



DoDEA

SAFE *Schools*

NEWSLETTER



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New DoDEA AT Standards Coming . . .

The Department of Defense is updating its Antiterrorism (AT) Standards in the DoD Instruction 2000.16. The new standards are in final review and are expected to be signed by early summer.

DoDEA Headquarters, in conjunction with the District Safety and Security Officers (DSSOs) are reviewing the DoD draft standards in preparation for a 2005 update to DoDEA Regulation 4700.1, *DoDEA's Antiterrorism Program*. It is anticipated that the new DoDEA Standards and Implementing Guidance will be published prior to the 2005-2006 school year. ■

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Prevention Programs

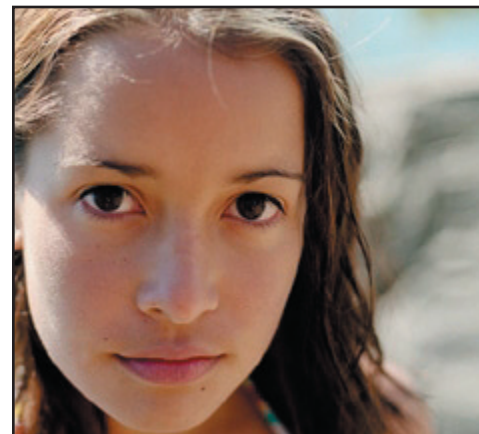
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Parents: The Anti-Drug

Two-thirds of youth cite their parents' disapproval as the reason they do not use illicit drugs, according to the Partnership for a Drug-Free America's (PDFA) 2002 Partnership Attitude Tracking Study. In late February 2005, PDFA teamed with Comcast Corporation to let parents know that talking to their children about drug use helps. Administrators can support the effort by publicizing PDFA's suggested actions in school newsletters and other communication with parents and student sponsors.

PDFA's Partnering with Families Campaign emphasizes that parents need to tell their children that drug use is not acceptable. Two factors repeatedly shown to help students resist drugs are: 1) Clearly articulated disapproval from their parents; and 2) Participation in constructive after-school activities (i.e. sports, drama, service clubs).

Steve Pasierb, PDFA CEO, explained the urgency of the campaign. According to a recent PDFA study, parents who attended high school when drug use peaked during the late 1970s and early 1980s, see significantly less risk in the use of some drugs such as marijuana. "Parents appear to be carrying lax attitudes about drugs into the future," Pasierb said.



Almost 60 percent of today's parents have used marijuana. Due to their history of drug use, many parents find it difficult to establish a zero tolerance policy for their children. The PDFA campaign suggests parents begin by resolving their internal conflict so they can better help their children avoid drugs.

Further information on the Partnering with Families campaign is available from the PDFA web site at: www.drugfree.org. The White House Office of National Drug Control Prevention offers substance abuse prevention tips at: www.mediacampaign.org and www.theantidrug.com. ■

Alcohol Prevention Web Site for Middle School Students

Research indicates that if middle school students learn about alcohol consumption and its adverse effects, the likelihood that they will become heavy abusers in high school is reduced. To help them learn about the effects of alcohol, the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) released a new version of The Cool Spot, the Institute's web site for 11 to 13 year-old children.

The web site offers free "teen-friendly" content and graphics including:

- ◆ Statistics on alcohol and teen deaths related to alcohol;
- ◆ Ways to resist peer pressure;
- ◆ Information on alcohol's effects on mood and judgment; and
- ◆ Facts about alcohol's effect on the body.

University of Michigan researchers developed The Cool Spot curriculum for grades 6-8. Researchers tested the curriculum through a multi-year project called the Alcohol Misuse Prevention Study (AMPS). This project gives young teens a clearer picture of alcohol use among their peers. According to AMPS, "Teens tend to overestimate how much other teens drink. When provided with accurate information about peer-group drinking habits, teens may feel less pressure to drink."

The curriculum also helps students learn skills to resist the pressure to drink and gives them reasons not to drink. The NIAAA's Cool Spot web site for middle school students can be accessed at: www.thecoolspot.gov/. ■

DoDEA Safe Schools Program Managers

Ed Englehardt, Rose Chunik

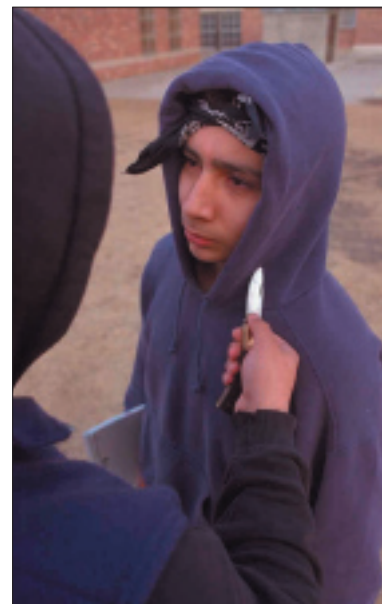
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This is an unofficial publication produced by DynCorp, Inc. on behalf of the Department of Defense Education Activity Office of Safety and Security. The material is presented for informational purposes and does not constitute official policy of the Department of Defense. All comments and questions should be directed to Bob Michela at: rmichela@csc.com.

Recognizing Youth Gangs

Youth gang activity is becoming a part of the landscape in U.S. public schools. While DoDEA schools may not be as vulnerable to this phenomenon as U.S. public schools, administrators who can recognize the early warning signs can prevent incoming CONUS students from starting gangs. The U.S. Department of Justice offers several criteria for classifying a group as a youth gang:



- ◆ Youth gangs require some permanence. Gangs are different from transient youth groups in that they show stability over time, generally lasting a year or more. Historically, youth gangs have been associated with ethnic groups.
- ◆ The central purpose of the gang is to participate in criminal activity.
- ◆ Members must share some symbol of identity. This is generally accomplished by naming the gang and/or using symbols or colors to signify gang affiliation. Hand signs, graffiti, specific clothing styles, bandannas, and hats are among the most common symbols.
- ◆ The group must have at least three members.

If you think a gang may exist in your school, there are many strategies available to help you to identify and squelch gang activity at its earliest on-set. To learn more about gangs and how to prevent or suppress them, go to the National Youth Gang Center web site at: www.iir.com/nygc/PublicationLinks.htm#YGPI. ■

Managing the Aftermath

DoDEA administrators benefit from an abundance of resources available to help them with both near and long-term crisis recovery. Following an incident of school violence, the immediate objectives include evacuation, relocation, and reunion of students with their parents. Long-term concerns entail helping students recover from the emotional trauma of a crisis. This article concentrates on the near-term objectives, which should be part of your Safe School Incident Response Planning (IRP).

Evacuation

When the perpetrator has been isolated or subdued, local security or law enforcement personnel will begin evacuating students from the school. Pre-designating a remote rally point and practicing evacuation drills regularly ensures that students and staff will know the evacuation site and route.

Usually, evacuation following a violent incident requires moving children away from the school. Plan for the presence of emergency vehicles as you select your evacuation route. At some DoDEA locations, the elementary and middle schools plan to host each other if an incident occurs at one of the schools. If a crisis affects both schools simultaneously, students can be relocated to a nearby recreation center where they can be fed, sheltered and supervised until they are released to their parents.

Relocation

Some incidents, such as a chemical spill, might require evacuation to distant locations. Consider who will accompany each of the school buses. If evacuating to another school, designate one staff member to call ahead to the receiving school. Often elementary schools plan to relocate to a high school. Some high schools divide their students into groups and send them to neighboring elementary schools.

Reunion

Schools that have experienced violent incidents often report that parents rushed to the scene and interfered with emergency operations. Directing parents to an alternate location or “Parent Center” to retrieve their

children will help avoid disruption. Coordinate your Parent Center communication procedures with local law enforcement, security offices and the public affairs office. Periodically check that the designated location of the Parent Center is still feasible.

Include a description of the Parent Center in the student handbook. Educate parents about the use of a Parent Center during an incident. Let parents know that the location is not published in the handbook for security reasons and because the location might change.

Tell parents that in the event of an incident they should contact the Office of Safety and Security prior to coming to the school. Also advise them that the Parent Center location will be publicized through the U.S. military TV and radio stations.

Designate a room or area (i.e. gymnasium or football field, etc.) as the Parent Center. Identify primary and alternate staff members to operate the center. These staff members have three key functions:

1. Welcome parents and reassure them.
2. Provide factual incident information approved for release by the public affairs office.
3. Enforce sign-out procedures to ensure that the school can document that all students were picked up by their parents or sponsors.

Review the IRP checklist in Chapter 2 of DoDEA’s *Safe Schools Handbook* for incident procedure ideas. Additionally, the *DoDDS-Pacific Crisis Response Guide* and the *DoDDS-Europe Guide for Crisis Management in Schools* both offer numerous checklists and guidelines for establishing your Incident Response Procedures.

Administrators do not have to coordinate all of the planning on their own. District Safety and Security Officers offer a wealth of expertise. This type of planning contributes directly to preparation of the military antiterrorism plans. The Federal Emergency Management Agency also offers a free online course, IS 362: Multi-Hazard Emergency Planning for Schools, available at: www.training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is362.asp. ■

Carefully Selected Programs Improve Discipline

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) recommends carefully selecting delinquency prevention programs to improve student behavior. NIJ's November 2004 Issue Brief: "Toward Safe and Orderly Schools—the National Study on Delinquency Prevention in Schools," reports on a survey of more than 500 principals, 16,000 students, and 13,000 teachers. The study shows that program implementation is as important as program design. Copies of the NIJ brief are available from the NIJ web site at: www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/nij/205005.pdf.

The report concludes that many of the delinquency prevention programs initiated by schools were poorly implemented. However, the 57 percent of U.S. school-based delinquency prevention programs that succeeded share several characteristics. Some of NIJ's recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of prevention programs, include:



- ◆ Provide extensive staff training on the use of classroom behavior management techniques.
- ◆ Ensure programs include highly structured, scripted material such as instruction manuals or implementation guidelines and quality control.
- ◆ Involve staff and district personnel in program selection. Ask them to help identify and select programs suitable for your school.
- ◆ Integrate program concepts into the regular school curriculum, rather than requiring separate classes or activities taught by volunteers.

NIJ observed that when programs work effectively, the improvement in school climate is obvious: "Schools with high-quality programs tend to have high faculty morale and open communication between teachers and the principal." Involving staff in the selection process bolsters support for program implementation.

DoDEA schools implement quality prevention programs to decrease bullying, improve character and enhance school climate. For examples, see the February and March 2003 newsletters available at: www.dodea.edu/schools/newsletters.htm.

For specifics on selected programs considered suitable for DoDEA schools, see the DoDEA Prevention Program guides available on the DoDEA web site at: www.dodea.edu/schools/ISGuides.htm. To share an example of a prevention program that benefited your school, E-mail: safeschools@csc.com. ■

Young Smokers and Drug Addiction

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), research now suggests that young smokers are particularly vulnerable to the physiological effects of nicotine. The results of two recent NIDA-supported studies indicate that smoking may be more addictive for people who begin smoking during adolescence. Dr. Edward Levin and his colleagues at Duke University conducted research which indicates that early exposure to nicotine may heighten a person's response to other addictive drugs. Additionally, researchers found that adolescent smokers are more likely to abuse other drugs than their non-smoking peers.

Dr. Levin and his research team investigated the relationship between the addiction process and brain development. "Self-administration of nicotine during the teenage years, when the brain is still developing, may cause some of the developmental processes to proceed inappropriately, in effect sculpting the brains of adolescents in ways that facilitate the addiction process," states Levin.

Researchers also found that males and females differ in their susceptibility to the addictive effects of smoking. For more on the issue, consult the NIDA web site: www.nida.nih.gov/NIDA_notes/NNvol19N2/Early.html. ■

Detectors Prevent Smoking in Rest Rooms

Administrators interested in deterring student smoking in the rest rooms now have a technological tool – cigarette smoke detectors. Pagers sound the alert when the device detects cigarette smoke. This is not a regular smoke alarm, but a special device designed to distinguish cigarette smoke from other types of smoke. Manufacturers design the photo and ion sensors in smoke alarms so that they will not give a "false alarm" in the presence of cigarette smoke.



Assistant Principal Mike Kelly, at South Charleston High School in West Virginia, recommends making cigarette detectors part of a larger school-wide anti-tobacco campaign. South Charleston High School installed cigarette detectors two years ago and now has no smoking in the rest rooms. Mr. Kelly notes that this frees up administrator time that can be allocated to other areas.



Rather than conceal the cigarette detectors, administrators have invited students to participate in publicizing the devices as part of the school's anti-smoking campaign. Art teachers ask students to create posters that alert their peers that smoking in the rest room will be detected. Student participation in the program solidifies the anti-smoking message and helps administrators in their efforts to keep the lavatories smoke-free.

Cigarette detectors are available from Voice Products for about \$325. To order, phone Voice Products at: 216.360.0433 or visit Voice Products at: www.vproducts.com. ■

Listening Improves School Climate

Build a respectful class environment and improve your school climate by practicing effective listening skills. Positive student/teacher communication can go a long way to creating a relationship of mutual respect and trust among both parties. Additionally, students who feel “heard” by teachers are more apt to warn school staff about any negative student activities or concerns.

The Center for Family and Adolescent Studies (CFAS) at Indiana University offers teachers the following seven techniques for communicating effectively with students:

1. Express a genuine interest in your students.

Greet students at the door. Learn about students’ cultures. Be aware of teen slang terms. Attend to students as individuals, not just to the class as a whole.

2. Communicate classroom rules clearly.

Treat students equally by enforcing rules fairly and consistently. Consider each incident’s unique circumstances while making discipline-related decisions.

3. Be objective, not judgmental.

Try to adopt the students’ perspective. Look at issues from a variety of angles.

4. Show that you are human.

Be prepared to admit your mistakes. Use humor when appropriate.

5. Minimize the power differential in everyday communication.

Sitting behind a desk or standing behind a podium can send the message that you want to create some distance between yourself and the students.

6. Address problem behavior directly and immediately.

Unresolved conflicts and issues often resurface. Addressing a problem early lessens the chance that it will continue.

7. Adopt a collaborative approach.

Maximize student opportunities for choices within the class-room. Send students the message that this is “our” classroom, not “my” classroom. Actively solicit students’ opinions.



Good communication skills improve school climate and decrease misunderstandings that can cause friction. For additional ideas on how to connect with students, visit the CFAS web site at: www.indiana.edu/~cafs/. Also, Women’s Media.com offers techniques for improving listening skills at: www.womensmedia.com/seminar-listening.html. Many DoDEA schools use the Character Counts! program and have found it to be effective in improving school climate. For more information on this program, see the *DoDEA Intervention Strategies Guide*, July 2002, located on the DoDEA web site at: www.dodea.edu/schools/pdfiles/ISGuide_Jul02.pdf. ■