

Safe Schools

A publication of Safe Communities~Safe Schools and the School Safety Resource Center
CU-Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence and Colorado Department of Public Safety



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Colorado Establishes School Safety Resource Center

On May 13, 2008, Governor Bill Ritter signed into law a bill establishing the Colorado School Safety Resource Center (CSSRC). The Center will operate within the Colorado Department of Public Safety to assist schools in preventing, preparing for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies and crisis situations and to foster positive learning environments.

The CSSRC will include an advisory board representing multiple agencies, school administrators, parents, and law enforcement to make recommendations about safe school policies.

The Center will assist schools to:

- ◇ Develop and implement safety and preparedness plans
- ◇ Establish practices and strategies to respond to emergencies and crises
- ◇ Establish evidence-based prevention and intervention efforts to promote safe and secure learning environments
- ◇ Conduct research and assessments
- ◇ Provide safe school information and resources

The CSSRC will collaborate with the CU-Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence (CSPV) to help improve school safety in Colorado. CSPV will facilitate the research and prevention component and will make recommendations about evidence-based prevention and intervention programs and strategies. Many services, including this newsletter, will be provided jointly to provide a clear and consistent message about safe school planning in Colorado.

Integral to this work is the School Safety Pilot Program. Up to five sites, including at least one rural school, will be selected to receive intensive technical assistance on elements of physical safety and school climate. Participation is voluntary and open to all schools and school districts in the state. Notice of Interest packets are being mailed to all schools and are due back by November 3 so the pilot sites can be chosen and notified by December 1. Schools must agree to participate for at least two years beginning in January 2009 and ending May 2011.

Stay tuned for more information as the resource center is established in the next few months. If you have initial questions, please contact Ann Terry at 303-239-4449. ❖

This quarterly newsletter will serve as a joint communication outreach between the State School Safety Resource Center and SCSS. It becomes an e-newsletter beginning in early 2009. Readers can subscribe by visiting the website (www.colorado.edu/cspv/safeschools) to submit an email address.



Senator Salazar Supports Safe Communities-Safe Schools

The Safe Communities~Safe Schools (SCSS) initiative has been re-established as a result of federal funding that Senator Ken Salazar secured due to his ongoing interest in evidenced-based violence prevention programming for Colorado schools.

This funding will allow the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence (CSPV) to continue to assist schools through the SCSS initiative in creating safer learning environments while complementing the ongoing work of the School Safety Resource Center.

The SCSS initiative first began in 1999 as a partnership between then Colorado Attorney General, now Senator Salazar, CSPV, The Colorado Trust, and other key Colorado partners. Senator Salazar continues to have a sincere interest in the safety and well-being of Colorado youth.

The Senator's efforts will allow Colorado schools to create a positive and welcoming school climate, where teachers can teach and students can learn. ❖

SCSS Begins New State Outreach

Safe Communities~Safe Schools (SCSS) services are being launched this fall. SCSS is designed to improve school safety by providing assistance to schools in four areas:

- ◇ School violence prevention planning
- ◇ Evidence-based programming
- ◇ Prevention and safety research and resources
- ◇ Training and technical assistance

An exciting new component added this year is an online assessment tool. SCSS staff can work directly with a school's planning team to help the school gain an understanding of its specific violence prevention and safety needs and ultimately develop a strategic plan to meet them. This pro-

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cess involves conducting a school safety assessment that focuses on the school's climate and safety planning. The school climate survey and preplanning checklist will be available online through a secure website. Schools can survey students using a core set of questions on school climate, bullying, violence, and other problem behavior. And schools can add tailored questions in specific categories like health and wellness or mental health. Schools will then be offered a comprehensive report based on responses to the surveys with national comparisons where available. Staff and parent surveys will be added to the package in fall 2009.

Core SCSS services and resources are available at no charge to all K-12 school administrators, staff, and community agencies across Colorado. Additional fee-based services are available for those wanting more in-depth assistance.

The core of SCSS is a planning model comprised of these five components:

1. Convene a Safe Communities~Safe Schools planning team
2. Conduct school assessments
3. Develop strategies and implement evidence-based violence prevention programs
4. Establish a social support team
5. Develop or improve school crisis plans

SCSS staff will work with schools to help establish planning teams and follow the complete model or help with one or more individual components as needed.

The CSPV website has undergone a major redesign and contains the SCSS assessment tools, publications, fact sheets, this newsletter, and a search feature for research and resources on prevention-related topics. These online resources are available for use by anyone concerned about school safety and violence prevention.

Visit the site at www.colorado.edu/cspv/safeschools. ❖

SAVE THE DATE REGIONAL TRAINING FALL, 2008

Join SCSS and CSSRC for a one-day seminar on school violence prevention.

TOPICS TO INCLUDE:

- ❖ bullet list
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Location and details forthcoming.

Watch our website for more details!

WWW.COLORADO.EDU/CSPV/SAFESCHOOLS




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