CSSRC Resource Review

Review Date: 11/17/14

Name/Title: Real Crimes in Virtual Worlds: School Violence: Echoes from the Digital Playgrounds

Author: Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), Drakontas, and Drexel University

Media Type: (Book, CD, Flyer, Poster, Website, etc) issue brief

Publisher/Supplier: BJA

Publication Date: December 2013

 Re-order Source: https://www.bja.gov/Publications/Drakonats-School_Violence.pdf

Language: English

Usefulness Rating:

1. Excellent XX
2. Good
3. Fair
4. Poor
5. Rated by: (CSSRC staff member) Alice
6. Comments:
    a. This issue brief explores virtual gaming communities as a source of intelligence for school administrators and law enforcement regarding threats and criminal intent that may affect educational environments in the real world.
    b. First, the brief presents the prevalence of electronic media and video games in the lives of young people. Many games contain social communication aspects like embedded text, voice, and video message systems and file sharing. Game users post a mix of communications in game systems about both the game and their personal lives. When users engage in cyberbullying and make threats, the effects of the game communication spill over into the real world.
    c. Law enforcement does not actively monitor game communications, nor is there a central authority overseeing game communications for most games. Thus, it is important for the game community to police itself by recognizing and responding to cyberbullying and cyberthreats. Young people tend to want to keep the peace in the game environment rather than report issues to authorities. It is therefore important to educate and train youth about the warning signs and serious nature of threatening messages, and provide them a viable way to notify schools or law enforcement about such messages.
    d. In response to a specific threat, law enforcement can contact a video game company to request information from the game. The local Internet Crimes Against Children Task (ICAC) Taskforce can help local law enforcement work with game companies. The ICAC

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in Colorado is located in Colorado Springs and is available at
https://www.facebook.com/ColoradoICAC/

e. It is suggested that school administrators and law enforcement proactively pursue information about the video game and other online communities used by youth. Schools can teach students about how to engage in these communities safely, and law enforcement can respond to threatening online behavior before it spills into the real world. The brief includes sample questions to ask students to begin a dialogue about virtual worlds and social media.

Category: (Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, Recovery, Promotional Item) Response

Topic: (Bullying, Substance Abuse, Threat Assessment, etc) Bullying, Cyberbullying, School Violence, Threat Assessment

Audience: (Administrators, Counselors/Psychologists/Social Workers, Emergency Responders, Health Professionals/Nurses, Law Enforcement/SROs/Security, Parents, Teachers, Other School Personnel) Administrators , Law Enforcement/SROs/Security

Intended Age Group: (pre-K, elementary, middle, high, higher education)

Cost: 0

Additional Comments: