



Multicultural Learning at Bahrain School

Think Bahrain School and security comes to mind. Think again and multicultural learning should come next. On any given day at Bahrain American School, Principal Gail Anderson interacts with students from nearly 50 different nations. “This school is like a mini-U.N.,” she recently joked by telephone during an overnight senior lock-in devoted to writing college essays. “In one of my elementary classes we have 14 nationalities and five spoken languages in one room.”



Managing the variety and range of cultural experience is no problem at Bahrain School, reports Anderson. “I have always found DoDEA kids to be very accepting and open to new experiences,” said the twenty-year veteran, pointing out the opportunities for travel as a key benefit to growing up in the military. At Bahrain, in addition to the students who are U.S. Military dependents, other students include children of Foreign Service officials, local Bahraini nationals who prefer to enroll their children in DoDEA’s prestigious Baccalaureate program, and the children of foreign nationals working in neighboring countries. Bahrain is also the only DoDEA school that continues to house a portion of its student population in an on-campus dormitory. This adds to the multicultural flavor of the school, reports Anderson.



While the students are naturally inclined to learn from one another and share their backgrounds, Anderson and her staff make it easy by kicking the school year off with a multicultural dinner. “Because Ramadan started right before school this year, our Arabic Cultural Club sponsored an Iftar feast for the school community,” explained Anderson.

The Iftar is a meal, typically shared with others, which breaks the fast each evening during the holy month of Ramadan. During the Iftar feast at Bahrain School, students shared Arabic traditions, food, including plenty of desserts, and music with their international peers. The cultural exchange not only enhances the social aspects of the school, but Ms. Anderson believes it also improves achievement. “I’ve never seen anything like the excitement for learning that I see here,” said Anderson. “This is a wonderful time to be teaching and learning in Bahrain.” ■

Inside This Issue

News & Updates

- Multicultural Learning at Bahrain School 1
- Windows Broken, Spirits Strong 2
- Reduce Stress: Schedule Fun..... 2

Safe Schools Planning

- DoDEA Protective Action Drills and Exercises
- Get Emergency Plans in Shape 3

Education Issues

- Attending to the Social Well-Being of Special-Needs Students 4

Cybersecurity

- Protect Electronic Devices During Holiday Travel 5

Prevention Programs

- “Time To Talk” for Military Families 6

Windows Broken, Spirits Strong

DoDEA Schools in Puerto Rico implemented their response and recovery procedures on Friday, October 23, when 11 large fuel tanks exploded at a petroleum storage facility near Fort Buchanan. Michael Gould, Superintendent of the New York, Virginia, and Puerto Rico District, and Assistant Superintendent Gary Gerstner, were visiting Puerto Rico at the time and were awakened by the explosion. “The blast woke me immediately, but due to its intensity it was very disorienting,” recalled Superintendent Gould. “It was a couple minutes before the flames were noticeable through the trees and then it became clear what was happening.”



Communication protocols planned for use during such incidents were immediately activated. The first priority was to inform the community that school would be cancelled. “The Post Commander was in touch with me via cell phone within 20 minutes of the blast,” Gould noted. “That communication positioned us to begin planning our response immediately.”

The DDESS Area office promptly dispatched a team of technical experts to assess the damage and begin repairing facilities. “We were very fortunate,” commented DDESS Security Division Chief Gene Hindle. “The windows and frames were blown in, but fortunately

the buildings down there are already hardened against hurricanes, so the structures remained sound.”

Both Gould and Gerstner agreed that communication and coordination with the installation officials and local emergency responders was excellent. Already teams on the ground are using the incident as an opportunity to improve response and recovery coordination efforts. “There is no doubt that we will rebuild stronger and smarter as a result of what we have learned,” said Gould. ■

Reduce Stress: Schedule Fun

The holiday season is typically a stressful time of year for educators. They are winding down the grading term, gearing up for holiday festivities, caring for the needs of their own families, and often busy with an increase in outside-of-work obligations. While many DoDEA educators praise the work environment of DoDEA and the community support they receive, everyone needs a boost from time to time.

A recent study, published in the academic journal *Emotion* offers hope for those who feel the additional stresses of the season. The study found that people do not have to banish negative emotions in order to feel well. They need only try to include positive emotions in the day to experience a boost in mood and energy.

The concept of “seeding” the day with little mood boosters is something that has been around for generations (download a new song for the commute, splurge on your favorite chocolate bar, or try a new jogging route). This study proves that the wisdom of the ages is correct. Being kind to oneself can increase the joy a person feels on a daily basis. Researchers describe this practice as “building a diet of positive emotions.” The study found that this approach provided insulating factors that protect individuals from the unexpected stresses of life. ■

DoDEA Headquarters Personnel

Rose Chunik, Chief, Office of Safety and Security
 Ronnie Martin, Program Manager, Physical Security
 Adam Bergstrom, Program Manager, Antiterrorism

CSC Safe Schools Newsletter Editorial Staff

Bob Michela, Sarah Markel, Brian McKeon, Bert Garcia

The material herein is presented for informational purposes only and does not constitute official policy of the Department of Defense, nor does it constitute an endorsement of any programs by the Department of Defense Education Activity or the Department of Defense. All comments and questions should be directed to safeschools@csc.com.

DoDEA Protective Action Drills and Exercises Get Emergency Plans in Shape

Across DoDEA, school crisis management teams are conducting drills to ensure they can protect students in any type of incident. Approaches range from honing flexibility by practicing evacuating to an alternative evacuation site, to coordinating with installation commanders to include schools in installation-wide full scale exercises. The following are a sampling of examples coming in from District and Area Safety and Security Officers.

Rainbow Elementary Evacuates to Alternative Site. On October 27, Rainbow Elementary on Barton Barracks in Germany practiced evacuating in response to a simulated bomb threat. Since their normal evacuation site was under construction they marched students over to an alternative evacuation site. Bavaria District Safety and Security Officer John McCoy reported that the drill went as planned: “All went very well and the kids were on their best behavior.”



Rainbow Elementary School students and staff at an alternative evacuation site.

Vicenza Schools Shelter-in-Place. Vicenza Elementary and Middle/High School recently practiced their shelter-in-place procedures in conjunction with an exercise conducted by the installation command. On September 22, the emergency responders walked through the two schools at Vicenza with school officials. Together, they evaluated which rooms offered the best protection. Sometimes gymnasiums hold a lot of people, but appear “porous” — they might allow air seepage. District Safety and Security Officer Patrick Booker mentioned that “we’re looking at getting people into a few locations.” He explained that conducting the drill at the same time as the installation exercise allowed the school to practice shelter-in-place procedures under realistic conditions, “but we had our own scenario.”



Students at Scott Middle School on Fort Knox evacuate during an installation-wide full-scale exercise.

Drama at Fort Knox, Kentucky. At Fort Knox, the middle and high school lent actors and realism to an installation-wide full scale exercise. Junior ROTC students from the high school volunteered to simulate victims injured during an incident at the start of the exercise. As the exercise scenario unfolded, the middle school responded to a bomb threat by initially going into lockdown, and then moving all students and staff to their evacuation site.

DDESS Security Division Chief Gene Hindle noted that the exercise started with a dramatic special effect, which benefited both the school and the installation in terms of providing a realistic practice. “The installation was doing the exercise anyway, so this was a great chance to practice our response procedures and see how well we could communicate with security forces and emergency responders.” He added, “The students were terrific.”

Congratulations to all of these schools for taking advantage of the autumn weather to practice protective actions. For tips on how to plan protective action drills or exercises, contact your district or area safety and security officer. For copies of protective action flip charts that teachers can reference during an emergency, principals may contact safeschools@csc.com. (Please provide name, school, address, and the number of flip charts needed.) ■

Attending to the Social Well-Being of Special-Needs Students

With so much attention on cyber-bullying, it is easy to forget that the most common victims of bullying are students who are different from their peers. Students who have physical or behavioral differences, or disabilities, are statistically more likely to be “picked on.” Creating a greater awareness of this can improve the cultural climate of schools and enhance learning opportunities for both bullies and their targets.

A recent study from researchers at the Medical University of South Carolina and the Citadel found that students with special needs are more likely to be bullied. The study surveyed over 300 students aged eight to 17. Only four percent of a control group of students (without special needs) reported being bullied, but students with special needs reported a much higher prevalence of harassment. For example, 41 percent of students with autism reported being victimized, and 25 percent of students with Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) were bullied.



Preventing bullying in schools is important because victims of bullying often suffer from collateral side effects. Students who are bullied are more likely than others to be depressed and have low self-esteem. They are also more likely to have repeated absences, say they dislike school, and think about suicide, according to Stop Bullying Now, a Web site operated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).

Stop Bullying Now also cites a number of related studies that came to similar conclusions. Among them, research in the past decade showed that students with ADHD, obesity, and medical conditions that affect their appearance (e.g., cerebral palsy or muscular dystrophy) may be at particular risk. One study reported that 83 percent of adults who stuttered as a child remembered being teased or bullied as children.

For information about bullying related to special needs students, visit http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/HHS_PSA/pdfs/SBN_Tip_24.pdf. The site also has tips for parents of special needs students who experience bullying. ■

New Autism Prevalence Statistics Released

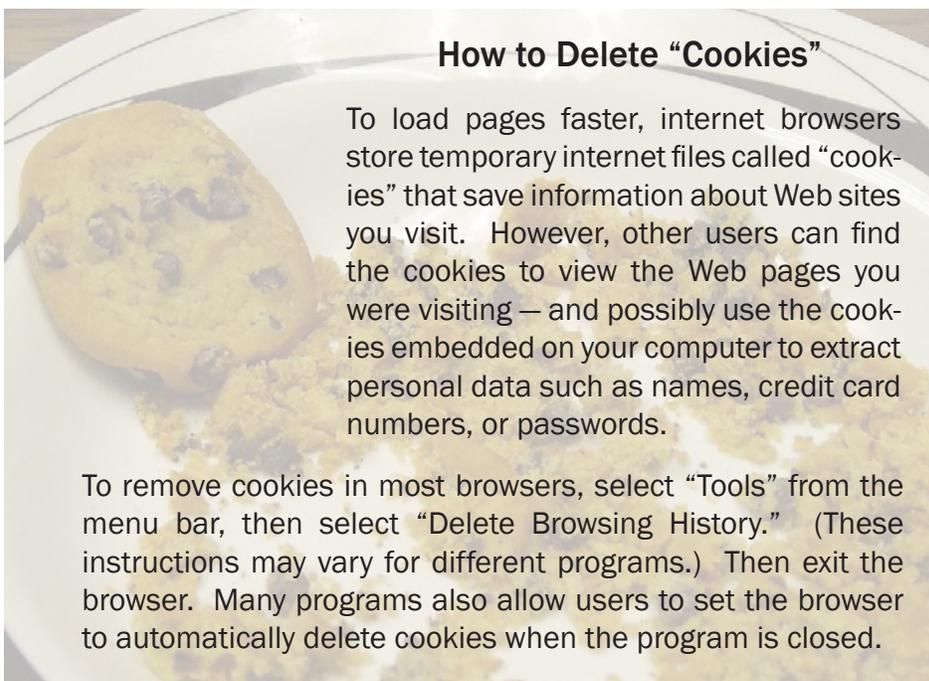
Research recently published in the journal *Pediatrics* estimates that 1.1 percent, or one in 91 children, had been medically diagnosed with autism. The information was gathered through a parent survey on the health of more than 78,000 children as part of the National Survey of Children’s Health sponsored in part by HHS. The last time the survey was conducted, in 2003, the estimated rate was 0.57 percent of children, or one out of 160. Whether the increased rate reflects an actual increase in autism or greater awareness of the disorder is unclear at this time. For more information about the studies, contact the Safe Schools Team at safeschools@csc.com. ■

Protect Electronic Devices During Holiday Travel

While travelling during the holiday season, it is important to be aware of the threats against computers and mobile devices, especially if they have wireless capabilities. Protecting your computer does not have to be difficult. The premise is quite simple: first, protect information, and second, protect possessions.

Protect Information. When connecting to the Web wirelessly, connect only to trusted networks. Avoid accessing wireless networks from unknown sources. Ideally, any wireless network should be encrypted and password protected. Thus, a free “wireless hot spot” at the airport might be convenient, but it is a dangerous place to use a credit card to make a purchase.

Just as when you are withdrawing money from your account at an ATM, be alert for anyone “looking over your shoulder” as you use the Internet. In this case, do so literally and figuratively. It is obvious when someone is peering at your computer screen, but it is harder to tell when a hacker is observing your computer screen remotely by intercepting your connection to the wireless network with a specialized antenna. For these reasons, it is not advisable to enter any personal data, access bank accounts, or work on private or sensitive information on a Web site in public. For example, do not make online purchases at a coffee shop or work on sensitive information in an airport.



How to Delete “Cookies”

To load pages faster, internet browsers store temporary internet files called “cookies” that save information about Web sites you visit. However, other users can find the cookies to view the Web pages you were visiting — and possibly use the cookies embedded on your computer to extract personal data such as names, credit card numbers, or passwords.

To remove cookies in most browsers, select “Tools” from the menu bar, then select “Delete Browsing History.” (These instructions may vary for different programs.) Then exit the browser. Many programs also allow users to set the browser to automatically delete cookies when the program is closed.

Also, when using a public computer in a hotel lobby or internet cafe, avoid entering personal information when possible, and erase any personal information that may have been saved on the computer. Before logging off of a public computer, delete temporary internet files such as “cookies,” sign out of any Web site that required a log-in (before closing the browser), and then exit all programs or internet browsers.

Protect Possessions. The potential for theft of laptop computers is also a concern, especially during the hustle-bustle of holiday travel. The following tips can decrease the chance that your computer might be stolen:

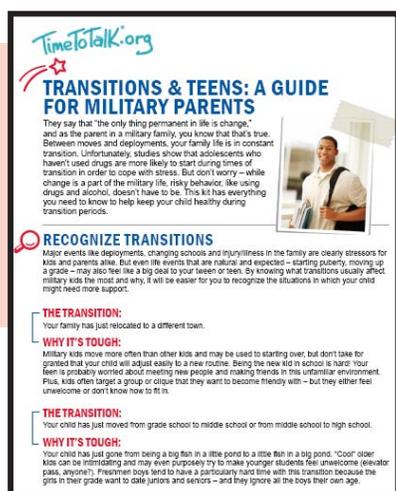
- ✓ Never leave your laptop or any portable/wireless device alone in a public place. Use a hotel safe if one is available, and/or purchase a laptop cable lock for added security while in a hotel room.
- ✓ Do not pack electronic equipment or other valuables in checked baggage. When passing through an airport security checkpoint, wait until the laptop has passed under the x-ray machine before passing through the metal detector, then keep an eye out for it to come out of the machine. Retrieve electronics immediately, and then worry about your shoes.
- ✓ Avoid leaving a laptop or other expensive electronic devices in a car, if possible. If you must leave a computer in a car, put it in the trunk to conceal it. Ideally, place it there when getting into the car. Otherwise, moving it to the trunk calls attention to the computer right before you walk away.

Simple measures can reduce an individual’s vulnerability to cyber-crime of any sort. For more tips on keeping your information and systems safe, contact safeschools@csc.com. ■

“Time To Talk” for Military Families

A nationwide campaign sponsored by the Partnership for a Drug Free America (www.drugfree.org) empowers parents to help teens make positive choices about avoiding alcohol and drug abuse. The program also offers a component designed for the unique needs of military parents and their teenagers.

Time To Talk builds upon numerous studies that show parents can exert a powerful and positive influence on the choices teens make simply by talking to them about the dangers of illicit substance abuse. One 2005 study found that children who learn about the risks of drugs from their parents are up to 50 percent less likely to use drugs, yet only 31 percent report discussing drugs with their parents. For that reason, the program includes scripts, talking points, and advice for parents about how to handle awkward questions that may come up during a discussion.



Time To Talk Military Families Guide

“Designed specifically for military parents of tweens and teens, this kit provides ideas on how to start the conversation about drugs and alcohol, scripts to help you find the right words, and tips for answering tough questions and getting support from other adults around you.”

Transitions and Teens: A Guide for Military Parents is available with the Time To Talk kit. It candidly addresses the kinds of issues teens may face during a military transition. Many of these issues can be easily overlooked by adults facing the challenges of adapting to a new job or finding suitable housing. To teens, however, these issues matter deeply and can have ramifications on the

choices they make further along in life. Some of these issues discussed in the guide include: saying goodbye to a boyfriend or girlfriend, the potential for parental deployment from a new military unit, and the awkwardness associated with changing schools and making new friends.

This guide offers scripts for military parents to discuss these issues with students to help reduce the likelihood that their teens may turn to socially risky behaviors during the stress of a transition. The guide also addresses post-deployment stress that teens may face and offers guidance for families during such times.

Time To Talk is a joint project sponsored by the National Military Family Association, the National School Nurses Association, and the Partnership for a Drug Free America. The program also offers ongoing support through a newsletter and an online chat room for parents who may wish to communicate with other parents in order to “keep the conversation going.” To learn more about the Time To Talk Program visit www.timetotalk.org/military/. The DoDEA Web site home page currently offers a link to the Time To Talk program at www.dodea.edu. ■

In Bahrain, Everyone Pitches In for School Security

It’s all hands (and paws) on deck for security at Bahrain school. But when the weather heats up to 120 degrees, even the dogs have to wear protective clothing. “They wear booties to protect their paws from the heat,” explained Ms. Gail Anderson, principal of Bahrain School. “No one goes barefoot here.”

