

PARTICIPANT PACKET

Promising Practices for Safe and Effective Schools

A Live National Satellite Broadcast

Produced by the

**Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
U.S. Department of Justice**

And the

**Juvenile Justice Telecommunications Assistance Project
Eastern Kentucky University—Training Resource Center**

Sponsored by the

U.S. Department of Education: Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services; Office of Adult and Vocational Education's Office of Correctional Education; Office of Elementary and Secondary Education's Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program; Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs; and Office of Compensatory Education Programs

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Center for Mental Health Services; National Institute of Mental Health; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

U.S. Department of Justice: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; National Institute for Justice

National Organizations: American Public Human Services Association; Association of State and Territorial Health Officers; Council of Chief State School Officers; National Association of State Boards of Education; National Association of State Directors of Special Education; National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors; National Conference of State Legislatures; National Criminal Justice Association; National Governors' Association

Promising Practices for Safe and Effective Schools

AGENDA September 15, 1999

***All times listed are EDT**

- 2:30-3:00 PM Pre-Conference Site Activities
Test Slate
- 3:00-3:05 PM Welcome/National Perspective Comments from Rosalyn Carter
(Via Videotape)
- 3:05-3:11 PM Overview of Project ACHIEVE
Tampa, Florida
- 3:11-3:30 PM Discussion/Call-In Segment
- 3:30-3:36 PM Overview of Westerly Public Schools
Westerly, Rhode Island
- 3:36-3:56 PM Discussion/Call In Segment
- 3:56-4:02 PM Overview of East Baltimore Mental Health Partnership
Baltimore, Maryland
- 4:02-4:22 PM Discussion/Call In Segment
- 4:22-4:30 PM Closing Comments/Upcoming Events

Promising Practices for Safe and Effective Schools

Overview

All children deserve to have a safe, orderly environment in which to learn and grow. Though America's schools are among the safest places for children due to the committed presence of educators, family members, and community support, school safety can no longer be taken for granted. Over the past few years, alarming incidents of disruptive behavior, assaults, and even murder have taken place in school settings. In many schools, concern about violence and discipline has surpassed academics as the highest priority for reform and intervention.

Characteristics of Safe and Effective Schools

Schools that maintain safe and effective environments instill in children important skills for learning socially appropriate behavior. In *Safe, Drug-Free, and Effective Schools for ALL Students: What Works!*, a study prepared by the Center for the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools and the Office of Special Education Programs found that successful schools tend to utilize multiple support strategies for students. These schools utilize several key principles:

1. Focus on academic achievement and high behavioral standards. The first step to a safe and effective learning environment is a school-wide commitment to good behavior.
2. Involve families and the larger community in meaningful ways. Safe schools bring in parents, mental health and other social service agencies, businesses and other community services to build safer schools and communities.
3. Emphasize positive relationships among students and staff. Safe schools build and support staff capacity to address the diverse needs of all students.
4. Treat children and youth with respect. Safe schools are caring schools that value and respect all students.
5. Help children feel safe expressing their feelings; and
6. Identify problems and assess progress toward lasting solutions. Safe schools are strategic schools.

Three Levels of Student Support

Program activities involving multiple levels of intensity can be utilized to reduce discipline problems and improve academic results and school safety. The three levels of support critical to meeting the needs of all students are prevention, early intervention, and intensive intervention. A mix of activities targeting the entire school, students exhibiting troubling behavior patterns, and individual students with more intense needs provides the strongest opportunity for creating a school-wide climate of respect, marked by positive interactions and minimal behavioral disruptions.

Project ACHIEVE

Tampa, Florida

Research suggests that with adequate school-wide prevention programs, about 80 percent of students will never present major behavioral problems. Programs that emphasize prevention help to reinforce positive student behavior and provide school staff with a strong foundation for a successful education milieu. Through a school-wide strategy that addresses safety and good behavior, an environment can be established for strong academic outcomes. Effective prevention programs incorporate the following components:

- Clearly defined behavioral expectations;
- Engaging, student-centered instruction;
- Direct teaching of appropriate behaviors;
- Support for achieving high behavioral and academic standards;
- Positive recognition and public acknowledgment of good behavior
- Well-defined, consistently delivered responses to misbehavior;
- Collaboration between regular and special educators, and links to other school improvement efforts;
- Collaboration with family, community, and service providers; and
- Leadership that is committed to supporting all students.

Cleveland Elementary School in Tampa, Florida has implemented Project ACHIEVE, a school-wide prevention and intervention model that provides behavioral support for all school children. Rather than simply focusing on student behavior, Project ACHIEVE also emphasizes teaching and reinforcing the instructional skills used by teachers to maximize students' academic achievement. An important component of Project ACHIEVE is the Stop and Think curriculum, which is integrated into the classroom curricula to teach students social and problem-solving skills. As consequences for inappropriate behaviors are made clear and consistently enforced on a school-wide basis, students learn that the outcomes for negative behaviors are a result of their own poor choices. Consistent support and positive reinforcement for appropriate choices through such means as praise, individual recognition, and group celebrations are utilized throughout the school and provided by all adults. Through the Stop and Think curriculum children quickly begin to engage in self-reinforcing behaviors and learn to feel good about themselves for making positive behavioral choices.

Westerly Integrated Social Services Program

Westerly Public Schools

Westerly, Rhode Island

While school-wide prevention programs are critical for minimizing the frequency and intensity of student behavioral problems, they will not always be sufficient to meet the support needs of every student. Research suggests that approximately 10 to 15 percent of students may need more intensive levels of support to decrease their high-risk behaviors. Schools should be aware of students in need of this additional support, and have access to effective strategies when prevention efforts do not work. For this level of need, early intervention programs are specifically designed to identify and address the factors that place some students at a higher level of risk for problem behaviors. By taking early action when confronted with student behavior problems, schools can address the issue before long-term patterns develop.

In communities such as the Westerly, Rhode Island Public School District, the strategy for early intervention often includes a teacher, counselor or school psychologist working with individual or small groups of students to provide them with the support necessary to meet behavioral expectations. Support activities often link children and their families to community support services or provide these services within the school.

Westerly schools maintain planning centers within each building where students can go to talk about their feelings or problems, resolve conflicts, get assistance with school work, or work on problem-solving skills. While all students have access to the planning center, the Individualized Education Plan of students with identified behavior problems, specify a regular time when they are to visit the planning center. The centers are staffed by adults trained in behavior management and in individual and group counseling. Staff members can also help students and families access mental health or other community services when a need is identified. The key contribution of these centers is helping prevent the escalation of inappropriate behaviors by addressing academic, emotional or behavior problems before they move to a level of crisis. Combined with the strategies for prevention and intensive student support, the Westerly planning centers have resulted in improved grades, achievement, attendance, and fewer disciplinary referrals. This, in turn, has created a positive, trusting learning environment that promotes high academic and behavioral expectations.

East Baltimore Mental Health Partnership Baltimore, Maryland

Research suggests that a small percentage of students will experience serious, ongoing problems that place them at risk for disruptive, destructive, or violent behaviors. To provide support to these students and minimize their potential negative impact on the school or other students, intensive, targeted strategies for support are necessary.

In school-based programs such as the one developed by the East Baltimore Mental Health Partnership, a strategy is in place for intensive, individualized support for students and their families. Through the use of a multi-agency coordinating committee, a system of care has been created that provides ongoing support to students and their families. Services are provided by school-based clinicians and include the use of a mentoring program and regular family consultation. Students with behaviors that might normally lead to removal from the local school setting are able to remain in their school, avoid the stigma of placement in a mental health facility, and benefit from the services of a trained clinician in a more familiar, supportive setting. Their families are more comfortable receiving services at the local school and teachers and other school staff are provided a resource for meeting the needs of their most challenging students.

In short, children in the schools and communities profiled above are given the necessary support to succeed. Through the use of multiple strategies for addressing school safety the needs of students are being effectively met in a variety of communities.

There is no single strategy that ensures school safety. Schools need to examine a variety of models, implement them in their own environmental contexts, and remain committed to a comprehensive program of student support. Strategies for school safety that incorporate prevention, early intervention, and intensive support have a proven record of success. The promising practices highlighted in this videoconference, present a clear message: by working together schools, families, and communities can move closer to the goal of making schools safe for all students.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

This videoconference is based on five documents prepared by or for the Federal partner organizations. These materials and documents are available to download at www.air.org/cecp/whatworks/ in several formats to accommodate your needs and technological capabilities.

- Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools
- Toolkit for Implementing Early Warning/Timely Response (Under Development)
- Safe and Effective School for ALL Students: What Works!
- Promising Practices in Children's Mental Health: The Role of Education in a System of Care
- 1998 Annual Report on School Safety

Previous Satellite Videoconferences

Produced by the
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

Conditions of Confinement in Juvenile Corrections and Detention Facilities

September 1993

Community Collaboration

June 1995

Effective Programs for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders

October 1995

Youth-Oriented Community Policing

December 1995

Juvenile Boot Camps

February 1996

Conflict Resolution for Youth

May 1996

Reducing Youth Gun Violence

August 1996

Youth Out of the Education Mainstream

October 1996

Has the Juvenile Court Outlived Its Usefulness?

December 1996

Youth Gangs in America

March 1997

Preventing Drug Abuse Among Youth

June 1997

Mentoring for Youth in Schools and Communities

September 1997

Juvenile Offenders and Drug Treatment:

Promising Approaches

December 1997

Comprehensive Juvenile Justice in State Legislatures

February 1998

Protecting Children Online

March 1998

Youth Courts: A National Movement

May 1998

Risk Factors and Successful Interventions for

Serious and Violent Juvenile Offenders

September 1998

White House Conference on School Safety:

Causes and Prevention of Youth Violence

October 1998

Juveniles and the Criminal Justice System

December 1998

Females and the Juvenile Justice

May 1999

For Further Information

For videos of previous OJJDP videoconferences, please contact the Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse, PO Box 6000, Rockville, MD 20849-6000; call 800-638-8736; fax 301-251-5212; or e-mail askncjrs@ncjrs.org.

For information on future OJJDP programs, contact Becky Ritchey, Juvenile Justice Telecommunications Assistance Project, Eastern Kentucky University, 301 Perkins Building, 521 Lancaster Avenue, Richmond, KY 40475-3102; call 606-622-6671; fax 606-622-4397; or e-mail ekujjtap@aol.com

Promising Practices for Safe and Effective Schools

Program Panelists

Project ACHIEVE

Dr. Howie Knoff, Project ACHIEVE Director and Professor, University of South Florida

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Howard M. Knoff, Ph.D. is a Professor of School Psychology at the University of South Florida (Tampa, FL) and was Director of the School Psychology Program there for 12 years. He is also the Co-Director of the Institute for School Reform, Integrated Services, and Child Mental Health and Educational Policy; and the Co-Director of Project ACHIEVE, a nationally-known school reform project. He received his Ph.D. degree from Syracuse University in 1980, and has worked as a practitioner, consultant, licensed private psychologist, and university professor since 1978. Known for his research and writing in organizational change and school reform, consultation and intervention processes, social skills and behavior management training, personality assessment, and professional issues, Dr. Knoff has published more than 75 articles or book chapters and delivered over 250 papers or workshops nationally.

Project ACHIEVE has been designated a Model Student Services Program in Florida by the State Department of Education in its “Promising Programs and Practices” competitions since 1994. The program has also received Honorable Mention in USA TODAY’s Community Solutions for Education national awards program for 1995 sponsored by the Coalition on Educational Initiatives; and it was a semi-finalist in the 1996 U.S. Department of Education’s National Awards Program for Model Professional Development. Project ACHIEVE was highlighted in Safe, Drug-Free, and Effective Schools for ALL Children: What Works! A joint report of the U. S. Department of Education’s Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Office of Special Education Programs, April 1998. And, it has been identified as an effective school reform program by the Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice of the American Institutes for Research, Washington, D. C., since January 1997.

Cathy Valdes, General Area Director for Area 8 Schools in Hillsborough County

Phone: 813-740-3723

Email: clvm@gte.net

Cathy Valdes has been an employee of the Hillsborough County School District in Tampa, Florida since 1972. She has served the district as a classroom teacher, primary specialist, elementary assistant principal and elementary principal. Ms. Valdes was the principal of Cleveland Elementary School for the past eight years and has been recently promoted to the position of General Director for Area 8 schools in Hillsborough County. She was named Florida’s National Distinguished Principal in 1997 by the National Association of Elementary School Principals.

Karen Collins-Cleveland Elementary School PTA President

Biography Unavailable

Westerly Integrated Social Services Program

Sally Mitchell, Westerly Integrated Social Services Program Coordinator, Westerly, RI
Phone: 401-596-6856.

Sally Mitchell has been practicing school psychology in Westerly, Rhode Island for 12 years. Both her experiences as an agent of change and her work with children across all grade levels have contributed to the identification of patterns and subsequent program development. The integration of social services is one program that occurs through collaboration with local, state, and private organizations on site and addresses the social, emotional, behavioral, and academic needs of all students. This major school reform initiative includes creating advisory councils, referral mechanisms using a team model, crisis guidelines, and a policies and procedures manual. The U.S. Department of Education has selected this program as one of three models nationally and it is the subject of a recent video documentary.

Sally has presented and consulted on safe schools at national and state conferences, including the 1998 National Association of School Psychology's Annual Conference and 1998 Improving America's Schools Conference. She was one of fifteen research/practitioners in the country invited to a listening session with U.S. Department of Education Secretary Richard Riley.

Sally is the recipient of the 1996 School Psychology Professional Service Award and has been nominated as an "outstanding educator" by the Rhode Island Department of Education. She resides in Westerly with her husband and three children.

Nancy O. Dodge, School Board President, Westerly Public Schools

Phone: 401-596-2716

Email: kpson@aol.com

Nancy Dodge is a graduate of Manhattanville College and Boston College Law School. She has been a practicing attorney in Westerly, Rhode Island since she and her husband and children moved there in 1979. Nancy has been involved in the representation of Special needs students since the early eighties, and that interest led her to run for School Committee in Westerly in 1990. She has been on the Committee since then, serving as Chairman during 1994 – 1996 and again from 1998 to the present. She has also been involved in Juvenile Law, and particularly the JD/LD link, with emphasis on reading disabilities related to juvenile legal issues and behavioral concerns. Besides being Chairman of the Westerly School Committee, she is presently the Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of Bishop Hendricken High School in Warwick, R.I., and Special Probate Judge for Block Island, R.I.

Detective Stephen J. Iacoi, Westerly Police Department

Phone: 401-348-6119

Detective Iacoi has been a member of the Westerly Police Department for the past 22 years. Detective Iacoi is a graduate of Roger Williams University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Administration of Justice. Detective Iacoi is also a graduate of the University of Rhode Island School of Criminal Investigation. Detective Iacoi has spent the last seven years in investigation, with three of those years spent investigating the crime of self-neglect and abuse within the elderly population. In 1993 he received the Safety Award from the Rhode Island Commission for the safety and care of the elderly. In 1995, Detective Iacoi was recognized for his work in a feature article in the New York Times. Over the last four years Detective Iacoi has revamped the Juvenile Services component of the Westerly Police Department. In 1996 the department started a Juvenile Hearing Board to address misdemeanor crimes for youthful offenders. Detective Iacoi was honored in 1997 for his work with juveniles and received the prestigious State of Rhode Island Juvenile Justice Award for outstanding services.

East Baltimore Mental Health Partnership

Dr. Gayle K. Porter, Director School-Based Services Program, East Baltimore Mental Health Partnership

Phone: 410-614-4054

Dr. Porter is a licensed clinical psychologist. She is currently the Director of the School-Based Program of Johns Hopkins' University/Hospital. She is on the faculty of Hopkins' Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Department. Dr. Porter has worked as a reading and human sexuality teacher at the junior high level as well as a school counselor. She was also the director of two outpatient mental health clinics for children and families in Washington, DC. Dr. Porter has given numerous presentations on various topics related to children's mental health, especially poor and minority children and families.

Donette Grizzle, School-Based Clinician, East Baltimore Mental Health Partnership

Phone: 410-5340957

Ms. Grizzle is a School-based Clinician for the Johns Hopkins East Baltimore Mental Health Partnership. She currently provides mental health services to students in a middle school setting. Ms. Grizzle obtained her B.A. degree in Human Development from Saint Mary's College of Maryland. In 1990, she earned her M.S.W. from Virginia Commonwealth University. Ms. Grizzle also received her LCSW-C in the state of Maryland.

Angela Vaughn Lee, Parent Coordinator, Families Involved Together

Phone: 410-464-2606

Angela Vaughan-Lee is a parent and guardian of two special needs children. She is the Support Network Coordinator for Families Involved Together (FIT) and the East Baltimore Mental Health Partnership. Ms. Vaughan-Lee works with families who have children with special emotional needs, providing them with peer support, education, and advocacy. She has been in this position for the past four years and plans to continue in this field. Ms. Vaughan-Lee feels that one of her purposes for being here is to help others.