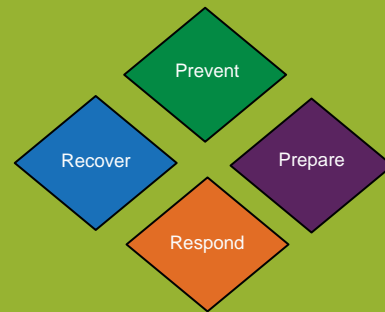


Colorado Safe Schools

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BULLYING

It's Not Welcome in Today's Safe School Climate

Schools across Colorado continue to meet the education needs of our young people by working hard to build school environments in which each student feels safe and, in fact, *is* safe. School climate, a tremendous influence on safety, is generally thought to encompass: norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures according to the National School Climate Center.

Today, most educators use the term "school climate" to refer to our subjective experience of school while "school culture" is used to refer to the actual state of the school. For example, if the school building itself were in a state of disrepair, this would be an aspect of school culture; but how people feel about this and how they see it (e.g. "Our school is a wreck. It makes me feel like no one cares about the students here." or "It is a beautiful old building that needs some repair, but I love it") reflects school climate.

Source: National School Climate Center schoolclimate.org

For at least 30 years, U.S. schools have been using formal surveys to measure these aspects of their school climate in an attempt to improve education outcomes. It is important that schools be aware of the issues at play in their campus environment and the larger environment of parents and surrounding community. A reliable climate survey is one simple and efficient method to build this awareness by asking for honest feedback in a non-threatening approach. Surveys are anonymous, quick to complete, and remarkably illuminating for topics that may be difficult to talk about openly. And the data they capture is crucial to track progress and, increasingly, to qualify for grant funding.

This year the U.S. Department of Education started a new grant program, *Safe and Supportive*

that 17 percent of kids reported that they are being bullied two to three times a month or more. Of those bullied, nearly 40 percent of the girls and 45 percent of boys say the bullying has been going on for more than a year. Quoted in an MSNBC article, Susan Limber who is co-author of the study, said, "Kids' voices are so important for us as adults to hear. We think we know what is going on, but when kids can express their honest opinions we are often caught off guard."

At its worst, the impact of bullying can be deadly to our youth. We've seen a number of violent attacks and suicides in the past few years that are linked expressly to bullying. And we've seen a lot of valuable work being done to help prevent these types of tragedies. Building awareness and effective skills to intervene are among our most important goals. Each one of us can make a positive change for a young person who is suffering at the hands of one or more bullies.

Because it can be extremely difficult for young people to ask for help, they need to be aware of these tips:

- If bullied, tell your parents. Telling is not tattling.
- Tell a trusted teacher, counselor, principal, or have your parents talk to the school.
- Do not retaliate or get angry.
- Respond evenly and firmly or say nothing and walk away.
- Develop friendships and stick up for each other.
- Act confident.
- Take a different route to and from school.
- Avoid unsupervised areas of school.
- Do not bring expensive items to school.

If your school would like to schedule a free climate survey or learn more about ways to reduce bullying behaviors, please contact CSPV today.

Bullying Prevention: Tips for Schools

- Establish a bullying prevention committee.
- Create a long-term anti-bullying plan and raise school and community awareness and involvement.
- Use student, staff and parent surveys to determine if there is a bullying problem.
- Involve parents in planning, discussions and action plans.
- Establish classroom rules against bullying.
- Create both positive and negative consequences regarding bullying.
- Initiate serious talks with bullies and victims of bullying.

Source: *Bullying Prevention Tips* colorado.edu/cspv

Schools, to support statewide measurement of, and targeted programmatic interventions to improve conditions for learning in order to help schools improve safety and reduce substance use. In the first round of grant awards, ED awarded \$38.8 million to state education agencies in Arizona, California, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, South Carolina, Tennessee, West Virginia and Wisconsin. The award amounts range from \$1.6 million to \$5.9 million. It is anticipated that we will learn valuable lessons from these 11 states as we watch the efforts they make over the next four years.

The CU-Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence offers a free climate survey to any K-12 public or private school in Colorado. This survey is offered as part of the Safe Communities-Safe Schools project, which is made possible with grant funds from the U.S. Department of Justice. Surveys are administered to students, staff and parents online via a secure website and results are generated immediately once the survey is closed.

One area of school climate that continues to harm a lot of students is bullying. Whether it is done in person or online, too many students are subjected to some form of it routinely - maybe as bystanders rather than perpetrator or victim, but we cannot stress enough how devastating it can be for young people. A recent study out of Clemson University found

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Contact CSPV:
303-492-1032 or 1-866-SAFE790
safeschools@colorado.edu
www.colorado.edu/cspv/safeschools



Contact CSSRC:
303-239-4435
schoolsafetycenter@cdps.state.co.us
www.safeschools.state.co.us

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Spotlight on Bullying and Harassment Prevention Resources from the CSSRC

Recent events in the news from across the country have drawn attention to the issues of bullying and harassment for students both in school and on the way to and from school. According to the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, Assistant Deputy Secretary, Kevin Jennings, one out of three students in schools this year will be the victim of bullying. Students with special needs or those from the LGBT community are at even greater risk.

Data from the 2009 Youth Risk Behavior Survey in Colorado reveals that more than 12,000 (5.5%) high school students reported staying home from school in the month prior to the survey because they were afraid to go to school. Sometimes this fear for safety is related to the issues of bullying, harassment or intimidation.

Colorado school personnel and parents have been requesting bullying prevention materials in response to the concerns and in a renewed effort to provide training. The Colorado School Safety Resource Center's website www.safeschools.state.co.us/Resources2.html#r1 lists a number of bullying and harassment prevention resources for schools and parents. The variety of resources include:

- information on in-person bullying, harassment, cyberbullying
- tip sheets for administrators, teachers and parents and more.

In addition, CSSRC is a resource to provide a **no cost consultation and/or workshop** for your school or district, that can help you create a safe, positive, and successful school. We can customize a variety of trainings for your school safety and crisis planning teams or your school staff as you continue to train this school year.

Please contact the CSSRC at 303-239-4435 or email: schoolsafetycenter@cdps.state.co.us. Thank you for all of your school safety efforts!

Resource Highlights:

1. Cyberbullying Research Center- <http://www.cyberbullying.us/index.php>
2. Dear Colleague Letter, U.S. Office For Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education - <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201010.pdf>
3. Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN)- <http://www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/antibullying/index.html>
4. Stop Bullying Now - U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the Health Resources and Services Administration - <http://www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/adults/default.aspx>
5. www.bullyinginfo.org- U.S. government website that helps create, maintain, and strengthen effective youth programs

Colorado Safe Schools: Training & Resource Fair Vail, May 5-6, 2011

AT A GLANCE:

- Designed for school safety team members: administrators, faculty, counselors and mental health staff, SRO/law enforcement, fire safety and other community partners.
- Representatives from leading violence prevention programs will be on hand.
- No registration fee to Colorado participants. Space is limited and registration required.
- Vail Cascade Resort & Spa, 1300 Westhaven Dr., Vail, CO 81657

REGISTRATION: Opens in March, 2011. Watch www.colorado.edu/cspv for more details.

Presented by the CU-Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence and the Colorado School Safety Resource Center



**Is Your School Using
Safe2Tell®?**

Anonymous tip line makes it easy and safe for students or teachers to report concerns.