation to commit itself to fulfilling five (5) promises:

- *Promise One:* Ongoing relationships with caring adults-parents, mentors, tutors or coaches. Resilient youth have at least one adult who cares deeply for them. Luckier still are youth who have a loving parent and at least one adult friend or mentor who care about them, act as role models, and often connect them with other resources and opportunities.
- *Promise Two:* Safe places with structured activities during non-school hours. Young people need structure and physically and emotionally safe places to be. Before and after school programs help fulfill this promise.
- *Promise Three:* Healthy start and future. Healthy start is not limited to early childhood but, instead, also pertains to a healthy start for adulthood represented by the entire journey through childhood and adolescence.
- *Promise Four:* Marketable skills through effective education. Significant shifts in the workplace and the new skills needed to succeed there make it difficult for young people to pass this critical developmental milestone from adolescence to adulthood.
- *Promise Five:* Opportunities to give back through community service. Giving young people an opportunity to serve others is an important strategy that sees them as part of the solution, not the problem. Service-learning helps to fulfill this promise.

> ***"Employers increasingly need workers who can think, learn new skills rapidly, work in teams, and solve problems creatively. Yet too few youth, whether college bound or not, have these skills, or in many cases, even basic work skills."***
>
> *- America's Promise*

America's Promise, like the Search Institute framework, focuses on asset building. Over 500 national organizations and 550 Communities of Promise and states form an alliance committed to fulfilling all five promises. Seven (7) alliance members are in Iowa.

Communities That Care – Social Development Research Group

Communities that Care is a community operating system that provides research-based tools to help communities promote the positive development of children and youth and prevent adolescent substance use, delinquency, teen pregnancy, school dropout and violence. This risk-focused prevention framework, developed by the Social Development Research Group, University of Washington, incorporates both risk *and* protective factors (assets). It can provide helpful guidance when a school wishes to target resources to risk-focused prevention for populations of students in greatest need.

> ***Researchers make the case that "prevention policies and programs should focus on [both] the reduction of risk and the promotion of protective influences if the reduction of substance use, crime, and violence or the improvement of academic performance are intended outcomes."***
>
> *- Pollard, Hawkins, and Arthur, 1999*

Risk and protective factors exist across multiple domains: school, community, family, and individual/peer.

Risk Factors: Risk factors are those characteristics, variables, or hazards that, if present for a given individual, predict the development of problem behaviors such as adolescent substance use, teen pregnancy, delinquency, and violent behavior. These factors, which are based on 30 years of research, exist in all domains: schools, families, communities, individuals and their peers. They are present across the entire developmental continuum and operate in similar ways across races, genders, and socioeconomic groups (*Guide for Implementing the Comprehensive Strategy*, 1995).

Protective Factors: Protective factors buffer the risk factors by reducing the effect of exposure to them, and thus, result in reduced incidence of problem behavior. Protective factors, like risk factors, are research-based and exist across the continuum and demographic groups. These factors fall into three (3) basic categories: individual characteristics (positive social orientation, high intelligence, and resilient temperament); social bonding (warm, affective relationships, especially with positive adults, and the skills, opportunity, and recognition for meaningful involvement in conventional activities), and healthy beliefs and clear standards for behavior.

SUMMARY

Some schools and/or communities have already adopted one of these frameworks for their local efforts. For those who have not, consideration of doing so might prove worthwhile. The framework adopted should be one that best serves the needs of those who are adopting it.

LEARN MORE ABOUT IT:

- **Web sites:**
  - *Success4* http://www.state.ia.us/educate/programs/success4/index.html
  - The Search Institute: http://www.search-institute.org
  - Social Development Research Group (Communities That Care): http://www.drp.org;
  - America's Promise: http://www.americaspromise.org
- **In this Handbook:** See additional briefs in this section. For information beyond the scope of this handbook, see the Resources Section.

Information Brief

Positive Behavioral Supports

Positive Behavioral Supports (PBS) is a relatively new and growing field of applied behavioral science. PBS focuses on the healthy social and behavioral development of children and youth through a "systemic approach to enhancing the capacity of schools to adopt and sustain the effective use of practices" for all students (Sugai, February 1999). It provides both a process of problem solving and planning and a set of empirically validated behavior change strategies designed to address the behavioral challenges of children and youth as schools, families, and communities strive to prepare them for a dramatically changing world.

Introduction

Children and youth need to acquire the skills necessary for successful adulthood in today's society. Most will have the supports from their families, peers, schools, and communities. Yet, others lack these supports. In fact, there is an increasing number of young people who are at risk of displaying antisocial and disruptive, even violent, behavior that is causing concern to schools. They come to school lacking a repertoire of pro-social skills. The lack of pro-social engagement in the community and the resulting association with a network of antisocial peers are shown to be strong correlates to additional problematic and deviant behavior (Biglan, 1993, 1995).

Researchers have found that the typical "get tougher" response to problem behavior in the form of increased punishment is essentially ineffective in changing these behaviors. In fact, they found punishment that is not in the context of a positive school-wide disciplinary system is associated with increased aggression, vandalism, truancy, tardiness, and dropouts. On the other hand, a prevention and early intervention system of positive behavioral supports holds promise for reducing serious behavior challenges (Lewis and Sugai, 1999).

"If schools are to be safe, effective environments, behavior support must become a proactive priority, not simply a concern to be addressed after disruptive behavior engulfs a community."

- Horner and Sugai

Positive Behavioral Support – What Is It?

Positive Behavioral Support (PBS) is defined as:
"a broad range of systemic and individualized strategies for achieving important social and learning outcomes while preventing problem behavior. PBS is the integration of (a) valued outcomes, (b) science of human behavior, (c) validated procedures, and (d) systems change" *(OSEP).*

A system of positive behavior supports is a comprehensive set of strategies that includes social skill training, academic and curricular restructuring, proactive management, individual behavior interventions, and parent training.

...a new positive model that stresses personal competence and environmental integrity.

- E.G. Carr et al, 1991

Positive behavior is that set of skills that increases the likelihood of success and personal satisfaction for children and youth in academic, work, social, recreational, community, and family settings. ***Support*** includes both the educational methods for teaching and strengthening positive behavior and the systems change methods that provide opportunities to display it (Carr, et al, 2001).

The Context for PBS

PBS applies a behaviorally-based systems approach to help schools, families, and communities design environments that improve the link between research-based practices and the environments where the teaching and learning of pro-social behavior occurs. PBS focuses on teaching as a central behavior change tool, replacing coercion with environmental redesign to achieve durable and meaningful change in the behavior of students (Sugai and Horner, et al, 2000).

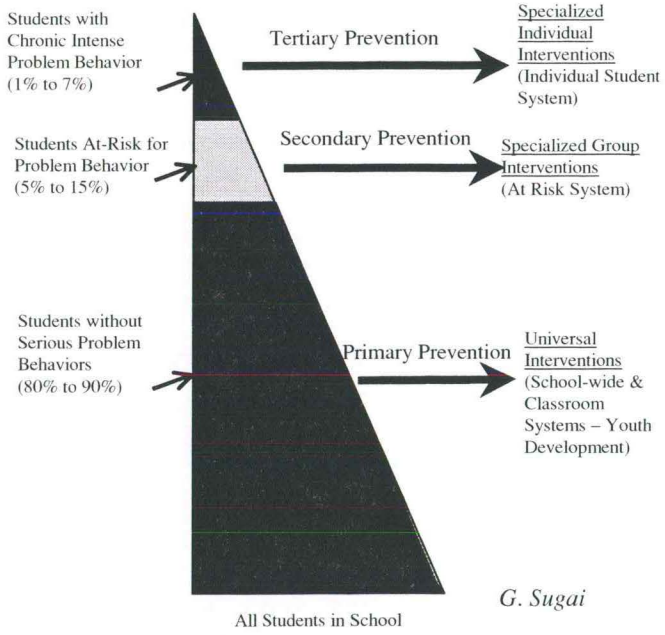
The growing diversity of our student bodies, including greater behavior difficulties coupled with increased pressure on schools with limited resources to improve students' academic achievement, creates a major and persistent challenge. For some time, schools have engaged in an array of practices and procedures designed to address behavioral challenges. When these practices are ineffective, schools drop them and move on to the latest fad. The problem is we have been unable to create the "contextual fit" between the problem behavior and the features of the environments where the problem behavior occurs (classroom, playground, home, neighborhood). The systemic

solution is to create "host environments" that support the use of effective evidence-based practices.

> **"The sexy part is the practices. The durable part is the system. We need to focus on the system to get enduring change."**
>
> *- R.H. Horner*

A Continuum of Positive Behavioral Support

A systems approach to PBS provides a continuum of team-based, proactive behavioral support at three levels: 1) primary prevention – (reduction of new cases of problem behavior); 2) secondary prevention – (reduction in the number of existing problem behaviors); 3) tertiary prevention – (reduction in complexity and intensity of current problem behaviors). PBS attends to the *policies* (e.g., discipline and procedural handbooks); structures (e.g. behavioral support teams); and routines (e.g., opportunities for students to learn appropriate behavior, staff development, data-based decision-making) that permit the adoption, implementation, and monitoring of evidence-based practices, creating a school culture of behavioral competence.



PBS procedures emphasize:

- assessment before intervention, whether the intervention is targeted at the system or an individual;
- changing environmental factors that contribute to and sustain problem behaviors;
- development of new personal and social skills that make engaging in the problem behavior irrelevant;
- redesign of the rewards and consequences that maintain behavior to foster the display of appropriate and effective social and behavioral skills; and
- the use of data collection and analysis to inform decision-making.

Educators should collect a variety of data (e.g., office discipline referrals, attendance and tardy records, academic progress) using a variety of methods (e.g., record reviews, interviews, observation) from a variety of sources (e.g., students, family members, school personnel, and community members). PBS provides guidance in the use of these measures to assess the effectiveness of the practices being implemented to ameliorate a particular problem situation.

PBS and Discipline Provisions of IDEA '97

Amendments made in 1997 to the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Act) require teams charged with the development of individualized education programs (IEPs) to conduct functional behavioral assessments and develop positive behavioral intervention plans and supports for students with disabilities whose behavior interferes with their own learning and that of others and/or may require disciplinary action. Although the provisions of the act do not define what is meant by "functional behavioral assessment" and "positive behavioral intervention plans," the evidence-based practices of PBS address and appear to meet the intent of this law.

Summary

PBS is an effective, evidence-based approach for schools to identify and organize their behavior policies, procedures, and practices. The PBS approach offers schools, families, and communities a process to address needed changes for systems as well as individuals. The process is based on an established body of applied behavioral research that attends to important quality of life results. It works from a systems perspective, and gives priority to research-based practices. Schools that engage in this work can approach the full spectrum of challenging student behaviors, and provide important learning opportunities to develop the personal and social skills of all students. A team in each area education agency in Iowa is trained to assist schools that wish to adopt Positive Behavioral Supports as an approach to their work with social, emotional, intellectual, and behavioral development.

Learn More About It:

- **Web sites:**
  - OSEP Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) – http://www.pbis.org
  - Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice (CECP) – http://www.cecp.org
- **In this Handbook:** See additional briefs in this handbook on *Youth Development, School-Wide Discipline, Risk-Focused Intervention, Early Intervention, Wrap Around,* and *Discipline Provisions of IDEA.* For information beyond the scope of this handbook, see the Resources Section.

Information Brief

Environmental Design: The Physical Environment & School Safety

The physical environment is an important element in the overall safety of a school, contributes significantly to the school's climate, and is a crucial supportive factor in teaching and learning.

CRITICAL ELEMENT ADDRESSED:
Districts and schools ensure that safe, welcoming, accessible physical environments, inviting and conducive to learning, are provided.

INTRODUCTION

Research has shown a direct relationship between the design and use of school facilities and the occurrence of unacceptable and criminal behaviors (*Safe Schools Facilities Planner*, 1998). Good environmental design improves the perception of a school's safety and creates an environment for positive social interaction.

The physical environment can have a dramatic effect on our feelings, behavior, and the way that we view the behavior of others. The design, form, arrangement, and use of buildings and open spaces can either encourage or discourage disruptive and violent behavior. Because of this relationship between environmental design and student behavior, it is wise to examine a school's environment and to modify it in order to increase the likelihood that inappropriate behavior will be diminished.

A well-designed environment can preclude the need to turn a school into a fortress of metal detectors and surveillance cameras. As a matter of fact, such a fortress-like atmosphere can only increase the perception that the school is unsafe. On the other hand, a safe physical environment can optimize the opportunity for students to succeed academically and socially.

"The design and use of the environment directly affects human behavior, which, in turn, influences both fear of crime and opportunities for crime and ultimately affects the quality of life."

- C. Ray Jeffrey

FACTORS THAT AFFECT SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

A school's architecture can contribute greatly to the creation of a safe school environment. The effect on school climate and the overall process of education made by the design, construction, and maintenance of school facilities should not be underestimated. Naturally occurring features of terrain also provide opportunities to enhance safety.

In addition to the architectural design of school facilities and features of the landscape that surrounds these facilities, other features of the physical learning environment also impact on student behavior and learning. These include: the organization and use of space, interior decorating, furnishings, and time.

ENVIRONMENTAL AUDITS

A number of instruments (including the one in the "Crisis Management" section of this handbook) are available to school personnel to gather information on the current status of their school environment. Involving students in the conduct and analysis of an audit and the design of solutions to problems increases their sense of pride and ownership in their school. Once the results of the audit are known, simple solutions can often make major differences in the overall climate of safety and learning in schools. In many instances, the problem and solution are obvious, but have gone unnoticed. The structured nature of a formalized audit can change this.

CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN (CPTED)

Researcher C. Ray Jeffrey coined the term Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) in his book written in 1971. This concept denoted the "proper design and effective use of the built environment that can lead to a reduction in the fear and incidence of crime, and an improvement in the quality of life" (*Designing Safer Communities,* 1997).

CPTED is based on three principles: access control, surveillance, and territoriality. Stan and Sherry Carter adapted CPTED for use in school settings. As part of this adaptation, they added three principles: physical maintenance, order maintenance, and activity support. For each of these six principles, the Carters describe three categories of strategies: natural, organized, and mechanical. When these are combined in the most advantageous design to solve or prevent a safety problem, they create a safe environment for the entire school community. Many schools turn first to the mechanical strategies, sometimes called target hardening. These include the use of metal detectors and surveillance cameras. Yet, these measures may be more extreme than is necessary. Implementation of

natural strategies is less costly, less obtrusive, and less apt to create a prison-like atmosphere in the school.

Access Control deals with the access to a school campus by students and non-students and addresses the perimeters of school grounds, the entrances and exits to school buildings, and the direction of traffic flows. Landscaping, "wayfinding" systems, signage, control of entrance and exits, fencing, landscaping, lighting, supervision of parking lots and athletic facilities, and policies limiting hours of access are examples of natural access controls. Placing receptionists at key areas provides both opportunities to screen visitors who enter a building as well as surveillance of the activities of students and visitors. Automatic closing devices on gates, locks, and key cards are strategies for target hardening by mechanical means.

Surveillance strategies bring vigilance and necessary supervision to the high risk and remote spaces of a school building. Creating a school site with all areas highly visible and increasing the number of staff in an area can drastically reduce the opportunity for vandalism, theft and physical harm. Stairs and hallways, windows and large assembly areas can be strategically placed for ease of visibility by staff. Lighting enhances visibility. Staffing policy should be designed to expect teachers and all school staff to stand outside classrooms during passing times. Activities can be intentionally planned to take place in the more visible locations of the school grounds. Informal student gathering spaces within sight of adult supervision prevent illicit activities from occurring in off limit areas. Surveillance cameras may be included as target hardening strategies. Interestingly, the Las Vegas Unified School District has one of the most sophisticated and best managed surveillance systems of any public school program in the United States, thanks to the consultative advice of security specialists from local casinos (*Safe Schools Facilities Planner*, 1998).

Territoriality is the use of design elements to delineate public and private space to create a sense of ownership of that space and to send "hands off" messages to potential offenders. People will care for, protect, and respect spaces for which they feel responsible and with which they have identity. Placement of physical features can define a territory. Among these may be student art, landscaping, fencing, and pavement treatments that signal pride and define spheres of influence.

Signage that guides visitors, students and staff to their destinations in the school facility communicates welcome, eliminates confusion, and controls access to private offices within the building. Signs also play an important role in communicating the expectations of the environmental design. Strategic placement of signs, entrances, fencing and landscaping helps to guide users to and from their activities in an orderly manner. Maps provide orientation to those new to the facility. Placing the offices of those in authority in easily accessible and visible locations increases security and facilitates surveillance and communication.

Physical Maintenance of a building is essential. When a school environment is kept clean and in good repair, the system runs smoothly, creating a safe and comfortable place of learning. Timely repair of damaged or worn features lessens work at a later date. Making maintenance a shared responsibility of students, school staff, and maintenance personnel and supporting it with commitment and resources by the school's administrator enhances the sense of ownership and pride. It also decreases instances of vandalism. Having clear and enforceable sanctions for damaging school property also reduces vandalism.

While landscaping provides good control of foot traffic and creates a pleasing environment, low-maintenance plant materials make the job of upkeep more manageable. Campus clean-up days provide an opportunity for the participation of students and staff in trash and litter removal. A good date to schedule an all-school campus clean up and appreciation of our environment is Earth Day in April.

Order Maintenance contributes to a safe learning environment when expectations of acceptable behavior are made clear in the environmental design. Surfaces can be designed to resist permanent graffiti and measures can be taken to control the incidences of graffiti. A response system should be developed that provides access to an authority figure for assistance.

Activity Support is the planning and strategic placement of physical education and recreational activities to enhance opportunities for natural surveillance, supervision, informal access control, and territoriality. Adjacent residential or commercial neighbors can be used to increase casual surveillance of hard-to-see areas on your school campus. Encourage staff to take a walk or drive around the grounds as part of their daily routines. Enlist the support of parent volunteers to help monitor the campus, and equip them with direct means of communication to assistance.

> ***"No greater challenge exists today than creating safe schools. Restoring our schools to tranquil and safe places of learning requires a major strategic commitment."***
>
> *- Ronald D. Stephens, Executive Director, National School Safety Center*

OTHER FACTORS IN THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

When we think of the environmental design of a safe school, we must think about more than the physical architecture of the school. Other factors combine to create an environment that fosters prosocial behavior. Among the factors proven to have impact on student conduct are wall color; lighting; windows; noise

control; furniture arrangement, style, and student fit; ventilation; and temperature.

SUMMARY

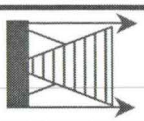
Providing a safe and nurturing school environment for all students is the common goal among school administrators. Today, they are faced with the fact that a violent situation could occur in their district at some time, and they need to be prepared with intervention procedures. Although crime in schools is on the decline, crises involving sudden violence in schools are traumatic because they are so unexpected.

The physical environment provides additional opportunities to create and maintain a school setting that gives students the opportunity to learn and grow. Creating safe spaces for learning can be as complicated as starting from the ground up or as easy as simply making your staff aware of the physical boundaries, limitations and advantages offered by your particular school setting.

The safety of our schools has to take priority in order to generate the setting in which students can flourish both academically and socially. It takes the cooperation of parents, schools, and community leaders to produce and implement plans to end the violence and create a safe and nurturing school environment.

LEARN MORE ABOUT IT:

- **Web sites:**
  - The Appropriate and Effective Use of Security Technologies in U.S. Schools: A Guide for Schools and Law Enforcement Agencies. National Institute of Justice. http://www.ncjrs.org/school/state.html
  - Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED): http://www.arch.vt.edu/crimeprev/
  - Carter and Carter Associates: http://www.cccpted.com
- **In this Handbook:** See "*Success4* Critical Elements" and articles on *Violence Prevention, Safe Schools,* and *School-Wide Discipline.* In other sections of the manual, please refer to *Early Warning, Timely Response, Safeguarding Our Children: An Action Guide*, and the *Crisis Management Planning* section. For information beyond the scope of this handbook, see the Resources Section.



Information Brief

Positive Youth Development

Positive youth development is the first category for program development and implementation along the Continuum of Programs and Services. It is for all youth (ages 6-21). The underlying assumption of youth development programming is that healthy communities will nurture and support healthy families and individuals. The way to improve the lives of youth is to improve the schools and communities where they live. This represents a substantial conceptual shift from thinking that youth problems are primary barriers to youth development to thinking that youth development is the most effective approach to prevention of youth problems (Positive Youth Development in the United States, 1999). Positive youth development focuses on the strengths and assets of youth, their families, and communities. It views youth holistically and for what they can contribute, rather than for what we do for them.

Introduction

A youth development approach shifts the focus away from youth problems and categorical youth programs, to a holistic, positive approach fostering the healthy development of all youth. While not ignoring youth problems, youth development focuses on growth and is based on the principle that many youth problems are interrelated and best addressed through comprehensive and proactive strategies that engage youth in positive ways.

> **"Young people's development is a given; the direction it will take, however, is not."**
>
> *- FYSB Update*

Positive Youth Development – What Is It?

The Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development* defines youth development as "the ongoing growth process in which all youth strive to: 1) meet the basic personal and social needs to feel cared for and to be safe, valued, useful, and spiritually grounded and 2) build character, skills and competencies that permit functioning and contribution in daily life."

To become socially, emotionally, intellectually and behaviorally healthy and productive adults, youth must develop the attitudes, behaviors, competencies, and skills that allow them to succeed as parents, citizens, and workers. Without these attributes, youth may be at risk for a variety of problem behaviors: violence, teen pregnancy, substance abuse, and dropping out of school.

One of the activities of the Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development has been the creation of an Iowa Youth Development Results Framework. This framework identifies five broad youth-related outcomes that cross system lines and provide a unifying structure for collaboration among youth-serving agencies. The five result areas are:

1) Families are secure and supportive.
2) Communities and schools are safe and supportive.
3) Youth are engaged in and contribute to the community.
4) Youth are healthy and socially competent.
5) Youth are successful in school and prepared for a productive adulthood.

The framework delineates the common results toward which multiple state and local agencies are working.

A Major Shift

Youth development represents a major cultural shift in policies and practices. The table below illustrates that shift (*NGA Issue Brief*, July 2000):

Remediation	→	Prevention
Targeted Programs	→	Universal Programs
Deficit-focused	→	Asset-based
Single Problem Solutions	→	Holistic, Universal Approach
1-Agency, 1-Discipline	→	Interagency/Interdisciplinary

Positive Youth Development Programs

Increasingly, society views youth development as the responsibility of the entire community, including schools. Effective youth development strategies engage youth and their families with schools, the faith community, juvenile justice, child welfare and other youth-serving institutions. Youth development strategies also focus on strengthening the capacity of schools and their communities to better engage and support young people.

Comprehensiveness is an essential characteristic of effective youth development programs. A recent study defined positive youth development programs as those that seek to achieve objectives in one or more of the following areas:

* *The Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development (ICY) is an interagency initiative designed to align state policies and programs and to encourage collaboration among multiple state and community agencies on youth-related issues.*

- **Competence:** The positive youth development construct of competence covers five (5) areas of youth functioning: social, emotional, intellectual /cognitive, behavioral, and moral. Programs build specific skills in these areas.
  - **Social –** the range of interpersonal skills that help youth integrate feeling, thinking, and actions to achieve specific interpersonal and social goals. Assertiveness, refusal and resistance skills, conflict resolution, and social skills are examples of competencies. Programs that promote social competence seek to strengthen relational skills by providing training, and practice of developmentally appropriate interpersonal skills and their application to specific, relevant situations.
  - **Emotional –** the ability to identify and respond to feelings and emotional reactions in oneself and others. Programs that foster self-awareness, persistence, motivation, impulse control, self-control, and/or empathy promote emotional competence.
  - **Intellectual/Cognitive –** the ability to develop and apply the cognitive processes of self-talk, self-awareness, the reading and interpretation of social cues and the understanding of the perspectives of others, the steps of problem solving and decision-making, understanding behavioral norms, and a positive attitude toward life. Although academic competence is a part of the intellectual/cognitive construct, it is beyond the scope of this document so will not be discussed here. Programs that promote intellectual/cognitive competence include the teaching of logical and analytical thinking, planning, goal-setting, decision-making, problem solving, and self-talk skills.

> **"Problem-free is not fully prepared."**
> *- Pittman, 1991*

  - **Behavioral –** refers to taking effective action. Programs that teach skills and provide reinforcement for effective behavior choices and action patterns, including verbal and non-verbal strategies, can promote behavioral competence. Strategies that reward, recognize, or reinforce students' pro-social behaviors are part of this programming.
  - **Moral -** the ability to assess and respond to the ethical, affective, or social justice dimensions of a situation. Those programs that promote moral competence focus on the development of empathy, respect for rules and standards – cultural and societal, a sense of right and wrong, or a sense of moral or social justice.
- **Bonding:** the emotional attachment and commitment youth make to social relationships in the family, peer group, school, community, and culture that are critical to development of their capacity for motivated behavior and adaptive responses to change and growth into functional adults. Programs promoting bonding focus on developing relationships between youth and healthy adults, positive peers, school and community. Adult and peer mentoring are examples of such programs.
- **Resilience:** an individual's capacity to make healthy and flexible adaptations to change and stressful incidences. Programs that foster resilience build protective factors/assets into the environments of youth.
  - **Spirituality –** Spiritual development lies largely in the domain of the faith community and thus is beyond the scope of this paper. Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning that the literature indicates that religiosity is positively associated with pro-social values and behaviors and negatively related to suicide, substance abuse, premature sexual involvement, and delinquency.
  - **Self-Efficacy -** the perception that one can achieve desired goals through one's own actions. Programs that empower or increase autonomy, or that provide for personal goal-setting, coping and mastery skills, or techniques to change self-deprecation to self-affirmation foster self-efficacy. Efforts made to ensure that students experience personal, social, and academic success contribute greatly to the development of self-efficacy.
  - **Self-Determination: –** the ability to think for oneself and to take action consistent with that thought. Programs intended to increase youth's autonomy, capacity for empowerment, independent thinking, self-advocacy, and/or their ability to live or grow by self-established internal standards and values foster self-determination. Youth leadership/youth involvement programs foster the development of self-determination skills.
  - **Clear and Positive Identity -** the internal organization of a coherent sense of self – by gender, culture and social status. Programs in this area develop cultural competence and facilitate and support a youth's healthy identity formation and achievement, including identity with a social or cultural sub-group.
  - **Belief in the Future –** the internalization of hope and optimism about the future. School-to-work programs, programs that link with institutions of higher education, etc., can influence students' belief in their future potential, goals, options, choices, or long range hopes and plans.

- **Pro-social Involvement:** participation by youth in events and activities across social environments. Programs that provide for pro-social involvement ensure that youth have the opportunity to interact with positively oriented peers and make contribution to others – their family, school, neighborhood, peers, or larger community. Service peers, or larger community. Service learning, volunteering, scouting, and after-school programs are examples.
- **Pro-social Norms:** programs that foster pro-social norms encourage and support youth to adopt healthy, pro-social lifestyles. Such programs provide students with information about commonly accepted behaviors and encourage them to make commitments in the presence of peers or mentors, for example, to attend or stay in school, remain substance-free, identify and seek to achieve personal goals, etc.

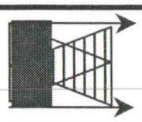
SUMMARY

Schools play an important role in the positive development of youth. All children and youth benefit when schools assume this orientation to their work with them. Many youth development programs naturally fit into the daily routines of schools. What better environment to foster healthy social, emotional, intellectual, and behavioral development; to form meaningful relationships with youth that create bonds with positive adults; to provide opportunities for youth leadership and involvement in meaningful roles in the design, delivery, governance and evaluation of programs that impact them; to provide a training and practice ground for the development of pro-social behavior; to engage youth in service to others; and to foster the development of attitudes and skills that enhance youths' sense of self-efficacy, belief in the future, and realization of a clear and positive identity? How easily schools without this orientation can either make no contribution to or unwittingly undermine the healthy development of youth, thereby exacerbating the degree to which they are put at risk.

Much of the literature emphasizes the need for multi-faceted, multi-year programs if lasting behavioral improvements are to be attained. Schools cannot do this job alone. Positive youth development can be accomplished only if it is carried out in collaboration with the youth, themselves, their families, and their communities.

LEARN MORE ABOUT IT:

- **Web sites:**
  - The Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development - http://www.icyd.org/
  - National Youth Development Information Center – http://www.nydic.org/
- **In this Handbook:** See additional briefs in this section on a selection of youth development programs, such as the *Continuum of Program and Services, Mentoring, Youth Involvement, Service-Learning,* and *Conflict Resolution.* For information beyond the scope of this handbook, see the Resources Section.



Information Brief

Resiliency

Did you ever wonder why some children raised in "good families" turn out to be "rotten apples"? Or conversely, why do some youngsters raised under the most adverse circumstances grow up problem free and become successful? Some children are just more resilient than others. That is, they have an inner strength that permits them to inhibit problem behavior when in the presence of risk. Studies have identified the specific assets, or protective factors, that contribute to a youngster's resilience. An understanding of its nature and the strategies that help build resiliency into the lives of our children is very useful as schools join with families and communities to develop socially, emotionally, and behaviorally healthy children and youth.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS ADDRESSED: *Skillful, non-judgmental adults treat students with dignity and respect, using a positive, caring manner.*

- *Positive peer relationships are fostered in an environment that promotes them in the classrooms, in common areas of the school, at school-sponsored activities, and in the community.*
- *Positive and trusting relationships among the adults create an environment of psychological safety for risk taking and experimentation and provide models of appropriate interpersonal behavior.*
- *The school attends to issues of diversity by recognizing and capitalizing on the assets of students and acknowledging their individual differences.*

We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future.
- Franklin D. Roosevelt

INTRODUCTION

Between one-half and two-thirds of all children growing up in families with mentally ill, alcoholic, abusive or criminally involved parents grow up to lead productive lives (ERIC/EECE Newsletter, volume 7, no. 2, Fall 1995). These children could be described as being resilient. They possess the capacity for well being and the ability for healthy transformation and change when faced with overwhelming obstacles.

Linquanti (1992) defines resiliency as that "quality in children who, though exposed to significant stress and adversity in their lives, do not succumb to the school failure, substance abuse, mental health, and juvenile delinquency problems they are at greater risk of experiencing." Resilience, then, is an interaction between the characteristics of the individual and the environment. What makes a student "resilient" is the relative strength of individual characteristics and external protective processes compared to the influence of risks and vulnerabilities in the environment. In order to foster resilience, researchers and practitioners look to its correlates in the form of protective processes within and around individuals over which we have influence.

Whether we believe that most of us are born with a potential for resilience or that resiliency can develop as a result of adversity, we can describe certain qualities common to resilient youth, and administrators can support an environment in their schools that allows all children to exercise resilient tendencies.

At each stage of my life, no matter where I was, I always managed to have one meaningful relationship with an adult — a teacher, a coach, and a Boys and Girls Club counselor. It let me know that someone cared about me. A child can do about anything if the child feels loved and significant in some way.
- Resilient Youth

WHAT COMMON CHARACTERISTICS DO RESILIENT CHILDREN POSSESS?

Children who have exhibited an ability to overcome adversity prove themselves competent in social situations. They are responsive to the needs and wants of others, flexible regardless of routine, show empathy toward those in need, are able to communicate well and exhibit a sense of humor.

According to Bonnie Bernard, author of *Fostering Resiliency in Kids: Protective Factors in the Family, School, and Community* (1991), our innate capacity for resilience allows for the development of:

1. **Social competence:** responsiveness, flexibility, caring and empathy, communication skills and a sense of humor;
2. **Problem-solving skills:** the ability to plan, to be resourceful in seeking help from others, to think creatively, critically and reflectively;

3. **Critical consciousness:** a reflective awareness of the structures of oppression;
4. **Autonomy:** having a sense of one's own identity and an ability to act independently and to exert some control over one's environment, including a sense of task mastery, internal locus of control, and self-efficacy;
5. **Sense of purpose:** a belief in a bright future, including goal direction, educational aspirations, achievement motivation, persistence, optimism, hopefulness, and a sense of being spiritually connected.

Resilient youth are optimistic about their lives and manifest a sense of purpose, which allows them to gain some control over their own environment. They are self-disciplined and recognize their own strengths while seeing their mistakes as learning experiences.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE PROVIDED TO FOSTER RESILIENCY IN YOUTH?

While we often recognize resiliency in youth confronted with at-risk situations, all children will benefit from a school environment that strengthens resilient qualities. Resilient youths believe that they have adults in their lives that are available for support and encouragement. Relationships with caring adults foster positive attitudes and support academic achievement as well as nurturing social competence.

Instilling these positive feelings in students will not result from pep talks or positive image assemblies, but, rather, from planned educational experiences. Simply put, we must structure opportunities into each child's daily routine that will enable him or her to experience feelings of competence, belonging, usefulness, potency, and optimism.

- Richard Sagor, Washington State University

Specific experiences in the classroom aimed at boosting resilient tendencies will provide youth with evidence of academic competence, a sense of belonging, proof of their contributions to the community and a feeling of empowerment. Administrators can best support resilience in youth by setting high expectations for all students and providing opportunities for meaningful participation in school activities.

How can schools create an environment that fosters resiliency in youth?

Services, Strategies and Suggested Training:

- Identify staff members who are willing to develop appropriate activities surrounding the theme of resiliency for all students. Ask the faculty to brainstorm practices that have the potential for building resiliency.
- Begin your efforts with those teachers who volunteer — implementation will be much more successful, causing other teachers to want to be involved.
- Encourage parents, staff and faculty to identify and encourage each student's individual areas or strength or talent. Allow and enable students to use these talents in the service of others, thus providing an opportunity for the student to discover his or her own strengths and talents.
- Team students with a caring adult, whether it be a volunteering teacher or a community member, who can help them with their academic, social and emotional performance within the school setting.
- Develop partnerships with area colleges, universities, education agencies and health institutions to find the best ways to get families involved in the process.
- Focus on the students' strengths and how to better develop these qualities. In the classroom, prevention strategies can be incorporated that focus on building strengths that are recognized in youth. Such programs include youth courts, mentoring, service-learning, law-related education, and other academic programs that nurture a resiliency attitude.
- Communicate high expectations for all youth and provide support for academic success. Schools that successfully demonstrate to students their individual strengths have higher rates of academic success, as well as lower rates of problem behaviors such as dropping out, drug abuse and teen pregnancy.

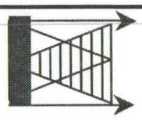
- ERIC/EECE Newsletter, volume 7, no. 2, Fall 1995

SUMMARY

Although we may or may not be born with a predisposition for resiliency, administrators can provide the basis for a school environment that nurtures resiliency in all youth. Building resiliency in students need not take substantial time from teachers' hectic schedules, and many techniques are likely already part of the teachers' repertoires. Feelings of optimism and belonging are a direct result of authentic experiences. Infusing the classroom with resiliency-building experiences can have a profound impact on students' self images.

LEARN MORE ABOUT IT:

- **Web sites:**
  - Resiliency in Action: www.resiliency.com/recent.html
  - The Child and Family Resiliency Research Programme: www.quasar.ualberta.ca/cfrrp/cfrrp.html
  - National Network for Family Resiliency: www.nnfr.org
- **In this Handbook:** See "*Success4* Critical Elements" and articles on *Youth Leadership/Youth Empowerment, Character Education, and Service-Learning*. For information beyond the scope of this handbook, see the Resources Section.



Information Brief

Character Education

In response to recent incidents of violence in schools across the country and appeals from our nation's citizens to achieve greater civility in our society – in the schools, in the workplace, in our homes, and in our communities - character education has taken a front seat in schools as a way to address these aspirations. The development of character is a critical aspect of healthy development for all children and youth and one in which young people themselves along with their schools, families, and communities all have a role to play. Although there are many models of character education available for use by schools, good programs adhere to a specific set of fundamental principles.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS ADDRESSED:

- *The school is a caring, respectful, encouraging community.*
- *A written school improvement plan that includes provisions for fostering students' social, emotional, intellectual, and behavioral development is in place and is reviewed annually.*
- *School staff, families and community develop, communicate, and support clearly defined, appropriate high behavioral expectations.*
- *An engaging curriculum is implemented that addresses social, emotional, intellectual, and behavioral development and aligns with the district's guiding principles, student learning goals and standards and benchmarks.*
- *A documented assessment system addresses student learning in social, emotional and behavioral as well as academic areas, is integrated with curriculum and instruction provides for monitoring over the course of instruction, and forms the basis for program improvement efforts.*
- *The school has a variety of programs and services intended to prevent or intervene early with students' social, emotional, and behavioral difficulties.*
- *Schools support families to be partners in their children's education.*
- *Community agencies/organizations, individuals and schools work together to provide and engage in asset-building activities that are known to be factors that contribute to success for children and youth in school and throughout life and that support families in their efforts to raise their children.*

INTRODUCTION

A parent's greatest hope is that their child will grow up to be a kind, caring adult. Teachers want to educate respectful and motivated students. Employers want to hire honest and productive workers. And, we all want to live in a society composed of people with good character. Schools of character support core values such as respect, responsibility, caring, and citizenship that form the moral fiber of our society. These core values also are the essence of the teaching that begins in our homes. Schools and families that understand and agree upon character traits that they value and who partner to support each other in the moral development of our children and youth can make a dramatic difference in the social, emotional, behavioral, and intellectual development of youth.

WHAT IS CHARACTER EDUCATION?

What It Is - Character development is the process of becoming ethical, responsible individuals. Character education provides our youth with skills needed for this to occur. It is a growing national movement that espouses the belief that the social, ethical, and emotional development of young people is as important as their academic development. Character education can be the vehicle for schools in partnership with families to foster the healthy character development of their students.

What It Is Not - Character education is not a program, curriculum, group of activities, class, or one more thing for teachers to do at school. It should not be an "add-on" program, but instead must be infused throughout a school's curriculum and culture. If done effectively, instead of adding to a teacher's workload, it will help create an environment and attitudes receptive to learning.

RATIONALE FOR INCLUSION

Public education in the United States was originally designed to serve three purposes: 1) to teach the general population to read, write, and count with the goal of creating individuals that would be successful in a free society; 2) to teach job skills so those individuals would have a means of earning a living and the ability to support their families; and 3) to educate the public on the ethical

principles of a democracy so that they understood their responsibilities as a member of that democratic system.

This third ideal has been all but lost as a result of fear of conflict between issues that historically divide church and state. To achieve the original intent of public education, schools need to have local conversations with their constituents (including youth) about ethics, values, and societal standards and to have those common ideals reflected in the curriculum, policies, and daily practices of the school system.

Various studies in recent years make clear that our nation worries about the character of our citizens and that we consider issues related to societal values and morals to be one of our priorities. A 1998 Gallup Poll found that Americans consider crime and violence; decline in ethics, morals, and family values; education; and drugs to be the four issues of greatest concern in society today.

One of the most striking pieces of current research appeared in the March 1999 issue of the *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine*. Researchers found that when teachers taught and managed their classrooms in ways that promoted bonding to school and provided children with skills for social interaction, students' behavior improved, as well as their academic achievement.

Researchers also found that full implementation of these strategies in elementary grades predicted positive effects on students' bonds to school, achievement, and school behavior through age 18. The more attention that is given to social and emotional development, the greater the benefits for students personally, socially, and academically.

What's happening with character education in Iowa?

Effective character education initiatives across the state have produced lower numbers of discipline referrals, incidents on buses, and fights between students. One Iowa elementary school lowered discipline referrals to the office from 387 to two in a three-year period. Another school reduced referrals from bus drivers by 95 percent over four years. Still another school found that they had less trouble getting and keeping substitute teachers because of change in the building climate. Some middle and high schools have focused on building character through sports and work to model good character at athletic events.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR CHARACTER EDUCATION?

Too often, educators don't believe that character education is their responsibility. They may feel insecure about their training in this area and believe that they are better off sticking to their subject area. Or, sometimes they are afraid to address values within their classroom for fear of repercussions from parents. Character education must be EVERYONES' job to ensure that messages about behavioral expectations are clear and consistent. These messages apply to all youth AND adults.

> ***"Parents and teachers must encourage young people to work hard academically and make right choices so that they may build meaningful lives and realize their dreams."***
> *- President George W. Bush*

An opportunity for youth involvement

Involving youth is key to the effectiveness of any character-building initiative. Too often in educational systems, we do things "for" students but not "with" students. Feeling connected to school promotes the asset of bonding to school that is so critical to healthy development. One way to connect students is to give them responsibility for the day-to-day functioning within a classroom, a building, or at an extracurricular activity. Teaching responsibility and giving students the freedom to set behavioral standards for their work environment not only offers the opportunity to practice the skill in a controlled environment, it also creates "teachable moments" that help students internalize the definition of responsibility.

STANDARDS FOR CHARACTER EDUCATION

A group of researchers and theorists have set national standards for character education programs and initiatives. These are summarized in the following principles: (Lickona, Schaps, and Lewis, Character Education Partnership). An effective character education program:

1. *Promotes core ethical values.* A school committed to character education explicitly names and publicly stands for the values of caring, honesty, fairness, responsibility, and respect for self and others.
2. *Defines character in terms of thinking, feeling, and behavior for each core value.* Character education helps all members of the learning community know what is good, value it, and act upon it.
3. *Requires an intentional, proactive and comprehensive approach that promotes core values in all aspects of school life core values.* Schools committed to character education see that everything that goes on in school affects students' character. They plan deliberate ways to develop character, and don't wait for opportunities to occur.
4. *Fosters a caring school community.* The school itself must embody good character and progress toward becoming a microcosm of a civil, caring, and just society.
5. *Provides students with opportunities for moral action.* Students need opportunities to apply values such as respect and responsibility in everyday interactions.

6. *Includes a meaningful and challenging academic curriculum that respects all learners and helps them succeed.* Students who succeed academically are more likely to feel valued and cared for as persons. Conversely, students who feel liked and respected by their teachers and peers are more likely to achieve academically.

7. *Strives to develop students' intrinsic motivation.* Students who develop good character are less likely to rely on rewards and punishments to control their behavior and more likely develop an internalized locus of control.

8. *Creates a learning and moral community where students and school staff adhere to the same core ethical values and share the responsibility for character education.* All school staff must be involved and share ownership in a school's character education effort.

> ***"The same values and norms that govern the life of students must govern the collective life of the adult members of the school community."***
> *- Lickona, Schaps, and Lewis, 2000*

9. *Requires moral leadership from both staff and students.* Leaders must champion the effort and ensure that long-range planning and program implementation occur.

10. *Requires full partnership with parents and community.* Parents are the primary educators of their children, and the community plays critical roles in promoting the core ethical values. No character education program will achieve full effectiveness without their involvement.

11. *Must be evaluated for effectiveness.* Schools should assess the staff as character educators, and the character of the school and the students.

SUMMARY

A civil society is dependent upon the healthy development of character in its citizens. This development begins in infancy and is a lifelong journey. The critical stages of early childhood and the school-age years are central to this development that begins in the home and is taught and reinforced in schools and communities. To support families, schools, and communities in this important work, a body of knowledge and strategies is available from the field of character education. When schools, families, and communities join one another to foster the healthy development of character in our young people, good things happen.

LEARN MORE ABOUT IT:

- **Web sites:**
  - *Success4:* http://www.state.ia.us/educate/programs/success4/index.html
  - Institute for Character Development: http://www.drake.edu/icd
  - Character Education Partnership: http://www.character.org
  - The Josephson Institute of Ethics: http://www.josephsoninstittute.org
- **In this Handbook:** See "*Success4* Critical Elements," and other articles in this section on *Positive Youth Development, Peer Group Strategies, Youth Leadership/Student Empowerment, and School-wide Discipline.* For information beyond the scope of this handbook, see the Resources Section.

Information Brief

Youth Leadership/Student Empowerment

Rarely in schools are youth leadership and involvement strategies used for the positive development of at-risk youth. Typically, students who already have shown potential for positive leadership and who exhibit those skills are the ones tapped for leadership roles in schools. Those same leaders are the ones most likely to be engaged in a wide array of school activities. However, current research indicates that the risk for young people to develop problem behaviors is reduced when they possess buffers that potentially protect them from, or make them resilient to, problem behaviors. Among these protective factors are the development of pro-social skills and formulation of an attachment to school. Teaching students leadership skills and involving them in decision-making are proven strategies in positive development, especially in the healthy development of those at-risk. The instructional tools are available. Are the interest in and commitment to the work available as well?

CRITICAL ELEMENT ADDRESSED: *The school is a caring, respectful, encouraging community.*

- *Indicator: Skillful, non-judgmental adults treat students with dignity and respect, using a positive, caring manner.*
- *Essential Practices: Seek, recognize, value, and celebrate the contributions of all students. The school attends to issues of diversity by recognizing and capitalizing on the assets of students and acknowledging their individual differences.*
- *Indicator: The school approaches social, emotional and behavioral development and learning opportunities from a strength perspective that identifies and builds on personal assets.*

INTRODUCTION

A national survey of adults in the United States reported that more than 60 percent did not think youth would make the country a better place to live, and 20 percent felt that they would make the country worse (Farkas, Johnson, Dugget and Bers, 1997). However, youth recognize and develop leadership qualities if welcomed and valued as partners in all aspects of community life and actively engaged in efforts aimed at social and community change. Adults sometimes perceive at-risk students, who make up more than 10 percent of the population (MacGregor, 1998), as being "disposable." When at-risk students and their advocates identify and put leadership qualities to use, the potential is more resilient students, stronger schools, and stronger communities.

> ***"What drives an at-risk student to take a leadership role of involvement? They will typically not be involved in planning a prom or running a bake sale. Leadership generally revolves around finding meaning in their own life, having an influence on the choices of their peers, finding ways to resolve conflict without fighting and having greater control of personal issues."***
>
> *- MacGregor, 1998*

Successful youth involvement depends on both youth and adults accepting responsibility for building positive relationships, respecting and valuing each other, and contributing to the community as citizens (Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development, June 2001). Many opportunities and experiences are available for youth to enhance their leadership potential and to exercise their leadership abilities.

Placing at-risk youth in positions of leadership and implementing programs that foster involvement in school issues are not always top priorities of adults. Adults often do not see leadership development as a primary option for prevention of at-risk behavior, and they avoid tapping into the leadership potential of high-risk youth. Yet when group decision-making processes involve at-risk students in leadership positions, the students are able to shed light on school issues from their own perspectives and they also can see that their opinions are valued. This leads them to make better choices when dealing with difficulties in school and in their own daily lives

DEFINING LEADERSHIP AND INVOLVEMENT

Youth, themselves, must define what leadership and involvement mean if they are to take active roles in school and community improvement. Youth who struggle each day to cope with life find it difficult to commit to school involvement and need to understand how being a leader will improve their lives. Asking youth to define leadership personally can identify the characteristics they perceive to be meaningful for leadership.

The National 4-H Council, in their booklet on the study *Youth in Decision Making,* stresses the benefits of including youth in positions of authority and leadership. These benefits also accrue when the school improvement planning process involves youth.

- ***Youth involvement becomes the expectation.*** An organization/school will see more youth willing to be involved in any group that has a youth governing it. When adult group members who are unwilling to

share power with young people leave the group, the group should replace them with individuals who accept youth participation in organizational decision-making.

- ***Young people clarify the organization's mission.*** Through formal and informal means, youth can become the keepers and protectors of the mission.
- ***Organizations become more connected and responsive to youth in the community.*** When youth are involved in planning, committees tend to be better able to match programming efforts to youth needs.
- ***Organizations place greater value on inclusivity and representation.*** Having youth involved in decision-making improves the representative nature of programs offered by the organization. Their focus on diversity and fairness tends to lead to policy changes and new conversations.
- ***Youth find the greatest purpose through direct action.*** Youth-infused organizations are highly likely to involve young people in advocacy, policy-making and service.

How can students be involved as leaders at school?

- Provide an environment where youth have the opportunity to demonstrate their leadership capabilities and where they are taken seriously.
- Be sensitive and understanding of at-risk youth's emerging leadership qualities — these students have not been "groomed" as leaders, as many have, and they are all too aware that they have not been marked as "leadership material" in the past.
- Lead a group "brainstorm" on the definition of leadership. This gives youth permission to set their own standards for leadership qualities.
- Leadership characteristics have the best chance to develop through activities which require everyone's participation — this provides students with opportunities to demonstrate what they have learned. As important as it is to teach a student to lead, it is equally important for that student to have the opportunity to lead others.
- Activities that may foster leadership and involvement include restoring parks, helping to prepare meals for those in need, painting murals to beautify school grounds, organizing after-school sports leagues, leading policy discussions in committee meetings and local debates to influence legislative issues relevant to their lives.

How can administrators promote student leadership?

Students develop a better understanding of school issues when they interact with staff, because they see the school from the staff's perspective. Administrators can foster student leadership in a variety of ways.

- Identify interested faculty and staff members who have influence with the students.
- Prepare staff to collaborate in school improvement before involving students in the process.
- Involve faculty, staff, students, and community members in the identification of students who may have influence with their peers.
- Establish guidelines for discussion of school issues.
- Organize groups of student leaders and adults to involve the student body in planning and implementing school improvement activities.
- Support efforts of these groups by allowing time for meetings and recognition of progress.

Involve Teens as Community Leaders

Developing youth interest in community improvement requires the involvement of influential adults and student leaders. When youth feel a strong sense of ownership of community projects, they are more likely to participate actively in seeing the project through.

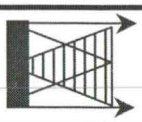
The potential of most at-risk students to make positive contributions to the community is typically overlooked or undervalued. For many at-risk teens, day-to-day survival is a way of life, and future planning doesn't extend past today. When adult mentors reach this group, teaching the teens leadership skills will help them to redesign their tactics for dealing with everyday life. As they see that they have control of their own circumstances, the community becomes more important in their plan and they can envision being an involved leader.

SUMMARY

Youth must develop an interest in the school or community they will serve. With adult guidance in a nurturing environment, youth leadership qualities will surface and have the chance to develop. For many youth the most important benefit they receive from seeing themselves and having others view them as leaders is the ability to stand up for what they believe. Because at-risk students are painfully aware that others expect them to fail, these students won't take risks to make a positive difference in their lives. This awareness also makes them very receptive to those who do genuinely believe in their abilities. When these youth are encouraged to develop their inner leadership abilities, the change in their outlook and the quality of their contribution is immeasurable.

LEARN MORE ABOUT IT

- **Web sites:**
  - Youth As Resources: www.yar.org
  - Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development: www.icyd.org
- **In this Handbook:** See "*Success4* Critical Elements," information briefs on *Youth Development, Frameworks, Resiliency*, and *Service-Learning*. For information beyond the scope of this handbook, refer to the Resources Section.



Information Brief

Service-Learning

"Alienated," "isolated," and "disaffected" are terms that have been used to describe youth who display violent behavior. Youth who become violent often feel that they don't belong, that no one cares about them, and that they don't matter. Researchers have established a link between youth violence and a lack of youths' connection to their schools and communities. Service-learning is a strategy that can help youth feel more engaged.

CRITICAL ELEMENT ADDRESSED: *School staff, families, and community develop, communicate, and support clearly defined, appropriate high behavioral expectations. School-wide proactive discipline plans that promote respectful, responsible behavior are developed and implemented by all key stakeholders.*

INTRODUCTION

Service-Learning is a "way to involve young people in learning through participation in thoughtfully organized service that meets real community need" (National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993). Service-Learning allows those involved to see, first-hand, the value of learning through experience, applying academics to the service of others and reflecting on what has been accomplished.

By being involved in Service-Learning, students have the opportunity to apply what they learn in the traditional classroom to the service of others. They can see their academic study put to use in the *real world*, giving meaning not only to the act of contributing to the community, but to continuing their academic studies, as well.

HOW CAN SERVICE-LEARNING IMPACT ON SCHOOL VIOLENCE?

Research indicates that allowing youth to contribute through community service, lead social change, develop marketable skills, and build ongoing relationships with caring adults has a positive impact on the development of assets or protective factors. These assets buffer students from problem behaviors, including violence, and reduce the disengagement and sense of alienation that put youth at risk. Service-Learning can make a significant contribution to the lives of youth, especially youth at-risk.

WHAT CHARACTERIZES SERVICE-LEARNING?

Service-Learning engages students, educators and community in the planning and execution of the project chosen. Overseen by educators, administrators, and involved community members, students generate ideas for projects. This process illustrates the reciprocal relationship in which the *service* reinforces the learning and the *learning* strengthens the service. Service-Learning provides for a structured time in which students reflect on their service and learning experiences. Teachers award credit for learning, not for the number of hours of service provided.

WHAT EFFECT DOES SERVICE-LEARNING HAVE ON THE SCHOOL?

Service-Learning creates an environment where the students, teachers and administrators have to work with an open line of communication in order to succeed. The cooperation of each component is necessary to set goals, designate responsibilities, and create a strategic plan.

HOW DOES SERVICE-LEARNING AFFECT THE COMMUNITY?

Service-Learning is reciprocally beneficial to both students and the community. Students become an active part of the community as they work toward a common goal with community members. Their efforts provide a much-needed extension of resource, addressing and meeting local needs by providing thousands of hours of service to people in need, non-profit agencies, private sector companies, non-governmental and governmental agencies in the areas of education, public safety, human service and the environment.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF SERVICE-LEARNING TO THE STUDENT?

Evaluations show that service-learning has a strong impact on both academic learning and citizenship. In a national study conducted by the Corporation for National Service, for example, students scored higher on four measures of academic importance: grades, grade point averages in core subjects, engagement in school, and education aspirations (E.C.S., 1999).

In addition, students learn through experience that being of service to others is a worthwhile, lifelong endeavor. By viewing each service activity *from the inside*, they can incorporate service into their daily lives. Service-Learning helps the students put into perspective the real purpose of what they learn in school by giving them the opportunity to use real skills to answer a need in the community.

- Elementary students develop understanding and build friendships across the generations while visiting a convalescent home.
- Third-grade students learn mathematics, chemistry and ecology as they sponsor an aluminum can drive to raise funds to buy and plant trees in the community.
- Middle school students develop graphing skills as they study rural and urban nutritional data.
- Middle school students add to their own understanding of government as they tutor immigrants in U.S. history in order to help them pass the citizenship test.
- High school students apply mathematics, physics and vocational skills while designing and building low-income housing.
- High school students study ecosystems as they work with the Department of Natural Resources to reclaim a dump site and construct a nature trail.

How can we implement a Service-Learning program in our school and community?

Prepare by laying the groundwork for integrating Service-learning projects into the school curriculum.

- Train the participants.
- Identify a school or community-based need.
- Research the need.
- Choose a specific project.
- Design the action plan for that project.

Take Action by implementing the plan. This can take more than one direction:

- Develop a new Service-Learning project. For example, set up a Reading Buddies program with a senior citizen center.
- Support an existing plan such as protecting deteriorating rain forest or prairie, contributing to food pantry or clothing drives.
- Engage in social action by modeling democratic participation in public issues and decision making.

Reflect on the results of the student's project and the correlation between the service and learning components.

- Before: What needs do we have in our community and how can we make a difference in these areas?
- During: How is our project progressing and what might we change to improve upon it?
- After: What did we learn and how can we share this with others? Where do we go from here?

Celebrate by recognizing youth as a valuable part of the community. Renew the commitment to service and thank community leaders and participants.

Summary

Service-Learning creates a partnership that benefits all participants involved. By motivating students to make a difference in their communities, Service-Learning gives students a clear picture of the importance of their classroom activities. As students increase their academic skills, they unknowingly develop empathy, self-esteem, social awareness and responsibility, and a sense of caring for others in their community. And the community, in turn, sees youth as active, compassionate and productive members of the community.

> ***The youth population has been misnamed the self-centered generation. There's a strong desire to serve others. The problem we face in America today is not a lack of willingness to serve others, but to find the appropriate outlet for this.***
>
> *- George Gallup*

Learn more about it:

- **Web sites:**
  - Iowa Department of Education, Service-Learning: www.state.ia.us/educate/sl
  - National Youth Leadership Council: *www.nylc.org*
- **In this Handbook:** See "*Success4* Critical Elements" and articles on *Positive Youth Development, Youth Leadership/Empowerment, Character Education, Resiliency, Frameworks,* and *After School Programs.*

Information Brief

Parent Involvement

Involvement of parents in the education of their children is critical to their children's success in school. Despite our awareness of the importance of this involvement, schools and families continue to struggle to establish meaningful communication, engage parents in the day-to-day life of the school, and achieve common ground given the diversity of the population in background, experience and thought. Nevertheless, schools continue to seek ways to improve their work with parents. The importance of this effort has never been more clear than it was as people sought answers to the "what might have been" questions raised by the tragic school shootings across our country.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS ADDRESSED:

- *Districts and schools, with families and community members, establish a philosophy and develop policies that recognize and support families as partners in their children's education.*
- *Families and schools communicate clearly and frequently with each other.*
- *Schools support families to be partners in their children's education.*
- *Families support their children's education.*
- *Schools provide families with opportunities for meaningful involvement in the school.*

INTRODUCTION

In the United States, schools today are attempting to increase parent involvement in order to strengthen the bonds between home and school. Although studies have rarely addressed the issue of parent involvement in schools as a deterrent to school violence, it is positively associated with student academic success, higher attendance rates, lower suspension rates, and the prevention of problem behaviors, including violence (Skiba and Strassell, 2000).

THE IMPACT OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Research on parenting has identified five parenting practices that are instrumental in the upbringing of well-adjusted children. They are:

1) Fair, consistent, and predictable discipline;
2) Parental monitoring and supervision of a child's activities, whereabouts, and peer associations;
3) Parent involvement in their children's lives in either structured or unstructured activities;
4) Positive parenting by establishing warm, caring relationships, mutual respect, and affection; and
5) Use of crisis intervention, conflict resolution and problem solving to deal with the minor crises that arise in children's lives.

-Walker, 2001

When parents teach their children positive attitudes toward school and perceive education as a highly valued activity, they help their children get a good start in school, thus enhancing their probability for academic achievement and healthy social development (Walker, 2001). Attendance rates have increased and suspension rates have decreased in schools implementing aggressive plans to involve parents in the process. One Iowa school reports an increase in attendance following improved communication with and involvement of parents in the development and implementation of stricter attendance rules. Increased parent involvement also has been shown to lead to greater teacher satisfaction, improved parent understanding and parent-child communication, and more successful and effective school programs (Skiba and Strassell, 2000).

Some programs focus their efforts on the parents of students with challenging behavior. One elementary school in California required parents of students at risk of expulsion to attend regular meetings to develop a solution regarding their child's behavior. Both parents and teachers rated the collabora-tive team approach as highly successful. Parent Management Training (PMT), teaching parents effective methods of behavior management to decrease their children's aggressive behavior, also has been used with families of students exhibiting aggressive or disruptive behavior (Skiba and Strassell, 2000).

> ***"We cannot bring out the best in children if we are not willing to give our best!"***
> *- Dr. Steve Edwards, Principal East Hartford (CN) H.S.*

Parent Involvement at School: Making it Work

When trying to involve parents in school activities, school administrators need to take into account the background of the parents. Parents may be uncomfortable participating at school because they, themselves, did not have good experiences there; the only communication about their child that they receive from school is negative; or they do not communicate well because of language barriers, or cultural and socio-economic differences.

Dr. Steven Edwards is the principal of East Hartford High School in Connecticut, an urban high school of 2100 with 72 percent students of color and 40 languages spoken. He understood these issues when he rented an apartment in the projects where his students resided. There he could meet with their parents in surroundings where they were comfortable. Parent involvement increased in his school, and the focus on relationship building helped to eliminate expulsions, decrease suspensions by 50 percent, decrease the drop out rate by 3.5 percent, and improve standardized achievement test scores.

How can schools build trust with parents? Making an attempt to reach parents and to make their experiences at school meaningful and comfortable needs to be part of an overall goal to increase parent involvement. Some suggestions for improving relationships include the following:

- ***Clearly define parent involvement expectations.*** Are parents serving on committees? What might the responsibilities be? Are parents going to help in the classroom? What are they expected to do? How often? What hours of the day?
- ***Boost parents' feelings of involvement in important decisions and events concerning their child's school.*** When parents know that they have a part in decision-making, they take ownership of the school and take pride in its accomplishments.
- ***Convenience should be the order of the day.*** Many parents are not available during the day. Offer opportunities for involvement on weekends or evenings.
- ***Make parent involvement at school meaningful and worth the time parents invest at school.*** Center activities on the wants and needs of families. Include students and other siblings in your plans.
- ***Develop multiple ways that parents can be involved.*** Some parents may feel more comfortable if they can be involved by working on projects that fit their areas of expertise. By bringing their work talents to school, they are able to make an immediate connection.
- ***Extend the effort to involve parents that are the hardest to approach.*** Use every available resource. Make telephone calls. Send notices of involvement opportunities home with children. Mail letters. Ask other parents who may be close to the family to extend an invitation to school events. Some schools have been successful approaching parents through community activities and churches.

Training programs intended to improve the level of parent involvement in school are available to Iowa schools. Two of these programs focus on parent-child communication. *Strengthening Families,* developed by Iowa State University Extension, is one of the scientifically evaluated programs recognized as exemplary by the U.S. Department of Education. This program, designed for youth from 10-14 years of age and their parents, helps improve communication between parents and their children, helps parents set limits, and helps youth develop skills to resist peer pressure. *Parents as Teachers* provides numerous support contacts for both parents and staff.

Remarkable School-Home Partnerships is a third program available in Iowa that more directly targets relationships between parents and schools. This training helps schools convene conversations with parents and community members about things that matter. Participants explore possibilities for expanding parent and community involvement in school improvement efforts and build skills for effective communication.

Parent Involvement in School: Making Schools Safe

Increasingly, parents are asking to play a role in helping the school to become a safe place. Indeed they have an important contribution to make to the overall safety of the school beyond what they do to guide their own children from violent behavior. Recommended strategies for parent involvement in school safety issues are: 1) serving on an advisory body to counsel schools on matters of policy and the challenges of keeping the school safe; 2) advocate for parents to teach their children non-violent ways to deal with conflict: 3) advocate for securing weapons at home and gun safety instruction for families; and 4) make available to parents information on effective parenting practices and facilitate their access to training and support on effective parenting (Walker, 2001).

SUMMARY

Involvement with children's education begins at home when parents establish an environment where learning is valued, teach their children the social, emotional, and behavioral skills they will need to succeed in school, and show their children that their schoolwork is important. Involvement continues into the school when there is open communication among parents, children, and school, and parents are provided with a wide range of opportunities to participate in the daily life of their child there. Every school will be improved and the life of every child enhanced by the active involvement and support of parents in school.

LEARN MORE ABOUT IT:

- **Web sites:**
  - Partnership for Family Involvement in Education: http://pfie.ed.gov/
  - Strengthening Families: http://www.exnet.iastate.edu/Pages/families/SFP.html
- **Email:**
  - Remarkable Partnerships: beth-larson@home.com
  - Parents As Partners: higherplain@home.com
- **In this Handbook:** See "*Success4* Critical Elements," and other briefs in this section.

Information Brief

School-Wide Discipline

Littleton, Jonesboro, Paducah, Springfield, Santee – These are communities forever associated with shocking shootings of students by students. Everyone speculates on the cause of such horrendous behavior and how to prevent it. Suggestions for solutions range from turning schools into fortresses, to blaming but doing nothing. At the same time, discipline has become a primary concern of teachers, administrators, school boards, parents, and communities. In addition to apprehension about student misconduct, there are concerns about low levels of student achievement, school dropouts, high rates of absenteeism, and individuals ill-prepared for the world of work. Inadequate instruction most often receives the blame, yet activities other than instruction occupy almost one-half of all classroom time. Discipline problems are responsible for a significant portion of this lost instructional time.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS ADDRESSED: *School staff, families and community develop, communicate, and support clearly defined, appropriate high behavioral expectations. All key stakeholders develop and implement school-wide proactive disciplinary plans that promote respectful, responsible behavior.*

INTRODUCTION

There is no quick fix for these complex problems. Among other researchers, Geoff Colvin of the University of Oregon's College of Education and co-developer of Project PREPARE, a model for classroom and school-wide discipline, states that the solution requires a multi-dimensional approach (Colvin, 1994). This necessarily includes long-term planning, adequate funding, adequate commitment of time, emphasis on preventive rather than reactive measures and the collaboration of schools, families, and community. We have to begin some place, and that place can be making our schools healthier, with environments where every student matters and where every student can acquire the skills to succeed at school and in life. This investment now is an investment in our future.

"If all schools do is add guards or metal detectors or put students in uniforms or expel them, it won't work...You don't change a kid's behavior by expelling him. The real solution is to teach students how to think, how to act, how to deal with their anger. Maybe that wasn't the job of schools in 1950, but it sure is now."

- Kevin Dwyer, Assistant Director of the National Association of School Psychologists

Dr. Kevin Dwyer, Assistant Director of the National Association of School Psychologists, distinguishes between making the physical environment safe and making the psychological environment both safe and instructional. Of course, the former is important; but the latter is crucial. In order to have a psychologically safe environment, schools and communities need to make changing the school's climate and culture a priority. A school-wide system of discipline can help create such an environment and foster the healthy personal-social development of students while it supports their acquisition of academic knowledge and skills.

DISCIPLINE – WHAT IS IT?

Discipline encourages learning, responsibility, and self-control. *Webster's New World College Dictionary* defines *discipline* as "From the Latin meaning: 1. A branch of knowledge or learning; 2. Training that develops self-control, character, orderliness or efficiency; 3. Strict control to enforce obedience; 4. Treatment that controls or punishes; 5. A system of rules."

The theme that runs through all five definitions is that of "control." The "control" that undergirds the first two definitions is the development of self-control through the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and habits. The next three definitions speak to control coming from external sources.

Traditionally, our society has thought of school discipline as a system of rules designed to control or punish in order to enforce obedience. In fact, current research and experience tell us that such systems work only temporarily and only as long as students are under the threat of the punishment. Often such systems only serve to escalate or encourage disrespectful and rebellious behavior.

Effective discipline is discipline that is instructional, contributing to a student's overall healthy development, socially, emotionally, intellectually, and behaviorally.

Discipline should be future-oriented and relationship enhancing. When it is, discipline develops self-control by supporting young people to acquire the

pro-social knowledge, skills, and habits that will help them succeed.

School Culture

To create a school culture where the environment is welcoming, invitational, supportive, and tolerant, means that the school must engage in deep systemic change. The knowledge, skills, and attitudes of students, staff, families, and communities are all part of the mix that determines what the school is like. If a school uses a more traditional model of discipline (i.e., a set of rules and punishing consequences), then those who use this approach and those impacted by it must be supported to learn a new way of doing business. This means putting the structures and processes in place so that the school can become a learning community with a collaborative rather than competitive culture. As schools work on development of their school-wide systems, a set of critical elements, grounded in the professional literature, identifies factors that contribute to their becoming places where all kids can succeed (See those elements in another section of this Handbook).

Developing a Plan

In order to develop a plan for school-wide student discipline:

- Begin by establishing a leadership team composed of school staff (instructional and support), students, families, and community members.
- Train the team in such skills as planning, facilitation of effective meetings, group decision-making, managing change, and building commitment. Attention to team building is a critical aspect of this phase.
- Once a leadership team is established, involve the rest of the school staff (teachers, school secretary, the guidance counselor, the janitor, cooks) as well as students, their families, and other community members in making decisions about the design and implementation of the plan. Dividing school staff into study teams is an organizational structure that serves this purpose well.

In an article in *The American School Board Journal,* (1993, February) Joseph Williams, former school administrator, likens developing a school-wide disciplinary system to building a house. He stresses the importance of laying the foundation of the system. This foundation includes a set of shared beliefs, shared visions of a successful school and a successful student, and the school's mission. An ill-conceived disciplinary plan without this solid foundation has little chance of succeeding.

Components of a Successful School-wide System

- A set of beliefs, a vision, and mission that state what behaviors are valued and important.
- Total staff commitment to manage student behavior based on an agreed upon approach.
- School-wide attention to the treatment of *all* persons with respect, concern, and fairness.
- A set of clearly defined, widely communicated high and clear expectations for behavior.
- A programmatic effort to help students gain skills in positive social relationships and conflict management.
- A set of well-defined, equitably enacted consequences and clear, fair procedures for students who break the rules.
- A dynamic instructional program that engages students in meaningful, authentic learning that motivates and generates motivation and learning.

- K.D. Peterson, "Establishing Effective School-wide Behavior Management and Discipline Systems," Reform Talk, October 1998

Researchers have found that the most beneficial programs are *comprehensive* and *multi-faceted,* with an *integrated approach* to cognitive, affective, and behavioral skill development. Such programs address those factors that put children at risk and give them access to the protective factors that enhance their ability to resist negative influences. They are most effective when they are an *integral* part of the curriculum and day-to-day life in the school rather than isolated add-ons.

Summary

Disciplinary systems that work are *coordinated efforts* with families, students, educators, and community members. They bring together efforts with a common mission to foster students' healthy personal-social development.

Learn More about It:

- **Web site for *Success4:***
  - OSEP Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) – http://www.pbis.org
- **In this Handbook:** See *Early Warning Timely Response* (Section 2), *Safeguarding Our Children: An Action Guide* (Chapters 2 & 5), "*Success4* Critical Elements," *Crisis Management Section: "Templates for Designing a School-wide Proactive Discipline System,"* and the Resources Section.

Information Brief

Restorative Justice

Restorative justice is a set of disciplinary practices based on making reparations for infractions. In contrast to traditional disciplinary systems, restorative justice focuses on both the perpetrator and the victims of any harmful act. The goal is to restore a situation to a homeostatic state, where the individual or property harmed is healed, and perpetrators are held accountable for their actions. At the same time, it provides wrong doers support to enhance their competencies so they may be healed as well. Restorative justice could be a fit for schools seeking an instructional approach to behavioral change based on a belief that human beings are of value and have the potential for healing, growth, and change. It assumes they are worth the investment of time and skill to teach them to adapt to, and succeed in a changing world.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS ADDRESSED: *School staff, families and community develop, communicate, and support clearly defined, appropriate high behavioral expectations.*

- *Indicator: School-wide proactive behavior management plans that promote respectful, responsible behavior are developed and implemented by all key stakeholders.*
- *Indicator: Effective instructional strategies are used to teach students school-wide and classroom expectations.*

INTRODUCTION

Restorative justice is a different lens through which to view wrongdoing (Zehr, 1990). It puts primary focus on repairing the harm caused by offending behavior and on accountability on the part of those who have caused the harm, rather than on determining rule violations and punishment. A traditional approach to wrongdoing asks: "What laws or rules have been broken? Who did it? What shall the punishment be?" In contrast, within a restorative framework, the following questions would be considered: "Who has been harmed by this incident? What needs to be done to repair the harm? Who is responsible for this repair?" Restorative justice also recognizes that to repair the harm and to minimize repeat behavior, attention also must be paid to the needs of the individual who has caused the harm. The value system through which we look at behavior affects the definition of the problem, as well as possible solutions.

Though the principles and practices of restorative justice originated in the context of the criminal justice system during the 1990s, schools began adapting and applying a restorative approach in their own settings. This Information Brief will expand on the principles and values of restorative justice and look at examples of how these are being put into practice in schools.

PRINCIPLES

Restorative practices assume that all human beings are of value and have the potential for healing, growth and change. Restorative justice or restorative discipline in school contexts asserts that the primary impact of misbehavior is the harm done to other individuals and to relationships within groups. A just response is one that focuses on healing and repair of the harm, not on the violation of a rule or law. Restorative justice focuses far more on restitution to individuals and the community that has been harmed than on punishment (Umbreit, 2001, page 28).

Misbehavior creates responsibilities not only for the ones who misbehave, but also for those affected. Participation of those most affected by misbehavior in the response gives them an opportunity to have a voice in how to repair wrongs and increases the likelihood that wrongdoers will learn from what happened by hearing and understanding the impact of their behavior on others. Such a forum encourages meaningful accountability by those who have harmed.

Any person who harms another is responsible for his or her own choices. However, restorative justice recognizes that a community has responsibility for social conditions that may contribute to wrongdoing (Umbreit, 2001, page 29). This implies that schools and communities have an obligation to provide support and restoration of those harmed and to enhance the competencies of those who have harmed. A restorative approach requires treating those who have misbehaved with respect and taking effective steps to integrate them back into families, schools and communities.

PRACTICES

Restorative justice practices give the individuals most affected by harmful or criminal acts a chance to be involved in responding to the harm caused by such acts (Umbreit, 2001, page 27). For those harmed, restorative measures provide:

(1) choices in how they want to proceed,
(2) an opportunity to talk about what happened,
(3) a voice in how the harm might be repaired, and

(4) a way to feel some power, safety, or affirmation.

For those who have harmed, a restorative approach provides:

(1) a chance to accept responsibility for one's actions,
(2) an opportunity to understand the impact their behavior has had on others and to develop empathy,
(3) a chance to contribute to the solution,
(4) an opportunity to make amends,
(5) an opportunity to get assistance in developing skills to change behavior and attitudes that would help prevent future harm.

In a school setting, restorative practices have been used in response to incidents of theft, vandalism, bullying, minor physical assaults, verbal assault, truancy, unintentional injury, disturbing the peace, defiance of authority and others.
- Colorado School Mediation Project, 2000

Schools may apply some restorative practices, such as peacemaking circles, more generally for conducting class meetings or staff decision-making sessions, developing individualized education plans for special education and for other forums. The Iowa Peace Institute, with its "Building Peaceable Schools and Communities" program, is introducing concepts and practices of restorative approaches to schools and communities throughout Iowa.

Following are three examples of restorative practices that have been most widely applied in school settings. Additional practices are in wide use in community and criminal justice programs.

Victim Offender Dialogue: A trained facilitator, usually an adult, brings together a student who has been harmed with the student who caused the harm for a conversation about the incident. The victim can speak about the impact of the incident and be involved in developing a plan to repair the harm. The process may include a mutually acceptable written plan that may specify restitution or intangibles such as making an apology.

Small Group Conferencing (Family Group Conferencing): A trained facilitator brings together not only the perpetrator and victim, but also their parents and others affected by the incident. The goal of the conference is similar to that of the victim offender dialogue.

Peacemaking Circles: This process, derived from indigenous cultures, brings together the person who has caused the harm, the person who has been harmed, family members of both parties, and supporters, as well as others affected by the incident. The practice is so named because participants sit in a circle and speak one at a time going around the circle. The facilitator, or circle keeper, guides the conversation through the articulation of the values and guidelines of the process and through the use of a talking piece that passes around the circle. All participants have an equal opportunity to speak. This process is particularly suited to managing discussion of very emotional issues. Peacemaking circles may conclude with written agreements.

SUMMARY

Each of these practices is an element of a holistic response to disruptive behaviors. They contribute to enhancing community safety by strengthening relationships.

"Restorative results are measured by how much repair is done rather than by how much punishment was inflicted. Restitution to those harmed becomes the rule, not the exception." *- Anderson et al., p.7*

In Minnesota restorative measures are being used in 40 percent of school districts. One impact these practices have had in four pilot programs is that suspensions and discipline referrals are dramatically reduced (Riestenberg, 2001, page 19). Early indications suggest that restorative approaches to discipline may also be related to improved student academic performance. (Roxanne Claasen, "Beyond Punishment," page 5.)

Lolya Lipchitz, Mediator of the Iowa Peace Institute, Grinnell, Iowa, wrote this Information Brief especially for this *Safe Schools Leadership Handbook*. Thank you, Lolya, for your contribution.

LEARN MORE ABOUT IT:

- **Web sites:**
  - Iowa Peace Institute, iapeace@netins.net, www.iapeace.org
  - Restorative justice programs in Minnesota schools, Nancy Riestenberg, prevention specialist, Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning, nancy.riestenberg@state.mn.us
  - Colorado School Mediation Project, info@csmp.org, www.csmp.org
  - Center for Peacemaking and Conflict Studies, Fresno Pacific University, www.fresno.edu/dept/pacs
  - Center for Restorative Justice and Peacemaking, University of Minnesota School of Social Work, http://ssw.che.umn.edu/rjp
- **In this Handbook:** See *Early Warning Timely Response* (Section 2), *Safeguarding Our Children: An Action Guide* (Chapters 2 & 5), "*Success4* Critical Elements." For information beyond the scope of this handbook, refer to the Resources Section.

Information Brief

Peer Group Strategies

Involving peers in teaching and helping one another requires a shift on the part of adults from their view of young people as problems to be fixed to one of young people as resources to their families, schools, and communities. Schools that adopt this view provide ongoing, continuous opportunities for youth – from early childhood through late adolescence – to serve as resources to each other. Schools implement a variety of "peers as resources" structures, such as peer helpers, peer tutors, peer mediators, and peer mentors. These programs have been especially effective in the development of assets that make youth resilient to problem behavior.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS ADDRESSED:

- *The school is a caring, respectful, encouraging community.*
  Indicator: Positive peer relationships are fostered in an environment that promotes them in the classrooms, in common areas of the school, at school-sponsored activities, and in the community.

INTRODUCTION

Students can be useful, contributing members of their school community, and youth service can play a major role in reducing the alienation felt by many from their families, schools, and communities - alienation that can lead to alcohol and drug abuse, teen pregnancy, and dropping out of school. A peer resource model of education applies to any program or service that uses children and youth to work with other children and youth: peer or cross-age tutoring, peer helpers, peer mediation, youth leadership and youth involvement, cooperative learning, and service learning.

[The vision for education]..."is a vision of raising compassionate, insightful and brave young people who will be able to look at the challenges they will inherit – racism, poverty, violence, sustainability – and respond with their whole selves. It is a vision of schools with heart and soul. Our children can become healing agents if schools – as their last public institution in a fractured time – give young people the skills and convictions they need. May we leave our world safer for our children by providing them with a school experience that educates their hearts along with their minds."

- Linda Lantieri

Peer group strategies attempt to create a prosocial group climate, peer group controls on antisocial behavior, and peer support for prosocial attitudes and behaviors as a norm of the school. Research shows that when school-wide reports of negative peer influence goes down, school-wide belief in conventional rules goes up, and schools become safer (CSPV, 1998).

PEER MENTORS

Peer mentoring programs match older youth with younger children in one-to-one relationships to provide guidance for the children. Together they may work on schoolwork, deal with social relationships, talk about social issues such as drinking, smoking, and using drugs, sort out family problems, or reflect upon other issues of growing up. A peer mentor can be someone with whom the younger child can simply hang out.

Peer mentoring programs have many benefits, including providing positive influences for a younger student who may need a little extra attention or support. Mentors can provide encouragement, friendship, and listening ears. They can mean the difference between dropping out of school and graduating, or between getting involved with drugs and developing the strength and confidence to resist them.

Effective mentoring programs require training for the mentors, careful matching between the mentor and the child to be mentored, and ongoing support to maintain and improve the mentoring relationship. If a school wants to start a peer mentoring program, it should turn to experienced national and local programs such as the National Mentoring Partnership, the Corporation for National Service, and Americorps.

PEER TUTORING

Hundreds of evaluations of cooperative learning and peer and cross-age tutoring have found both positive academic and social development results (Benard, 2000). Adding a well-designed peer or cross-age tutoring component to an elementary or secondary school program has the potential for significantly augmenting the school's capacity to promote academic achievement and interpersonal relationships. A

Stanford University study (Levin, 1984) found that peer tutoring is more consistently cost-effective than computer assisted instruction, reduction of class size, or increased time for raising the math and reading achievement levels of both tutors and the students they tutored.

Those students who benefit most from peer tutoring programs are the tutors themselves, because they receive more intensive exposure to the material they teach than do the ones whom they teach. However, training peer tutors is an essential ingredient if the program is to be effective.

PEER MEDIATION

A student's peer group can influence the way that students react to conflict and potential violence — for better or worse. When a school implements strategies aimed at peaceable solutions to daily conflict, students can learn from each other how to negotiate potentially violent situations to the acceptance of all students involved. Instruction in conflict resolution skills can help students recognize that they can learn new ways to deal with daily conflicts.

Peer mediation is a program strategy based on negotiation. The main focus for peer mediation is to provide students with a means to solve disputes without confrontation and violence. The use of peer mediation can substantially change how students approach and settle conflicts. When used on a regular basis, students can learn an alternative method of settling disputes and add an important life skill to their repertoires.

The main focus of peer mediation is to bring all students a way to solve disputes with means other than confrontation and violence. Trained student conflict mediators serve as unbiased third parties to help their peers settle disputes by applying problem-solving strategies to create an outcome that is satisfactory to all parties involved.

Although it can be implemented as a stand-alone program, peer mediation should be used as one piece of a broader curriculum of violence prevention and conflict resolution (Skiba and Peterson, February 2000).

Initial training of peer mediators requires an estimated 12 to 15-hour commitment. During this training time, students learn the basics of peer mediation (problem solving, communication, and interest-based negotiation strategies) and increase their awareness of how conflict develops. Role playing and active learning are essential elements of training. Peer mediators learn that conflict can be handled in a positive, constructive manner. They learn that the role of the peer mediator is not to pass judgment on the parties involved, but to help the students come to a solution that is acceptable to all parties. The students in disagreement come to the peer mediator voluntarily and are not forced to come to an agreement immediately.

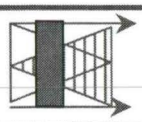
The effectiveness of peer mediation is measured by the success of mediations and how students and peer mediators view the mediation process. Although effectiveness has not been properly documented, a wide variety of studies conducted in different locations and situations did find that peer mediation appears to be a promising strategy for improving school climate (Skiba Peterson, February 2000).

SUMMARY

Leaders in the field of cooperative learning and peer tutoring conclude that the key to successful peer resource programs is that they are created in the context of a collaborative culture with cooperative structures and relationships at all levels within a school or district (Benard, 2000). Despite compelling evidence that peer group strategies are effective in building student success academically and socially, to the puzzlement of researchers and reformers, implementation of these strategies has failed to take hold in schools. The answer seems to lie in a conflict between the basic beliefs of educators regarding the traditional role of students in their own education where they are consumers of help and the more recent view that youth are resources and producers.

LEARN MORE ABOUT IT:

- **Web sites:**
  - Resolving Conflict Creatively: http://www.esrnational.org
  - The National Mentoring Partnership: http://www.mentoring.org
- **In this Handbook:** See additional briefs in this section on *A Continuum of Programs and Services, Positive Youth Development, Youth Leadership/Student Empowerment*, and *Service Learning*. In other sections of the manual, please refer to *Early Warning, Timely Response, Safeguarding Our Children: An Action Guide*, and *"Success4's* Critical Elements." For information beyond the scope of this handbook, see the Resources Section.



Information Brief

Risk-Focused Prevention

In any school, there will be one or more groups of students who are more at risk for engaging in problem behavior than are others. Often these students live in circumstances and have personal characteristics that put them at risk for the development of problem behaviors. At the same time, there are also protective factors that diminish the effects of exposure to risk factors and enhance protective factors, thus reducing the incidence of problem behaviors. Current research (Pollard, Hawkins, & Arthur, 1999) has shown that some preventive intervention strategies can have a positive impact on these factors and subsequently the resulting problem behaviors. Schools that are developing a continuum of programs and services designed to prevent violent and disruptive behavior and to promote healthy social, emotional, and behavioral development need to adopt strategies that will be effective in achieving these results.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS ADDRESSED:

- *The school, in collaboration with the community, provides a full and accessible array of specialized programs and services to address the needs of students experiencing social, emotional and/or behavioral problems.*
- *Schools and community agencies and organizations establish working partnerships to support students and their families.*

INTRODUCTION:

"Recent research suggests that between 9 million and 16 million children in the nation are growing up with disadvantages that 'limit the development of their potential, compromise their health, impair their sense of self, and generally restrict their chances for successful lives.'"

- Thomas McClellan, National Governors' Association

We should view all young people as positive resources to our communities. To prevent the tragic loss of such capital, schools must partner with parents and the community to help young people become healthy, productive adults. Risk-focused prevention programs that address both risk and protective factors are essential components of the continuum of programs and services that foster the healthy social, emotional, intellectual, and behavioral development of their students. The work in risk-focused prevention begins with the belief that all students are important and that investing in all is an important part of the work of schools, well worth the time and effort expended.

WHAT IS RISK-FOCUSED PREVENTION?

Risk-focused prevention consists of the programs and strategies used to work with individual students or groups of students who have conditions present in their lives that place them at risk for developing certain problem behaviors such as substance abuse, aggression, violence, teen pregnancy, and dropping out of school. At the same time, studies have shown that there is a set of protective factors that mediate the effect of the exposure of young people to risk, resulting in reduced incidence of problem behavior.

Current research suggests that both these sets of factors are promising targets for preventive interventions. Interventions that enhance resilience by promoting protective factors and reducing risk, either singly, or more powerfully in combination, can reduce the likelihood that problem behaviors will develop and increase the likelihood that prevention efforts will be effective.

WHO IS AT-RISK?

"Youth who do not have opportunities to develop positive attitudes and behaviors and to test them within a supportive environment are at risk of a host of antisocial and negative behaviors."

NGA Center for Best Practices, July 2000

To be most effective, prevention efforts must begin early – between birth and six years of age. Although most of the risk factors in the lives of young children are centered in families and communities, schools can play an important role in counteracting them by serving as good community members. This includes fostering the development of protective factors through parent education, serving as community centers for human services, sponsoring early childhood education programs, and sharing expertise by providing cross agency training.

Recent school shootings have focused much attention on the characteristics of the students who did the shootings so that potential shooters can be identified. Although researchers have identified warning signs, no single profile has emerged that would predict which students will become violent. Early warning signs, discussed in detail in the document *Early Warning,*

Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools, can alert school staff to emerging problems that may warrant intervention, but they are not intended to serve as a checklist for singling out students for punishment isolation and stigmatization. Any warning signs should be understood in the larger context of each student's situation (MacClellan, 1999).

> ***"If antisocial behavior is not changed by the end of grade three, it should be treated like a chronic condition much like diabetes. That is, it cannot be changed, but managed with appropriate supports and continuing intervention."***
>
> *-Walker, Colvin, & Ramsey, 1995*

The Social Development Research Group (SDRG) at the University of Washington has conducted some of the most substantial and recognized research in the area of at-risk children and youth. Researchers identified a set of factors that put young people at risk for adolescent health and behavior problems such as school failure, substance abuse, delinquency, and pregnancy. Environmental conditions in children's homes, schools, and communities, as well as personal physiology and personality traits, also are risk factors.

SDRG also identified protective factors and processes that buffer the effects of a student's exposure to risk and thereby reduce their development of health and behavior problems. They organize both risk and protective factors into five domains: individual, family, peers, school, and the broader community.

What Can Schools Do?

Researchers have identified an array of effective strategies for the reduction of problem behaviors. A school district can implement a selection of these strategies and monitor the occurrence of problem behaviors in order to test the effectiveness of the strategy.

The *Iowa Youth Survey (IYS)*, the *Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)*, the *Search Institute Survey*, and the *Communities that Care Youth Survey* all yield data that inform schools about the incidence and prevalence of problem behaviors among the students in their districts. These data can be used to prioritize risk and protective factors and guide the selection of effective prevention and intervention strategies.

Hawkins and Catalano (1995) identified three categories of risk factors that are directly related to schools: early and persistent antisocial behavior, lack of commitment to schools, and academic failure beginning in lower elementary schools. They also identified a set of strategies that ameliorate these risk factors.

They are:

- Prenatal/Infancy Programs
- Early Childhood Education
- Parent Training
- Family Therapy
- Classroom Management, Organization and Instructional Strategies
- Classroom Curricula for Social Competence Promotion
- School Behavior Management Strategies
- After School Recreation Programs
- Mentoring with Contingent Reinforcement
- Parent Training
- Organizational Change in Schools
- Youth Employment with Education

What Works?

In order to support schools and communities in their efforts to reduce the prevalence of problem behaviors, a variety of organizations have involved prevention scientists to identify effective strategies and programs. They have made available lists of such programs, typically divided into two categories: proven effective and promising approaches. The former have met the test of rigorous research. The latter, while not having been researched at the most rigorous levels, have some evidence of effectiveness. For more information on these programs and strategies, check the websites identified below. System strategies embodied in most of the listed programs include the following:

Proven Effective Strategies -

- building school capacity to initiate and sustain innovation;
- communicating and clarifying behavioral norms by establishing school rules, improving consistency of rule enforcement using positive reinforcement of appropriate behavior, and conducting school-wide campaigns;
- implementing instructional programs that focus on a range of social skills (i.e., developing self-control, stress-management, social problem solving, communication skills, and responsible decision-making) and are delivered over a long period of time to continually reinforce the skills.

Promising Strategies –

- grouping students into smaller units to create more supportive interactions and greater flexibility in instructional practices, such as schools-within-schools;
- behavior modification programs that teach thinking skills to at risk youth;
- programs that improve classroom management and instructional techniques.

- Hill M. Walker, 2001

Some strategies should be targeted at individual students or small groups of students who are at risk

of developing problem behaviors. These strategies include youth involvement, mentoring, service to others, after school programs that provide safe places, and programs that develop work-related skills and behaviors.

SUMMARY

Any school interested in the success of its students academically, personally, and socially should ensure that effective programs and services are in place especially for students who are at-risk for school failure and the development of problem behaviors. Over the last decade, researchers have contributed greatly to what is known about what works with this population. By using the information about risk-focused prevention strategies, schools can maximize the effectiveness of their efforts, as well as provide opportunities for *all* students to succeed.

LEARN MORE ABOUT IT:

- **Web sites:**
  - Blueprints for Violence Prevention - http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/Defaults.htm
  - Centers for the Application of Prevention Technology (CAPT) - http://www.captus.org/index.htm
  - Collaboration for the Advancement of Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) - http://www.casel.org
  - National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) - *Information@lists.nida.nih.gov*
  - Safe, Disciplined, and Drug-Free Schools Expert Panel, U.S. Department of Education - http://www.negp.gov/
- **In this Handbook:** See additional briefs, especially *A Continuum of Programs and Services, Frameworks, Youth Development, Youth Involvement, Positive Behavioral Supports, and Early Intervention* in this section. In other sections of the manual, please refer to *Early Warning, Timely Response, Safeguarding Our Children: An Action Guide*, *Crisis Management Planning*, and "*Success4's* Critical Elements." For information beyond the scope of this handbook, see the Resources Section.

Information Brief

After-School Programs

A large number of today's students are home alone in the hours after school. According to "Kids Count 2000," based on 1998 data, 77 percent of Iowa's children under age six and 65 percent of those between the ages of six and twelve live in households with working parents. These percentages are 10 percent greater than the national percentage. At the same time, the Federal Bureau of Investigation identifies the hours between 3 - 6:00 p.m. as the times when youngsters are at greatest risk of committing or being victims of violent acts. In the past, primarily community-based organizations have carried out after-school programming. Today, there is a trend toward school-based programs that are proving to be very effective in improving students' academic performance and engagement in problem behaviors.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS ADDRESSED:

- *The school has a variety of programs and services intended to prevent or intervene early with students' social, emotional, and behavioral difficulties.*
  - *Indicator: A wide range of developmentally appropriate, structured options is designed to prevent the onset of social, emotional, intellectual, and/or behavioral difficulties.*
  - *Essential Practice: After-school programs provide students with opportunities from school and community for involvement in a variety of areas; including, but not limited to, YMCA/YWCA, interest clubs, teams, hobbies, drama, music and sports.*

INTRODUCTION

The period of time between the end of the school day and the end of the workday is the most vulnerable time for our children and youth. These are the hours that they are more likely to engage in at-risk behavior and are most susceptible to the dangers that exist in neighborhoods and communities. In the hours between 3 - 6:00 p.m., violent juvenile crime soars (U.S. Department of Education, 1997). Unsupervised youth are more likely to:

- commit or become victims of violent crime;
- be in or cause a car crash;
- be killed as a result of household or other accidents;
- use cigarettes or experiment with illegal drugs;
- engage in sexual intercourse, resulting in unplanned pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases (Foundation Consortium, 2000).

Today, between eight and 15 million children return to empty homes after school. When the school bell rings, the anxiety of parents begins. They worry about whether their children are safe and whether they are vulnerable to drugs and crime.

There is a chronic shortage of after-school programs available to serve children. Although 74 percent of elementary and middle school parents say that they would be willing to pay for such a program, only 31 percent of primary school parents and 30 percent of secondary parents report that their children actually attend an after-school program at school (U.S. Department of Education, June 1998). In response to this pressing concern, many communities have created after-school programs to keep children and youth out of trouble and engaged in activities that help them learn (U.S. Department of Education, June 1998).

> *"It's just common sense that if we don't provide young people with some kind of sanctuary — I call them 'safe places' — and give kids something constructive to do once the last bell rings, they are going to be easy marks for drug dealers, gang recruiters and other predators."*
>
> *- General Colin L. Powell*

While past research has focused on how children spend their time after school and what level of supervision is provided, current research has begun to examine the various types of after-school activities and their effects on the cognitive and emotional development of children. Researchers have identified three major functions of after-school programs: 1) providing supervision, 2) offering enriching experiences and positive social interaction, and 3) improving academic achievement (Olatokunbo S. Fashola, In press).

Research shows that after-school programs improve academic performance and help children and youth avoid high-risk and dangerous situations that can occur during unsupervised time. In addition, they have been catalysts for change that has resulted in stronger partnerships among communities, city and county governments and schools (Foundation Consortium, 2000).

THE ROLE OF SCHOOLS AFTER SCHOOL

Traditionally community agencies have operated after-school programs. Schools started providing these programs only recently. Overwhelmingly (93 percent), Americans favor providing school-based after-school programs in their own communities (U.S. Department of Education, 1999). The 21st Century Community Learning Centers grants from the U.S. Department of Education enable school districts to fund public schools as community education centers for keeping children safe during after-school hours. These grants funded more than 3600 school sites.

CREATING QUALITY AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

The creation of successful after-school programs differs from district to district. By responding to the needs of each individual community, the after-school program grows successful independently. Community efforts result in programs that meet the needs of the school-aged children when school is not in session. Strong leadership and effective management set the goals of the after-school program and carry them forward. Quality programs hire skilled and qualified staff, provide them with ongoing professional development, and keep adult-to-child ratios low and group sizes manageable (U.S. Department of Education, June 1998).

Positive Youth Development for Successful Youth

Although after-school programs provide safe havens for students, they can also provide extended learning opportunities that contribute significantly to the positive development of youth. Supports and opportunities provided in many after-school programs include:

- connecting youth to principled and caring adults
- nurturing young people's skills and capacities, including social skills, vocational interests and civic responsibility
- protecting youth from violence and other dangerous or negative influences
- creating peer groups that exert positive influence on each other
- providing opportunities for children and youth to contribute to their community and society
- enriching young people's academic performance and educational commitment

(America's Promise, Alliance for Youth, March 2001).

Taking a Stand for Academic Achievement

Linking after-school programs with children's learning experiences in the classroom improves academic achievement. However, in a 1994 Harris poll, more than one-half of teachers polled singled out "children who are left on their own after school" as the primary explanation for students' difficulties in class (U.S. Department of Education, June 1998). Establishing a link between school-day teachers and after-school personnel keeps the line of communication open for expanded learning opportunities. Research by Dr. Reginald Clark demonstrates that how students use their time in school and out of school is an important predictor of their academic success. Clark found that low-achieving students spend the majority of their non-school hours in activities that have little benefit to them during their in-school time. On the other hand, high-achieving students participate in more activities that reinforce the skills and knowledge learned in school (Foundation Consortium, 2000). After-school programs provide the opportunity for this coordinated effort.

Involving Parents and Community

Successful after-school programs involve parents and the community at large to add depth and direction to the program. While keeping parents informed of the activities available to their children, after-school program leaders can offer parents opportunities for volunteer involvement. Positive relationships with the community bring to the after school program additional volunteers, supporting networks with community-based and youth-serving organizations, expertise in management and youth development, and needed resources and funding. (U.S. Department of Education, June 1998).

SUMMARY

For many children across America, after-school programs provide a structured, safe, supervised environment for learning, fun, and friendship with adults and peers alike. When the collaboration of schools and communities offer after-school programs, they engage young people in positive activities that build a stronger and healthier community.

Quality after-school programs can meet family needs by providing responsible adult supervision of children during non-school hours. By offering young people rewarding, challenging, and age-appropriate activities in a safe, structured, and positive environment, after-school programs help prevent juvenile delinquency and insulate children from injury and violent victimization. After-school programs give children and teenagers positive reasons to say "yes."

LEARN MORE ABOUT IT:

- **Web sites:**
  - National Governors Association Center for Best Practices: http://www.nga.org/CBP/Activities/Extralearning.asp
  - Foundation Consortium: http://www.foundationconsortium.org/pdf/afterschool/programs.doc
  - U.S. Department of Education: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/SafeandSmart/intro.html
- **In this Handbook:** See "*Success4* Critical Elements," and other articles in this section on Frameworks, *Youth Development*, *Youth Leadership/Youth Empowerment*, and *Service-Learning*.

Information Brief

Mentoring

Young people need to have the sustained presence of a caring adult, whether it is a parent, neighbor, teacher, group leader, coach, or minister. This relationship with a caring adult is one of the most important protective factors in a young person's life. Adults can be mentors who, along with parents and extended family, provide youth with support, counsel, and friendship. Such early prevention options as mentoring can keep students in school doing what they need to do to succeed. In addition, mentoring shares parental responsibility for the well-being of the youth with the school and community. Once mentors learn about barriers youth face there, they are prompted to make changes on their behalf.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS ADDRESSED:

- *The school is a caring, respectful, encouraging community.*
  - *Indicator - Skillful, non-judgmental adults treat students with dignity and respect, using a positive, caring manner. Essential Practice - Positive relationships with an adult for every child/youth are established, e.g., mentoring adult to child or youth. A young person enters into a relationship with an adult designed to help connect the young person to the community, build a sense of belonging, and share information and life skills that will help make the transition into adulthood smoother.*
- *Individual community volunteers can provide for children/youth relationships with responsible, caring adults, and provide them opportunities for knowledge acquisition and skill building, and encouragement and personal attention.*

INTRODUCTION

"We need to make sure that no boy or girl in America is growing up without having in his or her life the presence of a responsible, caring adult. Where else does a child learn how to behave? Where else does a child learn the experience of the past, the totems and traditions of the past? Where else does a child look for the proper examples except from responsible, caring, loving adults in his or her life?"

- General Colin L. Powell

It is becoming increasingly clear that youth who lack sustained adult relationships are more at risk for dangerous activity. Evidence indicates that 25 percent of adolescents engage in behaviors with serious consequences. Alcohol and drug abuse, potentially harmful sexual activity, truancy, delinquency, and violence are part of their lives. Another 25 percent of adolescents are at moderate risk (*Creating Safe and Drug-Free Schools: An Action Guide*, 1996).

Mentors can reconnect at-risk students with adults, peers, school, and the community through a supportive relationship. This relationship gives at-risk students opportunity to explore their own aspirations, as well as to improve their academic achievement, behavior and self esteem (Skiba and Wu, February, 2000). Mentored teens are 46 percent less likely to get into drugs; 59 percent get better grades; and 73 percent raise their goals (The National Mentoring Partnership, 1996).

WHAT IS MENTORING?

A mentor can be any caring adult or older peer who, along with parents, makes a positive and sustained contribution to the life of a child who is not his or her own. They may be extended family members, neighbors or other adults that the youth see in their daily lives. They may be adults who spend time with them in schools and community programs such as teachers, coaches, child-care workers, youth workers, and employers. They may even be older peers who can serve as positive role models.

Mentors paired with at-risk students provide them educational, personal, and social support. They provide friendship, reinforcement, counsel on the importance of academic success and making good choices, and constructive examples by modeling responsible behavior. Usually the youth and their mentors meet once or twice a week for 3-5 hours and engage in a variety of activities that may include tutoring, recreational outings, discussion, and/or community service.

The National Mentoring Partnership (1996) provides these tips for those who mentor:

- Be patient.
- Set boundaries.
- Be honest.
- Praise is power.
- Celebrate differences.
- Be there.
- Be positive.
- Believe.
- Stick with it.

TYPES OF MENTORING PROGRAMS

The style of the mentoring programs must fit the different mentors, mentees, and life situations.

Mentee Characteristics. The type of mentoring effort and the characteristics of a mentor must be matched to the profile of the youth to be mentored. The California Mentoring Center classifies mentoring efforts into four categories based upon the needs of the youth to be mentored: soft mentoring, medium mentoring, hard mentoring, and hard-core mentoring.

Location. One characteristic may be the location of the mentoring program: school-based, community-based, or faith community-based. ***School-based mentoring*** takes place in the school facility, and the mentors may be the school staff or volunteers for the school. In many instances, the school has paired with a business or service organization that provides the mentors. Big Brothers and Big Sisters is the most well-known of the ***community-based mentoring*** programs and is recognized as one of the programs most promising for reducing school violence. Finally, ***faith-based mentoring*** brings young people together with their mentors in places of worship where the typical focus is on developing self-esteem, self-image, and religious beliefs.

> ***"Schools are good places to mentor because they are the focal points of a community."***
> *- Lisa Adkins, Executive Director Youth Friends*

Mentoring Arrangements. Mentoring programs may be characterized by the configuration of the mentoring relationship. Traditionally, the relationship is **one-on-one** between one adult and one child. When two or more mentors share two or more mentees, it is known as **team mentoring.** This gives the mentors the flexibility and support of a group situation. Those involved with this arrangement find that it often creates the best environment for the mentee, who may prefer a more social setting, eliminating the need to bond immediately with one adult.

Group mentoring takes place when one or more adult volunteers work with a small group of youth. Scouting groups are beginning to view their leadership as mentors. When more than one leader is involved in the group's meetings, the shared responsibility makes it easier for volunteers to take on the mentoring project. This setting is also more adaptable to youth who enjoy the social setting with peers as they develop a relationship with the adult mentors (Saito and Roehlkepartian, November 1992).

> ***"These kids really respond to you. It's an hour in his or her week when someone says, 'Hey, you're really doing a great job.'"***
> *- Volunteer Group Leader*

Peer mentoring programs that match older youth with young students in one-to-one relationships, especially for tutoring, are becoming popular arrangements that benefit both participants in the relationship.

Establishing a Mentoring Program in Your School

The following steps are loosely based on those suggested by the National Association of Partners in Education, a nonprofit organization in Alexandria, Virginia:

- *Plan and execute an effective program.*
- *Set goals and objectives.*
- *Recruit and select mentors and mentees.*
- *Obtain commitment from and train mentors.*
- *Pair mentors and mentees.*
- *Provide adequate support and communication structures.*
- *Keep involvement alive.*
- *Evaluate the effectiveness of the program, its strategies and its impact on mentees.*

> ***"The best mentoring is child-centered, so quality mentoring comes in many different forms. One size doesn't fit all — not for adults and certainly not for children. Opportunities for responsible mentoring need to be everywhere young people are and need to be delivered in every way they want and need."***
> *- Gail Manes, National Executive Director, National Mentoring Partnership*

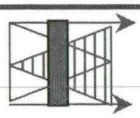
Summary

Mentoring can be a cost effective way to keep at-risk youth on track to lead successful lives. In a study of the impact of mentoring on high-risk behaviors of youth, researchers concluded that connectedness with a trusted adult, regardless of whether it is a parent, makes a positive contribution to the life, behaviors, and development of an adolescent (SIECUS, *Shop Talk,* June 2000).

Although the involvement of an at-risk youth with a mentoring adult has been proven to deter detrimental behavior, a mentor does not need to be an expert in drug prevention, remedial tutoring, antisocial behavior, or family counseling. While we follow the disturbing trends in adolescent behavior, there is growing support for the belief that a mentoring adult can help a young person shape a more positive future by gaining their trust through the development of a sustained, caring relationship.

Learn More about It:

- **Web sites:**
  - The National Mentoring Partnership: http://www.mentoring.org/
  - America's Promise, Caring Adults: http://www.americaspromise.org/Five Promises/caringadults.cfm
  - The Points of Light Foundation: http://www.pointsoflight.org/
- **In this Handbook:** See "*Success4* Critical Elements," and related articles in this section on *Positive Youth Development, Resiliency, Positive Behavioral Supports, Risk-Focused Prevention,* and *Early Intervention.*



Information Brief

Early Intervention

Although schools may have an effective array of youth development and risk-focused prevention programs and services, there always will be a population of students (experts estimate between 10 – 15 percent) who will require more intensive, targeted interventions intended to reduce or eliminate their problem behaviors (Colvin, Kameenui, & Sugai, 1993). Practices designed to intervene early, when students begin to exhibit problems that persist despite school-wide and classroom interventions to which students typically respond, are important to a school's provision of a continuum of student-focused services.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS ADDRESSED: *The school has a variety of programs and services intended to prevent or intervene early with students' social, emotional, and behavioral difficulties.*

INTRODUCTION

> ***"The educational mission of schools comprises not only a focus on academics and addressing barriers to academic learning, but also encompasses a major role in promoting learning and development related to social and emotional functioning and safe, healthy, and resilient behavior."***
>
> *- Policy Leadership Cadre*
> *Mental Health in Schools, UCLA 2001*

Because of the amount of close, first hand contact that school personnel have with our children and youth, they are in especially important and unique positions to identify the things that interfere with students' healthy development and successful learning. This is especially true at the earliest onset of problem behavior. Once identified, schools need to have in place resources and programs to which school staff can turn to for guidance and support. These support systems can assist school personnel in working with parents to identify and carry out home and school strategies that have promise of correcting difficulties before the problem worsens. Such early action can reduce both personal and financial costs to schools, families, and society.

EARLY INTERVENTION MODELS

There are three models of early intervention designed to prevent or ameliorate the onset of student problem behaviors: early-age interventions, early warning signs interventions, and early-after-onset interventions.

Early Age Interventions

With the recent findings in brain research and early childhood practices, the concept of early intervention has become associated with early childhood and primary aged students. These models incorporate family-focused interventions and strategies that promote early literacy, readiness to learn, and healthy child development. For the purpose of this brief, primary discussion will center on the other two types of early intervention.

Early Warning Signs

Since the school shootings, school personnel are increasingly interested to know whether or not there is a set of behavioral warning signs that would signal that a given student is likely to engage in violent acts at school. They believe that such information would enable them to intervene in order to prevent an occurrence of violence.

Studies of the school shooters showed that no profile of student behaviors could predict behavior that would lead to violence and, in turn, direct actions. In fact, profiling students can do more harm than good. Nevertheless, the list of behaviors discussed in depth in the document, *Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide To Safe Schools (1998)*, can enable us to address problem behaviors before they escalate into violence. The authors of *Early Warning, Timely Response* divides warning signs into two categories: "early warning signs" and "imminent warning signs." In contrast to early warning signs, imminent warning signs indicate that danger is likely. These signs usually are evident to a variety of people and occur as a sequence of overt hostile acts or threats directed at staff or other students. They should trigger an immediate response to ensure the safety of the student and others.

Early-After-Onset Interventions

> ***"When the need directly affects learning, the school must meet the challenge."***
>
> *- Carnegie Task Force on Education*

Not only can early intervention help with students who are potentially dangerous, but it also can assist with identifying and addressing the factors that place students at risk for academic failure and chronic discipline problems by removing barriers to student learning and success. The longer a barrier exists, the more difficult it is to remove and the more damage is done to the academic success and healthy development

of the student. That's why intervening early after onset of a student's problem behavior is so important.

As schools undertake reforms to create conditions that will take students to increasingly higher levels of achievement, a critical question is whether or not this new high standards, high stakes environment will benefit *all* students. To do so requires designing practices not only for students who are motivationally ready and able to profit from improved instruction, but also for those encountering internal and external barriers to that learning.

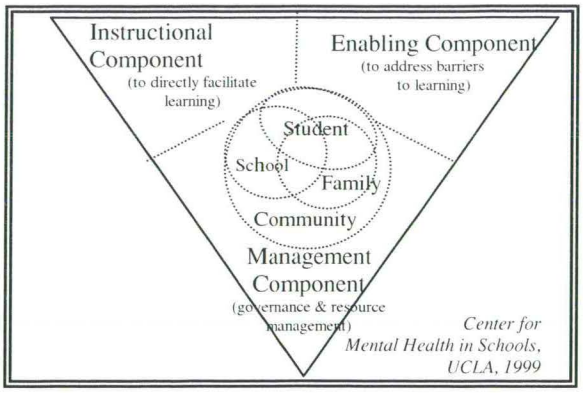
Barriers to Learning

> ***"Before a large proportion of students in schools can benefit significantly from instruction, we need to enable learning by attending to the many barriers that interfere with learning. Such barriers include a large range of biological, psychological, and socio-economic factors that make schools and communities unsafe and are linked to substance abuse, teen pregnancy, dropouts and other risk behaviors....Attending to such barriers requires making fundamental changes in educational support programs and finding ways to integrate these activities with community resources. At present neither school nor community reforms are likely to lead to the type of comprehensive integrated approach necessary for addressing these overlapping barriers to learning."***
>
> *-Adelman & Taylor*
> *Center for Mental Health in Schools, UCLA 1999*

Examples of barriers to learning include, but are not limited to, negative attitudes toward schooling, a lack of prerequisite skills, disabilities, lack of home involvement, lack of peer support, peers who are negative influences, lack of community involvement, and inadequate school, health, and social support services (Adelman and Taylor, 2000).

A View of What's Needed

Adelman and Taylor (1999) propose that, in order to remove barriers to student learning and healthy personal-social behavior, an "enabling component" be added to the instructional and management components that traditionally make up the context for student learning. Six clusters of enabling activity address barriers to learning and healthy development for all students: classroom-focused activities, student and family assistance programs and services, crisis assistance and prevention, support for transitions, home involvement in schooling, and community outreach for involvement and support.



The Intervention Process

Schools may target individual students or groups for early interventions. A teacher and a student's parent(s) may design the interventions informally. A problem solving team composed of regular school staff and parents, or a child study (extended problem solving) team that includes specialists can design more formal early interventions.

Schools should have a process for reporting their concerns about a student, whether it be triggered by observation of early warning or imminent danger signs, or the concerns of a school staff member or parent about a student's progress in school. The family should become involved in the process from the very beginning, as should the student, when appropriate.

Once a school-based team has engaged in a problem - solving/solution - focused process, the outcome of their efforts is a plan that lays out academic or behavioral interventions. Plans that focus on academic concerns may include instructional strategies, accommodations, and/or modifications to curricular materials or the learning environment. Behavioral intervention plans incorporate positive behavioral supports.

Summary

Schools with an array of early intervention processes, structures, and services in place greatly reduce the human and financial cost of addressing the needs of students with problem behaviors and enhance the likelihood of student success in school and in life. The most effective early intervention programs engage the help and support of parents as partners from the beginning and actively involve appropriate community partners along the way.

Learn More about It:

- **Web sites:**
  - Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice: http://cecp.air.org/
  - School Mental Health Project/Center for Mental Health in Schools, UCLA: http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/
- **In this Handbook:** See additional briefs, especially *A Continuum of Programs and Services, Positive Behavioral Supports, Risk-Focused Prevention, Problem Solving Teams,* and *Intensive Interventions.* In other sections of the manual, please refer to *Early Warning, Timely Response, Safeguarding Our Children: An Action Guide*, and "*Success4's* Critical Elements." For information beyond the scope of this handbook, see the Resources Section.

Information Brief

Problem Solving Teams

Collaborative problem solving is a proven effective tool for a wide range of student and building-centered problems. Student/staff support teams in schools are among the most popular collaborative problem solving formats. They are organized to apply a systematic process designed to enhance understanding of the student's behavior and to guide design of effective intervention plans. These team structures can be effective mechanisms to intervene early and successfully improve problem behavior.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS ADDRESSED:

- *The school uses a collaborative planning and problem solving approach as a response to ongoing behavior problems.*
  - *Indicator: Problem-solving teams (e.g., BAT/TAT) provide quick and timely responses to a wide range of inappropriate student behaviors.*
  - *Indicator: Staff use problem solving strategies and problem-solving processes to design intervention strategies/ positive behavior supports that assist students in developing alternative behaviors.*

INTRODUCTION

Over the last decade, one of the early intervention strategies that has demonstrated effectiveness in resolving concerns about student behavior is the problem-solving/solution–focused approach. This approach includes a systematic process for addressing concerns about students' problem behaviors early, after the onset of that behavior. Teams of educators are the structures used to implement this process. The teams' composition, as well as the process used, may vary from school to school; however, the focus and outcome of their work is the same – to design interventions that will alleviate the problem situation.

A PROBLEM SOLVING/SOLUTION-FOCUSED APPROACH SCHOOL-BASED STUDENT/STAFF SUPPORT TEAMS

School-based teams are varyingly known as SATs; and Student/Staff Support Teams, Teacher Assistance Teams, TATs; Building Assistance Teams, BATs; School-wide Assistance Teams, SWATs; Student Support Teams, SSTs. They are similar in many aspects but differ somewhat in focus.

> ***"The various formats for problem solving teams hold in common a number of basic beliefs:***
> ***(1) responsibility for student success and problem resolution should be shared among school staff;***
> ***(2) the pooling of diverse talents and expertise among school staff is of significant value; and***
> ***(3) a forum for routine and timely problem solving should exist at the building level."***
>
> *-Phillips and McCullough, 1993*

Teacher/Building Assistance Teams

Chalfant, Pysh, and Moultrie conceptualized the Teacher Assistance Team, TAT, in 1979. The authors viewed TATs as facilitative structures that could support the collaboration and empowerment of teachers, address individual student and school-wide system problems, provide preventive intervention for at-risk students, and identify appropriate referrals for special education. The primary focus of the TAT is providing support to teachers as they work with individual students. If patterns of problem behavior among groups of students occur, the emphasis may shift from solving individual student problems to solving system problems.

In Iowa, schools have adopted different names for their teams. However, regardless of the name, be it BAT, TAT, or SWAT, the premise is the same: Multiple heads are better than one. Classroom teachers can be effective with a significant number of problems if resolution of the problems is submitted to a systematic problem-solving/solution-focused process. The assumption is that interventions developed collectively are more likely to be unique, effective and implemented with greater integrity than those developed individually.

Student Assistance Teams

Schools in Iowa originally formed Student Assistance Teams, SATs, to provide interventions with students suspected of substance abuse. Typically, they have been high school teams because of the problems they address. In many respects, SATs and TATs are similar. Both are building-based and use processes of early identification of problems that interfere with a student's needs and may affect a student's school performance and healthy development.

TATs focus on supporting teachers and designing interventions that will assist them in their work with students that are exhibiting problem behavior. SATs focus on students and intervene by referring them to appropriate resources. The primary responsibility of the SAT is to receive and screen students who are referred to them. Once a student is referred, the team gathers information about the student's physical and emotional health from a variety of relevant school sources. The information collected helps the team to decide upon next steps.

If a basis for the concern is determined, TAT members meet with the student and parent(s), either together or separately, to gather additional information and to make appropriate suggestions, such as referral to a tutor or to an outside agency. A plan for follow-up is then made.

Team Composition

Team membership varies depending upon the staffing and needs of a particular school. Student Assistance Team membership often consists of support staff such as guidance counselors, school nurses, school social workers and psychologists, prevention specialists, and/or physical education staff. The team calls upon parents and the referred student to provide information and to be the recipients of the team's recommendations.

In contrast, a core team of teachers, the parent, and when appropriate, the student comprise the Teacher Assistance Team. When a referral requires specialized expertise, the core team calls upon auxiliary members that serve on an *ad hoc* basis.

The Process

Teams may adopt different processes to help them understand the problem presented and to design a response. In the case of SATs, the process may be one that leads to referral of students and their families to a substance abuse treatment agency or counselor. For BATs/TATs the process may be problem-solving or solution-focused. Practitioners using problem-solving processes believe that it is important to analyze a problem thoroughly to understand it and design interventions that have a high probability of working. On the other hand, those using a solutions-focused approach believe in giving less attention to the presenting problem. Instead, they identify and build upon the strengths of the student in their interventions, with the conviction that to do so will also alleviate the problem situation. Regardless of the process used by these teams, their intent is the same – to intervene early after a student's problem is identified and to provide ways by which that problem may be alleviated and the student can achieve success.

Summary

Team formats are proving to be effective and efficient structures for school-based problem solving. They are important components of a school's continuum of student-focused programs and services. Key to the success of any team are the skill levels of the members. Knowledge of both processes and content are essential. Somewhat limited research indicates high levels of problem resolution and consumer satisfaction with the process (Phillips, V. and McCullough, 1993).

Comparison of Characteristics of TATs and SATs

Characteristics	Teacher Assistance Teams	Student Assistance Teams
Purpose	Provide support to teachers in intervening with individual students, groups of students, or the system.	Intervene early with students and, when appropriate, refer them for assistance.
Target of Assistance	Teachers	Students and their families
Scope of the work	Individual students and the system	Students only
Data Collection	Student and setting data	Student data only
Team Composition	Usually 3-5 general education teachers, although composition may vary.	6-8 trained school staff, especially health professionals
Phase 1	Problem Identification	Problem Identification
Phase 2	Problem Analysis	Screening
Phase 3	Behavior Intervention Plan	Referral
Phase 4	Follow-up	Follow-up
Parent Involvement	Part of the team	Recipient of referral
Student Involvement	Member of the team, when appropriate	Target of the intervention

Learn More About It:

- For assistance with your team training, contact your area education agency.
- **Web sites:**
  - North Central Regional Educational Laboratory: http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/envrnmnt/drugfree/sa1lk.23.htm
- **In this Handbook:** See additional briefs, especially *Early Intervention and Positive Behavioral Supports.* In other sections of the manual, please refer to *Early Warning, Timely Response, Safeguarding Our Children: An Action Guide*, and "*Success4's* Critical Elements."

Information Brief

Bullying and Harassment

Our schools must create caring, respectful, and encouraging communities in order to provide safe supportive environments where learning flourishes. Improvement efforts should include attention to each school's culture, the quality of interpersonal relationships (student to staff, staff to student, staff to staff, and student to student), and the nature and quality of learning experiences. Bullying prevention should be a school-wide effort designed to send a message that bullying will not be accepted in the school. An environment of genuine concern and acceptance of all individuals, free of stereotyping, where high levels of learning occur characterizes caring, encouraging school climates.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS ADDRESSED: *Students in our school have positive relationships with their peers; show concern and caring for others; treat others with dignity and respect regardless of their individual differences. Our school is a caring, respectful, encouraging community.*

INTRODUCTION

Worldwide, bullying and harassment in schools cause problems that can negatively impact general school climate and the right of students to learn in a safe environment. Lifelong negative consequences may occur, both for the perpetrator of bullying and harassment and for the targets of this behavior.

The key component of bullying is physical or psychological intimidation that occurs repeatedly over time to create an ongoing pattern of harassment and abuse. It is characterized by an imbalance of power. Bullying consists of **direct behaviors,** such as teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting, or stealing, that are initiated by one or more students against a target or targets, and **indirect behaviors,** such as spreading rumors, that cause targets to be socially isolated through intentional exclusion.

Harassment in school occurs when a student or adult's behavior or language creates a hostile, offensive or intimidating school environment.

Bullying and harassment may be the impetus of other behaviors that disrupt the school environment. The common thread among all recent school shooters was that they all had been targets of bullying and harassment. During the Fall of 2000, a study by the National Threat Assessment Center, run by the U.S. Secret Service, found that in more than two-thirds of 37 school shootings, the attackers felt "persecuted, bullied, threatened, attacked or injured" (Bowles, *USA Today*, 4-17-2001). Harassment and bullying can lead to suicide, one of the highest causes of death among adolescents.

"Being bullied is not just an unpleasant rite of passage through childhood, it's a public health problem that merits attention."
- Duane Alexander, Director, Child Health Institute

How prevalent is bullying and harassment and how does it impact the school environment?

Bullying traditionally has been accepted as some perverse sort of child's play and a part of the growing-up process. Today, bullying is rightfully recognized for what it is — an abusive behavior that often leads to greater and prolonged violent behavior or depression.

Research funded by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (1998), found that about 30 percent of kids in grades six through 10 reported being involved in bullying (13 percent as the bully, 11 percent as targets of bullying and six percent as both) (Olweus, 1993). More than 160,000 students skip school every day because they fear bullies, according to the National Association of School Psychologists (Bowles, *USA Today*, 4-17-2001). Direct bullying seems to increase through the elementary school years, peak in the middle school years and decline during the high school years. However, indirect bullying and harassment by way of verbal abuse appears to remain constant through high school.

The following behaviors may create a hostile, offensive or intimidating school environment:

- Degrading, demeaning or insulting verbal statements or writings related to a student's race, religion, ethnic background, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
- Graffiti, slogans or other displays, which contain racial, ethnic, religious slurs, or insults based on another student's gender, sexual orientation or disability.
- Treatment of a student in an unfavorable way because the student submitted to or rejected sexual advances or requests for a social relationship.

Although boys who bully typically engage in direct bullying methods, girls who bully are more apt to use subtle, indirect strategies. Boys tend to be more likely than girls to engage in and be targets of bullying.

Who are the players?

Three types of students are the players in the practice of bullying and harassment: the **bully** is the instigator of the behavior, the **target** acts as a host for the aggressive behavior, and the **witness** takes on the role of mediator, whether actively taking part in the confrontation or passively standing aside.

The Bully

Though many students who engage in bullying have a need to feel powerful and in control, there is little evidence to support the contention that bullies victimize others because they feel bad about themselves. Bullies usually have little empathy for the targets of their actions. Bullies typically are larger than their victims and have more positive attitudes about violence than their peers.

The Target

Targets of bullying can be insecure and cautious and suffer from low self-esteem; rarely defending themselves or retaliating when confronted by bullying students. They may lack the social skills to develop lasting friendships and are often socially isolated. Parents of the targets often are overprotective (Batsche and Knoff, 1994, Olweus, 1993). Targets of bullying report feelings of vengefulness, anger and self-pity after a bullying incident (Borg, 1998).

A strong correlation exists between bullying other students during the school year and engaging in criminal behavior as adults. Chronic bullies seem to continue their behaviors into adulthood, negatively influencing their ability to develop and maintain positive relationships (Limber, Nation, Juvenile Justice Bulletin, April 1998).

Targets of bullying often fear school and consider it to be an unsafe and unhappy place. Being the target of bullying increases the student's isolation, because peers do not want to lose social status by associating with them or because their peers don't want to increase the risks of being bullied themselves. Depression and low self-esteem can continue for the target into adulthood (Olweus, 1993, Batsche and Knoff, 1994).

The Witness:

Most students in a school setting are neither the bully nor the target. They are bystanders who can add momentum to the bullying by way of their own passive behavior. If witnesses do nothing to prevent or put an end to the bullying, they are giving the bully more power to continue inappropriate behaviors. The witness to bullying and harassment can provide support to the bully without actively taking a part in the bullying. But the group of students who witness bullying can become active in developing a school climate that does not accept the bully's behavior.

"You can outnumber the bullies if you teach the silent majority to stand up," states Carla Garrity, Denver psychologist and bullying expert. In one Canadian study, 76 percent of the students believed that they should help the target of bullying, or actively try to intervene in the situation (Charach, Pepler and Ziegler, 1995). The first step is to allow and encourage this group to stand against bullying by teaching them that they can make a difference simply by the way they react when they witness bullying in their school.

What can be done about bullying and harassment?

Services, Strategies and Suggested Training: Create a school culture that focuses on the quality of interpersonal relationships (student to staff, staff to student, staff to staff and student to student) where there is genuine concern, caring and acceptance of all individuals, regardless of their individual differences.

- Post school-wide rules against bullying, accompanied by consistent sanctions.
- Help witnesses develop behaviors that do not encourage bullying, and actually help to put an end to school environments that support bullying. Ask witnesses to refuse to join in or watch the bullying, to speak out to the bully, to report bullying they see, to invite the target of bullying into their group and make an effort to include students who may normally feel left out or rejected.
- Provide student and adult mentors who assist in building self-esteem and foster mutual understanding of differences in others.
- Recruit parents, encouraging them to take part in the educational process.
- Provide classes for parents in parenting skills and for students in anger management.
- Develop behavior contracts and written behavior codes for students, teachers, staff and parents.
- Use discipline that encourages right behavior instead of issuing reprimands that punish wrong behavior.
- Organize friendship groups that support regularly victimized students and peer mediation programs that train students to work problems out among themselves.
- Monitor "hot spots" closely where bullying is likely to occur, e.g., the cafeteria and playground.

SUMMARY

When practical intervention plans are in place, it is possible to reduce bullying dramatically in the school environment. Intervention is primarily a question of changing attitudes, behavior, and routines in the school setting.

LEARN MORE ABOUT IT:

- **Web sites:**
  - Bully On Line: http://www.successunlimited.co.uk/
  - Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence: http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/factsheets
- **In this Handbook:** See "*Success4* Critical Elements," and other articles in this section on *Character Education*, *Conflict Resolution*, *Violation Prevention*, and *School-wide Discipline*.

Information Brief

Teen Suicide

Few things can cause such sadness as the suicide of a young person. It seems so improbable when youth would seem to have all the promise of a full life ahead of them. Yet, in Iowa, it is the second leading cause of death among adolescents 15 – 19 years old. Every month in our state, on average, two young people take their own lives (Youth, Suicide, Iowa Department of Public Health). Although there is no single cause for suicide, experts assert that teen suicide is preventable, both by creating the conditions that will promote the development of assets that youth need to thrive and by intervening early when warning signs alert us to pending problems.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS ADDRESSED:

- *The school is a caring, respectful, encouraging community.*
- *Effective, success-oriented learning opportunities are provided for all students.*
- *The school has a variety of programs and services intended to prevent or intervene early with students' social, emotional, and behavioral difficulties.*
- *The school, in collaboration with the community, provides a full and accessible array of specialized programs and services to address the needs of students experiencing social, emotional and/or behavioral problems.*
- *Schools support families to be partners in their children's education.*
- *Schools, community agencies and organizations establish working partnerships to support students and families.*
- *Community agencies/organizations, individuals and schools work together to provide and engage in asset-building activities that are known to be factors that contribute to success for children and youth in school and throughout life and that support families in their efforts to raise their children.*
- *A community-based comprehensive system of integrated services is linked with schools in the district.*

INTRODUCTION

Over the past 20 years, the suicide rate for teens 15-19 years of age has increased by six percent. For adolescents 10-14 years of age, the suicide rate increased more than 100 percent. (National Youth Violence Prevention Center, July 2001). In addition to the statistics cited above, the Iowa Department of Public Health reports the following about Iowa's youth:

- Youth suicides outnumber youth homicides 4 to 1.
- Youth suicide rates are higher in rural areas, whereas youth homicide rates are higher in urban areas.
- Male youth are four times more likely than females to complete suicide.
- Female youth are two times more likely than males to attempt suicide.
- More than 60 percent of suicides involve a firearm.
- Self-reported survey data indicate that more than 20 percent of high school students had seriously considered committing suicide over a one-year period. Another 23 percent made plans to commit suicide or actually made a suicide attempt during the year preceding the survey.

WHO IS SUICIDAL?

Suicide is a complex behavior that is usually caused by a combination of risk factors associated with higher rates of suicide without the presence of relevant protective factors. For many teens, suicide attempts seem to be the only solution to a troubled life. Experts who have studied the causes of teen suicide have reached no definitive answers. They have, however, cited a myriad of contributing environmental factors: problems in families such as divorce, conflict, abuse; poor impulse control connected to exposure to violence in the media; isolation and alienation from caring adults at home and at school; access to guns and the availability of drugs; and pressures at school from bullying and from higher academic standards.

> ***"Two teenagers burst into their Colorado high school...and gunned down 13 people. But nearly lost in the avalanche of reaction was the fact that the young men were also on a suicide mission."***
>
> *- Jessica Portner, 2000*

Risk Factors

Based on various studies, risk factors for suicide are:

- Previous suicide attempts. A youth that has attempted suicide is likely to attempt suicide again.
- Mental disorders combined with alcohol or substance abuse. Research shows that more than 90 percent of young people who complete suicide have a diagnosable mental or substance abuse disorder, or both.
- Family history of suicide.
- Stressful life event often precedes a suicide or attempt.
- Lack of available mental health care.
- Easy access to lethal methods, especially guns.
- Exposure to the suicidal behavior of others.
- Incarceration in juvenile correctional facilities.

Firearms are the most common method of suicide by youth and despondent teenagers. More than 60 percent of youth suicides between the ages of 10 and 19 years were firearm-related (National Youth Violence Prevention

Center, July 2001). Hanging or suffocation follows far behind, being the choice of roughly 23 percent of both male and female suicide victims. Smaller percentages die from drug overdose, drowning, falling, or slitting their wrists (J. Portner, 2000).

Early Warning Signs

Although there is no sure way to predict who will attempt suicide, a brochure distributed by the Iowa Department of Public Health, *Youth Suicide: Information for Adults Who Care About Youth,* states that 80 percent of the time, people who kill themselves have given definite signals or have talked about suicide. School staff should be familiar with warning signs of potential suicide. Early warning signs that may signal a pending suicide attempt are:

- Sad, anxious, or "empty" mood
- Declining school performance
- Withdrawal from friends and regular activities
- Violent actions, rebellious behavior, running away
- Change in sleep habits (sleeping too much or too little)
- Changes in weight or appetite
- Drug and alcohol use
- Unusual neglect of personal appearance
- Marked personality change
- Persistent boredom, difficulty concentrating
- Frequent complaints about physical symptoms, often related to emotions, such as headaches, stomachaches, fatigue, etc.
- Loss of pleasure/interest in social and sports activities
- No tolerance for praise or rewards

A teenager contemplating suicide may give signals that should always be taken seriously (American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 1997):

- Complaints about being a bad person, feeling "rotten inside"
- Verbal hints: "Nothing matters," "I won't see you again…"
- Putting affairs in order: giving things away, cleaning room, disposing of favorite items
- Becoming suddenly cheerful after seeming depressed
- Showing signs of psychosis

THE ROLE OF SCHOOLS

Suicide prevention

Schools have a critical role to play in the prevention of youth suicide. Among prevention activities in which schools should engage are:

- Understanding risk factors and causes of behavior
- Developing and implementing effective prevention strategies in the context of evaluation research
- Creating a school environment of caring, acceptance, and support

The National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center cautions that some types of school-based youth suicide awareness and prevention programs have had unintended negative effects. The programs appear to suggest that suicide is an option for young people who have some risk factors. In that sense, they normalize suicide. Nevertheless, school administrators can develop a school environment that promotes overall mental health of students by reducing risk factors within the school.

Early Intervention

Efforts should focus on the detection of youth most likely to be suicidal by confidentially screening for depression, substance abuse, and suicidal tendencies. Communication with students is imperative to all aspects of a healthy school environment, especially with those youth who may be contemplating personal harm. The American Psychiatric Association and the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry point out that when you communicate with a youth who you believe may be contemplating suicide, you are showing them that you are a caring adult, concerned about their well being. In addition to establishing a school environment where open and caring communication among adults and students is the norm, a school should have early intervention processes in place, including referral procedures that can provide students with assistance.

When a Suicide Occurs

A district's school safety plan should contain procedures for addressing preparedness, crisis management, and the aftermath of suicide or an attempted suicide. In the unfortunate event that either should occur, staff must be trained to implement those procedures immediately. See the "Crisis Management" section of this handbook for guidance in developing these procedures.

SUMMARY

Suicide among youth is increasing at an alarming rate. While many factors from negative family environment to mental predisposition come into play, caring adults can diligently focus their efforts on identifying risk factors and seeking help for students in need. Schools can provide an environment that supports the emotional and academic needs of students, and communicates the message that caring adults listen to the needs of students.

LEARN MORE ABOUT IT:

- **Web sites:**
  - National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center: http://www.safeyouth.org/topics/suicide.htm/
  - American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry: http://www.aacap.org/publications/factsfam/suicide.htm
  - American Psychiatric Association Online: http://www.psych.org.public_info/teen.html
  - Iowa Department of Public Health: http://www.idph.state.ia.us/
- **Hotlines:** *Statewide 24 Hour Crisis Line* – 1/800-332-4224; *Iowa Teen Line* – 1/800-443-8336; *National Suicide Hotline:* 1/800-SUICIDE
- **In this Handbook:** See "*Success4* Critical Elements," and other articles in this section on *Positive Youth Development, Resiliency, Positive Behavioral Supports, Risk-Focused Prevention, Early Intervention*

Information Brief

Juvenile Court School Liaisons

Many students who are truant and have other behavior problems in school also have behavior problems at home and in the community. The school and juvenile court may be working with the same young person but too frequently do not coordinate their efforts. Juvenile Court School Liaisons provide this link. Schools and Juvenile Court Services can be more effective if they work together to provide intensive school-based supervision for at-risk and delinquent youth.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS ADDRESSED:

- *The school, in collaboration with the community, provides a full and accessible array of specialized programs and services to address the needs of students experiencing social, emotional and/or behavioral problems.*
- *Schools and community agencies and organizations establish working partnerships to support students and their families.*
- *A community-based comprehensive system of integrated services is linked with schools in the district.*

WHAT ARE JUVENILE COURT SCHOOL LIAISONS?

Juvenile Court School Liaisons (JCSLs) are staff who work under cooperative arrangements between local schools and the juvenile court. They provide intensive involvement with at-risk and delinquent youth, and they promote important collaboration between schools and the juvenile court. Juvenile Court School Liaisons have the day-to-day personal relationship with youth that the school setting provides, but also can call upon the resources of the court.

Juvenile Court School Liaisons fulfill various functions, depending upon the needs of the school and community. Their duties may include:

- Working with the Juvenile Court Officer to supervise students who are on probation;
- Working with individual students who have been identified as at-risk, providing prevention services and linking them and their families with resources in the community;
- Working to reduce truancy;
- Responding to disruptive behavior in the classroom so all students can learn better; and
- Working with at-risk and delinquent students after school and during the summer to prevent delinquency during these high-risk times.

Who do Juvenile Court School Liaisons Serve?

Juvenile Court Liaisons have limited caseloads, ideally about 25 students who are selected jointly by the school and Juvenile Court Services. These include students who are on probation to juvenile court, students who are identified as being at-risk by either the school or the court, students with truancy problems and/or disruptive school behavior, and other students, as time permits.

How many JCSLs are there?

Approximately 160 liaisons were assigned to work in middle and high schools across Iowa during the 2000-2001 school year, an increase from approximately 70 in 1996-1997.

How are JCSLs funded?

The Iowa Legislature makes an appropriation for school based supervision to the Iowa Department of Human Services (IDHS). The IDHS transfers funds to the control of Juvenile Court Services who then negotiates contracts with local school districts. Participating school districts are required to provide at least 25 percent of the cost of their Juvenile Court School Liaison.

Juvenile Court Services and the school district provide supervision of the JCSL. The Chief Juvenile Court Officers and the Iowa Attorney General's Office sponsor an annual training conference.

REASONS FOR GROWTH AND EFFECTIVENESS

- **Liaisons are school-based.** School is the most effective place for Juvenile Court Services to work with youth. JCSLs work with students in their every day surroundings. They get to know their schools, their neighborhoods, their friends and their families. They have the opportunity to see the student interact with peers and teachers. In addition, being on site, they are able to intervene immediately in conflicts and disruptive behavior.
- **Liaisons provide the intensity and frequency of involvement with youth** that is necessary for success. This agrees with research findings that intensive one-on-one involvement is the best and most effective way to deal with at-risk youth.
- **Liaisons help spark collaboration between schools and the court.** JCSLs are at the

intersection of these two crucial systems and they foster collaboration.

- **The liaison program is flexible and locally run.** There is flexibility within the job description for Juvenile Court School Liaisons to reflect the needs of the local school and community.
- **Liaisons help at-risk students and families connect with other community resources.** JCSLs often find creative ways to meet the needs of families, bringing together resources that otherwise might be fragmented and ineffective.
- **Liaisons help improve the school environment for all students.** *All* students learn better when schools are quieter, safer and less disrupted.

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Some JCSLs work with at-risk and delinquent youth after school and during the summer. A study conducted for the U.S. Justice Department confirms the need for such work. The study tracked juvenile crime by time of day in eight states, including Iowa, and found that the prime hours for violent juvenile crime are from 3-8 p.m. In fact, 3:00 p.m. is the peak hour for all juvenile crime. According to the study, "When the school bell rings leaving millions of young people without responsible adult supervision or constructive activities, juvenile crime suddenly triples and prime time for juvenile crime begins."

Sending at-risk and delinquent youth out of the schools in the middle of the afternoon without adult supervision or constructive activities often is a recipe for bad decisions. Such youth are more likely to engage in assaults and vandalism, and they also are at much higher risk of personally destructive behaviors such as pregnancy and drug or alcohol abuse. In Iowa, some JCSLs are playing a much-needed role in after-school programs that provide structure to youth during these crucial hours.

RESULTS

Iowa communities have reported significant improvement by students receiving services through the Juvenile Court School Liaison program, including fewer new offenses, better school attendance and better school performance. The Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning Division of the Iowa Department of Human Rights is now collecting statewide information.

Pennsylvania has used Juvenile Court Officers much like Iowa uses JCSLs. A University of Pennsylvania study showed promising results there, including significant reductions in both new arrests and out-of-home placements for youth in their School-based Probation (SBP) program. Twenty-one percent of the School-based Probation group youth were arrested for serious new offenses, compared to 82 percent in the control group. Youth in an SBP sample had 40 percent fewer out-of-home placements and less than half the average number of days spent in out-of-home placement (35 days versus 83 days), for an estimated savings of $6,665 for every case assigned to the program.

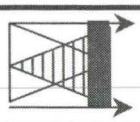
SUMMARY

Iowa's Juvenile Court School Liaisons provide intensive services to at-risk and delinquent students and an important link between schools and juvenile court. The program is locally run and school-based. It is collaborative. It combines law enforcement and prevention. It improves school safety. It embraces education. When schools, juvenile court and others all work together, good things happen; learning goes up and juvenile crime goes down.

Marilyn Lantz, Iowa Attorney General's Office, Grinnell, Iowa, wrote this Information Brief especially for this *Safe Schools Leadership Handbook*. Thank you, Marilyn, for your contribution.

LEARN MORE ABOUT IT:

- **WEB SITES:**
  - Iowa Attorney General's Office: http://www.iowaattorneygeneral.org/
- **IN THIS HANDBOOK:** See "*Success4* Critical Elements," and other articles in this section on *Positive Behavioral Supports, Risk-Focused Prevention, Early Intervention, Mentoring,* and *After School Programs.*



Information Brief

Intensive Interventions

As schools commit to educating all students and fostering their healthy development, one area that requires attention is that of intensive, targeted interventions for those with serious emotional and behavioral difficulties. The problems presented to school personnel by students who exhibit behaviors that differ greatly from other students, disrupt the learning environment, and challenge the training and skills of educators have caused some to question the role of schools in students' lives. Although schools may provide an array of services to address the needs of troubled students, current studies support as effective the development of systems of care, of which school is one very important partner with families and community-based services.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS ADDRESSED:

- *The school, in collaboration with the community, provides a full and accessible array of specialized programs and services to address the needs of students experiencing social, emotional and/or behavioral problems.*
- *Schools and community agencies and organizations establish working partnerships to support students and their families.*
- *A community-based comprehensive system of integrated services is linked with schools in the district.*

INTRODUCTION

In every school, there is a population of students who experience moderate to severe emotional and behavioral problems that significantly interfere with their daily functioning and quality of life across multiple domains – school, family, peers, and community. Experts estimate these students make up from three to ten percent of the total student population. If schools are to provide adequately for these students' complex needs, they must first believe they have a responsibility to provide necessary services.

Those who question that premise state that such activity will take time away from the educational mission of schools, or that schools working in this arena infringe on the rights and values of families. Still others question the unsystematic and fragmented way that programs and services are carried out (Adelman and Taylor, 1999). School personnel may feel they lack the skills needed to deal with the students' challenging behaviors and the resources required to provide appropriate services. To be effective in dealing with mental health and behavioral concerns, schools must join families and communities to provide comprehensive, multi-faceted, and integrated services as part of their school improvement efforts.

> ***"It is not a new insight that mental health and psychosocial problems must be addressed if schools are to function satisfactorily and if students are to learn and perform effectively."***
>
> *-Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor, UCLA, 1999*

THE PROBLEM

A report entitled *National Agenda for Achieving Better Results for Children and Youth with Serious Emotional Disturbance* (1994), prepared for the U.S. Department of Education by the Chesapeake Institute, pointed out the critical importance of improving services to students with mental health and behavioral needs. If Iowa's population of students with serious emotional and behavioral problems follows the national trends cited in the report, some of which are restated below, then the results could alert us to the potential impact of the problem on our state's indicators of student success in school and in our communities.

> ***"Education plays a critical role in the development of children. Positive learning experiences help to prevent emotional and behavioral problems. Furthermore, schools provide a logical setting for both early identification for children at risk for serious emotional disturbance and for effective delivery of services……Despite this acknowledged importance a 1992 study found schools to be only marginally involved in systems of care."***
>
> *- Promising Practices in Children's Mental Health, 1998*

Iowa Indicators of Student Success in School

Iowa Code (§256.11) and Iowa Administrative Code (§281, Chapter 12) require schools in Iowa to work toward meeting a set of state indicators. To what extent does the population of troubled youngsters influence the results? Although specific data are not available for the state, national data may inform the work of schools that strive to close the gaps between current and desired levels of performance (*National Agenda for Achieving Better Results for Children and Youth with Serious Emotional Disturbance*, 1994):

- *Academic Outcomes:* Students with serious emotional and behavioral difficulties get lower grades than any other group of students. They have records of more frequent course failure and lower performance on competency tests than do other students with disabilities.
- *Graduation Rates:* The percentage of students with serious emotional and behavioral problems who earn high school diplomas is about 34 percent less than the rate for similarly aged youth in the general population.
- *Dropout Rates:* In grades 9-12, twice as many students with serious emotional and behavioral problems drop out of school compared to all high school students.

Impact on the Community

- *Involvement with the Juvenile Justice System:* Authorities arrest one out of five students with serious emotional and behavioral difficulties before they leave school compared to one in nearly 17 in the general student population. They will arrest 58 percent of all students with serious emotional and behavioral problems within five years of leaving school. For dropouts, the percentage rises to 73 percent.

Students with serious emotional and behavioral problems are more likely than students with other disabilities to be placed in restrictive settings. Placements made out of neighborhood schools and communities are very costly to communities and disruptive to families. They impede many students from developing the academic and social competencies they will need for their entire lives.

These figures probably tell us what we already suspected. Nevertheless, they do call our attention to the potential loss of future workers and contributing citizens, as well as the sizeable investment of dollars and resources that result from a failure to habilitate these young people by providing them with effective programs and services.

"Improving outcomes for children with serious emotional disturbance depends not only on improving their school and learning opportunities, but also on promoting effective collaboration across other critical areas of support: families, social services, health, mental health, and juvenile justice."

- Woodruff,et al, (1998)

THE SOLUTION

The National Agenda

The National Agenda for Achieving Better Results for Children and Youth with Serious Emotional Disturbance (1994) developed by the Chesapeake Institute for the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services Office of Special Education Programs set forth seven targets for improved services to students with serious emotional disturbance:

The Seven Targets of the National Agenda

1. *To foster the provision of engaging, useful, and positive learning opportunities.*
   - Provide culturally responsive, student-centered opportunities to learn that are characterized by high expectations and tailored to meet individual needs.
   - Support coordinated initiatives that improve the effectiveness of teachers, families, schools, and other agencies and contribute to the whole development of students with serious emotional and behavioral difficulties and those at risk for these problems.
2. *To foster initiatives that strengthen the capacities of schools and communities* to serve students with serious emotional and behavioral disabilities in the least restrictive environments appropriate.
   - Develop the capacity to integrate students with challenging behaviors into neighborhood schools and regular classrooms.
   - Provide early intervention, prevention, and pre-referral activities, such as problem solving teams.
3. *To value and address diversity.*
   - Undertake approaches that improve the capacity of individuals and systems to respond skillfully, respectfully, and effectively to students, their families, teachers, and providers in a manner that recognizes and affirms their dignity and worth.
   - Support culturally competent approaches.
4. *To collaborate with families to provide family-focused services* that will improve educational outcomes.
   - Ensure that services are open, helpful, culturally competent, accessible to families and school, as well as community-based.
   - Implement service planning that reflects the input of families' goals, knowledge, cultures, and need for additional services.
5. *To promote appropriate assessments* for the identification, design, and delivery of services for students with emotional and behavioral problems.
   - Provide assessments that are culturally competent, ethical, and functional.
   - Ensure that ongoing, continuous assessment captures the student's changing developmental needs.
6. *To provide ongoing skill development and support.*
   - Provide ongoing support and professional development of teachers and other service providers.
   - Hold field-based training that promotes collaboration among families, teachers, paraprofessionals, and mental health professionals.

7. *To create comprehensive and collaborative systems.*
   - Promote systems change that will result in coherent services built around the individual needs of students with or at risk of developing serious emotional and behavioral disabilities.
   - Provide family-centered, community-, school-based, and appropriately funded services.
   - Create systems that are outcome oriented, employ uniform definitions, provide individualized and family-centered services, and respond effectively, promptly, and flexibly during any crisis.

The Role of Schools

Schools may take multiple approaches to addressing the intensive needs of students with moderate to severe emotional and behavior problems. Among these are special education services, alternative educational programs, school-based mental health services, and systems of care. These services should be individualized to meet the needs of students and their families and provided in the least restrictive environment appropriate.

Special education: Not all students with moderate to severe emotional and behavioral problems are eligible to receive special education services. For those who are, the 1997 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) affirmed the intent that special education be an array of services and supports delivered to a student rather than a place to take a student. Use separate classes and facilities only when the goals for the students cannot be achieved or the needed services and supports cannot be delivered effectively in the regular educational environment. A system of positive behavioral interventions and supports can successfully address the special needs of students with emotional and behavioral concerns in a variety of settings, including the regular education classroom.

Alternative educational programs: Following suspension, expulsion or students dropping out, some school districts provide for the continuation of their education through alternative educational programs (Iowa Code §280.21B), either in the student's home, school or a separate setting. Some programs have a behavioral focus while others may include day treatment.

School-based mental health services: Iowa school districts, with access to the services of community agencies, have adopted a comprehensive school health or school-based youth services model. These models co-locate an array of community services in the school. Successful programs are an integral part of a school's improvement plans and weave mental health principles and practices throughout daily life in the school.

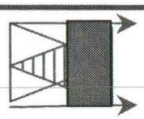
Systems of care: The Center for Mental Health Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) defines a system of care as an integrated continuum of mental health and related services and supports designed to ensure that children and youth with serious emotional and behavioral problems and their families get the right service at the right time as close to their homes as possible. The design and delivery of services in a system of care optimally begins with the students who are exhibiting problems and their families. Individuals who represent the services that can best address the needs of the students and their families form a team. The team develops, implements, and continuously monitors a plan that has the active involvement of the family and is built on its strengths.

SUMMARY

It is possible to improve outcomes for children and youth with serious emotional and behavioral problems. Part of the answer lies in the beliefs that schools have a role to play in addressing the needs of these students and that they are worth the investment. Another part of the answer is in the availability of resources – time, trained personnel, and finance – needed to provide the services. And finally, a part of the answer lies in one's vision and commitment to develop and implement the services required.

LEARN MORE ABOUT IT:

- **Web sites:**
  - Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice: http://cecp.air.org/
  - School Mental Health Project/Center for Mental Health in Schools, UCLA: http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/
  - *Success4*, Iowa Department of Education: http://www.state.ia.us/educate/programs/success4/index.html
- **In this Handbook:** See "*Success4* Critical Elements," *Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe School*, Chapter 4; *Safeguarding Our Children: An Action Guide*, Chapter 4; and *A Continuum of Programs and Services, Comprehensive Programming, Positive Behavioral Supports,* and *Wraparound Services* in this section of Information Briefs.



Information Brief

Wraparound

Students with significant emotional and behavioral problems are a small (1-7 percent) yet demanding portion of a school's population. A slightly larger percentage (5-15 percent) includes those students at-risk for developing such problems as well. One process called "wraparound" promises improved outcomes for these populations. Wraparound is a way of working with students and their families to tailor services to their needs. One or more agencies, including the school, collaborate with a family to design and implement a service plan. School personnel interested in an effective process to prevent potentially disruptive and even violent behavior and to create safe, disciplined school environments should consider integrating the wraparound process into their continuum of programs and services.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS ADDRESSED: *The school has a variety of programs and services intended to prevent or intervene early with students' social, emotional, and behavioral difficulties.*

- *The school uses a collaborative planning and problem solving approach as a response to ongoing behavior problems.*
- *The school, in collaboration with the community, provides a full and accessible array of specialized programs and services to address the needs of students experiencing social, emotional and/or behavioral problems.*
- *A community-based comprehensive system of integrated services is linked with schools in the district.*

INTRODUCTION:

Everyday in schools across the country, educators confront problems posed by students with challenging behavior. Although schools may have effective school-wide prevention and early intervention practices in place, there always will be a small group of youngsters who continue to have behavioral difficulties, some of which are significant and complex.

In order to address these problems effectively, schools, families, and community agencies must become partners in the child's education and personal-social development. Wraparound is an effective process for providing comprehensive support for children with emotional problems across all areas of their lives. School-based wraparound planning complements a system of positive behavior supports that includes proactive school-wide practices along with a problem solving approach to problem behaviors.

WHAT IS WRAPAROUND?

Wraparound is a philosophy of care that results in a uniquely designed, individualized plan for a child and family. It "reflects the voices and choices of the child and family" (Eber, et al, 2001). Contrary to what is often thought, wraparound is *not* a set of programs and services. Instead, its focus is on the planning process. This process has its roots in the concept of a system of care, a community-based approach wherein a variety of professionals and agencies in collaboration with families deliver comprehensive and integrated services.

Wraparound is a family-centered, strength-based approach. It guides service planning for students with, or at-risk for, emotional and behavioral disabilities and their families, and it involves all the services and strategies needed to meet their needs. Today, schools, mental health, child welfare, juvenile justice, and other human service agencies are integrating wraparound philosophy and process into existing program structures (Burns & Goldman, 1999).

Community-Based Wraparound: Traditionally, community-based agencies in the mental health or child welfare systems initiate the wraparound planning process. Often, schools have been passive, if not at times reticent, participants in that process, perhaps because school personnel believe that attending to mental health issues requires specialized expertise. They also may be concerned that the services designed through a wraparound process will result in unrealistic expectations, undue burden, and excessive costs being placed on them. On the other hand, personnel from the human and social service systems also fail to include school personnel in the wraparound process.

School-Based Wraparound: Schools can play an integral role in any wraparound process. Schools not only are the places where youngsters spend a large portion of their waking hours, but they also are the places where a child's mental health or behavioral problems will manifest themselves. Schools often provide students with the best opportunity to connect with the community (Eber, 1998). The school, in fact, is a likely place for this process to occur. While community-based wraparound plans may provide a general school plan that only addresses where the child goes to school, more in-depth, school-based wraparound planning can address necessary support so that a student can participate successfully in the classroom and other school settings. For these

reasons, there has been an increasing focus on school-based wraparound services.

The Team and Wraparound

The wraparound process brings together teachers, families and community representatives to form a planning team. Membership on a team varies from student to student. In part, this is because the family guides the determination of the specific team composition. With the assistance of a designated wraparound facilitator or resource coordinator, the family may select friends, neighbors, extended family members, church members, or colleagues from work in addition to agency staff who are already involved with their child. A parent–educator or parent advocate, and the child's special education case manager may be selected when applicable. This team works to develop a behavior support plan by achieving consensus on:

- specific and individualized outcomes,
- interventions based on the strengths and needs of the family and designed to ameliorate the concerns, and
- the supports needed to implement effectively the interventions designed.

The Wraparound Plan

Wraparound plans integrate and blend the myriad of perspectives brought to the process by the members of the team. Plans are practical and action-oriented and represent a binding commitment to follow through. They are, at the same time, comprehensive, family-centered and strength-based.

Life Domains in Wraparound Planning: The planning process includes examination of all areas of a child's life, termed "life domains." Teams decide whether or not a family has needs in each of these domains.

Life Domains		
Family	**School**	**Community**
• **Basic Needs**	• **Medical/Health**	
• **Recreational**	• **Safety**	
• **Social/Emotional**	• **Legal**	
• **Educational/Vocational**	• **Spiritual/Cultural**	
• **Other Problem Areas**		

Family-Centered/Strength-Based Planning: Key to the success of any wraparound plan is the extent to which the family is involved. Instead of being told what their problems and needs are and how they will be resolved, families actively engage in the planning process.

Listen to their stories - their dreams, visions, and goals; their strengths; what is working or what has worked before; whom they want on the team; and what options they wish to explore. The needs of all family members are considered across all domains, thus making this a family-centered rather than a child-centered process.

Together, team members identify and prioritize needs. Then the team brainstorms options for services, supports, and resources. These may range from keeping a journal to participating in a karate class at the local YMCA to becoming involved in psychotherapy at a mental health clinic. School-based options are important elements of any effective wraparound plan. Only options based on the strengths of the family should be selected. This strength-based approach increases the likelihood that the plan will succeed.

Fit within Existing Systems

The challenge to school leaders is to integrate the wraparound process into existing school practices and reorient staff to a different way of thinking. The most logical place to begin is to make it an integral part of the school's problem-solving/solution-focused approach to working with students with special needs. Although initially educators applied the process to students with the most complex needs, recent application by schools has extended to work with those at-risk who are not yet involved in special education, juvenile justice, mental health, or other child service systems.

Wraparound is a good fit for schools that have adopted a Positive Behavioral Supports approach to preventing and intervening in behavior challenges. Both focus on systems change, capacity building, outcome driven strategies and strength-based approaches. Positive behavior strategies are important components of wrap-around plans. Team involvement, coupled with the use of a problem-solving/solution-focused process, makes wraparound and PBS highly compatible. Both also underscore the need for skilled behavior specialists in the schools (Eber, 2001).

Summary

Wraparound is a process, not a set of programs and services, designed to meet the needs of students with challenging behavior and their families. This family-centered, strength-based approach is receiving increasing attention as a viable and effective school-based way to work with at-risk students and those with emotional and behavioral disabilities.

Learn More about It:

- **Web sites:** Illinois EBD Network: http://www.ebdnetwork-il.org
- **In this Handbook:** See additional briefs, especially the *Continuum of Programs and Services*, *Comprehensive Programming*, *Positive Behavioral Supports*, *Risk-Focused Prevention*, and *Early Intervention* in this section. In other sections of the manual, please refer to *Early Warning, Timely Response, Safeguarding Our Children: An Action Guide*, and "*Success4's* Critical Elements."

Information Brief

Alternative Educational Settings

By law, 26 states require that school districts make alternative education opportunities available to suspended or expelled students. Iowa is among them. In addition, the 1997 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) contains requirements for students with disabilities who carry a weapon to school or to a school function, or who knowingly possess, use, sell or solicit the sale of a controlled substance while at school or at a school function. Such requirements challenge local school districts to provide alternatives for students to continue their education when suspended or expelled under provisions of state and federal statutes.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS ADDRESSED:
- *A community-based comprehensive system of integrated services is linked with schools in the district.*
- *The school, in collaboration with the community, provides a full and accessible array of specialized programs and services to address the needs of students experiencing social, emotional and/or behavioral problems.*

"Instead of locking youth up, we need to unlock their potential. We need to bring them back to their community and provide the guidance and support they need."

- Mayor Daley - City of Chicago

INTRODUCTION

America's schools are experiencing higher numbers of violent incidents now than ever before. In fact, 82 percent of school districts surveyed by the National School Boards Association (NSBA) reported increasing violence within their schools during the past five years (*Creating Safe and Drug-Free Schools: An Action Guide*, September 1996).

Policies put in place locally to meet requirements of federal and state statutes have led school districts to expel or suspend students for violations. Iowa code (§280.17B) additionally requires schools to prescribe procedures for continued school involvement of suspended or expelled students for possession of a dangerous weapon and for their reintegration into the school.

Alternative education programs can provide not only a safe place for these students to meet each day, but also services that are necessary to bring students back to the traditional school setting or enter the work force. Without these services, research has shown a link between expulsion/suspension and later dropping out of school, with resulting personal and social costs (*Creating Safe and Drug-Free Schools: An Action Guide*, September 1996). It is in society's interest to ensure that all are educated to the equivalent of a high school education at the mastery level.

WHAT ARE ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS?

There are at least four different alternative educational settings - two long-term arrangements and two short-term placements. Perhaps the most common are alternative schools, referring to a broad array of programs that include magnet schools, charter schools, school-within-a-school, schools established to address the needs of at-risk youth, or private schools for chronically disruptive youth. Another type of alternative setting is for students with disabilities when the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) dictates that services can best be delivered in a setting other than a regular school, such as a day treatment or residential facility.

The third and fourth types of alternative settings are associated with suspension or expulsion of students for disciplinary reasons. The third type may be either short or long term and relates to suspension and expulsion covered under state and federal weapons and substance abuse laws. The fourth type of alternative setting is in the discipline provisions of IDEA 1997 and is short term. This brief focuses on the latter two types of alternative settings.

ACCOMMODATING EXPELLED OR SUSPENDED STUDENTS

National trends show significant increases in the number of students expelled each year and the length of time they are excluded from their schools. At the same time, nearly three million crimes take place in or near schools annually — or one every six seconds of the school day. The consensus among educators and others concerned with youth is that it is important for expelled students to receive educational services including counseling to help modify their behavior while they are away from their regular school (*Creating Safe and Drug-Free Schools: An Action Guide*, September 1996). The increase in the number of students excluded

from school, the passage of laws that require continuation of their education, and realization of the cost to students and communities when students don't complete their education and are sent to the streets without supervision have created a need for interim alternative education settings.

Developing the Alternative Education Program

Once suspended or expelled, students enter a program that differs from the traditional school environment in many ways. Students may continue their academic path with plans to return to the classroom or remain in the program through graduation. Some school systems modify existing programs to accommodate the needs of students expelled for misconduct while others create new programs, often in collaboration with social agencies or nonprofit organizations. The focus of the time spent in the alternative educational setting may be behavior management, counseling, and behavioral skills training, as well as academics.

Typically, these programs also differ in the ratio of students to teachers, the manner of presentation of academic subject matter, the setting, the link between school and community or workplaces, the emphasis on behavior management, and the availability of comprehensive support services. Several elements combine to comprise an effective and successful alternative education program (J. Kellmayer, March 1998):

- Small class sizes with low student-to-teacher ratios, comprised of students with and without disabilities
- Appropriate facilities to meet the needs of the student population, welcoming physical environment with the possibility of good peer models and strong relationships (such as a college campus)
- Voluntary participation of students and staff
- Student-centered curriculum and instruction involving the student in educational planning and decision making
- Ongoing communication between sending and receiving schools, with authority for local administration
- Flexibility in the role of the teacher with a competent staff trained in discipline
- Positive behavior supports and effective access to social services and counseling
- Parent involvement
- Appropriate technology to support the learning environment

OPTIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

"Interim alternative educational settings" has particular meaning within the discipline provisions contained in the re-authorized Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA 97). These provisions permit local school officials unilaterally to remove students to an interim alternative setting for a period not to exceed 45 days for a) carrying a weapon to school or to a school function and b) for knowingly possessing or using illegal drugs or selling or soliciting the sale of a controlled substance while at school or at a school function (IDEA 97, 34 CFR, §§300.520 & 521). In addition, if school officials believe students would pose a danger to themselves or others upon return to school, they may seek an order from an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) for a change in placement in the form of an interim alternative educational setting. Extensions of duration for this placement may also be sought from the judge.

In order to meet the requirements for providing students with disabilities a free and appropriate education (FAPE), IDEA 97 sets out requirements for the selection of an interim alternative setting: The setting must:

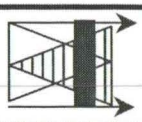
1) be determined by an IEP team;
2) be selected so as to enable the student to continue to progress in the general curriculum, although in another setting;
3) permit the student to continue to receive those services and modifications that will enable the student to meet the goals set out in the IEP; and
4) include services and modifications designed to address and prevent recurrence of the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action.

SUMMARY

Maintaining safe school environments may require that students who disrupt the workings of the school day with violent behavior be removed to an alternative educational setting where they can receive educational and other services until they are able to return to their regular school program. In order to serve all students and to ensure the safety of the school and community, appropriate alternative educational settings need to be available. Out of sight should not mean out of mind. With the cooperation of all involved, troubled students can re-enter the regular school setting, graduate, move on to post-high school education or enter the workforce and make a positive contribution to the community.

LEARN MORE ABOUT IT:

- **Web sites:**
  - Alternative Education Projects for Expelled Students: http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDFS/actguid/altersch.html
  - ERIC: http://eric-web.tc.columbia.edu/abstracts/ed412301.html
  - Alt-7: http://www.ed.mtu.edu/safe/alt-7.htm
- **In this Handbook:** See "*Success4* Critical Elements," and other articles in this section on *Positive Behavioral Supports, Wrap Around, Zero Tolerance, and Intensive Interventions.*



Information Brief

Zero Tolerance

The "take no prisoners" disciplinary practices of school districts across the country resulted in the suspension of 3.1 million students and the expulsion of 87,000 in 1998. Time lost by children and youth, in exposure to educational opportunities and participation in one of the most important contributors to their healthy development, is staggering. School administrators must maintain a delicate balance between ensuring that teaching and learning can take place in a safe haven and preparing ***all*** *students to become educated workers and productive citizens. Zero tolerance policies, while appearing to achieve the former, are barriers to the latter.*

CRITICAL ELEMENTS ADDRESSED:

- *Districts and schools ensure that safe, welcoming, accessible physical environments, inviting and conducive to learning, are provided.*
- *The school is a caring, respectful, encouraging community.*
- *The school, in collaboration with the community, provides a full and accessible array of specialized programs and services to address the needs of students experiencing social, emotional, intellectual, and/or behavioral problems.*

INTRODUCTION

Ninety-one percent of schools have adopted zero tolerance policies for bringing a weapon to school. Eighty-seven percent also have zero tolerance policies for alcohol and drugs, often resulting in mandatory expulsion no matter how small the infraction (Cauchon, 1999). This widespread use of exclusionary practices to deal with issues of safety is partly attributable to federal and state laws that require local districts to use them as sanctions for serious misconduct and to the belief by educators, parents, and community members that punishment is the most effective way of handling student misconduct.

"A society that will trade a little liberty for a little order will lose both, and deserve neither."

- Thomas Jefferson

There is a national debate about the effectiveness and efficacy of zero tolerance policies. They raise questions about the role of schools, their responsibility to educate all students, and their philosophy of student discipline.

HISTORY OF ZERO TOLERANCE POLICIES

The concept of zero tolerance stems from the state and federal drug control policies of the 1980s. With the passage of the Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994, Congress directed states, if they were to get their federal funding, to pass laws requiring expulsion of any student bringing firearms to school for one year. Since then, there has been a proliferation of zero tolerance policies across the country.

Although the laws that have become known as "Zero Tolerance Policies" initially required mandatory expulsion only for gun possession on school grounds, they were expanded by federal regulatory guidelines in 1995 to include bombs, rockets, grenades, missiles, mines, or similar devices. State legislatures went even further by including other weapons. Encouraged by teacher unions and some parents' groups, state legislatures also added zero tolerance for possession of alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs, fighting, cursing, and gangs. Iowa laws are among those that expanded coverage to other weapons and possession of illegal drugs (Iowa Code, §702.7 and §279.9). Iowa laws give discretion to local superintendents to assign sanctions on a case-by-case basis.

THE WHAT AND WHY OF ZERO TOLERANCE

What is it?

Traditionally, zero tolerance meant the presence of a specified punishment for a specified behavior. More recent definitions place emphasis on punishing a range of behaviors by expelling students in order to exclude their behavior.

Stories about the imposition of extreme sanctions for apparently minor infractions have caused a national debate about zero tolerance policies. Some administrators consider a squirt gun, fingernail file, or plastic toy ax in the hands of a student as weapon possession. Some treat aspirin, Midol, and even Certs as drugs. Threatening statements have resulted in expulsions.

Considerable variation in the definition of zero tolerance has occurred at the local level. Many have broadened district policies beyond federal and state. They may define an expanded group of behaviors as

subject to a district's zero tolerance policy or may have a broad definition of what constitutes a weapon or drug. They may assign extreme sanctions to relatively minor misconduct. In most instances, schools adopt policies with good intentions, to create safe schools. Unfortunately in some cases, such policies may exclude certain types of students.

Despite the variations in zero tolerance policies, they do have several characteristics in common. They are:

- reactive rather than proactive
- crisis response, not crisis prevention
- punishment oriented
- exclusionary

Why? Advocates of zero tolerance policies believe that they send a powerful message to the school community that violent, aggressive behavior will not be tolerated. They credit zero tolerance with helping students, administrators, teachers and parents feel safer. Many believe that zero tolerance is a fitting punishment for a wide range of student misconduct.

What does the law say? There is a common misconception that federal and state laws require mandatory exclusion for possession of weapons and drugs in schools. In fact, although these laws do contain provisions for total exclusion of students for up to one year, they do permit local decision-making about sanctions by allowing local review based on the circumstances of individual cases. Federal legislation permits and some state laws require schools to provide alternative educational programs and procedures for re-entry following imposition of zero tolerance. Iowa is among them (Iowa Code §280.21B).

Administrators and teachers need to retain their authority to remove students who endanger themselves and others. In addition, although they have the discretion to impose lesser punishments, administrators sometimes believe that rigid adherence to the provisions in the policy can protect them from lawsuits. Thus, they choose not to exercise this discretion.

> ***"Schools should have zero tolerance for the idea of doing anything that treats all students the same. One size does not and cannot fit all."***
> *- Richard L. Curwin and Allen N. Mendler*
> *Authors, Discipline with Dignity*

Issues Related to Zero Tolerance

As part of the national debate on zero tolerance, several issues have surfaced. The following sections present some of these issues.

School Safety – Real and Perceived: The school shootings caused many to believe that violence is rampant in our schools. However, current data do not support the claim that there has been a dramatic and intense increase in school violence. This fear of random violence is a prime motivator for the adoption of zero tolerance. "The popularity of zero tolerance has less to do with its actual effects than the image it portrays" (Skiba and Peterson, January 1999). Harsh measures send a reassuring message to teachers, students, and parents that the administrator is still in charge and that the school holds students to high standards of behavior.

An Epidemic of Suspensions and Expulsions: Despite little evidence supporting the effectiveness of suspension and expulsion for improving student behavior or contributing to overall school safety, the use of exclusion, suspension and expulsion are central to most zero tolerance policies. Federal law connects these consequences to the concept of zero tolerance. Although schools usually reserve expulsion for serious infractions of discipline codes, expelled students are not always the most troublesome. In some cases, schools expel typically "good kids" for a single occurrence of serious misconduct.

> ***"Zero tolerance and expulsion don't have to go hand in hand. Zero tolerance simply means all misbehavior will have some sanction. It doesn't mean you bring the maximum punishment for every transgression."***
> *- Ronald D. Stephens, Executive*
> *Director, National School Safety Center*

Suspension, on the other hand, is a widely used discipline strategy for a broad range of behaviors from relatively minor to severe offenses. Studies show that repeat offenders comprise up to 40 percent of suspensions, suggesting that suspension is not effective in changing student behavior. In fact, suspension seems to predict additional suspensions and may even reinforce rather than punish misconduct (Skiba, 2000, p. 13). Other studies show that suspensions are a factor in students dropping out of school. "Pushout" policies to rid schools of low achievers and troublemakers contribute to the failure of students to complete their education. Excluding students from school using suspension and expulsion appears to be a strategy that rids schools of unwanted students and unwanted behavior.

Psychological Impact: Many of the principles of healthy child development are in direct conflict with the results of zero tolerance policies. Overly harsh punishment can destroy a child's spirit, build distrust in relationships, or make the problem worse. These effects negate factors likely to foster healthy development. Noted psychologist James Comer (Comer, J. and A.F. 1992), stresses that children who

bond with significant adults in their lives identify with them, imitate their behavior, and internalize their values, attitudes, and ways. A child whose development meshes with the mainstream values encountered at school will be prepared to achieve at his or her level.

The strength of a student's social bond with school is an important predictor of future delinquent behavior. Zero tolerance policies can alienate the child from school or exacerbate their problems. Consequently, the question must be asked, "Why use policies that break this important bond with school, especially for those already at-risk?"

> ***"Ultimately, as we commit ourselves to increasingly draconian policies of school discipline, we may also need to resign ourselves to joyless schools, increasingly unsafe streets, and dramatically increasing expenditures for detention centers and prisons."***
>
> *- Russ Skiba and Reece Peterson*

Loss of Educational Opportunities: Punishment, including zero tolerance and other exclusionary practices, has become a philosophy that permeates the discipline systems of many school districts. Punishment provides retribution, not instruction. Punishment suppresses behaviors. Interventions can be designed to teach and change behavior. As a result of a punishing approach to discipline, students miss out on critical learning opportunities by loss of important instructional time, the chance to bond with positive adults, and essential experience with prosocial interaction.

Of schools that exercise zero tolerance policies, 40 percent exclude students permanently from school. "When you kick children out of school, they are not learning," says Nancy Riestenberg, Prevention Specialist of the Minnesota Department of Children, Families, and Learning. Students excluded without alternative educational programs either wind up at home, often alone, or on the streets. They are more likely to drop out of school altogether. Without an education, the course to delinquency for these students also is more likely to accelerate. The question then becomes, "When we use exclusion to make our schools safe, what are we doing to our communities now and in the future?" We must recognize the potential societal impact of these exclusionary practices.

Safe Schools Do Not Make Safe Communities: The result of excluding students from schools to ensure school safety has important ramifications for communities. Research shows that the highest rates of juvenile crime and teen pregnancy occur between the hours of 3-6:00 p.m. If we extend those unsupervised hours to include typical classroom hours, we merely transfer school problems to the community. Not only does it place these young people on the streets without supervision, they are not being educated. Potential long-term effects, as supported by research, are higher dropout rates, lower graduation rates, a less educated workforce, higher crime rates among adults, and more prisons.

Minority Issues

Often African-American, Latino, and disabled children bear the brunt of these policies (*Report by the Advancement and Civil Rights Projects,* June, 2000). A disproportionate number of blacks and the poor are at risk for receiving a wide range of school punishments. Yet the differences in rates of misconduct between blacks and whites are minor and do not explain the overrepresentation. Schools that rely heavily on suspension and expulsion also have this highest rate of overrepresentation of minorities in school disciplinary processes (Skiba and Peterson, January 1999).

WHAT WORKS?

Does zero tolerance work?

Studies conducted by the National Center of Educational Statistics (NCES) indicate that schools with no crime are less likely to have zero tolerance policies, and those with such policies have higher rates of crime. Their studies showed that after four years, those schools that elected to use zero tolerance policies are still less safe than those without such policies (Skiba and Peterson, January 1999).

Little empirical data exists on school security measures. In a search of four major databases, Skiba and Peterson (1999) found only six empirical studies on five major security categories (zero tolerance, metal detectors, surveillance, school uniforms, and school security). They located none for locker searches and video surveillance. From this study, the authors concluded that, as yet, there is no solid evidence that such security measures contribute to a safer environment.

What can be done?

Discipline philosophy determines outcomes. Strict disciplinarians who believe in harsh punishments will have higher suspension and expulsion rates, but this does not necessarily translate into effective discipline. The principal is key to setting disciplinary tone. In schools where the principal has set the standard that no child shall be suspended except under severe circumstances, teachers are less apt to refer a child for suspension for minor misconduct. Where principals and administrators have adopted zero tolerance for misbehavior, suspension rates are higher. In contrast,

schools where principals believe in finding other ways to deal with misbehavior have lower suspension rates. Arnold Goldstein, director of the Center for Research on Aggression at Syracuse University, says that if zero tolerance policies are to work, principals must by given the discretion to exercise fairness and common sense (USA Today).

> ***"...even in these fearful times, reasonable steps to protect students from guns, violence, and illegal drugs in their schools can be taken without mass exclusion of American children from the educational process, which Zero Tolerance Policies are extracting."***
> *- Curwin and Mendler in the Report by the Advancement and Civil Rights Projects, June 2000*

Some districts have embraced alternatives to zero tolerance, adopting systems of graduated sanctions that match consequences to offenses and emphasize prevention strategies. Curwin and Mendler (October 1999) suggest an "as tough as is fair" approach to dealing with student misconduct. This means sending the message that unacceptable behavior will not be tolerated. The administration of consequences will be sure, but the range of consequences is broad and will be matched to the severity and type of misbehavior on a case-by-case basis. Without question, there is a need for clear, firm limits and for sending the message that certain behaviors are not acceptable. The key questions are: "Was it effective?" "Do the consequences teach students how to behave?" "Do they help them to understand what to do, or are they limited only to sending a message of what not to do?" Only by monitoring the outcomes can schools determine the effectiveness of the action.

Characteristics of safe schools with high achievement levels and a low number of disciplinary referrals concur with *Success4's* critical elements. (See *Success4* Critical Elements.)

- An inclusive model that is a school-wide effort promoted by the principal and bought into by the majority of the teachers and staff
- Training of teachers in classroom management and the root causes of behavior
- Strategies to foster strong bonds between teachers and students
- Teacher instruction makes accommodations for learners with a variety of learning styles
- A proactive, school-wide code of conduct and expectations that is widely promoted and understood
- Discipline that is focused on prevention and diffusion of potentially disruptive situations before they erupt
- Consequences for behavior handled on a case-by-case basis with input from parents and students
- Active involvement of parents and the community in the life of the school
- Expectations that students adhere to high academic and behavioral standards
- Implementation of a wide range of programs that promote a respectful, collaborative climate
- A welcoming, friendly physical environment

SUMMARY

Zero tolerance policies that include a set of mandated exclusionary sanctions have both short- and long-range negative consequences that need to be carefully considered. Because of a lack of evidence that these policies are effective in changing student behavior or deterring potential misconduct, they need to be examined carefully for their impact on the healthy development of children and youth. Administrators have tough choices to make in order to ensure that schools are safe, while at the same time ensuring that all students are educated.

LEARN MORE ABOUT IT:

- **Web sites:**
  - *The Civil Rights Project: Harvard University Conferences:* http://www.law.harvard.edu/groups/civilrights/conferences/
  - Indiana Education Policy Center: http://www.indiana.edu/~iepc/
- **In this Handbook:** See additional briefs in this section on *Weapons in Schools, Violence Prevention, Bullying and Harassment, Restorative Justice, School-wide Discipline, Positive Behavioral Supports, and Alternative Educational Settings.* In other sections of the manual, please refer to *Early Warning, Timely Response, Safeguarding Our Children: An Action Guide*, and "*Success4's* Critical Elements." For information beyond the scope of this handbook, see the Resources Section.

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"If a student doesn't
know how to read,
we teach.
If a student doesn't
know how to swim,
we teach.
If a student doesn't
know how to multiply,
we teach.
If a student doesn't
know how to behave,
we...punish?"

– John Herner,
Ohio Department of Education

CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN

In a "School Emergency Management Survey" conducted in 1999 by Employers' Mutual Company (EMC) at the request of the School Violence Crisis Intervention Task Force, a little over 98% of 291 Iowa school districts and Area Education Agencies responding reported that they had emergency plans, yet almost 40% indicated that they would like technical assistance in developing a "community-wide crisis management plan." This section of the handbook is intended to provide such assistance.

Although crisis management involves both natural disasters, such as fires and tornadoes, and violent and/or criminal acts, the focus of information in this handbook is on school safety related to violence. Most districts in Iowa have plans on file to cover the entire spectrum of crisis situations. Many of the procedures and processes contained herein are applicable to all aspects of crisis planning. The primary intent of this section of the notebook is to provide guidance to those who are adding a school violence component to an existing plan or to provide a framework for reviewing and, if necessary, improving an existing plan that already addresses school violence.

This Crisis Management Plan should be part of an overall four-faceted School Safety Plan that includes prevention, intervention, preparedness, and crisis response.

Crisis Management
Planning for Safe Schools in Iowa

The goal of safe school planning is to create a positive, welcoming, school environment that is free of violence, drugs, fear, and intimidation, where teachers can teach and students can learn. Establishment of a safe school plan, of which a crisis management plan is a part, is a long term and complex process. The key to safe Iowa schools is prevention and preparedness. This section of the handbook is a general guide for districts to follow in preparing the crisis management portion of a safe school plan for the district. The format and content of plans should be a local decision developed through an ongoing and comprehensive collaborative local process. The information and templates included in the handbook are intended as tools to be used as needed in order to help make the process thorough without being cumbersome

Authority to guide development of a safe schools plan is derived through Federal and State laws, policies of local boards of education and direction-setting by the superintendent who oversees plan development and implementation. A district's school board adopts the final plan. In order to implement the direction set, a superintendent may appoint a School Safety Team and delegate to it responsibility for writing the plan and assistance in providing oversight of its implementation, including continuous review. In addition, a school-based Emergency Management Team (EMT) may be appointed to serve as first responders to a crisis before arrival of trained community responders.

A well-designed crisis management plan has three major components: Preparedness, Response, and Recovery. *Preparedness* activities incorporate planning, training, and practice to ensure that a school is ready should an emergency situation arise. *Response* is the set of activities that are carried out in a crisis situation. Finally, and of great importance, are the things schools do in the aftermath of a tragic occurrence, sometimes called the *Recovery* phase.

Because violence prevention is key to maintaining safe schools, the bulk of the material in this handbook that precedes this section deals with proven prevention methods that place special emphasis on school climate. This section of the handbook has three parts that address 1) the three phases of crisis management, 2) the warning signs that can alert schools to a pending violent situation, and 3) a set of templates that schools may use, if they so choose, to develop their own crisis plans. The last section of the handbook is reserved as a place where a school can put its own plan, permitting everything to be kept in one place.

Seven key elements of violence prevention identified in the General Accounting Office's 1999 report *School Safety: Promising Initiatives for Addressing School Violence* provide guidance for plan development. These elements are:

1. *A comprehensive approach.* The complex nature of violence requires a multi-faceted response, including provision of a variety of services and linking school and community.
2. *Early start and long-term commitment.* Programs should start in elementary school and provide sustained intervention over multiple years.

3. *Strong leadership and disciplinary policies.* School faculty and administration must provide clear, consistent, unambiguous student codes of conduct.

4. *Staff development.* Key staff should be trained in handling disruptive students and in mediating conflicts.

5. *Parental involvement.* Parents should be encouraged to become increasingly involved in school violence prevention activities and other school activities.

6. *Interagency Partnerships.* Programs should establish collaboration between schools, local business, law enforcement, social service agencies, and private groups to create a net of community support.

7. *Culturally sensitive and developmentally appropriate approach.* Programs should be sensitive to racial, ethnic and cultural norms.

Table of Contents

Section I. Preparedness

"Be prepared" is the watchword for school safety. An important step to providing a safe environment for learning is developing a comprehensive Crisis Management Plan.

A. Roles and Responsibilities

School Safety is the responsibility of everyone – staff, students, parents, and the community. Schools must reach out to community members – law enforcement, the fire department, the medical community, human service agencies, emergency personnel, and the business community - so that each segment can be represented on a School Safety Team.

1. District Crisis Management Plan

The goal of a comprehensive school safety plan is the health, safety, and well being of *all* students and staff, and this goal must be embedded in policies and procedures at both the district level and the building level.

Leadership from the superintendent is crucial in developing a District Crisis Management plan and in recruiting the members of the team that coordinate, monitor and help implement the plan.

Members of a District School Safety Team

Representatives from each of the areas below are recommended for inclusion on a planning team charged with the responsibility of school safety. This team may be a subcommittee of the School Improvement Action Committee (SIAC) or the SIAC may assume this responsibility for itself if the team composition is appropriate and adequate time can be devoted to safety issues. In smaller districts, one person may represent more than one of the suggested team members. A District administrator should chair this team.

- Superintendent
- Personnel from Operations
  - -- Business, Safety, Media Relations
  - -- Transportation, Maintenance, Food Service
- Building Team Representatives
- School Board Member
- Two (2) Student Representatives*
- Parent Representative
- Community Emergency Response Representative
- Community Business Representative
- Community Media Representative
- Community Law Enforcement

* *Students are more likely to attend meetings and make contributions if at least two serve on committees largely composed of adults.*

Roles and Responsibilities of the District School Safety Team

The Team should develop a district-wide plan that includes preparedness, response, and recovery measures and addresses the safety issues of the entire district. The team has the following general responsibilities.

- Review policies and procedures in support of safe schools and modify, if needed. (See Section IB, "Safety Audits.")
- Conduct safety and emergency equipment audits of the district and its facilities. (See Section IB, "Safety Audits.")
- Develop a Crisis Management Plan that can be adapted to fit specific building needs. (See Section V, "Plan Development.".)
- Establish a budget for training, equipment and supplies needed to implement safety plans for the district and each building. Include costs for building and classroom emergency kits. (See Section IE.)
- Develop a mechanism for students to report anonymously threats of violence and the presence of guns or drugs in school.
- Review, approve, and coordinate each building plan.
- Provide training for each Building School Safety Team. (See Section IC, "Training.")
- Coordinate with local emergency management agencies.
- Name a district media spokesperson and develop and implement a plan for communication with the media. (See Section IG, "Dealing with t he Media.")
- Communicate with parents and community.
- Be prepared to assist as needed each building in times of emergency.
- Schedule drills to test crisis response and recovery plans. (See Section IF, "Drills and Exercises.")
- Evaluate plans and responses to any crisis that may occur, and modify if necessary.

2. Building Crisis Management Plan

As with the district plan, the goal of a building Crisis Management Plan is the health, safety, and well-being of students and staff, and this goal must be similarly embedded in both policy and procedure.

The principal and administrative staff must provide the leadership to make the building plan a priority. Recruiting members of the team, scheduling and attending team meetings and safety training will take essential administrative and staff time.

Members of the Building Safety Team

Representatives from each area below are recommended for inclusion on a building safety team with a building administrator serving as chair of the team. Like the district team, this team should be connected to the overall school improvement process. In some buildings, one person may fill more than one of the suggested positions.

- School principal
- Teacher
- School nurse
- School counselor
- Bus driver
- Food service manager
- Custodian or building maintenance
- School secretary
- School resource officer
- Parent(s)
- Community Emergency Response Representative(s)
- Student representatives (middle and high school)

Role and Responsibilities of the Building Safety Team

- Make sure "safe" is in the building mission statement and create a vision of a safe school.
- Conduct policies and procedures, facilities, and safety equipment audits.
- Maintain and analyze accurate and detailed records of all behavior incidents.
- Develop a user-friendly Building Crisis Management Plan (adapted from the District Plan) that can be followed by regular teachers, substitute teachers, staff and students.
- Distribute copies of the Crisis Management Plan and review with staff, parents and community.
- At a minimum, attach a building map (with designated safe places clearly marked) to the plan. Up-to-date blueprints, layouts, and floor plans of school buildings and grounds including information about main leads for gas, water, electricity, cable, telephone, HVAC, alarm and sprinkler systems, location of hazardous materials, elevators, and entrances for community emergency response teams are essential.
- Distribute building maps to all emergency agencies, such as fire department, police, emergency personnel, and local bomb squad experts in the area.
- Coordinate with local emergency management agencies and conduct drills to test crisis response and recovery plans.
- Name a building media spokesperson.
- Evaluate plans and responses to any crisis.

3. Role of Administrative Leaders

Administrators are key leaders in the creation of safe schools. Their attitudes and actions communicate to staff and students the importance and philosophy that they ascribe to this work.

Prevention:

- Bring together students, families, teachers, other administrators, staff, social and mental health professionals, law enforcement, emergency response personnel, security professionals, school board members, the business, and faith communities to collaborate on violence prevention.
- Involve parents in the life of the school and of their children as students.
- Assume leadership in the development and implementation of a school-wide discipline system.
- Establish policies that enhance school safety and address incidences of violent and disruptive behavior.
- Lead by example.

Preparedness:

- Train safety team student members in problem solving, meeting participation, planning, and leadership skills.
- Provide leadership for the District and Building Safety Teams.
- Initiate school safety audits.
- Ensure that students have opportunities to learn violence prevention techniques.
- Know the community commanders and chain of command for the community emergency response team.
- Make certain that insurance coverage is adequate to cover potential damage created by any crisis event.

Response:

- Oversee the actions of the building-based Emergency Management Team.
- Keep staff updated on status of the crisis situation as information becomes available.
- Be highly visible to show support and control of the situation.
- Help students feel safe by providing reassurance.
- Have appropriate staff begin a calling/phone tree.

Recovery:

- Hold an all-staff meeting before school to update them on the situation, eliminate rumors, and review guidelines for dealing with the aftermath of the crisis event, including procedures for referring students to counseling.
- Hold a staff meeting to permit faculty to process their reaction to the crisis.
- Be open about own emotionality when dealing with the faculty.
- Implement plan for providing qualified counselors that may be needed by students and staff.
- Maintain both an information and special call-in line for victims and their families.
- Keep in close contact with injured victims and/or surviving family members.
- Ensure that thank you notes are sent with a message of appreciation for any contributions made.
- Oversee activities related to memorials and tributes.
- Work with investigating authorities to help complete any investigations.
- Deal with a deceased student's desk, locker, name on school records.
- Design procedures for closing a mourning period.
- Direct School Safety Teams to evaluate the Crisis Management Plan.

4. Role of School Staff

Although School Boards and school administrators set the direction of and climate for schools, it is teachers who are in the first line for school safety because of their direct contact with students. For this reason, teachers must be directly involved and supported in developing and implementing programs that foster school safety.

Prevention:

- Regularly invite parents to talk about their children's progress and any concerns they might have.
- Model appropriate behaviors.
- Learn and teach students skills in problem solving, anger management, social skills, and conflict resolution.
- Participate in the development and implementation of a proactive school-wide discipline system.
- Serve as mentors to troubled children and youth.
- Provide leadership opportunities for at-risk students.
- Promote the success of *all* students.
- Take responsibility for *all* students in the school.

Preparedness:

- If asked, participate on the School Safety Team and support its recommendations.
- Learn to identify the warning signs of potentially violent behaviors.
- Report to the principal as quickly as possible any threats, overheard discussions of weapons, signs of gang activity or other violent behavior.

Response:

- Get students out of harm's way.
- Contact the appropriate administrator or person on the Emergency Management Team (EMT).
- Remain with students until notified by appropriate personnel on what actions to take.
- Upon appropriate notification, follow the crisis response plan for the specific situation.
- Carry out specified communications with designated individuals.
- Remain calm and keep order among students

Recovery:

- Cooperate with law enforcement in their investigation.
- Help victims and students re-enter the school.
- Modify assigned work to accommodate for the situation.
- Provide accurate information to students to dispel rumors.
- Identify students' symptoms of stress and grief.
- Provide outlets for students' grief and stress.

5. Role of Students

In a school environment, students are often the most underused resource. They are the eyes and ears that can make a difference and must be actively involved in school safety in a number of different ways, such as:

Prevention:

- Know and follow the school's safety policies.
- Follow the school rules/code of conduct.
- Confide with an adult (parent, teacher, counselor, etc.) when they personally experience symptoms of depression.
- Listen to the concerns of friends and encourage them to seek appropriate help.
- Learn to avoid becoming victims – avoiding high-risk situations and seeking help from adults.
- Actively participate in school safety/violence prevention programs such as conflict managers, problem solving teams, student courts, peer mediation, and community service.
- Help organize, participate in, and encourage peers to participate in after school activities – school and community-based.
- Find ways to help redirect peers' negative leadership behaviors to positive leadership. Student bullies often have innate leadership skills.
- Act as positive role models for peers and younger students.
- Serve as a big brother/big sister, peer tutor, or mentor for a younger student.

- Refrain from teasing, bullying, and harassing other students, and be tolerant of their differences.
- Learn ways to resist negative peer pressure.
- Speak out and refuse to participate in negative or criminal behavior.
- Start a school crime watch.
- Develop and implement anti-violence activities in the school and community.

Preparedness:

- Serve on the School Safety Team to provide their perspective on how to promote school safety.
- Work with teachers and administrators to develop a safe way to report threats.
- Learn who to go to with information and concerns about known or potential violence, bullying, and harassment.
- Immediately report suspicious behaviors, threats of violence, drug sale or use, bullying and victimization, vandalism, or suicide to school officials or other responsible adult by speaking directly, sending e-mail, or using other means such as anonymous notes or hotlines.

Response:

- In the absence of adult direction, decide where it is safest to be and remain there.
- If a violent situation occurs, notify the first available adult.
- Follow instructions of school, law enforcement, or other emergency response personnel.
- Assist teachers and staff in assessing who is accounted for and who is not.
- If able, assist injured persons. Calm and reassure peers.

Recovery:

- Share all relevant information with law enforcement, teachers, and school staff.
- Do not speculate or perpetuate rumors.
- Seek counseling and other opportunities to deal with stress and grief.

6. Role of Parents

Parental support is key to the success of any school initiative, and school safety is no exception. Demonstrating an interest in the lives of their children and working to maintain open lines of communication are critical. Enhance parental involvement by encouraging them to:

Prevention:

- Help the school teach their children to be safe.
- Take an active role in their children's education.
- Establish, teach, and consistently enforce reasonable limits of behavior.
- Become involved in, understand, support, and discuss with their children the school's discipline policies, practices, and code of conduct.
- Model appropriate behaviors, and demonstrate healthy ways to express anger and relieve stress.

- Promote a healthy lifestyle in their home by prohibiting the illegal or irresponsible use of tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs.
- Encourage and support their children's involvement in school or community-based after school activities.
- Get to know their children's friends and families. Establish a network to exchange information with other parents.
- Monitor and supervise their children's reading materials, television watching, and Internet use.
- Monitor and supervise their children's whereabouts. Make their home a welcoming and safe haven where their children want to bring their friends.
- Listen, talk to, and show interest in their children's activities, friends, and school.
- Set curfews when their children are young.
- Talk to employers about special considerations that will help them participate in their children's activities.
- Become involved in programs such as neighborhood watch.
- Participate, as appropriate, in programs such as parenting skills, conflict resolution and anger management.
- Secure any weapons that are in the home and ensure that their children are trained in gun safety.

Preparedness:

- If asked, participate on the School Safety Team and/or safety planning sessions.
- Be aware of warning signs for potential problems in their children, be alert to any changes in their behavior, and seek help if indicated.
- Communicate specific incidents and concerns about safety for their child and other children to school personnel.
- Be informed about the school's safety policies and programs and discuss them with their children.

Response:

- Go to and remain in designated parent gathering area.
- Follow district plan for reuniting with their child(ren).

Recovery:

- Talk to their children about their feelings about the crisis situation and share their own feelings, too. Give them information they can understand.
- Reassure their children about their mutual safety.
- Talk to their children's teachers and work with them to help their children.
- Hold and touch their children and allow them to grieve.
- Recognize and help children with their reactions and seek counseling if needed.

7. Role of the Community

Community members play a vital role in school safety and the Crisis Management Plan. Emergency service personnel and law enforcement must be involved in any crisis situation and the wider community can provide valuable support in violence prevention.

Prevention:

- Business:
  - Adopt family friendly policies that support parents in their job of raising their children.
  - Provide jobs, internships, and opportunities for student mentoring.
  - Adopt and support a local school.
  - Establish community service programs as an effective alternative to suspension to provide meaningful learning experiences for student and an opportunity for community involvement.
  - Be mentors for at-risk youth.
  - Support the school by providing needed materials, facilities, services, etc.
  - Provide time off for students to study and extra time off during exams.
- Law Enforcement
  - Develop and maintain working partnerships with schools, including effective communication.
  - Maintain good relationships with students and their families.
  - Develop and implement a School Resource Officer program.
  - Work with schools and local businesses to reduce truancy.
  - Consult with and train schools about school security measures.

Preparedness:

- Members of law enforcement, emergency service, and the business community participate on the School Safety Team.
- Form and train a community response team.
- Develop a written memorandum of understanding with each of the major emergency, safety agencies, and youth-serving agencies in the district, including police, sheriff, fire, emergency medical, social/welfare and the juvenile court.
-

Response:

- Crisis response personnel respond immediately when notified of a crisis situation.
- Implement Crisis Response plan.
- Develop lines of communication with school administrators and building-based Emergency Management Team.
- Assist parents/guardians to locate their children.
- Counselors report to the counseling area.

Recovery:

- Community Counselors:
  -- Work with the Emergency Management Team, if possible.
  -- Cancel appointments and meetings that are not emergencies.
  -- Maintain a list of students who are counseled.
  -- Organize and provide individual and group counseling.

- Community-at-Large
  -- Volunteer time and resources.
  -- Provide services to meet the needs of victims and their families.
  -- Dispel rumors.
- Law Enforcement
  -- Conduct a thorough investigation including debriefing of those present at the crisis.
  -- Work with school to prosecute those who have committed crimes.
  -- Coordinate news releases with school.
  -- Critique the department's response to any serious crisis situation.

B. Safety Audits

The focus of safety audits is on the policies and procedures, physical environment, and equipment in the district. The purpose is to determine whether or not the environment promotes safety or actually may be contributing to the existing or future problems. Conducting safety audits are among the first tasks undertaken by both District and Building School Safety Teams. While the District Team tackles Policies and Procedures, Building Teams can begin to audit equipment and their buildings and grounds. Involvement of law enforcement personnel will enhance the equipment and building and grounds audits because of their specialized training in the relationship between environmental design and the commission of crime. These audits should then be submitted to the District Team. (*See Section V for Audit Templates.*)

1. Policies and Procedures Audit

Crisis prevention is primarily dependent on a culture or climate devoted to safety that is based on policies implemented throughout the district. As the team audits policies and procedures, they are encouraged to consider the ideas listed below:

- The District's mission statement includes "safety."
- Policies conform with the Fourteenth Amendment, which requires school administrators to apply equally and fairly all school rules and to provide due process procedures for students.
- School policies are included that protect students and staff against:
  -- Weather related, fire, accident, violent, and other emergency situations;
  -- Criminal activity;
  -- Identifiably dangerous students;
- A system for data collection is in place that will inform decision-making and document disciplinary actions:
  -- collect data on incidents on school property, including transportation and off-site school sponsored events.
  -- review weekly to assess any patterns or trends
  -- develop prevention and intervention strategies to address incidents that threaten the school's safety and security
- Student handbooks serve as meaningful guides for student safety and conduct:
  -- promote proactive practices that provide students with positive behavioral supports.
  -- communicate clearly to students and their parents board policy related to student conduct
  -- have a plan for ensuring that the content is understood by all students and their parents

2. Environmental/Facilities Audit (Walkabout)

Well-designed schools may preclude the need to "target harden" them by focusing on such things as the installation of metal detectors and surveillance cameras. Crime Prevention through Environmental Design, as presented in a special program of the National Crime Prevention Council, brings the knowledge of the policing community to the design of schools so that the physical environment can become an aid to the prevention of crime and violence in schools.

Every three years completion of a comprehensive school environmental/safety audit is recommended, with annual review of those areas in need of improvement. This audit allows the School Safety Team to assess current safety conditions in and around each school's buildings, grounds, and immediate neighborhood and helps Team members to:

- identify and address concerns related to physical safety and building security; and
- identify any areas of student concern regarding safety on and around school grounds or at school sponsored events.

Team members might consider implementing additional building security measures. Suggestions of such measures include:

- Install clearly visible and welcoming signs pointing the way to parking, entry and to the office. Good signage helps legitimate visitors feel welcome and prevent them from being viewed suspiciously by school officials.
- Designate specific points of entry to enhance surveillance and to discourage intruders and others that may not have business at the school.
- Consider modifying school design and size. Changes that might have a positive effect include reducing a school's size or dividing existing large schools into district 'learning communities.'
- Consider requiring student, staff and visitor identification badges. They help identify individuals who may not have legitimate business on school property and provide instant recognition for those who do.
- Consider a law enforcement presence (e.g., school resource officers – SROs) on school grounds to provide a way for students to interact with law enforcement in positive way.
- Explore need for, value, and feasibility of "target hardening" (e.g., installing security devices such as metal detectors or surveillance cameras).

3. Safety Equipment Audit

Quick response to an emergency situation will depend on the availability of proper safety equipment. A safety equipment inventory is the best way to insure that equipment and training in the use of the equipment is adequate to meet the needs of the school. Each building needs to conduct its own audit. When conducting an audit, School Safety Team members should ask themselves what is needed to respond to a crisis situation. For instance:

- Identify means by which people can communicate from any area of the school grounds.
  -- What: do we need? cellular phones? walkie-talkies?
  -- How many do we need?
  -- Who should have them?
  -- How do we designate their use?
- Provide a means of communication from classrooms.
  -- Does every classroom have a phone?
  -- With access to cellular phones, does every classroom need a regular phone?
  -- Do phones have caller ID?
- Do we have an air horn and/or bullhorn?
- Is a battery-operated radio available in every building?
- Does staff have easy access to e-mail in your district?
- Has staff been trained in the use of fire extinguishers?
- Do you have portable classrooms in your district?
  -- What are the crisis procedures for the portables?
  -- What is the means of communication for the portables?
- How many staff members are trained in CPR and emergency first aid? Who are they?
- Is all emergency equipment in working order?

C. Insurance

One of the first questions that many people have in their emergency response is how their new insurance protection will perform. This section is a guide on how to prepare your insurance program to meet any emergency situation.

Prevention

Like any good emergency plan, your insurance protection is only as good as the work that goes into it. The Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB) Safety Group Insurance Program, underwritten by EMC Insurance Companies of Des Moines, covers all schools in Iowa. This program automatically provides certain critical insurance coverage:

- Property insurance covers all school-owned buildings and contents.
- Liability insurance protects the school and its employees for premises and operations including a crisis in the schools that might include an act of violence, fire, or explosion where it can be shown that the school was negligent in its operation of emergency response.
- Workers' Compensation covers injury to school employees injured during a crisis situation.
- All schools share Special Excess Liability coverage for catastrophic loss situations.

Preparedness

Even though the IASB insurance program has a wide range of insurance coverage designed specifically for schools, there are certain things that every district should do to make sure its insurance program is up-to-date.

- Conduct a thorough review of insurance coverage with its local insurance agent yearly.
- Review carefully property values on buildings and contents to ensure they are up-to-date.
- Store a complete inventory of property content off premises. During and after a crisis, it may be difficult to reconstruct property values, particularly contents.
- Photograph or make videotapes of current school buildings both inside and out.

Crisis Response

During any kind of crisis situation, the emergency plan is extremely important. Having such a plan and following it closely will prevent many potential liability claims.

- Document details of the event in the weeks and months following it. As soon as possible, dictate the details and recollections to capture a kind of hard copy documentation that can prove useful later for both property and potential liability claims.
- Create photographic evidence by recording the aftermath of any emergency. Digital cameras are especially helpful for this.
- Notify your insurance agent as soon as the emergency is over. Ensure that both the agent and Employers Mutual are fully informed as quickly as possible.

Recovery

During the recovery phase, it will be important to deal with the insurance adjuster on a regular basis whether it involves damage to school property or injury to personnel, students, or the public.

- Maintain good public relations and regular contact with the media.
- Provide the adjuster and school personnel with easy access to the school site involved.
- Retrieve off premises records of property values and lists of employees, students, and their parents when the school site is not accessible.
- In the case of potential liability claims, the recovery phase may extend for several months or even years depending on the severity of potential injuries.

D. Training

Crisis Management Plans cannot work without training. Administrators, teachers, staff and students all need training and practice in safety and emergency procedures.

Just as important, however, is ongoing training in the areas of classroom management and sound discipline practices. Making a commitment to developing a culture of safety is essential if we are to preserve schools as safe havens for learning.

All staff should regularly receive school safety and violence prevention information as part of systemwide staff development. The items below serve as a checklist of areas to cover in a staff development plan devoted to the safety of both students and staff.

TRAINING	TARGET AUDIENCES								
	Administrators	Teachers	Para-Educators	Support Staff	Bus Drivers	Students	Parents	School Safety Team	Emergency Response Team
PREVENTION									
▪ Classroom management		√	√						
▪ Behavioral expectations and procedures within the first two weeks of school.	√	√	√	√	√	√			
▪ Teaching interactions for addressing student behavior	√	√	√		√				
▪ Negotiation skills.	√	√			√	√			
▪ Conflict resolution	√	√			√				
▪ Personal safety training	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
▪ De-escalation techniques,	√	√	√	√	√				
▪ Social skills instruction						√			
▪ Problem solving, meeting participation, planning, and leadership skills.						√		√	
▪ Behavior expectations and procedures first 2 weeks of school with booster sessions throughout the year.		√							
▪ Role of law enforcement	√	√	√	√	√				
▪ Defusing anger and de-escalating conflict, e.g., Mandt and C.P.I.	√	√			√				

TRAINING	TARGET AUDIENCES								
	Administrators	Teachers	Para-Educators	Support Staff	Bus Drivers	Students	Parents	School Safety Team	Emergency Response Team
PREPAREDNESS									
▪ Conducting Safety Audits								√	
▪ Legal responsibilities for the enforcement of state and federal laws	√				√				
▪ Early warning signs for potential violence and/or suicide, including knowing the appropriate steps in referring for help	√	√	√		√		√	√	
▪ Appropriate response to threats from students and parents	√	√		√	√				
▪ Appropriate responses to fighting (both with and without a weapon)	√	√	√		√	√			
RESPONSE									
▪ Crisis Response Procedures	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
▪ How to handle phone calls and the media during a crisis.	√								√
▪ Implementation of the Crisis Response Plan	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
RECOVERY									
▪ Recognition of post traumatic stress symptoms	√	√	√	√			√	√	
▪ How and when to refer students for counseling.	√	√							

E. School-Based Emergency Management Team (EMT)

1. Membership

Administrator-in-Charge:	Coordinates and oversees the overall emergency response effort, including making necessary notifications and coordinating the police, fire and medical response.
First Responders	Provide temporary aid until medical teams arrive.
Site Coordinators:	Go to the site of the emergency and control access to it. Preserve the crime scene until law enforcement arrives to take control.
Police/Fire/Medical Coordinators:	Meet arrival of emergency personnel and direct them to appropriate places. Go to the front of the school to control and direct parents, media, and central office personnel to appropriate locations.
Sweep Team Coordinators:	Form teams of three from adults without other supervisory responsibilities to sweep and check the building – the hallways, restrooms, and other classroom areas for students and outsiders. Pick up student lists from teachers. Identify missing students and communicate them to the command center.
Media Coordinator:	Coordinate work with the media including preparation of a news statement and making arrangements for interviews.
Parent Coordinators:	Assume responsibility of parents who come to the scene, keep them informed about their children, and, when appropriate, help them connect with their children and take them home.
Recorder:	Maintain a log with the sequence and times of events.

Adapted from Blauvert, P. (1999).

2. Criteria for EMT Team Membership

The Emergency Management Team is made up of those individuals in a school that will take action in a crisis situation before the arrival of professional crisis response teams. Selection of the right individuals to serve on the team is critical. Selection criteria might include:

- Individuals who are recognized and respected in the school
- People who are good listeners, good communicators, accepted by staff as fair and impartial, skilled negotiators, good at crowd control, cool headed, skilled counselors
- Those with specialized training, such as CPR, first aid, de-escalation procedures, etc.

3. Suggestions

- Make size of team proportional to size of school (e.g., elementary schools – 5-6, middle schools - 8-9, high schools – 10-12)
- If members are classroom teachers, identify substitutes to cover their classes and place their names on the EMT membership list.
- Appoint a recorder to keep track of times and the sequence of events.
- Pre-assign responsibilities.

F. Emergency Kits

To provide maximum safety and security at the time of crisis, the building and every classroom needs to develop updated emergency kits. These kits should be in kept in secure location, yet readily available in case of emergency. Below is a sample list of contents for each kit.

1. Building Emergency Kits (locate in strategic positions)

- Name tags
- Floor plans, evacuation routes
- Location of utility shut-off for gas, power and water
- Location of first-aid equipment and fire extinguishers
- Phone/e-mail lists for emergency response agencies and hospitals
- Complete phone lists for staff (home, office, cell, pager)
- Student registration list
- Class schedules of students and staff
- Current student photos (e.g., yearbook, class pictures, student IDs)
- Phone lists for media contacts
- Phone lists/e-mail for key communicators
- Volunteers and parent organization contact lists and phone numbers
- Guidelines for canceling events
- Basic office supplies, such as notepads, pens, pencils, tape, felt pens
- Log book
- Hand radios and batteries
- Bus rosters and routes
- First aid supplies
- Placards with directional words (Parents, Counselors, Media, Volunteers, Keep Out)

2. Classroom Emergency Kits

Each teacher should have an individual kit whose articles will vary according to a teacher's responsibilities. Children can help decide what might be useful. ***A 5-gallon plastic bucket with lid provides a portable, secure kit container that can also be used for water if necessary.***

- Class roll sheet
- Emergency cards
- Laminated copy of response plan
- Laminated map of campus and area
- First-aid kit
- Flashlight(s)
- Spiral Notebook
- Tape (duct & masking)
- Whistle
- Scissors
- White towel(s)
- Safety pins
- Incident and Bomb Threat Report Forms
- Baby wipes
- Soap
- Plastic bags
- Plastic cups
- Bright plastic vest
- Cap
- Activity book(s)
- Permanent markers
- Pencils
- Toilet paper
- Sunscreen
- Umbrella
- Tennis balls
- Frisbee

Avoid anything perishable

G. Drills and Exercises

Drills and exercises must be included in any crisis management plan to ensure its effectiveness. They allow students and staff to practice their roles during a crisis and enable identification of weaknesses in the plans. Even an excellent plan may not be dependable without drills and exercises. If it's not, liability could become an issue in an emergency situation.

To be effective drills should be scheduled regularly and customized to fit various emergencies. (See Section VB, "Templates.") Before any drill or exercise, provide staff with an opportunity to discuss the plan and review responsibilities. This does not mean staff should know when a drill or exercise would take place. Listed below are three types of drills and three types of exercises.

TYPE	DESCRIPTION
1. Shelter-in-Place Drills	Shelter-in-Place is the purposeful act of keeping students and staff in the building in a pre-determined area. These drills may take place in a classroom or other predetermined safe place. These drills are completed by individual classrooms, although all classes in the school may participate simultaneously. They are used for such incidents as an intruder, a tornado, a missing child, a hostage situation, presence of an angry parent, or death of a student or staff member. Terms to signal students to take action such as "take cover" or "get down" should be identified and consistent throughout the district. These drills should also be conducted in common areas.
2. Evacuation Drills	An evacuation drill covers the procedures used to evacuate a classroom, part of a building or the entire building. Evacuation drills help identify the best back up or alternate evacuate routes. Do not rely on a single route. It may be unavailable, depending on the crisis situation. Evacuations are usually used for such things as a fire, bomb threat, or facility-related problem.
3. Full-Scale Exercise	This is a comprehensive exercise that involves a school-wide drill and simulated problems such as injuries and structural damage. It may include outside 'players' such as police, fire, and rescue teams. Minimize the use of students in role playing situations. This is likely to create unnecessary anxiety or cause children to be more fearful of a possible crisis.
Special Purpose Drills and Exercises:	
4. School Drills	A school drill is any school-wide drill that may or not include evacuation. Such drills are useful in helping test specific procedures such as taking roll, setting up a command post or first aid station, evacuating special needs students or conducting a 'sweep' of the entire school.
5. Table-top Exercise	A tabletop exercise involves only adult staff members and uses a scenario to help staff plan responses to specific incidents. Often designed as a 'walk-through' and/or brainstorming activity, it usually includes representatives from local emergency response agencies (police, fire, and rescue). The more key players involved, the better.
6. Functional Exercise	A functional exercise tests one function of the plan – first aid, communications, parent-child reunification, emergency transportation, etc. It is a useful technique for resetting any portions of the plan that might not have worked smoothly in prior drills.

Evaluating Drills and Exercises

After drills and exercises, the Emergency Management Team and other appropriate participants should conduct a **formal** debriefing session. The purpose is to discuss, critique and evaluate the drill or exercise and learn from it. It should be positive, honest and constructive. If problems occurred, they should not be ignored or minimized. They should be used to formulate plans for improvement.

H. Dealing with the Media

It will be much easier to deal with the media in the time of crisis if the school is prepared and has a cordial existing relationship with local media. As professional disseminators of information, well informed media can be your best ally in a time of crisis. In advance of a crisis:

PREVENTION:

- Encourage local education reporters to write features on the various prevention activities being implemented.
- Submit occasional press releases to local media about the school's safety program to foster a compatible working relationship as well as inform the community about the school's efforts to maintain a safe school environment.

PREPAREDNESS:

- Designate a media spokesperson at the district and each building level, (not the superintendent or principal who will be very busy during a crisis).
- Develop a relationship with local media, and let them know that you will provide them with information as soon as you have it.
- Develop a media kit to be used in crisis situations with relevant information about safety prevention techniques developed by the District. Such a kit should also include:
  -- name of contact person at each school
  -- information about potential emotional responses to crises so the media can be more sensitive in interviewing, reporting, etc.
  -- a school map.
- Develop a sample press release for crisis situations so only blanks need to be completed at the time of a crisis – fire, bomb threat, death, etc. Include parent pick-up site announcement, 'do not call school' announcements, etc.

DURING A CRISIS:

- Limit contact with the media to the media spokesperson;
- Be prepared, stay calm, and always be honest.
- Set boundaries where the media is allowed to go and have them escorted to a designated area.
- Don't speculate so reporters won't be tempted to speculate.

AFTER THE CRISIS:

- Try to control any interviews with short direct answers and say what you want to say;
- Stick to the facts and avoid hypotheticals.
- Avoid saying "no comment." Say "I don't know" and get back to the interviewer with correct information later.
- With the assistance of the media coordinator, prepare a written news release.

* Suggestion: Have law enforcement answer questions about any crime and the media representative and/or principal answer questions about the school's response to the incident.

For additional information about the role of the media in crisis situations, check out the following websites: The International Association of Chiefs of Police. http://www.theiacp.org/pubinfo/pubs/pslc/; *Communicating About School Safety*. (March, 2001). Washington State School Director's Association. http://www.keepschoolssafe.org/wssd.htm

I. Recordkeeping

1. Types of Records

Records generated as part of the crisis management process serve two purposes—the obvious documentation of events, and, more importantly, instruments to guide problem solving in order to improve the safety of the school environment and to deliver appropriate services needed by individual students. The records defined below fulfill both of these purposes.

- *Discipline Records:* These records have typically been used simply as a means to document disciplinary actions taken with individual students. Actually, they yield a wealth of information that, when analyzed, can help the School Safety Team to make decisions about interventions needed to address system level issues, problems that groups of students have in common, and problems with individual students. They also permit monitoring of the overall success of the school's safety program. Electronic systems that analyze and chart discipline records are available to facilitate this work.

- *Incident Profiling:* Blauvert (1999) suggests that schools maintain well-written incident reports that can be used in follow-up activities (e.g., suspension proceedings, court proceedings, lawsuits, etc.) as well as to facilitate prevention of recurrence of incidents, and reduce administrative recordkeeping time. Once a report is generated, Blauvert recommends that it be placed in a filing system organized by reasons students are sent to the office (tardiness, insubordination, fighting, controlled substances, classroom disruption, cheating). This permits easy retrieval and initiates the process of analysis of patterns of problems that can lead to interventions.

- *Anonymous reporting mechanism:* Students need to know that it is in their best interest to report threats to adults yet they often hesitate to break the "conspiracy of silence"(Poland, 2000, October) because they think if they tell they are a "snitch." They don't tell because they fear retaliation, they are uncertain what and whom to tell, they don't take it seriously, or they don't think anything will happen. A mechanism for anonymous reporting can alleviate such concerns. Strategies that can be effective are 1) to ensure students that all threats will be taken seriously and 2) to make sure that every student has someone available to them that they can trust (e.g., a counselor, a favorite teacher, a coach, a parent). Some districts have subscribed to phone-in crisis lines; others have a safety pledge that all students and their parents sign

- *Record of crisis:* Blauvert (1999) recommends that an individual be assigned to collect newspaper articles, taping of radio broadcasts and television coverage in order to make a record of the crisis situation, including the crisis response. This record can provide a valuable tool for troubleshooting the effectiveness of a district's crisis management plan.

- *Copies of the District and Building Crisis Management Plans:* Copies of plans should be placed in strategic places to ensure that key individuals are aware of them and that they are available as references during a crisis situation.

2. Rules and Policies on Information Sharing

Both Federal and State laws have provisions for sharing personally identifiable information about students. Some violations of school rules also constitute a violation of criminal law, especially infractions involving drugs, weapons, and violence. School officials need to understand and follow the laws that require them to turn over to the police evidence or information about suspected crimes.

School district officials should develop a partnership with local law enforcement to facilitate a better understanding of the laws related to privacy, crime reporting, and information sharing. In Iowa, these laws are identified below. (Further information about these laws is included in the section "Safe Schools Laws and Policies.")

- *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)*. This Federal law protects the privacy interests of students and their parents through standards designed to discourage abusive and unwarranted disclosure of students' education records that contain personally identifiable information. The law also specifies the conditions under which such information can be shared with law enforcement.
- Federal law and Iowa code outline requirements related to the confidentiality of information pertaining to IDEA '97 eligible individuals.
- Iowa Code defines which student records are confidential, and the requirements for sharing information between a school district, law enforcement, and juvenile justice agencies. (See the "Information Sharing Agreement" at the end of this document.)

3. Distribution of Information

In order to ensure that all who need to know do know the procedures for dealing with crises adopted by the district and the building, copies of the plan need to be widely distributed to individuals or groups who have responsibility for implementation of the plan. Below is an adapted list suggested in "Emergency Planning for Iowa Schools" distributed by the Iowa Department of Education in 1995.

- Board of Education
- Superintendent of Schools
- School Principals
- District and Building School Safety Teams
- Building Emergency Response Teams
- Teachers
- Nurses
- Secretaries
- Custodial Personnel
- Food Service Personnel
- Bus Operators
- Parents (abridged version)
- Police Department*
- Fire Department*
- Highway Patrol (local resident)
- Local Emergency Management Coordinator*
- Local News Media (only the information that will not jeopardize student safety).
- State Emergency Management Division

* *Also provide, or if necessary develop, up-to-date blueprints, layouts, and floor prints of school buildings and grounds including information about main leads for gas, water, electricity, cable, telephone, HVAC, alarm and sprinkler systems, location of hazardous materials, elevators, and entrances.*

Section II: Early Warning Signs

Why didn't we see it coming? Did the child do or say anything that would have cued us in to the impending crisis? Did we miss an opportunity to help? Early warning signs – certain behavioral and emotional signs – if viewed in context, can signal a troubled child. Such signs may or may not indicate a serious problem, but they should impel us to check out our concerns and address the child's needs.

A. Principles for Identifying Early Warning Signs

Educators and families can increase their ability to recognize early warning signs by establishing supportive relationships with children and youth. **Unfortunately, there is a real danger that early warning signs will be misinterpreted.** While they are intended to protect students, there is potential for harm in labeling individuals as "dangerous." To date, no scientific research has been conducted to determine the efficacy of student profiling nor its success in preventing violent incidents. Use the following principles to ensure that early warning signs are not misinterpreted (Dwyer, K.P., Osher, D. and Warger, 1998, August):

- **Do No Harm.** First and foremost, use early warning signs to identify and help troubled children. Never use early warning signs as a rationale to exclude, isolate, or punish a child, or as a checklist for formally identifying, mislabeling or stereotyping children.

- **Understand violence and aggression within a context.** Violence is contextual. Violent and aggressive behavior may be due to factors that exist within the school, home, or the larger social environment. Some children will act out if stress becomes too great and they lack positive coping skills and have learned to react with aggression.

- **Avoid Stereotypes.** Stereotypes can interfere with – and even harm – a school's ability to help children. Be aware of false cues – including race, socio-economic status, academic ability or physical appearance.

- **View warning signs within a developmental context.** Students express their needs differently in elementary, middle and high school. Know what is developmentally typical behavior, so that individual behavior is not misinterpreted.

- **Understand that children typically exhibit multiple warning signs.** Research confirms that children who are at risk for aggression exhibit more than one warning sign, repeatedly, and with increasing intensity over time. Do not overreact to single signs, words or actions.

B. Early Warning Signs

The potential for identification of potentially dangerous students has become a source of reassurance for some school personnel as well as parents. Extreme caution must be exercised in such an undertaking. No single profile emerged for the shooters in the incidents in the recent past, and profiling can cause inaccurate and unjust identification. Although it is not always possible to predict behavior that will lead to violence, educators and parents can learn to recognize early warning signs that, especially when presented in combination, indicate a need for further analysis to determine appropriate intervention. They should be used to shape intervention practices – such as policies to support training and easy access to a team of specialists trained in evaluating and addressing serious behavioral and academic concern.

For a more complete discussion of the early warning signs presented below, see *Early Warning, Timely Response*. For convenience, they are summarized here. They can serve as an aid to identifying and referring children who may need help. None of these signs alone is sufficient for predicting aggression and violence. Moreover, it is inappropriate – and potentially harmful – to use early warning signs as a checklist against which to match individual children. *Note: Those listed below are not equally significant and they are not presented in order of seriousness.*

- **Social withdrawal.** In some situations, gradual and eventual complete withdrawal can be an important indicator of a troubled child.
- **Excessive feelings of isolation and being alone.** Research has shown that most children who are isolated and appear friendless are not violent. However, in some cases, feelings of isolation are associated with children who behave aggressively and violently.
- **Excessive feelings of rejection**. Many young people experience emotionally painful rejection in the course of growing up. Their response to rejection depends on many background factors. Without support, they may be at risk of expressing distress in negative ways – including violence.
- **Feelings of being picked on and persecuted**. The youth who feels constantly picked on, teased, bullied and humiliated at home or at school may initially withdraw socially. If not given adequate support, some children may vent in inappropriate ways – including possible aggression and violence.
- **Being a victim of violence.** Youth who are victims of violence – including physical or sexual abuse – are sometimes at risk themselves of becoming violent toward themselves or others.
- **Low school interest and poor academic performance.** Poor school achievement can be the result of many factors. It is important to track whether a drastic change in performance and/or poor performance becomes a chronic condition that limits a child's capacity to learn. In some situations, acting out and aggressive behaviors can occur.

- **Expression of violence in writings and drawings.** Youth often express feelings and intentions in their drawings, stories, and poetry. Many children produce work with violent themes that is harmless when taken in context. However, an overrepresentation of violence that is directed at specific individuals consistently over time may signal emotional problems and potential for violence. Because of the real danger in misdiagnosing such a sign, seek guidance from a qualified professional.

- **Uncontrolled anger.** Everyone gets angry. However, anger expressed frequently and intensely in response to minor irritants may signal potential violent behavior.

- **Impulsive and chronic hitting, intimidating and bullying.** Children – especially young children – often engage in shoving and mild aggression. However, these behaviors can escalate into more serious behaviors if left unattended.

- **History of discipline problems.** Chronic behavior and disciplinary problems may suggest that underlying emotional needs are not being met. These problems may set the stage for the student to engage in aggressive behaviors.

- **Past history of violent and aggressive behavior.** Unless provided with support and counseling, a youth who has a history of aggressive or violent behavior is likely to repeat those behaviors. Those who show an early pattern of antisocial behavior frequently and across multiple settings are particularly at risk.

- **Intolerance and prejudicial attitudes.** All children and youth have likes and dislikes. However, an intense prejudice toward others based on racial, ethnic, religious, sexual orientation, etc. – when coupled with other factors – may lead to violent assaults against those who are perceived to be different.

- **Drug and alcohol use.** Apart from being unhealthy, drug and alcohol use reduces self-control and exposes youth to violence, either as perpetrators, as victims, or both.

- **Affiliation with gangs.** Gangs that support anti-social values and behavior cause fear and stress among other students. Youth who are influenced by these groups may act in violent or aggressive ways in certain situations.

- **Inappropriate access to, possession of, and use of firearms.** Youth who inappropriately possess or have access to firearms can have an increased risk for violence. Research shows they also have a higher probability of becoming victims.

- **Serious threats of violence.** Idle threats are a common response to frustration. Alternatively, one of the most reliable indicators that a youth is likely to commit a dangerous act toward self or others is a detailed and specific threat to use violence.

C. Imminent Warning Signs

Unlike early warning signs, imminent warning signs indicate a student is very close to behaving in a potentially dangerous way to self and/or to others. Imminent warning signs require an immediate response. They are usually presented as a sequence of overt, serious, hostile behaviors and are evident to more than one staff member or family member. They may include:

- Serious physical fighting with peers or family members

- Severe destruction of property
- Severe rage for seemingly minor reasons
- Detailed threats of lethal violence
- Possession and/or use of firearms and other weapons
- Other self-injurious behaviors or threat of suicide.

When warning signs indicate danger is imminent, safety must **always** be the first consideration. Immediate intervention by school authorities, and possibly law enforcement, is needed when a student has presented a detailed plan to harm others or is carrying a weapon, particularly a firearm, and has threatened to use it. In situations where students present other threatening behaviors, **parents should be informed of the concerns immediately.** School authorities are also obligated to seek assistance from appropriate agencies such as child and family services and community mental health.

D. Team referrals

Any school safety plan should address both prevention and early intervention as well as procedures for dealing with crises when they occur. When school staff notice early warning signs in a student, a system of interventions should be in place to address the concerns.

In Iowa, school districts use a problem solving or solution-focused approach to develop intervention plans designed to ameliorate problems. This system usually includes a Building/Teacher/Student Assistance Team primarily comprised of building-based staff who collaborate with parents and, when appropriate, the student to develop strategies that will provide students with the positive supports they need to overcome any difficulties they may be experiencing. Special services teams that include psychologist, social workers, consultants, speech-language pathologists, and other support personnel from Area Education Agencies (AEAs) are also assigned to buildings and participate in this problem solving/solution-focused process.

Some schools will require more complex and intensive interventions that necessitate the involvement of or referral to community-based mental health professionals. These interventions are usually multi-faceted. Schools should build relationships with community partners in order to facilitate collaboration on behalf of their students and have a process in place for referring to outside agencies. In some communities, agencies are placing mental health professionals in schools. Still others have agreements with family assistance programs to which they can make referrals.

For more information about how to respond when early warning signs are observed, see the document *Early Warning, Timely Response* and the information briefs on "Early Intervention" and "Positive Behavioral Supports" in other sections of this handbook.

Section III. Crisis Response

A. Emergency Response Plan

Quick and responsible action during a crisis situation results from proper planning and training. Use the following checklist to assess the completeness of your emergency response plan:

The plan includes:

- Recommendations from the Safety Audits
- Roles & responsibilities of Emergency Management Team, administrative leaders, staff, students, parents
- Step-by step intervention/response procedures for a variety of crisis situations.
- A communication plan that includes audiences that need to receive communication during a crisis, channels of communication for each type of crisis, who calls whom, and an emergency contact list with names and phone numbers.
- Identification of a media liaison and designation of a news briefing area
- Clear strategies for dealing with the media.
- A process for securing immediate external support, e.g., police, other community agencies
- A full and ongoing evaluation of all components.
- Staff training in a range of skills from dealing with escalating classroom situations to responding to a serious crisis.
- Contents for school and classroom emergency kits and maintenance procedures
- Identified safe areas where students and staff should go during a crisis
- Contingency provisions

B. Examples of Responses

Specific responses to various emergencies that indicate procedures, delineate responsibility, and provide guidelines for shelter-in-place or evacuation should be included in the plan. Sample responses to specific incidents are listed below. Since most Iowa schools already have effective Response Plans for weather and fire related emergencies, they are not specifically outlined in this section.

1. Classroom Conflict/Disruptive Student

- Keep calm and do not raise your voice.
- Do not touch students who are agitated or angry.
- Try to keep the student seated.
- Reassure both the involved student(s) and the class as a whole.
- Seek help from the office either by calling or sending a student.

2. Fights

- Evaluate the severity of the fight.
- Do not physically get in the middle of a fight to try to restrain fighters. Instead, get help.
- Demonstrate confidence by walking briskly and giving commands in a calm, firm, and authoritative voice. This communicates to students that you are there and that you want the fight to stop immediately.
- Separate participants, if you can do so without harm to yourself.
- Disperse student spectators from the fight.
- Remove participants to a neutral area.
- Get medical attention, if needed.

- Obtain identification and call students by name.
- Notify building and district administrators.
- Determine if there is a need to involve law enforcement.
- Handle any media requests through media spokesperson.
- Meet with staff, students and parents, if necessary.
- Provide counseling as needed.

3. Armed Attack by Student or Intruder

- Assess the situation and remain calm.
- If possible, notify the administrator-in-charge, and call 911.
- Administrator-in-charge declare "Code Red" if appropriate.
- Determine whether to shelter-in-place or evacuate.
- Remain calm and try to isolate the individual with the weapon.
- If close to the armed individual:
  -- keep a safe distance and don't make sudden movements.
  -- negotiate with the individual, if it seems appropriate.
- Await the arrival of the police and provide assistance as needed.
- (Staff) follows appropriate crisis procedures and instructions of administrator-in-charge, and law enforcement.
- Provide first aid if needed.
- Secure medical attention for anyone injured.
- Debrief with school administrators and law enforcement.
- Hold meeting(s) with staff, parents, and students.
- Handle all press and media inquiries through media spokesperson.
- Provide counseling as needed.
- Write a letter to all parents and staff.

4. Suicide Threatened/Attempted/Accomplished

- Assess the situation. Treat all verbal and written threats as a serious matter.
- Send for the principal and counselor.
- Call 911.
- Contact a family member.
- Appoint a faculty member to accompany the ambulance to the hospital to act as a liaison between the hospital and school if family member is present.
- Handle any media inquiries through a media spokesperson.
- Inform staff and students.
- Provide grief counseling, if necessary.
- Write a letter to all parents about the death.

5. Bomb Threat

Instruct all personnel, especially anyone who is likely to answer the phones, to follow an established protocol if a bomb threat is reported. It should include, but may not be limited to:

- If the threat is called in –
  -- Keep caller on line as long as possible. Ask him/her to repeat information.
  -- Write down information in the caller's own words and record the information on a report form. (See Section VB, "Templates for Developing a Plan.")
  -- Respond to the caller as calmly as possible.

-- Ask the caller for specific information, such as location of bomb and time bomb will go off.
-- Inform the caller that the building is occupied and that detonation of a bomb could result in serious injury or death.
-- If possible, have more than one person listen to call.

- Notify the principal or designee, who will immediately phone 911 and contact security.
- Call the superintendent's office to ensure that necessary persons are notified.
- Immediately dispatch the EMT and evacuate the building when instructed to do so by designated authority, and ensure that all students, teachers and staff are at a safe distance from the building (1000-3000 feet recommended). Do not use the fire alarms, radios, cell phones or electronic bells because they can activate bomb.
- Establish a command post outside the building at least 1000 feet from the building.
- Designate a specific area for the media and have a designated media spokesperson. (*Note: The more publicity bomb threats receive, the more likely that repeat threats will be received.*)
- Communicate to parents after the incident is resolved.
- All students and staff members should be advised to report suspicious or unusual objects or packages immediately.

6. Death or Serious Accident/Injury at School (Student or Staff Member)

- Notify principal and district administrator.
- Remove onlookers from the area.
- Call 911.
- Contact family member.
- Appoint a faculty member to accompany the ambulance to the hospital to act as a liaison between the hospital and school if no family member is present.
- Handle any media inquiries through media spokesperson.
- Inform staff and students.
- Provide grief counseling, if needed.
- Write a letter to all parents about the death.

7. Death of Student or Staff Member (Not on School Grounds)

- Upon notification of death, hold a staff meeting to inform and review procedures.
- Contact family of the deceased to offer support and obtain information.
- Observe the reaction of students and offer grief counseling.
- Secure the belongings of the deceased until they can be released to a family member.
- Notify staff, parents, and students (when developmentally appropriate) of funeral arrangements.
- Work with family(ies) on memorial plans. If the death is a suicide, do not memorialize the student and thereby the act.

Other Areas that May Warrant Attention:

- Missing or runaway students
- Unarmed trespasser
- Gangs
- Riots
- Bus accidents
- Natural disasters
- Illicit drug or alcohol use or distribution

Section IV. Recovery

A comprehensive Crisis Management Plan must contain provisions for the aftermath of a crisis and assisting persons who were affected by the crisis – students, parents, teachers and school officials, and emergency personnel. Most students and staff will fully recover with the support of family, friends, and school personnel. The ideas listed below will help hasten that recovery.

A. Identify Resources

Additional services may be needed in the district should staff or an individual building not be able to deal adequately with the situation. Anticipate that long-term follow-up will be required for victims and their families, students, and staff during the period of recovery.

- Agreements may be made with counselors from surrounding districts to help during a crisis.
- Agreements may be made with local clergy, mental health professionals, and other agencies. Talk with officials from other schools that have lived through crisis situations.

B. Provide Support to Students and Staff

- Recognize that confusion, disorganization and difficulty in decision making are normal reactions to a crisis – for students and staff.
- Carefully consider the process of resuming normal operations and how students and staff are reintroduced to school facilities.
- Have district counselors consult with teachers to help them deal with their students' reactions.
- If necessary, implement discussions led by support staff and/or classroom teachers to give children a forum to express their feelings and to understand how classmates are coping.
- Provide one-on-one counseling support for students and staff, if necessary.
- Be sensitive to the effects of a crisis on students and staff and adjust classroom demands accordingly.
- Notify parents immediately if a child is experiencing difficulty in class or is referred for assessment and intervention.
- Provide a forum for teachers and staff to discuss their reactions with one another.
- Plan for "triggering events": return to school in September, holidays, trial of the perpetrator, anniversary date of the shooting, and graduation.

C. Communicate with Parents and Community

Communications with parents and the community at-large is essential following a crisis. At a minimum, inform parents about the situation. Parent/community meetings may be warranted to give everyone a chance to gather and discuss what has happened. If necessary, help arrange for counseling for parents and community members.

D. Follow-up

At the appropriate time (as soon as practicable), review the crisis situation and implementation of the crisis management plan. Determine what lessons have been learned, if any, and how these lessons may help the school be better prepared for any future crisis. As part of the review, ask the following:

- What is the probability of a copycat incident? Are we prepared?
- Do we need to modify the plan?
- Do we need more training?
- How can we make our schools safer?

V. Plan Development

A. The Planning Process

	Fully Implemented	Partially Implemented	Need to Address
▪ The School Safety Team includes administrators, teachers, staff, parents, community members, and students (secondary level).			
▪ The plan is coordinated and reviewed annually with law enforcement and other emergency personnel.			
▪ School safety audits have been conducted for policies and procedures, buildings & grounds, and equipment.			
▪ Prevention curriculum has been reviewed e.g., anger control, conflict resolution, peer mediation, mentoring programs, and character education			
▪ Profiles of each school in the district have been developed and distributed to key crisis responders			
▪ The plan includes procedures for a variety of crisis situations. (e.g., natural disasters, bus accidents, bomb threats, natural death, suicide, armed attack, etc.)			
▪ The plan includes procedures for handling the aftermath of a crisis			
▪ Procedures are incorporated in the plan for students with disabilities.			
▪ Places are pre-designated for personnel to carry out their roles: media contact area, parent gathering placer, staging area, and location for clergy and counselors.			
▪ Parents have been informed about the plan's contents and implementation.			
▪ A communication plan has been developed with key communicators and channels of communication identified.			
▪ A chain of command has been established and publicized.			
▪ Lists of phone numbers for community emergency responders and support groups such as counselors, churches, business partners, etc. have been prepared.			
▪ The plan includes an updated set of building layouts placed in the offices of the school, fire department, law enforcement, and emergency personnel.			
▪ The plan has received a legal review of crisis response procedures and forms.			
▪ Building and classroom emergency kits have been distributed and their contents are complete and in working order.			
▪ The plan has been distributed to those with responsibilities for implementing it.			
▪ A training plan is in place and all parties identified have received appropriate training.			

	Fully Implemented	Partially Implemented	Need to Address
▪ Transportation personnel have received training regarding emergency situations.			
▪ Selected staff members are currently trained in first aid.			
▪ An incident command center, accessible from the exterior and interior of the building, has been designated.			
▪ An off-site facility has been identified as an alternate command center.			
▪ A nearby site where parents and media can report has been designated.			
▪ A media plan, including a spokesperson, has been established.			
▪ Evacuation routes within all buildings are clearly designated.			
▪ Emergency drills and evacuations, fire and tornado drills are regularly conducted.			
▪ Bus transportation arrangements are included, should students and staff need evacuation.			
▪ Provisions have been made for regular meetings of the School Safety Team and support of their decisions.			
▪ Familiarization of students and parents with their respective roles and responsibilities and the procedures outlined in the Crisis Management Plan are ongoing processes.			

B. Templates for Developing a Plan

The following pages include templates and checklists that you may elect to use to develop your overall Crisis Management Plan. The last six, in particular, should be placed in individual emergency crisis plan folders in every classroom.

Team Membership:

- School Safety Team
- Building Emergency Management Team

School Profile

Audits:

- Environmental/Facilities Walkabout
- Policy & Procedures Review
- Equipment Audit

Response Plan:

- Code Red
- Emergency Directory
- Procedures Template
- Campus Map
- Shelter-in-Place Template
- Building Evacuation Template
- Site Evacuation Template
- Phoned-In Bomb Threat Report Form
- Incident Report Form
- Critical Incident Response Plan
- Juvenile Justice Sharing Agreement

School Safety Team

Name	Position	Agency/Address	Phone	E-mail

Building Emergency Management Team

Name	School Position	Team Position	Phone	E-mail

School Profile

(Complete one profile for each building)

School Name/Address: _____

Principal: _____

Contact Name/Telephone: _____

School Safety Team Members:

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

Personnel:

Grade Levels _____ # of Students _____ # of Teachers _____

# of Support Staff _____ Student to Teacher Ratio _____

Name of School Resource Officer: _____

Description of Facility:

Urban _____ Suburban: _____ Rural: _____ Size (acreage) _____

Age of Bldg. _____ Legal jurisdiction: _____

Adjacent Roads _____

_____

Surrounding Land Use: Residential Light Commercial Industrial Farming

Student Transportation

Type	# of students	% of total	Weather Related Variations
Bus	_____	_____	_____
Personal vehicle	_____	_____	_____
Parents	_____	_____	_____
Pedestrian/Bike	_____	_____	_____

Safety Audits

Environmental Design – The Walkabout Audit:

The principals below are part of the School-Based Crime Prevention through Environmental Design that speaks to the design and use of the physical environment to have a proactive impact on behavior, which in turn will affect the fear of and opportunity for violence and the commitment of criminal acts.

	Natural Strategies	Organized Strategies	Mechanical Strategies
Natural Surveillance: Design and placement of physical features to permit surveillance and deter criminal activity)	Facility design that provides opportunities for surveillance, such as walkways, windows, and common areas.	Intentional placement of persons for the purpose of supervision/surveillance. Ex. Teachers in the hallways at passing times.	Use of closed circuit television (CCTC) monitors.
Access Management: (Physical guidance of people, to enhance opportunities for effectiveness of surveillance, and reduce access of potentially dangerous individuals)	"Wayfinding"systems, signage, entrance and exits, fencing, landscaping, lighting, supervision of parking lots and athletic facilities, policies limiting hours of access.	Receptionists at key entries	Automatic closing devices on gates, locks, and key cards
Territoriality: (Use of design elements to delineate space – private, and public, and to contribute to people's sense of ownership of that space. People will care for, protect, and respect spaces for which they feel responsible and with which they have identity.)	Student art, signage, landscaping, fencing, pavement treatments to denote pride and sphere of influence. Placement of physical features to define territoriality.	Designation of use and responsibilities for space.	
Physical Maintenance: (Repair, replacement and general upkeep. Serves as additional expression of ownership).	Selection of easy maintenance landscaping materials, timely repair and replacement of damaged and worn materials.	Maintenance program and procedures, campus clean-up days, clear damage policy and procedures, sanctions for damage.	Vandal resistant hardware
Order Maintenance: Attention to and reduction of minor acts. Reflected in the school's discipline policy and procedures.)	Use of graffiti resistant materials, defining routines and procedures for use of pedestrian and vehicular routes, behavioral expectations posted in common areas and classrooms.	Clearly defining and teaching behavioral expectations/rules of conduct and providing monitoring, supervision and response systems with ready access to authority figures.	CCTV for monitoring in different areas.
Activity Support (Planning and placement of activities to enhance opportunities for natural surveillance, informal access management, and territoriality.)	Planning and strategic placement of supervised recreational and physical education activities.	Organization and use of adjacent residential and/or commercial neighbors to enhance surveillance. Expect staff to feel responsible for all kids and to capitalize on opportunities for surveillance. Develop parent and/or student volunteer programs to help with monitoring.	Community system for monitors and wireless communication system between the classrooms and the administrative offices.

Adapted from Safer Schools and Communities by Design: The CPTED Approach (2001).

Areas for Assessment

Area: Surrounding Neighborhood

- Community Connection
- Neighborhood Characteristics
- Adjacent Land Use

Area: Perimeter and Points of Entry

- Boundary Definitions
- Lighting
- Bus Entry
- Signage
- Main Entry
- Student Auto Entry
- Other Entries
- Landscaping
- Staff Auto Entry

Area: Vehicular Travel Routes and Parking Facilities

- Signage
- Lighting
- Landscaping
- Visitors
- Buses
- Parent Drop-off
- Student
- Staff
- Bicycles

Area: Pedestrian Travel Paths & Gathering Areas

- Signage
- Landscaping
- Lighting
- Exterior Corridors and Walkways
- Sidewalks
- Formal and Informal Gathering Areas

Area: Building Exterior and Grounds

- Doors
- Entry/Exit Areas
- Windows
- Stairways
- Unobservable Areas
- Landscaping
- Lighting
- Signage
- Security Features

Area: Playground

Doors
Entry/Exit Areas
Windows
Unobservable Areas
Landscaping
Supervision
Lighting
Play Equipment
Security Features

Area: Building Interior (Common Areas)

- Main Entries
- Lobbies
- Hallways
- Stairways
- Restrooms
- Lockers & Locker Areas
- Views
- Lighting: Natural
- Lighting: Activity
- Lighting: Emergency
- Security Features
- Administrative Areas

Area: Building Interior (Classroom(s) and Laboratories)

- Entries and Exits
- Doors and Windows
- Storage
- Supervision
- Lighting
- Furniture Arrangement

Area: Cafeteria

- Entries and Exits
- Trash/Garbage Collection
- Queuing Lines
- Seating Areas
- Gathering Areas
- Dish Returns
- Windows
- Restrooms
- Delivery Areas
- Lighting
- Supervision

Area: Library, Media Center, and Other Special Use Area

- Entries and Exits
- Doors and Windows
- Lighting
- Furniture Arrangement
- Supervision
- Restrooms

Area: Athletic and Recreational Areas

- Locker and Shower Facilities
- Entries and Exits
- Fields
- Lighting
- Parking
- Ticket Booths
- Queuing Lines
- Signage
- Connection with Other School Areas
- Supervision
- Landscaping
- Travel Routes

Adapted from Safer Schools and Communities by Design: The CPTED Approach (2001).

Name of Observer:_____

Area Assessed: _____

(Select one area from preceding page)

Feature(s) Assessed - (List features associated with selected area):

Surveillance:

Access Management (e.g., signage, traffic patterns, etc.):

Territoriality:

Physical Maintenance:

Order Maintenance:

Activity Support:

Adapted from Safer Schools and Communities by Design: The CPTED Approach (2001).

Policy and Procedures Review (checklist)

The School Safety Team policy and procedure review will include a variety of data and materials. Most of it should be obtained in advance of the formal review and the rest during administrative interviews and casual conversations with students and teachers. Materials and data sources to consult include:

- Materials provided to students, including the Student Code of Conduct
- Materials given to parents
- Bus ridership records
- School incident reports
- Calls for service data (local law enforcement)
- Climate surveys or other similar surveys
- Teacher, parent and student surveys
- Maintenance reports
- School map
- Local community map
- Architectural plans – site plans, landscaping, traffic circulation, buildings

Areas to cover in the Policy & Procedure Review include:

Policies, Procedures & Programs	***Comments***
Procedures and Routines:	
▪ Beliefs, Vision, and/or Mission Statements	
▪ Activities and schedules	
▪ Arrival and departure times	
▪ Lunch periods and times	
▪ Visitor policies	
▪ Off-site activities	
▪ Community use of facilities	

▪ Dress code	
▪ Backpack policy	
▪ Textbook system	
▪ Locker policies	
▪ Supervision policies	
▪ Lunch	
▪ Holiday Breaks	
▪ Attendance and Tardies	
▪ Access management	
▪ Transportation	
Discipline Practices	
▪ Student code of conduct related to Board policy	
▪ Guidelines for Student Success (e.g. School-wide Expectations)	

▪ Setting Specific Behavioral Expectations: Common Areas	
▪ Setting Specific Behavioral Expectations: Classrooms	
▪ Consequences for violations of school regulations/ behavioral expectations	
▪ Bus Referrals	
▪ Office Referrals	
▪ Property Damage	
▪ Critical-incident response (e.g., fights, etc.)	
▪ In-school suspensions	
▪ Out-of-school suspensions	
▪ Expulsions	
▪ Alternative Placements	
▪ Disciplinary procedures – students with disabilities	

Records	
▪ Sharing of Information	
▪ Incident documentation	
Programs and Services	
▪ Youth development programs	
▪ After-school activities	
▪ Extracurricular activities	
▪ Specialized services for students with special needs (e.g., special education, TAG)	
▪ Building/Student Assistance Teams	
Law Enforcement Relations	
▪ School resource officer	
▪ Legal jurisdiction	
▪ Exchange of Information	
▪ Local patrol patterns	

▪ Law enforcement calls for service (types and frequency)	
Parent Communication and Engagement	
▪ Notification in case of individual student emergencies	
▪ Notification in case of all-school emergencies (e.g. weather, violent incident, etc.)	
▪ Involvement Opportunities	
▪ Parent-Teacher Conferences	
▪ Referenced in school mission &/or belief statement	
Community Involvement	
▪ Relationship to community social service agencies	
▪ Relationship to youth development organizations and faith community	
▪ Relationship to business community	
▪ Relationship to community-at-large (i.e., the public)	
▪ Referenced in school mission and/or belief statements	

Emergency Plans	
▪ Drills and Exercises	
▪ Crisis Response Plan	
Training Policies	
▪ Students	
▪ Certified Staff	
▪ Non-certified staff	
▪ Bus Drivers	
▪ Parents	
▪ Community (Crisis Response Personnel)	
▪ Community (Crisis Follow-up Personnel)	
School Culture	
▪ Characteristics of student body	
▪ Characteristics of staff	

▪ Norms, Beliefs and Values	
▪ Decision-making processes	
▪ Rituals and Celebrations	
▪ Informal Rules	
Issues and Concerns	
▪ Administrative Concerns	
▪ Teacher concerns	
▪ Parental concerns	
▪ Student likes	
▪ Student concerns	

Equipment Audit

Type of Equipment	Have?		#	Location	Working Order?	
	Yes	No			Yes	No
▪ Walkie-Talkies*						
▪ Cellular Phones*						
▪ Pagers*						
▪ Telephones						
▪ Building Plans						
▪ Fire Extinguishers						
▪ Air horns						
▪ Bullhorns						
▪ E-mail						
▪ CPR-trained Staff						
▪ First Aid Trained						
▪ Portable Classroom						
▪ Flashlights						
▪ Emergency Generators						

* = Any equipment involving frequencies should not be used during a bomb threat.

Schedule of Drills and Evacuations

Crisis Situation	Shelter-in-Place Drill	Evacuation Drill	Full Scale Exercise	Special Purpose Drill/Exercise	Date	Time	Evaluation of Success*				
							1	2	3	4	5
Fire											
Tornado											
Bomb Threat											
Bomb Located/ Detonated											
Armed Student/ Intruder											
Other											

* **Success Criteria:** 1=All procedures performed accurately within prescribed time. 2= All procedures performed accurately, but not within prescribed time. 3=Some procedural inaccuracies and failure to perform within prescribed time, Conduct a special purpose drill/exercise. 4= Problems with majority of procedures. Review procedures and training, and practice again. 5=Poor performance of all procedures and no timelines met. Review procedures and training, and practice again.

Code Word

Code Word: A pre-identified code word is declared when, in the judgment of the Administrator-in-Charge, the safety of students and staff is threatened, and the situation warrants that they stay in their classrooms rather than evacuate.

	DESCRIPTION OF CIRCUMSTANCES
Code Word – Respond:	
Code Word – No Response: *(Includes restroom check by Administrator)*	

Administrator-in-Charge Responsibilities

Emergency Management Team Responsibilities

Potential Situations Requiring Emergency Responses

Accidents:

- At school
- En route to or from school
- On a school bus
- After school activity
- On a field/athletic trip

Serious assaults

- On a student
- On a teacher or staff member
- On an administrator

Bomb Threats

Explosive device found

Explosive device detonated

Medical Emergencies

Bus Accidents

Kidnapping/Missing Students

Death of a Student/Staff Member

Disruptive Student/Fights

Gang Altercations

Environmental Disasters (Fire, Tornadoes, Electrical Storms, Gas Leaks, Toxic Spills)

Student with a Gun

Suicide – Attempted/Actual

Trespasser

Student Demonstrations/Walkout (Authorized and Unauthorized)

Type of Emergency: _____

ADMINISTRATOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES	**TEACHERS'/STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES**

EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS

(Duplicate, laminate and distribute to appropriate persons)

LOCATION	PERSONS' NAMES	PHONE NUMBERS
EMERGENCIES		**911**
Police Department		
School Resource Officer		
Fire Department		
Guidance Counselor		
AEA Support Team		
• Psychologist		
• Social Worker		
• Consultant		
Superintendent's Office		
Assistant Superintendent		
Director of School Safety/Security		
Director of Transportation		
Maintenance Supervisor		
Weather Bureau		
Hospital		
Emergency Room		
Hazardous Materials		
Protective Services (child abuse)		
Poison Control Center		
Gas Company		
Electrical Power Company		
Telephone (line trouble)		
Public Health Department		
Mental Health Department		
Ecumenical Council of Churches		
American Red Cross		

Building/Campus Map

Map of building and grounds goes here.

Shelter-In-Place
Signal: "Shelter-in-Place"

Shelter-in-Place is often a classroom, but it may be a predetermined safe area in a hallway. **Shelter-in-Place** may be used for such incidents as an intruder, a tornado, a missing child, a hostage situation, presence of an angry parent, or death of a student or staff member. This is used anytime it is appropriate for students to say where they are and not move around

Shelter-in-Place Plan for Classroom _____ **Date:** _____

Individual classroom ***Shelter-in-Place Plan*** goes here

Remember:

- Close and lock window (s).
- Close and lock door(s).
- Get personal belongings and grade book.
- Get Emergency Crisis Plan Folder.
- Get Emergency Kit
- Move to pre-determined Shelter-in Place.
- Stay away from door(s) and glass.
- Contain and maintain students.
- Check for injuries.
- Check roll.
- Account for any missing students.
- Ignore all school bells.
- Follow all instructions.
- Wait for all-clear signal.

Building Evacuation
Signal: Fire Alarm or " Building Evacuation"

The principal or designee determines the need for a **Building Evacuation**. Evacuations may be necessary for a variety of reasons such as fire, bomb threat or a facility-related problem.

Building Evacuation Plan for Classroom _____ **Date:** _____

Individual classroom ***Building Evacuation Plan*** goes here

Remember:

- Close and lock window (s).
- Close and lock door(s).
- Get personal belongings and grade book.
- Get Emergency Crisis Plan folder.
- Get Emergency Kit
- Observe any unusual items as you leave.
- Close and lock classroom doors.
- Lead class safely and quickly to predetermined safe area.
- Leave door to the school building unlocked.
- Contain and maintain students.
- Check for injuries.
- Check roll.
- Account for any missing students.
- Follow all instructions.
- Wait for all-clear signal.

Site Evacuation
Signal: "Site Evacuation"

Predetermine a signal other than the alarm(s) used for Building Evacuation

Site evacuation is the process of leaving the entire school grounds. This may be necessary in the case of a chemical spill, explosion, bomb or other reason deemed necessary by the principal or designee.

Site Evacuation Plan for Classroom _____ **Date:** _____

Individual classroom ***Site Evacuation Plan*** goes here

Remember:

- Close and lock window (s).
- Close and lock door(s).
- Get personal belongings and grade book.
- Get Emergency Crisis Plan folder.
- Get Emergency Kit
- Observe any unusual items as you leave.
- Close and lock classroom doors.
- Lead class safely and quickly to predetermined safe area.
- Leave door to the school building unlocked.
- Contain and maintain students.
- Check for injuries.
- Check roll.
- Account for any missing students.
- Follow all instructions.
- Wait for all-clear signal.

Record of Phoned-In Bomb Threat

This form is designed for use by any individual who receives a bomb threat call. The information gathered should immediately be turned over to the building administrator and made available to the crisis responders upon their arrival at the building.

Name of Person Taking the Call: _____ Phone No: _____

(LISTEN – Do not interrupt the caller. Remain calm, courteous. Notify administrator by pre-arranged signal while the caller is on the line. Keep caller on the line and talking. Pretend that you are having difficulty hearing)

Time and Date Reported:_____ Time call began: _____Time call ended: _____

Exact words of caller: _____

_____

_____

Origin of Call: Local _____ Long Distance _____ Phone Booth _____ Internal _____

DESCRIPTION OF CALLER

Gender: Male_____Female_____ **Age:** Juvenile _____Adult _____Estimated Age _____

VOICE AND SPEECH CHARACTERISTICS

Tone and Pitch: Loud_____High Pitched _____ Deep _____Raspy _____Soft_____ Nasal _____

Speech: Fast _____ Slow_____Slurred _____Stutter_____Lisp _____ Distinct _____ Distorted _____

Accent: Local_____Not Local _____Foreign_____ Region _____ Race _____

Language/Syntax: Well-Spoken_____ Poor _____Foul _____Coherent _____Incoherent _____

Noteworthy Characteristics: _____

Manner: Calm_____ Tense _____ Angry _____Serious_____Joking _____Giggling/Laughing _____

Rational _____ Irrational _____ Emotional _____

Is voice familiar? If so, whose? _____

BACKGROUND NOISE (e.g., traffic, music, office machines, quiet, voices, airplanes, party noise, animals)

(Please Describe): _____

---

10 QUESTIONS TO ASK (Ask the questions below if the caller is agreeable to conversation)

1. Where is the bomb to explode? _____
2. Where is the bomb right now? _____
3. When is the bomb intended to go off? _____
4. What does the bomb look like? _____
5. What kind of bomb is it? _____
6. What will cause the bomb to explode? _____
7. Why did you place the bomb? _____
8. Where are you calling from? _____
9. What is your address? _____
10. What is your name? _____

Action to take immediately after the call: 1) Notify building administrator; 2) complete report; and 3)Talk to no one other than administrator.

(Computerized systems are available that not only permit data entry, but also analyze data in order to facilitate decision-making regarding improvement of the school's safety plan.)

Incident Report Form

Offense _____

Date: _____ Day: _____ Time: _____ Class Period: _____

Location from which referral was made: _____

Student Referred: _____

Grade: _____ Age: _____ Gender: _____ Male ___ Female _____ # of times referred: _____

Person Referring Student: _____

Relationship to Student: _____

Others Involved	Nature of Involvement

Description of Violation:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Nature of Violation: _____ Building Discipline Plan _____ District Discipline Code _____ Criminal Offense

Action Taken: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

By Whom: _____

Notification:

Parent _____ Police _____ Superintendent _____ Other _____

CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE PLAN

Information Sheet for Local School Districts

(Important: Complete form and file with local law enforcement and community emergency management services.)

School Critical Incident: Any situation with the immediate potential to result in casualties.
- Incident involving explosives or the threat of explosives.
- Incident involving weapons, e.g. firearm or knife
- Hostage situation

A. School Information

1. Name of School: _____

2. Complete Street Address: _____

   City/Town _____

3. Contact Person/Phone number outside building in case of evacuation of administrative personnel, (e.g. administrator's cell phone)

   _____

B. Response Plans

1. Off Site Location of Building Floor Plans:

2. Evacuation Routes:
   Primary:

   Secondary:

   Alternative Secondary:

3. Rooms for Shelter-in-Place (Use same designation as is used in the hallway to designate rooms, e.g., room number, teacher's name, room name (office, counselor, etc.). Attach extra sheet, if necessary.

• _____	• _____
• _____	• _____
• _____	• _____

4. Locations where students will be evacuated:

   Primary _____

   Secondary (if primary site is unsafe):

5. Parent Information/Reunion Sites:

   Primary Site: _____

   Secondary (if primary site is unsafe) _____

6. Helicopter Landing Site: Determine in consultation with local EMS or law enforcement.

   Primary _____

   Secondary: _____

7. Person(s) Responsible for removal of student records, class schedules, daily attendance sheets for students and staff, and restraining order files.

   _____

8. Staging Area for News Media: _____

   _____

9. Brief description of additional Internal emergency procedures of which outside emergency agency personnel should be made aware:

Form provided courtesy of Iowa State Patrol

JUVENILE JUSTICE AGENCY INFORMATION SHARING AGREEMENT

Statement of Purpose: The purpose of this Agreement is to allow for the sharing of information among the School District and the Agencies prior to a student's adjudication in order to promote and collaborate to improve school safety, reduce alcohol and illegal drug use, reduce truancy, reduce in-school and out-of-school suspensions, and to support alternatives to in-school and out-of-school suspensions and expulsions which provide structured and well supervised educational programs supplemented by coordinated and appropriate services designed to correct behaviors that lead to truancy, suspension, and expulsions and to support students in successfully completing their education.
Identification of Agencies: This agreement is between the Community School District (hereinafter "School District") and (agencies listed) (hereinafter "Agencies") .
Statutory Authority: This agreement implements Iowa Code § 280.25 and is consistent with 34 C.F.R. 99.38 (1999).
Parameters of Information Exchange:

1. The School District may share any information with the Agencies contained in a student's permanent record which is directly related to the juvenile justice system's ability to effectively serve the student.

2. Prior to adjudication information contained in the permanent record may be disclosed by the School District to the Agencies without parental consent or court order.

3. Information contained in a student's permanent record may be disclosed by the School District to the Agencies after adjudication only with parental consent or a court order.

4. Information shared pursuant to the agreement is used solely for determining the programs and services appropriate to the needs of the student or student's family or coordinating the delivery of programs and services to the student or student's family.

5. Information shared under the agreement is not admissible in any court proceedings which take place prior to a disposition hearing, unless written consent is obtained from a student's parent, guardian, or legal or actual custodian.

6. Information obtained by the school from other juvenile justice agencies may not be used as the basis for disciplinary action of the student.

7. This agreement only governs a school district's ability to share information and the purposes for which that information can be used. Other agencies are bound by their own respective confidentiality policies.

Records' Transmission: The individual requesting the information should contact the principal of the building in which the student is currently enrolled or was enrolled. The principal will forward the records within 10 business days of the request.
Confidentiality: Confidential information shared between the Agencies and the school district will remain confidential and will not be shared with any other person, unless otherwise provided by law. Information shared under the agreement is not admissible in

any court proceedings which take place prior to a disposition hearing, unless written consent is obtained from a student's parent. Agencies or individuals violating the terms of this agreement subject their entity represented and themselves personally to legal action pursuant to federal and state law.

Amendments: This agreement constitutes the entire agreement among the agencies with respect to information sharing. Agencies may be added to this agreement at the discretion of the school district.

Term: This agreement is effective from (September 1, 2001 or other date) .

Termination: The School District may discontinue information sharing with an Agency if the School District determines that the Agency has violated the intent or letter of this Agreement.

APPROVED:

Signature:	Address:	
Title:	City:	
Agency:	State:	ZIP
Dated:	Phone Number:	
Signature:	Address:	
Title:	City:	
Agency:	State:	ZIP
Dated:	Phone Number:	
Signature:	Address:	
Title:	City:	
Agency:	State:	ZIP
Dated:	Phone Number:	
Signature:	Address:	
Title:	City:	
Agency:	State:	ZIP
Dated:	Phone Number:	

This agreement is optional and can only be used if the board has adopted a policy approving of its use.

VI. References

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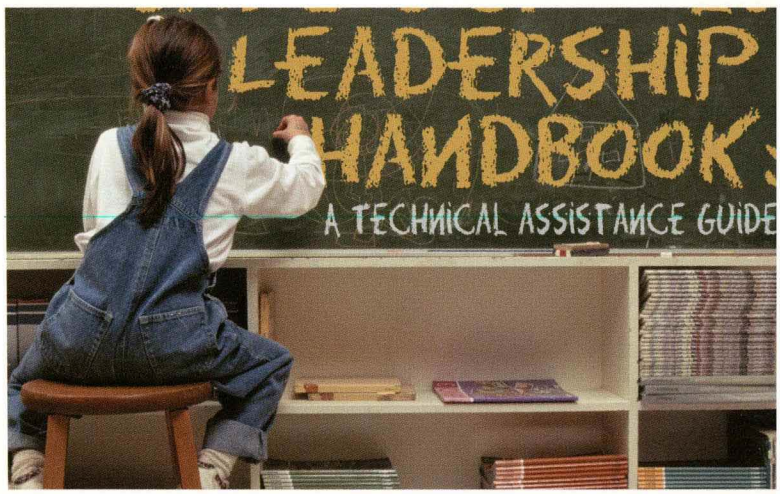
"Let us be a
proud nation that
takes responsibility
for all our children."

- Judith Heumann,
U.S. Department of Education



RESOURCES

State of Iowa

ORGANIZATIONS

SOURCE	DESCRIPTION
Success4 Iowa Department of Education Grimes State Office Building Des Moines, IA 50319 Phone: 515/281-7143 E-mail *Jim.Clark@edu.state.ia.us;* http://www.state.ia.us/educate/programs/success4/index.html	*Success4* is a statewide initiative that provides support and technical assistance to local schools and school districts that have goals in their Comprehensive School Improvement Plans related to the healthy social, emotional, intellectual, and behavioral development of children and youth. This site provides information on technical assistance, training, lists of state and AEA contacts for the initiative, and links to related sites dedicated to the same mission.
Higher Plain, Inc. 1025 Penkridge Drive Iowa City, IA 52246 Phone: 319/354-5606 FAX: 319/354-5345 E-mail: higherplain@home.com	Higher Plain works with school districts in Iowa on parent involvement programs, school-based health prevention and pregnancy prevention programs, program development and grant writing. This site gives information about their programs and services.
Institute for Character Development 2417 University Avenue Des Moines, IA 50311-4505 Phone: 515/271-1910 FAX: 515/271-1907 http://www.drake.edu/icd	This site provides information on training within Iowa, resources and partners in character education, especially Character Counts! in Iowa, and links to local, state, and national sites involved with Character Counts!
Iowa Association of School Boards 700 2nd Avenue, Suite 100 Des Moines, IA 50309-1731 Phone: 515/288-1991 or 800/795-4272 FAX: 515/243-4992 http://www.ia-sb.org/	The IASB site contains information and guidance on school policy and law. Pages within the site assist schools with the development of policy and student handbooks and provide a downloadable copy of *A Plan for Keeping Our Schools and Communities Safe* that was developed by statewide educational organizations and state agencies.
Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development (ICYD) Youth Policy Institute of Iowa 7200 Hickman Road, Suite 202 Des Moines, IA 50322 Phone: 515/727-4220 FAX: 515/727-4223 E-mail: icyd@ypii.org http://www.icyd.org/	The goals of ICYD are to promote use of positive youth development principles on state policies and programs and to foster the use of effective youth development practices in communities throughout Iowa. This site has information on *youth involvement* activities in Iowa, data, and tools to assist community planning including a results framework, a multi-agency youth development events calendar, and resources on youth development.
Iowa Consortium for Substance Abuse Research and Evaluation 100 Oakdale Campus, M317 OH Iowa City, IA 52242-5000 Phone: 319/335-4488 FAX: 319/335-4484	The consortium conducts research in the area of substance abuse prevention and treatment. The Iowa Youth Survey was designed and analyzed by the Consortium.

SOURCE	DESCRIPTION
Iowa Peace Institute PO Box 480 Grinnell, IA 50112 Telephone: 641/236-6905 FAX: 641/236-6905 E-mail: iapeace@netins.net http://iapeace.org	The Institute provides mediation and facilitation services to deal with conflict situations; training in negotiation skills, mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice; and a resource library of conflict resolution books and videotapes. This website describes available services of the Institute, contains an event calendar, and has answers to frequently asked questions for school districts interested in conflict resolution, mediation, and/or restorative justice programs for children, youth, and adults.
Iowa State Education Association (ISEA) 777 Third Street Des Moines, IA 50309 Phone: 515/471-8000 or 800/445-9358 http://www.isea.org	This website of ISEA (teachers' professional organization) contains a link to two resources related to school violence: 1) results of a survey of Iowa teachers on the extent of violence in Iowa Schools and 2) information on a new 15-minute video produced by ISEA entitled "Playing It Safe."
Iowa State Extension: Youth Development Office 33 Curtiss Hall Iowa State University Ames, IA 50014 Phone: 515/294-1017 FAX: 515/294-4443 http://www.extension.iastate.edu//4H	This site contains a directory for the county extension offices and information about developing a youth curriculum using the *Targeting Life Skills Model*. This model for positive youth development includes curriculum on conflict resolution, social skills, communication, resiliency, service learning, critical thinking, problem solving, decision making, stress management, healthy life choices, leadership, marketable skills, responsible citizenship, stress management, etc.
Iowa Substance Abuse Information Center (ISAIC) 500 First Street Cedar Rapids, IA 52401 Phone: 866/242-4111 FAX: 319/398-0476 http://www.drugfreeinfo.org/	This site contains a professional resource section that includes trainings, best practices, funding information, online libraries and job openings for substance abuse professionals. It also offers a searchable database of all Iowa specific Substance Abuse Services.
Iowa Youth Survey http://www.state.ia.us/dhr/cjjp/ythsurvey.html	This site contains results of the 1999 Iowa Youth Survey of more than 85,000 6th, 8th, and 11th graders, reported by county, area education agency, de-categorization regions, judicial districts, Department of Human Services and Substance Abuse Treatment and Prevention regions.
School Administrators of Iowa (SAI) 12199 Stratford Drive Clive, IA 50325 Phone: 515/267-1115 FAX: 515/267-1066 http://www.sai-iowa.org/	This site has a page that archives SAI reports back to 1996-1997. These reports are targeted to school administrators and include topics related to school safety.
Strengthening Families Program Iowa State University Extension E-mail: vmolgar@iastate.edu	This site provides information about the Iowa based curriculum for parents and their children, ages 10-14. The program is designed to prevent teen substance abuse and other behavior problems, strengthen parenting skills, and building family strengths. Strengthening Families is on several of the lists of model research validated programs: U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Justice (OJJDP), CSAP, and NIDA.

National

ORGANIZATIONS

SOURCE	DESCRIPTION
Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice American Institutes for Research 1000 Thomas Jefferson Street, NW, Suite 400 Washington, D.C. 20007 Phone: 202/944-5400 or 888/457-1551 FAX: 202/944-5454 http://www.air-dc.org/cecp/	This organization, supported by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), collaborates at the federal, state and local levels to foster the development and adjustment of children with or at risk of developing serious emotional development. This site gives information about the services of CECP as well as serves as a link to *Safeguarding Our Children: An Action Guide, a copy of which is contained in this handbook.*
Center for Mental Health in Schools School Mental Health Project Department of Psychology UCLA Los Angeles, CA 90095-1563 Phone: 310/825-3634 http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/	The Center addresses mental health and psychosocial concerns in children and youth from the perspective of barriers to learning and promoting healthy development. Its mission is to improve outcomes for young people by improving policies, programs, and practices relevant to mental health in schools. This site is a rich source of information on mental health in schools and links to other sites with common missions.
Center for the Prevention of School Violence 313 Chapanoke Road, Suite 140 Raleigh, NC 27603 Phone: 919/773-2846 or 800/299-6054 FAX: 919/773-2904 http://www.ncsu.edu/cpsv/	The Center is a resource for dealing with school violence including the School Resource Officer Programs and a public awareness campaign. This site also provides information on S.A.V.E. (Students Against Violence Everywhere), an organization with chapters across the United States, including Iowa. Information on starting a S.A.V.E. chapter or on involving students in issues of school violence) is on this site (http://www.ncsu.edu/cpsv/save.html).
Center for the Study & Prevention of Violence University of Colorado Campus Box 442 Boulder, CO 80309-0442 Phone: 303/492-1032 http://www.colorado.edu/UCB/Research/cspv	The Center provides fact sheets on topics such as Safe Schools Plans, School Violence and Social Conditions, and Reducing School Violence. This easy to navigate website facilitates bridge building among researchers, practitioners, and policymakers on the subject of violence, especially adolescent violence.
Centers for the Application of Prevention Technology (CAPT) http://www.captus.org/index.htm/	The system of CAPTs assists states and community-based organizations to bring research to practice in the area of substance abuse prevention, programs, practices, and policies.
Collaboration for the Advancement of Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) Department of Psychology, MC285 1007 West Harrison Street The University of Illinois at Chicago Chicago, IL 60607-7137 Phone: 312/413-1008/1012 http://www.casel.org	CASEL is a collaboration among researchers and practitioners in the fields of social and emotional learning, prevention, positive youth development, character education, and school reform who seek to establish social emotional learning as an integral part of education from preschool through high school. This site provides information about a framework for social-emotional learning and evidence-based practices.
Committee for Children 2203 Airport Way South, Suite 500 Seattle, WA 98134 Phone: 206/343-1223 or 800/634-4449 FAX: 206/343-1445 http://www.cfchildren.org/	This committee provides videos and research-based social-skills curricula on bullying, youth violence, and child abuse. Among the programs are *Steps to Success: A Bullying Prevention Program®* for grades 3-6 and *Second Step* a violence prevention curriculum for pre-K through grade 9. The site provides information about these programs.

SOURCE	DESCRIPTION
Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior Hill M. Walker, Co-Director Jeff Sprague, Co-Director 1265 University of Oregon Eugene, OR 97403-1265 Phone: 541/346-3592 or 800/824-2714 FAX: 541/346-2594 http://www.uoregon.edu/~ivdb/	Faculty of the Institute conduct research that contributes to the understanding of the factors in schools, families, and communities that are associated with later violence and destructive behavior patterns. This site provides information on that research that has served as the foundation of prevention and remediation of the behavior patterns that are predictive of later violence.
National Alliance for Safe Schools Ice Mountain PO Box 290 Slanesville, WV 25444-0290 Phone: 304/496-8100 or 888/510-6500 FAX: 304/496-8105 E-mail: NASS@raven-villages.net http://www.safeschools.org	This organization provides training, school security assessments, and technical assistance about school safety. Peter Blauvert, President and CEO of the organization is author of a comprehensive book on school safety entitled *Making Schools Safe for Students (1999).* This site includes information on the services and publications of NASS.
National Crime Prevention Council 1000 Connecticut Avenue, NW 13th Floor Washington, D.C. 20036 Phone: 202/466-6272 FAX: 202/296-1356 http://www.ncpc.org/	NCPC, the organization of McGruff, has resources on school safety and is the sponsor of the Youth Safety Corps that involves youth in addressing issues of school safety through the school improvement planning conference. Iowa is one of 4 states piloting this program in the Henry County Schools, and in the Waterloo and Storm Lake CSDs.
National Youth Development Information Center 1319 F Street, NW, Suite 601 Washington, D.C. 20004 Phone: 877/NYDIC-4-U FAX: 202/393-4517 E-mail: info@nydic.org http://www.nydic.org	The National Youth Development Information Center is a product of the National Assembly of Health and Human Service Organizations. This site includes practice-related information on youth development including research, effective projects, publications, funding and statistics.
National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center Phone: 866/723-3968 or 800/243-7012 FAX: 301/562-1001 http://www.safeyouth.org/home.htm	The Center is a central source of information on prevention and intervention, public research and statistics on violence committed by and against children and youth. Collaborates with the Centers for Disease Control and other Federal agencies.
Oregon Social Learning Center 160 E. 4th Avenue Eugene, OR 97401 Phone: 541/485-2711 FAX: 541/485-7087 http://www.oslc.org/	OSLC, under Board leadership of Hill M. Walker, Ph.D., is a Prevention Research Center funded by the National Institute of Mental Health. The Center's primary research focus is on factors related to family, peer group, and school experience which contribute to healthy social adjustment in key settings. The OSLC site contains links to publications and resources related to its mission.
Safe Schools Coalition, Inc. PO Box 1338 Holmes Beach, FL 34218-6652 Phone: 941/778-6658 FAX: 941/778-6818 E-mail: ssc@tampabay.rr.com http://www.ed.mtu.edu/safe/	SSC organizes conferences on school and community safety on topics that range from *Gangs, Schools, and Communities* to *Alternatives to Expulsion, Suspension, and Dropping Out of School.* Information about the menu of conferences can be found on this website.

SOURCE	DESCRIPTION
Social Development Research Group (SDRG) University of Washington 9725 3rd Avenue N.E., Suite 401 Seattle, WA 98115 Phone: 206/543-5709 FAX: 206-543-4507 http://depts.washington.edu/sdrg/	SDRG has conducted research on risk and protective factors related to problem behaviors such as substance abuse, school failure, delinquency, and teen pregnancy since 1981. David Hawkins is director of SDRG and James Catalano is Assistant Director.
Virginia Effective Practices Project (VEPP) James Madison University Harrisonburg, VA 22807 E-mail: graineae@jmu.edu http://www.jmu.edu/cisat/vepp/index.html	This project is intended to provide information, training and technical assistance to establish the Safe and Drug Free Schools' Principles of Effectiveness in practice. The intent is to promote research-based practices in youth substance abuse and violence prevention. This website is interactive and contains a 5-Step Program Planning and Evaluation Tutorial based on risk and protective factors as well as a web-based, data-based search to match proven effective programs to the needs of schools and communities.
SPECIAL TOPICS	
America's Promise Phone: 888/55-YOUTH http://www.americaspromise.org/	America's Promise, founded by General Colin Powell, is an alliance of communities and organizations dedicated to mobilizing to build the character and competence of our nation's youth by fulfilling five promises to them. This site provides information about the work of America's Promise and on how schools and communities can get involved.
Character Counts! Josephson Institute of Ethics 4640 Admiralty Way , Suite 1001 Marina Del Ray, CA 90292-6610 Phone: 310/306-1868 FAX: 310/827-1864 http://www.charactercounts.org and http://www.josephsoninstittute.org	Character Counts! is a non-profit, non-sectarian coalition of schools, communities, and non-profit organizations working for the advancement of ***character education*** by teaching the six pillars of character: respect, responsibility, caring, trustworthiness, and citizenship. The Josephson Institute of Ethics site contains additional information on Character Counts! and results from 1998 and 2000 national surveys on substance abuse and violence.
Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) http://www.arch.vt.edu/crimeprev/pages/confpapers.html/ Carter and Carter Associates http://www.cccpted.com	This site belongs to the College of Architecture and Urban Studies at Virginia Tech. The site contains information on the history and theory behind CPTED, its implementation, tools for implementation, case examples, available training and technical assistance, and resources. Another site, that of Carter and Carter Assoc., provides information on how to get training especially designed for schools.
Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support Technical Assistance Center 5262 University of Oregon Eugene, OR 97403-5262 Phone: 541/346-2505 FAX: 541/346-5689 http://www.pbis.org	The focus of the Center is on research validated ***school-wide disciplinary practices and systems*** that foster positive learning and teaching environments. The Center, established by the Office of Special Education Programs is administered from the University of Oregon and involves four partners: University of Kansas, University of Kentucky, University of Missouri, and University of South Florida. Schools interested in developing school-wide discipline systems will find this site helpful.

SOURCE	DESCRIPTION
Search Institute 700 South Third Street, 210 Minneapolis, MN 55415-1138 Phone: 612/376-8955 or 800/888-7828 FAX: 612/376-8956 E-mail: si@search-institute.org http://www.search-institute.org/	This website provides information about the asset development framework and research conducted by the Search Institute. Schools and communities wanting to develop programs for asset development will find this site helpful.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

American Association of School Administrators 1801 North Moore Street Arlington, VA 22209-1813 Phone: 703/528-0700 FAX: 703/841-1543 http://www.aasa.org	This link is directed to school administrators and contains links to information on school violence.
Association for Curriculum and Supervision Development (ASCD) 1250 North Pitt Street Alexandria, VA 22314-1453 Phone: 800/933-2723	This site provides links to publications that provide information on school discipline.
Council for Exceptional Children 1110 North Glebe Road, Suite 300 Arlington, VA 22201-5704 Phone: 703/620-3660 or 888/CEC-SPED FAX: 703/264-9494 http://www.cec.sped.org	The CEC site is a primary source of information on legislation and programming for children with disabilities. Schools seeking information to support their work with students with behavioral disorders will find this site useful. The Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders is an organization within CEC that focuses especially on this target group. http://www.ccbd.org
National Association of Attorneys General 750-1st Street NE, Suite 1100 Washington, D.C. 20002 Phone: 202/326-6000 FAX: 202/408-7014 http://www.keepschoolssafe.org	The Keep Schools Safe website is maintained by the National Association of Attorneys General in collaboration with the National School Board Association. It contains information on resources related to schools violence prevention and crisis management targeted to three audiences: 1) interested parents, 2) teachers and school administrators, and 3) law enforcement officers.
National Association of Elementary School Principals 1615 Duke Street Alexandria, VA 22314 Phone: 800/386-2377 FAX: 800/396-2377 E-mail: naesp@naesp.org http://www.naesp.org	As part of its mission to provide support to elementary and middle school principals, this site presents resource information on school violence that will assist them in addressing it. Among the resources are downloadable articles entitled, "Never Say Never: Violence and Tragedy Can Strike Anywhere" and "Violence Prevention Programs: How Do They Stack Up?"

SOURCE	DESCRIPTION
National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) 4340 East West Highway, Suite 402 Bethesda, MD 20814 Phone: 301/657-0270 FAX: 301/657-0275 TDD: 301/657-4155 http://www.naspweb.org/	The NASP site provides information developed by the association that is related to school violence, publications on the topic, and links to other resources for such information.
National Association of Secondary School Principals 1904 Association Drive Reston, VA 20191-1537 Phone: 703/860-0200 http://www.nassp.org/training	This site has a page on "Safe and Orderly Schools." Among its resources, the site includes links to information on safe schools, a sample contract between students, parents, and schools for the elimination of guns and weapons from schools, a "Safe Schools Position Paper," and papers on zero tolerance and the role of the media.
National Education Association 1201 16th Street, NW Washington, D.C. 20036 Phone: 202/833-4000 http://www.nea.org/	This site has a page entitled "Safe Schools Now" that provides tips for creating safe schools and links to other resources. The organization's formula for safe schools: Safe Families + Safe Communities = Safe Schools.
National PTA 330 N. Wabash Avenue, Suite 2100 Chicago, IL 60611 Phone: 800/307-4782 FAX: 312/670-6783 E-mail: info@pta.org http://www.pta.org/	The PTA site has information for parents on safe schools and a downloadable PDF file entitled "Community Violence Prevention Kit."
National School Boards Association 160 Duke Street Alexandria, VA 22314 Phone: 703/838-6722 FAX: 703/683-7590 Info@nsba.org http://www.nsba.org	The NSBA site contains information on the School Board Association's positions on school violence and on school-related legislation.

GOVERNMENT

21st Century Community Learning Centers U.S. Department of Education OERI 555 New Jersey, Ave., N.W. Washington, D.C. 20208 Phone: 202/219-2204 http://www.21stcclc.gov	This program grants funds to school districts to provide extended learning opportunities for participating children in safe, drug-free, and supervised after school environments. Programming includes academic tutoring, mentoring, drug and violence prevention, recreation, service opportunities, and enrichment.

SOURCE	DESCRIPTION
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Violence Prevention National Center for Injury Prevention and Control 4770 Buford Highway, MS K-60 Atlanta, GA 30341 Phone: 770/488-4646 FAX: 770/488-4349 E-mail: DVP@cdc.gov http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/dvp/dvp.htm/	CDC takes a public health approach to reducing and preventing youth violence, identifying risk and protective factors that influence its occurrence, research and program evaluation, technical assistance and information dissemination. This site contains information on best practices in youth violence prevention, facts about youth violence and violence in schools, and Federal activities on youth violence.
Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program William Modzeleski, Director U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW. 3E314 Washington, D.C. 20202-6123 Phone: 202/260-3654 http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDFS/>	This U.S. Department of Education website is for the office that administers the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities (Title IV) program as well as Safe Schools/Healthy Students, Middle School Coordinators, and Elementary Counselor national programs. The list of model programs and promising approaches of the U.S. Department of Education as well as *Early Warning, Timely Response* and the accompanying *Safeguarding Our Children: An Action Guide* found in this handbook can be obtained on this site.
U.S. Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention 810 7th Street, NW Washington, D.C. 20531 Phone: 202/307-5911 FAX: 202/307-2093 E-mail: askjj@ojp.usdoj.gov http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org	OJJDP collaborates with the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services on the problems of youth violence. One jointly administered program is the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative grant program of which Polk County is a recipient. (<http://165.224.220.66/inits/FY99/sdfshapp.html/) OJJDP also supports school-based conflict resolution and peer mediation programs and grant programs for mentoring projects, through JUMP (Juvenile Mentoring Program).

REGIONAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTERS

Central Center for the Application of Prevention Technologies (CAPT) of CSAP Minnesota Institute of Public Health 2829 Verndale Avenue Anoka, MN 55303-1593 Phone: 763/427-5310 or 800/782-1878 E-mail: CentralCAPT@miph.org http://www.ccapt.org	This Center serves the Midwest region, including Iowa, and will provide school and community personnel with technical assistance in the areas of substance abuse and violence prevention.
Comprehensive Centers – Region VI Center for Educational Research University of Wisconsin, Madison 1025 W. Johnson Street Madison, WI 53706 Phone: 608/263-4220 or 888/862-7763 FAX: 608/263-3733 http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/ccvi	The Comprehensive Centers provide regional technical assistance to school districts across the country. Region VI is Iowa's Comprehensive Center. This website provides information on violence prevention and violence prevention programs as well as links to resources.

SOURCE	DESCRIPTION
Great Lakes Regional Resource Center (GLARRC) 700 Ackerman Road, Suite 440 Columbus, OH 43202 Phone: 614/447-0844 FAX: 614/447-9043 TDD: 614/447-8776 http://www.glarrc.org/	GLARRC is one of seven resource centers in a national system that provides technical assistance to states on best practices, policies, and research in the education of children with disabilities. This site contains a database on "Early Prevention of Violence."

Model Programs

Blueprints for Violence Prevention Center for the Study & Prevention of Violence University of Colorado Campus Box 442 Boulder, CO 80309-0442 Phone: 303/492-1032 http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/Defaults.htm	Blueprints is a list of ten model violence prevention programs that were identified by the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence (CSPV) as meeting very high scientific standards. The site contains a list of programs and their "blueprints," i.e., the theoretical rationale, core components, evaluation design and results, and implementation information.
Hamilton Fish National Institute on School & Community Violence 1925 N. Lynn Street, Suite 305 Roslyn, VA 22209 Phone: 703/527-4217, ext. 104 FAX: 703/527-8741 E-mail: Kingery@gwu.edu http://www.hamfish.org/programs	The Institute, with assistance from Congress, was founded in 1997 to serve as a national resource to test the effectiveness of school violence prevention methods and to develop effective strategies. The Institute's goal is to determine what works and what can be replicated to reduce violence in America's schools and their communities. A list of Effective and Noteworthy violence prevention programs is available on this site.
National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 6001 Executive Boulevard, Room 5213 Bethesda, MD 20892-9651 Phone: 301/443-1124 E-mail: Information@lists.nida.nih.gov	NIDA's mission is to bring the power of science to bear on substance abuse and addiction and to ensure rapid and effective dissemination and use of research results to prevention, treatment, and policy. This site contains a "Goes to Schools Page" and is a link to NIDA's document, *Prevention of Drug Abuse Among Children and Adolescents,* that contains a list of programs that have been proven effective in substance abuse prevention.
SAMSHA Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) Phone: 301/443-8956 E-mail: info@samhsa.gov http://www.samsha.gov/centers/csap/modelprograms	This site contains information on evidence-based programs that have been identified by CSAP as effective in prevention of substance abuse and violence. The site also includes an extraordinarily helpful model for decision-making (Decision Support System) about planning, program selection, implementation and evaluation that could help schools develop plans for their CSIP goals that deal with substance abuse and violence prevention.
Safe, Disciplined, and Drug-Free Schools Expert Panel U.S. Department of Education Office of Elementary and Secondary Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20037 Phone: 202/708-5939 FAX: 202/260-7767 E-mail: NEGP@ed.gov http://www.negp.gov/	This 15-member Expert panel was established by the U.S. Department of Education's Safe and Drug-Free Schools (SDFS) program in cooperation with the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) to oversee the identification and designation of promising and exemplary school-based programs that promote safe, disciplined, and drug-free schools. A description of the process they used as well as the list of promising and exemplary programs is found on this website.

SCHOOL SAFETY CENTERS

State	Program Name/Address	Phone/FAX/E-mail/Website
National Center	National Resource Center for Safe Schools Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory 101 S.W. Main, Suite 500 Portland, OR 97204	Phone: 800/547-6339 FAX: 541/485-7087 http://www.safetyzone.org
National Center	National School Safety Center 141 Duesenberg Drive, Suite 11 Westlake Village, CA 91362	Phone: 805/373-9977 http://www.nssc1.org/
California	Safe Schools and Violence Prevention Office California Department of Education 560 J Street, Suite, 260 Sacramento, CA 95814	Phone: 916/323/2183 FAX: 916/323-6061
Connecticut	Drugs Don't Work Connecticut Safe Schools Coalition 30 Harbor Street Hartford, CT 06106	Phone: 860/231-8311
Kentucky	Kentucky Center for School Safety Eastern Kentucky University 300 Stratton Building 521 Lancaster Avenue Richmond, KY 40475	Phone: 606/622-1498 FAX: 606/622-6264 E-mail: brucetrc@iclub.org http://www.kysafeschools.org
Missouri	Missouri Center for Safe Schools University of Missouri, Kansas City School of Education 340 Education Building 5100 Rockhill Road Kansas City, MO 64110	Phone: 816/235-5657 FAX: 816/235-5270
New Hampshire	New Hampshire Department of Education State Office Park South 101 Pleasant Street Concord, NH 03301	Phone: 603/271-3828 FAX: 603/271-3830
New York	New York State School Safety Center New York State Education Department Comprehensive Health and Pupil Services 318 EB Albany, NY 12234	Phone: 518/486-6090
North Carolina	Center for the Prevention of School Violence 313 Chapanoke Road, Suite 140 Raleigh, NC 27603	Phone: 919/773-2846 or 800/299-6054 FAX: 919/773-2904 http://www.ncsu.edu/cpsv/

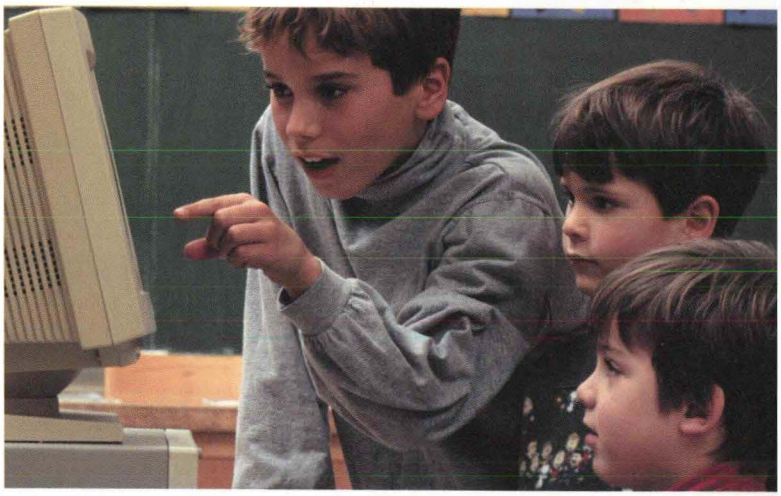
State	Program Name/Address	Phone/FAX/E-mail/Website
Pennsylvania	Office for Safe Schools Pennsylvania Office for Education Bureau of Community and Student Services 333 Market Street, 5th Floor Harrisburg, PA 17126	Phone: 717/783-3755 FAX: 717/783-6617
South Carolina	Safe and Drug Free Schools South Carolina State Department of Education Room 1108 1429 Senate Street Columbia, SC 29201	Phone: 803/734-8573 FAX: 803/734-2983 E-mail: bmack@sde.state.sc.us
Tennessee	Center for Safe and Drug Free Schools 3782 Jackson Avenue Memphis, TN 38108	Phone: 901/385-4240 FAX: 901/385-4221
Texas	Safe Schools, Chapter 37 1701 North Congress Avenue Austin, TX 78701-1494	Phone: 512/463-9073 FAX: 512/475-3638
Virginia	State Department of Education Commonwealth of Virginia PO Box 2120 Richmond, VA 23218	Phone: 804/225-2928 FAX: 804/371-8796
Washington	Washington State School Safety Center Drug Free Schools and Communities Programs, OSPI PO Box 47200 Olympia, WA 98504-7200	Phone: 360/753-5595 FAX: 360/664-3028

"Capacity building is not just the creation of and participation in new structures; it is above all the creation and development of new cultures."

- Michael Fullan,
Author

"Invitational education is a philosophy and set of activities intended to create a total school climate that is welcoming – a place that intentionally stimulates people to realize their individual and collective potential."

- Stan Friedland,
CEO, Principal Services



VISION OF A SAFE SCHOOL

This section contains three (3) documents that together paint a picture of a school that not only is safe physically for students, but also is psychologically safe and fosters their healthy social, emotional, intellectual, and behavioral development.

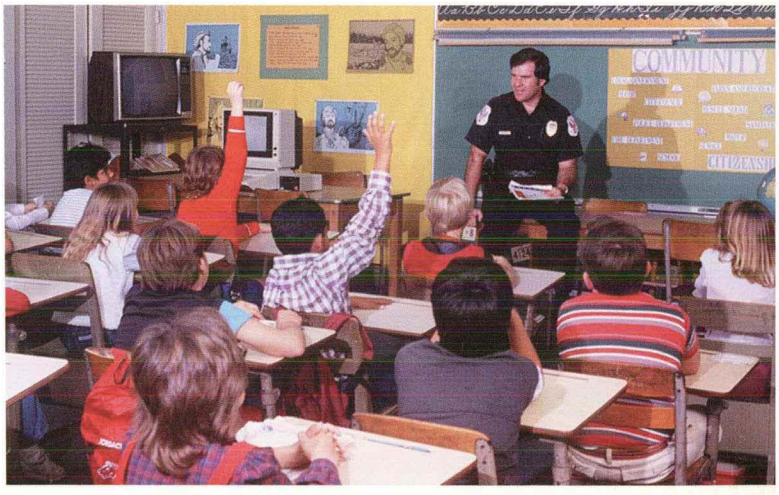
The document entitled "Envisioning Inclusive Schools and Communities for the 21st Century" is the vision of the Iowa Board of Education for all schools in the state to be inclusive; that is, to be places that welcome and support all students regardless of their race, gender, cultural or religious backgrounds. School safety begins in schools that are safe havens for learning where everyone feels wanted and recognized for his or her unique attributes.

The second document is a self-assessment instrument for districts or schools to determine their current status in creating environments that foster students' healthy personal-social development and develops their personal and interpersonal skills so that they will be successful in school and in life. The instrument is composed of a set of critical elements that describe the characteristics of healthy children and youth and of safe and supportive schools. These elements are based on research, a thorough review of the professional literature, and the input of state and national specialists in education, mental health, juvenile justice, child and adolescent development, and systems change. Each critical element is anchored in the literature and is accompanied by indicators of the presence of that element and the practices essential to its realization.

The final document guides district leadership teams through a process of planning that integrates the personal-social development of students into the school improvement process. This guide uses a logic model of planning and incorporates the Critical Elements throughout. Ron Mirr and Beth Larson of the Higher Plain in Coralville, Iowa originally developed the planning guide for the Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development. Ron and Beth are available, upon request, to assist districts with use of the self-assessment and planning guide.

"Insanity is doing the same thing again and expecting a different result."

– Albert Einstein



LAWS AND POLICIES

The section that follows contains a matrix of information on Federal and State laws and policy guidance from the Iowa Association of School Boards on matters pertaining to school safety, ranging from items supporting prevention programs and activities to those dealing with possession of weapons and illegal drugs. The matrix is intended to serve as a reference that will guide district leadership to the legal and policy information needed.

An article follows the matrix on the provisions related to discipline of I.D.E.A.'97 that address protections for students with disabilities. As this document is printed, those provisions are being re-examined as part of re-authorization of the Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA) of 1994. The paper included in this handbook not only deals with the legal specifics, but also the principles on which the laws are based.

LAWS, RULES, SELECTED CASE LAW, POLICIES, AND GUIDANCE SUPPORTING SAFE SCHOOLS

Source	Citation	Summary
		Prevention and Early Intervention
State	Iowa Code §256.11 & I.A.C.: 281 Chapt. 12.5(2)-(5) (Accreditation Standards)	Education Program Requires that kindergarten programs include experiences that develop healthy emotional and social habits…with experiences relating to the development of life skills and human growth and development. Education program standards for health education K-12 include requirements for instruction in safety and survival skills; substance abuse and nonuse, encompassing the effects of alcohol, tobacco, drugs and poisons on the human body; self-esteem, stress management, and interpersonal relationships; and emotional and social health.
State	Iowa Code §280.9 & I.A.C.: 281 Chapt. 12.5(7) (Accreditation Standards)	Career Education Requires incorporation of career education into the total educational program with inclusion of awareness of self in relation to others and the needs of society; exploration of employment opportunities; experiences in personal decision-making; experiences that help students connect work values into all aspects of their lives; and the development of employability skills.
Federal	20 U.S.C. Improving America's Schools Act (IASA), §7101 et seq. (1994)	Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act-Title IV Title IV of the Improving America's School Act of 1994, the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act, is the Federal government's primary vehicle for reducing violence, drug, alcohol, and tobacco use in schools through education and prevention. The seventh goal of the act states that all schools will be free of drugs and violence and the unauthorized presence of firearms and alcohol, and offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning. Funding authorized in this program is allocated to all school districts based on enrollment figures, as well as to districts identified as having greatest need. Additional grants through the Governor's portion of the program are provided to communities in a competitive grant process.
State	Iowa Code §256.11 & I.A.C.: 281 Chapt. 12.5(8) (Accreditation Standards)	Multicultural, Non-Sexist Requires that schools and school districts use a multicultural, gender fair approach, including approaches to instruction in the educational program. Chapter 12 requires school boards to establish a policy to ensure that students are free from discriminatory practices in the educational program and identifies the people who should be involved in the development of that policy. These provisions also define the terms "multicultural" and "non-sexist."
State	Iowa Code §256.11 I.A.C.: 281 Chapt. 12.5(13), (Accreditation Standards)	At Risk Programs and Services Requires school districts to incorporate provisions for at-risk students in their comprehensive school improvement plans. These provisions include procedures for identification of at-risk students, modified instructional practices; specialized curriculum; parental involvement and in-school and community-based support services; and plans for review and evaluation of the district's at-risk program.

Source	Citation	Summary
State	Iowa Code Supplement §257.38 –257.41 IAC: 281 Chapter 61.1-61.4, 61.7	Dropout Prevention and Support Services for Dropouts Provides for making separate schools, programs, and support services available to eligible students for dropout prevention (students at risk of dropping out) and returning dropouts through cooperative efforts between school districts, and cooperative arrangements between school districts and other educational agencies and related service providers. Allowable growth funds may be used for this purpose as long as plans serve both populations. Respective responsibilities of LEAs, AEAs, and the Department of Education are outlined.
State	Discussion IASB's *Student Issues Manual*, p. 17 Team (1997)	Assistance Teams Building/Teacher/Student Assistance Teams, common in Iowa school districts, deal with and attempt to resolve a wide range of issues affecting students, from substance abuse to learning and behavior problems. The composition and function of Building Assistance Teams varies from district to district.
		Weapons
Federal	20 U.S.C. §8921 (1994)	**Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994 (GFSA)** Requires states receiving Federal funds to have in effect a State law requiring local educational agencies (LEAs) to expel from schools for a period of at least one year (i.e., 12 months) students who bring weapons to school and/or who knowingly possess a weapon at school. This mandatory expulsion requirement is only triggered by "firearms," i.e., guns and bombs. Discretion is given superintendents to modify the expulsion requirement on a case by case basis. LEAs may provide such students educational services in an alternative setting. Violations of this law must be reported to law enforcement and to the State. This law must be administered in a manner consistent with I.D.E.A. (20 U.S.C. §1400 et seq.)
State	Iowa Code §280.21B	Iowa law extends Federal law by requiring school districts to adopt procedures for suspending or expelling students for possession of dangerous weapons, for continuing students' school involvement, and for reintegrating the student into school following a suspension/ expulsion. As in other suspension or expulsion situations, a school board is not required to enroll a student from another district until all conditions of the expulsion or suspension have been satisfied.
Federal	18 U.S.C. §921(a)(3) (1994)	Definitions The term "weapon" means "firearm." Regulatory guidelines from 1995 further describe objects defined as "weapons," including bombs, rockets, with propellant charges of more than 4 ounces, grenades, missiles with an explosive or incendiary charge greater than one quarter ounce, mines, or similar devices. Firearm includes a starter gun and means any weapon designed to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; also includes the frame of such weapon, a muffler or silencer.
State	Iowa Code §702.7	Defines "*dangerous weapon*" as "any instrument or device primarily for use in inflicting death or injury upon a human being or animal, and which is capable of inflicting death upon a human being when used in the manner for which it was designed." Extends the definition to include also any instrument or device of any sort used in a manner that indicates the user intends to inflict death or serious injury on another and which, when so used, is capable of inflicting death on a human being is a "dangerous weapon." Dangerous weapons in Iowa include, but are not limited to, "any offensive weapon, pistol, revolver, or other firearm, dagger, razor, stiletto, switchblade knife, or knife having a blade exceeding five inches in length.

Source	Citation	Summary
Federal	Amendments to IDEA (1997) 34 CFR §300.520(a)(2)(i) (1999)	Students with Disabilities Provides for a change in placement to an interim alternative educational setting for a child with a disability who carries a weapon to school or to a school function. The removal/change for that child may be for the same amount of time that a child without a disability would be subject to discipline, but for not more than 45 calendar days.
State	Iowa Code §724.22	Weapon Possession by Persons Under Twenty-One - The Sale, Loan, Gift, and/or Making Available Establishes the conditions under which a person under twenty-one may possess a firearm; the liability of persons selling, loaning, giving, or making available firearms to minors; and provisions pertaining to the security, including trigger locks, required of persons storing firearms that could otherwise be accessed by a minor under the age of fourteen.
State	Iowa Code §724.4B	Carrying Weapons on School Grounds Establishes a class "D" felony for any person carrying or transporting a firearm of any kind, *concealed or not*, onto school grounds unless exempted by the provisions of another part of the code.
State	Iowa Code §724.4A	Weapons free zones—enhanced penalties Defines the area "in or on, or within one thousand feet of, the real property comprising a public or private elementary or secondary school," or a public park other than an area designated for hunting under the law. This section of code also states that a person who commits a public offence with a firearm or offensive weapon, within a weapons free zone shall be subject to a fine twice the maximum amount that might otherwise be imposed under violation of this or any other chapter.
Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs (ATOD)		
State	Iowa Code §279.9	Mandates school boards to make rules prohibiting the use of tobacco and the use or possession of alcoholic liquor, wine, or beer or any controlled substance by any student and permits school boards to suspend or expel a student for a violation of rules established under §279.9.
Federal	Amendments to IDEA (1997) 34 CFR §300.520 (a)(2)(ii) (1999)	Students with Disabilities Provides for a change in placement to an interim alternative educational setting of a child with a disability who knowingly possesses, uses, sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance/illegal drugs at school or at a school function. The removal/change for that child may be for the same amount of time that a child without a disability would be subject to discipline, but not for more than 45 calendar days.
Federal	20 USC 706(8)(c)(iv)	For alcohol and drug violations, students under the protections of §504 may be disciplined as general education students without a manifestation determination.

Source	Citation	Summary
State	Iowa Code §123.47B	Requires peace officers to make reasonable attempts to identify the school attended by a person under the age of 18 who is discovered to be in possession of alcoholic liquor, wine, or beer and to notify the superintendent or the superintendent's designee, or the authorities in charge of a nonpublic school the person attends. If the person is taken into custody, this responsibility transfers to a juvenile court officer.
State	Iowa Code Chapter 93 §124.415	Requires that juvenile court officers make reasonable attempts to notify the superintendent or the superintendent's designee, or the authorities in charge of a nonpublic school attended by a person under the age of eighteen who is taken into custody for possession of a controlled substance, counterfeit substance, or simulation of a controlled substance in violation of Chapter 124.
Federal	20 U.S.C. §5965(a)(11) (1994)	Drug-Free Zones Authorized the establishment of Drug-Free School Zones.
Information Exchange/Student Records/FERPA/Reporting Requirements		
Federal	20 U.S.C. 1232g (1994) 34 C.F.R. Pt. 99.1 and 99.67 (1997)	**Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)** This Federal law states that student records, containing personally identifiable information other than that listed as directory information, are confidential. Parents and eligible students have access to the records. There are also certain exceptions for individuals and agencies named within the law. This act allows school officials to release student records to law enforcement *only* under the following conditions: 1) State statute allows for the reporting or disclosure and Information Sharing Agreements with juvenile justice agencies are in place; 2) the reporting or disclosure is to the juvenile justice system; and 3) the release enhances the system's ability to serve effectively the student prior to adjudication.
State	Iowa Code Chapter 22.7(1)	Defines as confidential records the "personal information in records regarding a student, prospective student, or former student maintained, created, collected or assembled by or for a school corporation or educational institution maintaining such records."
State	IAC: 281 Chapter 41.29-41.35	Students With Disabilities Outlines requirements related to the confidentiality of information pertaining to IDEA '97 eligible individuals. Included are provisions pertaining to: • information in educational records pursuant to 34 CFR Parts 99 and 300, July 1, 1999; • access to educational records; • amendment of educational records; and • destruction of information.
State	Iowa Code §280.25	Reporting and Sharing Juvenile Records Provides for the sharing of juvenile court social records pursuant to an interagency agreement prior to any adjudication. Mandates that each school district adopt an information sharing policy with juvenile justice agencies to assist the juvenile justice's system's ability to serve effectively, prior to adjudication, the student whose records are being released (See 20 U.S.C. 1232g and 34 C.F.R. Pt. 99.1 and 99.67 above.)

Source	Citation	Summary
State	Iowa Code §235A.15(2)(b)(4)	Provides for the Department of Human Services to share child abuse information to the parties of a §280.25 agreement if the Department of Human Services approves the relevant provisions of such agreement and determines that such access is necessary to assist the Department of Human Services in its assessment and disposition of a child abuse case.
State	Iowa Code 280.17A	Requires the school board to adopt procedures for reporting to law enforcement any dangerous weapon brought onto school premises in violation of school policy or state law.
State	Iowa Code §279.9B	Requires school officials to notify the juvenile court of a student's unexcused absence, suspension, or expulsion. This applies when such information on a student is requested by a juvenile court officer prior to that student's adjudication and when an interagency agreement is in place.
State	Iowa Code §280.24	Requires school officials to notify law enforcement when a student uses or possesses alcohol or controlled substances on school premises when such use or possession is violative of state law or school policy.
State	Iowa Code §235A.15(2)(e)(16) & §235B.6(2)(e)(8)	Abuse Record Checks Authorizes school districts and nonpublic schools to request the performance of abuse record checks of persons filling volunteer and support staff positions.
Search and Seizure		
Federal	The Fourth Amendment of the Constitution	"The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by oath and affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the person or things to be seized."
Case Law	New Jersey v. T.L.O., 469 U.S.C. 325 1985)	This Supreme Court ruling determined that school officials do not need probable cause to search a student. Provisions do, however, require that a balance between a student's right to privacy and a school's need to maintain security be maintained. Searches may be conducted when school officials have a *reasonable* suspicion that a school policy, rule, or law has been violated or a search is deemed necessary to maintain discipline. "Reasonableness" is determined through consideration of the following factors: 1) student's age, 2) student's record, 3) prevalence and seriousness of the problem in school; and 4) school official's prior experience with the student in school. When law enforcement officers initiate or are involved in searches conducted by school officials, the law enforcement officer must have probable cause.

Source	Citation	Summary
Case Law	Vernonia School District 47J v. Acton 515 U.S. 646 (1996)	• The school's policies of drug testing of student athletes did not violate either the student's right to privacy or freedom from unreasonable searches. • The expectation of privacy of public school students is lesser than that of the general population, and student athletes even less. • Courts must balance student privacy interests with the schools' legitimate interests.
State	Iowa Code §808A.1 & 2	Expands on the Constitutional protections and Federal law about when and what school officials may search. All schools must have a student search rule published in student handbooks that addresses (1) search of a student; 2) search of a protected student area; and 3) search of lockers, desks, and other facilities or spaces owned by the school. The statute defines "protected student area" and the circumstances under which a search may be conducted.
State	Iowa Code §808A.2 (3)	Searches of Lockers, Desks, or Other Facilities Owned by the School Random, periodic inspections of lockers, desks, or other facilities owned by the school district but provided as a courtesy to the student are permissible only if the following conditions are met: 1) the school district has notified in writing students and parents (or each student and the adult who enrolls the student at the school) at the beginning of the school year about the potential for such unannounced inspections; and 2) another individual (not necessarily the student) is present when lockers are inspected. 24-hour notice is no longer required for locker searches.
IASB	Guidance (Mary Gannon)	Metal Detectors Metal detectors have not been addressed directly in Federal or State code. They represent a generalized search, generally school-wide in scope, rather than individualized. Although a generalized search, they are minimally intrusive. Courts will probably uphold the search after balancing the school's interest in maintaining a safe environment with a student's privacy interest.
IASB	Guidance (Mary Gannon)	Breathalizers Use of a breathalizer is targeted for use with individuals; therefore, the "reasonableness" test applies.
State	Iowa Code §808A.2(4)	Drug Dogs Prohibits school officials from conducting a search of a student's person with drug sniffing dog.
IASB	Guidance (Mary Gannon)	Automobile Searches The courts have not yet provided guidance in this area. Prudent practice would suggest the application of the test of "reasonableness." A suggestion is to limit need for searches by limiting access to cars during the school day.

Source	Citation	Summary
		Surveillance
IASB	Guidance (Mary Gannon)	If video cameras are used in places where students do not hold expectations of privacy, such as in hallways and on busses, the Fourth Amendment regarding search and seizure probably does not apply. Use of such cameras in locker rooms or restrooms will probably invoke the protection of the Fourth Amendment. School districts using video cameras should probably have a board policy stating that the board approves the use of such cameras.
		Free Speech
Federal	First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution	Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or *abridging the freedom of speech,* or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances
Case Law	Tinker v. Des Moines School District 393 U.S. 503 (1969)	• School officials cannot deny students' freedom of expression if that expression does not interrupt the operations or activities of the school or intrude into school affairs. • Student's constitutional rights do not end at the "school house gate."
Case Law	Bethel School District v. Fraser 478 U.S. 675 (1986)	• Affirms students' rights to free speech under the protections of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, including the right to advocate for unpopular and controversial views in schools. • Balances this right against the interests of the school to teach socially appropriate behavior. • Permits public schools to establish standards of civil and mature conduct.
IASB	Discussion IASB's *Student Issues Manual* pp. 22-29 (1997)	Student Speech Through a review of legislation and case law, clarifies the authority of school districts to regulate student speech in the following areas: unprotected speech; reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions; symbolic speech; verbal and written speech; ; student appearance; student rights to receive information; student freedom of association; distribution of student-produced materials; and hate speech.
State	Iowa Code §279.58	Dress Codes and Student Appearance Permits school districts to adopt for the district or for an individual school within the district a dress code policy that prohibits students from wearing gang related or other specific apparel if the school board determines that the policy is necessary for the health, safety, or positive educational environment or for the appropriate discipline and operation of the school.
IASB	Discussion IASB's Student Issues Manual pp. 29-32 (1997)	In Iowa, students' rights to govern their own appearance while attending public school are protected by the Constitution. A school district, however, is permitted to regulate a student's appearance if the school district can prove the regulation is necessary in order to carry out its educational mission.

Source	Citation	Summary
IASB	Discussion IASB's *Student Issues Manual* pp. 25-27 (1997)	Describes the authority of school boards to adopt reasonable policies regulating student apparel. "Reasonable" means that policies need to protect the safety of the students or to prevent disruption or distraction that interferes with the educational program. School districts also have the authority to ban apparel promoting products illegal for use by minors and clothing displaying obscene materials, profanity or reference to prohibited conduct. In order to regulate student appearance, the school district must be able to show that the clothing or other apparel violated board policy or regulations.
IASB	Discussion IASB's *Student Issues Manual,* p. 33 (1997)	Hate Speech Hate speech is speech, spoken, written, or symbolic, which is highly offensive and may cause intimidation. It may be based on race or any number of other characteristics such as religion, sex, or sexual orientation. The First Amendment limits a school district's authority to pass judgment on which types of speech are or are not acceptable. School districts cannot specifically or arbitrarily prohibit hate speech. If school district officials can prove that the speech violated the district's policy because it would cause material and substantial disruption to the educational program, the speech can be regulated.
Bullying and Harassment		
Federal	20 U.S.C. §1681(a) (1972)	Sexual Harassment Prohibits sex discrimination, including sexual harassment in all school programs and activities whether it takes place in the facilities of a school, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored event. Protects both males and females from sexual harassment by school staff or by other students. Defines sexual harassment in two forms: quid quo pro harassment and hostile environment harassment. The law requires schools to have and publish laws against sexual discrimination, to adopt and publish grievance procedures, and have at least one person responsible for coordinating efforts to comply with Title IX.
IASB	Discussion IASB's *Student Issues Manual,* pp. 72-73 (1997), Stephenson v. Davenport Community School District, 110 73rd 1303 (8th Cir., 1997) Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education, 119 Sct. 1661 (1999)	Case law on student-to-student harassment is developing. "Harassment" is defined as verbal or physical conduct imposed on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, gender, national origin or disability that denies, limits or provides different aid, benefits and services, or conditions the provision of aid, benefits, services or treatment which are protected under the law. Sexual orientation or sexual preference is not protected, but may be added to the list of protected characteristics by a school board. When analyzing the effects of harassment, the courts have looked at how the conduct would be perceived by a reasonable person in the victim's circumstances and not how it was intended by the harasser. A school district may be held liable for student-to-student harassment if it can be shown that school officials knew or should have known of the harassment but failed to take prompt, reasonable and effective action to demonstrate that such behavior is not permitted nor will it be tolerated in the future. School boards have a responsibility to eliminate and prevent harassment in the school district by: 1) adopting a policy prohibiting harassment and stating that the board is serious about eliminating it; 2) adopting a complaint procedure; and ensuring that students and employees receive education about how to recognize and report it; 3) educating employees about harassment identification and prevention and their role.
State	I.A.C.: §281 Chapter 12.3(6)	Requires that student responsibility and discipline policies adopted by school boards include provisions related to harassment of or by students and staff.

Source	Citation	Summary
		Gang Recruitment and Activity
State	Iowa Code §723A.3	• "A person who solicits, recruits, entices, or intimidates a minor to join a criminal street gang commits a class 'C' felony." • "A person who conspires to solicit, recruits, entices, or intimidates a minor to join a criminal street gang commits a class 'D' felony." • Defines "criminal street gang" as any ongoing organization, association, or group of three or more persons…having as one of its primary activity the commission of one or more criminal act. In Iowa Code §723A.1(2) • Defines "pattern of criminal gang activity." In Iowa Code §723A.1(3)
IASB	Discussion IASB's *Student Issues Manual* pp.30-32 (1997)	Provides a review of legislation and case law pertaining to gang dress and activity and their implications for the development of school board policies.
		Policy Regarding Criminal Justice System Referral
Federal	20 U.S.C. §8921	Requires local education agencies to establish policy requiring referral to the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system of any student who brings a weapon or firearm to a school served by such an agency.
State	Iowa Code §280.25	School board must adopt procedures for reporting to law enforcement any dangerous weapon brought onto school premises in violation of school policy or state law.
State	Iowa Code §280.24	Requires school officials to notify law enforcement when a student uses or possesses alcohol or controlled substances.
		Assault/Corporal Punishment
State	Iowa Code §708.1	<u>Assault by an LEA or AEA Staff Member</u> Employees of a school district or AEA staff members cannot be charged with assault when using reasonable force to intervene in fights occurring in a school building, on school grounds, or at official school functions.

Source	Citation	Summary
State & IASB	281 I.A.C. 102 & Discussion IASB's *Student Issues Manual* pp. 17-23 (1997)	Outlines rules of the Department of Education for the investigation of physical or sexual abuse of students by school district employees. Issues related to the abuse of students are often referred to as "102" issues for these rules. IASB Manual provides guidance for implementation of investigation procedures.
State	Iowa Code §280.21 & 281 I.A.C. Chapter 103	<u>Corporal Punishment</u> • Provides that school district employees shall not inflict "corporal punishment" upon a student. • Defines "corporal punishment" as physical punishment, including the use of unreasonable or unnecessary physical contact made with the intent to harm or cause pain. • §280.21 includes a proviso that "an employees physical contact with the body of a student shall not be considered corporal punishment if it is reasonable and necessary under the circumstances and is not designed or intended to cause pain or if the employee uses reasonable force as defined in §704.1 • Iowa Administrative Code outlines a set of rules related to the use of "reasonable and necessary force", not intended to cause pain, including the use of physical restraint.
State	Iowa Code §103.6(280)	<u>Physical Confinement and Detention</u> Delineates the conditions required if a student is physically confined or detained in a portion of a school facility. Includes specifications for the construction confinement space, requirements pertaining to supervision of the confinement and the length of confinement, and restrictions on the use of material restraints.
Federal/ State	20 U.S.C. §1400 et seq./Iowa Code §282.4(2)	<u>Student Assault on an Employee</u> Requires suspension for a student who commits an assault against a school employee in a school building, on school grounds, or at a school-sponsored function. The law defines the procedures and considerations to be used when executing the suspension; further sanctions may include expulsion, but a 10-day or longer removal of the student must follow proper due process. No action may be taken that would violate the Federal I.D.E.A.
State	Iowa Code §704.1	Defines "reasonable force" as that force which is necessary to avoid a reasonable likelihood of personal injury or risk to life or safety or the life or safety of others.
State	281 I.A.C., § 102	Establishes procedures for investigating allegations of physical or sexual abuse of students by employees.
State	281 I.A.C, §103.4	Does not prohibit the use of reasonable force, not designed or intended to cause pain, under a set of specified circumstances: prevent a student from harming self or others, to obtain a weapon or dangerous object from a student, for self defense, to protect property, to remove a student.

Source	Citation	Summary
State	Iowa Code §280.22 §613.20	School Employee Immunity Establishes civil and criminal immunity for a school employee who in good faith reports or investigates violence, threats of violence, or other inappropriate activity against a school employee or student.
		Student Policies and Codes of Conduct
State	281 I.A.C.: 12.3(6) (General Accreditation Standards) (1999)	Requires school boards to adopt student responsibility and discipline policies that include, but are not limited to, provisions for: attendance; use of tobacco; use or possession of alcoholic beverages or any controlled substance; harassment; violent, destructive, and seriously disruptive behavior; suspension, expulsion, emergency removal, weapons, and physical restraint; out-of school behavior; participation in extracurricular activities; academic progress; and citizenship. Involvement of parents, students, instructional and non-instructional professional staff, and community members in the development and revision of the policies is required where practicable or unless otherwise indicated by this legislation. Policy provisions must also include assurance of due process rights, and provisions for publicizing board support of the policies and expectations for their implementation, consideration of the potential, disparate impact of the policies because of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, creed, or socioeconomic background.
IASB	Discussion IASB's *Student Issues Manual,* pp. 44-45 (1997	Suggests that school districts develop a transportation conduct policy similar to other district conduct policies and provides a model of provisions for such policy. Includes information on procedures recommended when suspending or revoking bus privileges.
Case Law	Goss v. Lopez 419 U.S., 565 (1975)	Suspension-Expulsion • Due process must be afforded students who are facing temporary suspension. • Due process protections include the right of students to receive written or oral notice of the charges against them an opportunity to present their version of the occurrence that precipitated the suspension and representation by an attorney.
State	Iowa Code §282.4 (1999)	Establishes the circumstances under which a student may be suspended or expelled from school, and prohibits (without a majority vote by the school board) the enrollment of a student in a school district who has been suspended or expelled and has not met the conditions of that suspension or expulsion.
IASB	Discussion IASB's *Student Issues Manual,* pp. 71-73 (1997)	Describes the procedures that school districts must have in place when they expel students pursuant to gun-free schools laws: suspension or expulsion of student for possession of a dangerous weapon; continuation of the students' school involvement; and for reintegrating the student in school following the suspension or expulsion.
Case Law	S-1 v. Turlington 635 F.2d342 (5th Cir. 1981)	Manifestation Determination • Requires an I.E.P team to consider the relationship of a student's misconduct the student's disability (manifestation determination). • If the IEP Team decides there is no relationship between the misconduct and the disability, the school may apply its ordinary disciplinary procedures. • Educational services must be continued during the student's expulsion.
Case Law	Honig v. Doe 484 U.S. 305 (1988)	"Stay Put" • Schools' recourse to "stay put" for students with disabilities is to demonstrate in court that maintaining the child in his or her current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to him/herself or others. • If it is so determined, the court may order the student to an alternative educational placement.

Source	Citation	Summary
Federal	29 U.S.C. §794 (§504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973) 34 CFR 104.3-.39	Section 504 Provides protections related to removal from school of students identified under Section 504 (i.e., individuals with disabilities) from discrimination. Section 504 defines the requirements and structure surrounding the execution of the discipline procedures of suspension and expulsion of Section 504 eligible students including manifestation determination
Federal	Amendments to IDEA (1997) 34 CFR §300.519-300.529	Discipline Provisions I.D.E.A • Defines what constitutes a change of placement for disciplinary removal of an IDEA '97 eligible student. • Delineates the authority of and requirements on school personnel for disciplinary removal of an IDEA '97 eligible student • Describes the circumstances under which a functional behavior assessment and a behavioral intervention plan is required for IDEA '97 eligible students who are subject to disciplinary removal. • Describes the circumstances under which an administrative law judge (ALJ) may order a change of placement for a child with a disability to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting • Requires that the interim alternative educational setting described above be determined by an IEP team and describe the conditions that constitute the "appropriateness" of such a setting. • Outlines the circumstances under which a manifestation determination review is required, and the procedures and guidelines for the decisions made in such a review. • Contains provisions for parent appeal of a decision of from the manifestation determination, for an expedited hearing, and for placement of a child during the appeal. • Defines the protections afforded children not yet eligible for special education and related services. • Provides for reporting a crime committed by a child with a disability to appropriate authorities and for the transference of records to the extent permitted by FERPA.
Attendance/Truancy		
State	Iowa Code §299.1A and 299.2 (1999)	Compulsory Attendance Requires that a child who has reached the age of six (6) and is under 16 years of age by September 15 attend a public school or an accredited nonpublic school, or receive competent private instruction and outlines six exceptions to that requirement. Also defines penalties for parents of truant children and the responsibilities of school districts with regard to a student's truancy. Includes provisions for involvement of a mediator.
State	Iowa Code §299.8, §299.1B §239B2A	Truancy • Defines the conditions under which a child of compulsory attendance age is deemed to be "truant." • Children who are in grades K-6 must attend school, and, if deemed truant, the school district must initiate an intervention process. For families receiving Family Investment Program (FIP) assistance and/or LearnFare, the Department of Human Services is the reeponsible party, and the families risk losing their benefits.

Fire and Tornado Drills		
State	Iowa Code §100.31	• School districts are required to hold fire and tornado drills. School districts must have two fire and two tornado drills before Dec. 31 and two fire and two tornado drills after January 1 for a total of eight each school year. • School districts need to have specific procedures in place in case of drills or actual emergencies. School districts should also have crisis plans in place to assist them in case of an emergency.