

Violence Prevention and School Safety Programs



This **Quick Training Aid** was excerpted from a Technical Assistance Sampler entitled: *A Sampling of Outcome Findings from Interventions Relevant to Addressing Barriers to Learning*, Appendix D, pp. 6-10. Center for Mental Health in Schools (1999).

Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum: Second Step is a school-based social skills curriculum for preschool through junior high that teaches children to change the attitudes and behaviors that contribute to violence. Second Step teaches the same three skill units at each grade level: Empathy, Impulse Control, and Anger Management. Lesson content varies according to the grade level, and the skills practiced are designed to be developmentally appropriate. There were no significant teacher- or parent-reported differences between those students participating in Second Step and a control group. However, two-weeks after the intervention was completed behavioral observations revealed that students in Second Step showed an overall decrease in physical aggression, and an increase in neutral/prosocial behavior, compared to the control group. Most of these effects persisted six months later.

For more information, see:

Grossman, D.C., Neckerman, H.J., Koepsell, T.D., Liu, P. Asher, K.N., Beland, K., Frey, K., & Rivara, F.P. (1997). Effectiveness of a violence prevention curriculum among children in elementary school: A randomized controlled trial. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 277(20), 1605-1611.

Quinn, M. M., Osher, D., Hoffman, C. C., & Hanley, T. V. (1998). Safe, drug-free, and effective schools for ALL students: What works! Washington, DC: Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice, American Institutes for Research.

For project information, contact:

Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum: Committee for Children, 2203 Airport Way South, Suite 500, Seattle, WA 98134. (800) 634-4449, (206) 343-1223.

Responding in Peaceful and Positive Ways (RIPP) Program: The 25 session RIPP program focuses on social/cognitive skill-building to promote nonviolent conflict resolution and positive communication. The 25-session sixth grade curriculum is taught during a 45-minute class period once a week. Participants showed significantly lower rates of fighting, bringing weapons to school, and in-school suspensions than control subjects.

For project information, contact:

Farrell, A.D. & Meyer, A.L., & Dahlberg, L.L. (1996). The effectiveness of a school-based curriculum for reducing violence among urban sixth-grad students. *American Journal of Public Health*, 87, 979-984

Farrell, A.D., Meyer, A.L. & Dahlberg, L.L. (1996). Richmond youth against violence; A school based program for urban adolescents. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 12, 13-21.

Farrell, A.D. & Meyer, A.L. (in press). Social Skills Training to Promote Resilience in Urban Sixth Grade Students: One product of an action research strategy to prevent youth violence in high-risk environments. *Education and Treatment of Children*.

First Step to Success: An early intervention program for grades K-3 that takes a collaborative home and school approach to diverting at-risk children from a path leading to adjustment problems, school failure and drop-out, social juvenile delinquency in adolescence, and gang membership and interpersonal violence. By recruiting parents as partners with the school, this program teaches children a behavior pattern that contributes to school success and the development of friendship. Children are screened for antisocial behavior, they participate in a social skills curriculum, and parents are taught key skills for supporting and improving their child's school adjustment and performance. Students who successfully complete the program show sustained behavior changes in the following areas, as indicated by teacher ratings and direct observations: adaptive behavior, aggressive behavior, maladaptive behavior, and the amount of time spent appropriately engaged in teacher-assigned tasks. Follow-up studies show that intervention effects persist up to two-years beyond the end of the initial intervention phase.

For more information, see:

Walker, H.M. (1998). First step to success: Preventing antisocial behavior among at-risk kindergartners. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 30(4), 16-19.

Walker, H.M., Severson, H.H., Feil, E.G., Stiller, B., & Golly, A. (1997). *First step to success: Intervening at the point of school entry to prevent antisocial behavior patterns*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.

Walker, H.M., Stiller, B., Severson, H.H., Kavanagh, K., Golly, A., & Feil, E.G. (in press). First step to success: An early intervention approach for preventing school antisocial behavior. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 5(4).

For program information, contact:

Jeff Sprague & Hill Walker, Co-Directors. Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior, 1265 University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403. (541) 346-3591

Project ACHIEVE: A school wide prevention and early intervention program, that targets students who are academically and socially at risk. Students learn social skills, problem-solving methods, and anger-reduction techniques. Since 1990, the program has reduced aggression and violence in Project ACHIEVE schools. Disciplinary referrals decreased by 67%. Specifically, referrals for disobedient behavior dropped by 86%, fighting by 72% and disruptive behavior by 88%. Referrals for at-risk students for special education testing decreased 75% while the number of effective academic and behavioral interventions in the regular classroom significantly increased. Suspensions dropped to one-third of what they had been three years before. Grade retention, achievement test scores, and academic performance have improved similarly, and, during the past four years, no student has been placed in the county's alternative education program. The project's success has led to the adoption of the Project ACHIEVE model in over 20 additional sites across the United States.

For more information, see:

Knoff, H.M. & Batsche, G. M. (1995). Project ACHIEVE: Analyzing a school reform process for at-risk and underachieving students. *School Psychology Review*, 24(4), 579-603.

Knoff, H.M. & Batsche, G. M. *Safe Schools, Safe Students*. Edited by Ronda C. Talley & Garry R. Walz. National Education Goals Panel and National Alliance of Pupil Services Organizations. Produced in collaboration with ERIC Counseling and Student Services Clearinghouse.

Quinn, M. M., Osher, D., Hoffman, C. C., & Hanley, T. V. (1998). *Safe, drug-free, and effective schools for ALL students: What works!* Washington, DC: Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice, American Institutes for Research.

For project information, contact:

Drs. Howie Knoff and George Batsche, Co-Directors, Institute for School Reform, Integrated Services, and Child Mental Health and Education Policy, School Psychology Program, FAO 100U, Room 268, The University of South Florida, Tampa, FL 33620-7750, (813) 974-3246.

Bullying Prevention Program: A universal intervention for the reduction and prevention of bully/victim problems. The main arena for the program is the school, and school staff has the primary responsibility for the introduction and implementation of the program. Program targets are students in elementary, middle, and junior high schools. All students within a school participate in most aspects of the program. Additional individual interventions are targeted at students who are identified as bullies or victims of bullying. The Bullying Prevention Program has been shown to result in: a substantial reduction in boys' and girls' reports of bullying and victimization; a significant reduction in students' reports of general antisocial behavior such as vandalism, fighting, theft and truancy; and significant improvements in the "social climate" of the class, as reflected in students' reports of improved order and discipline, more positive social relationships, and a more positive attitude toward schoolwork and school.

For more information, contact:

Dan Olweus, Ph.D., University of Bergen, Research Center for Health Promotion (HEMIL), Christiesgt. 13, N-5015, Bergen, Norway, 47-55-58-23-27, E-mail: olweus@psych.uib.no

Conflict Resolution and Peer Mediation Projects (CR/PM): Nine CR/PM programs throughout the country were evaluated. Data from this evaluation suggests that CR/PM projects may reduce the frequency of fighting and other undesirable behaviors at school, increase knowledge and modify student's attitudes about conflict, improve school discipline, and increase attendance. However, these findings are based on preliminary data, and success varies depends on how the curriculum is implemented.

For more information, see:

Altman E. (1994). *Violence Prevention Curricula: Summary of Evaluations*. Springfield, Ill: Illinois Council for the Prevention of Violence.

Powell, K. E., Muir-McClain, L., & Halasyamani, L. (1995). A review of selected school-based conflict resolution and peer mediation projects. *Journal of School Health*, 65 (10), 426-431.

Tolan, P. H. & Guerra, N. G. (1994). *What Works in Reducing Adolescent Violence: An Empirical Review of the Field*. Boulder, CO: Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence.

PeaceBuilders: A school-wide violence prevention program for elementary schools (K-5). This program is designed to prevent violence by reducing students' hostility and aggression by changing the school climate and promoting prosocial behavior. The project involves norm-setting, peace-building, and communication skills development. It reinforces prosocial behavior and enhances parent education and involvement, and includes mass media tie-ins. A year before PeaceBuilders began, 120 children were suspended and about 30 were arrested for crimes in the community. Two years into PeaceBuilders, the number of suspensions had dropped to five, and there were no arrests for community crimes. One school using the PeaceBuilders program reported that major student fights dropped from 125 to 23; another school reported a decrease from 180 to 24. Outcome assessments are still underway.

For more information, see:

Embry, D.D., Flannery, D.J., Vazsonyi, A.T., Powell, K.E., & Atha, H. (1996). PeaceBuilders: A theoretically driven, school-based model for early violence prevention. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine. Youth Violence Prevention: Description and Baseline Data from 13 Evaluation Projects (Supp.)*, 12 (5), 91-100.

Walker, H.M., Colvin, G., Ramsey, E. (1995). *Anti-Social Behavior in Schools: Strategies and Best Practices*. Pacific Grove, California: Brooks/Cole.

For program information, contact:

Jane Gulibon, Heartsprings, Inc., P.O. Box 15258, Tuscon, AZ 85732, (520) 322-9977.

Positive Adolescent Choices Training (PACT): Designed to reduce the chances that African-American and other at-risk adolescents will become victims or perpetrators of violence. Primarily targets youth between 12 and 16 identified as socially deficient or with a history of violence. Participants receive hands-on training and practice in 3 areas: prosocial skills, anger control, and violence risk education. Data suggest that those who completed the program showed reduced violence-related behavior as well as gains in skills predictive of future abilities to avoid violence. The data also suggest that others perceived the trained participants to have improved social skills and that trainees themselves had more confidence in their abilities to perform the new behaviors.

For more information, see:

Hammond, W.R., & Yung, B.R. (Winter, 1991). Preventing violence in at-risk African-American Youth. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*, 359-373.

For program information, contact:

B. Yung, Center for Child and Adolescent Violence Prevention, Wright State University, Ellis Human Development Institute, 9 N. Edwin C. Moses Blvd, Dayton, OH 45407, (937) 775-4300.

Resolving Conflict Creatively Program (RCCP): Curriculum stresses modeling of nonviolent alternatives for dealing with conflict and teaches negotiation and other conflict resolution skills. Conflict resolution and communication skills are taught in the classroom and practiced at least once a week. Several students are trained as “mediators” to assist others in resolving conflicts. Teachers who participate report decreases in name-calling and physical violence among students. When students are tested, most learn the key concepts of conflict resolution and are able to apply them when responding to hypothetical conflicts. In addition, students themselves have reported getting in fewer fights and engaging less frequently in name-calling compared with matched control groups. For the peer mediation component, 80% of students and teachers report that students are helped by contact with mediators. Nine out of ten teachers who participated in the program said that they had improved understanding of children’s needs and were more willing to let students take responsibility for resolving their own conflicts.

For more information, see:

DeJong, W. *Building the Peace: The Resolving Conflict Creatively Program (RCCP)*. National Institute of Justice: Program Focus. US Dept. Of Justice, Office of Justice Programs.

For project information, contact:

Linda Lantieri, RCCP National Center, 163 3rd Ave, Room 103, New York, NY 10003, (212) 387-0225.

The Mediation in the Schools Program: Promotes positive resolution of conflict in schools. The program consists of three components: conflict management curriculum for the classroom; adult modeling of mediation in conflict resolution; and training of student mediators to provide mediation services to other students. Evaluation showed that the program seemed to be “owned” by the students. Students were described as being more in control and empowered, as well as exhibiting higher self-esteem. Coordinators and administrators reported decreased levels of violence since the introduction of the program. Program teachers perceived less violence and hurtful behaviors among students believed that the program was effective in teaching students alternative, positive dispute resolution strategies and in decreasing levels of violence at school.

For more information, see:

Carter, S.L. Evaluation report for the New Mexico center for dispute resolution. *Mediation in the Schools Program, 1993-1994 school year*. Albuquerque: New Mexico Center for Dispute Resolution, 1994.

Lam, J.A. *The impact of conflict resolution programs on schools: A review and synthesis of the evidence*. Amherst, Mass.: National Association for the Mediation in Education, 1988.

For program information, contact:

National Resource Center for Youth Mediation, New Mexico Center for Dispute Resolution 620 Roma NW, Suite B, Albuquerque, NM 87102, (505)247-0571 / fax: (505)242-5966

For evaluation information, contact:

Susan Lee Carter, Ph.D, P.O. Box 67 Cerrillos, NM 87010, (505)424-0244

Lions-Quest Working Toward Peace: This program is designed to help young people develop lifelong habits of peaceful conflict resolution. The four-part course of study for grades 6-8 includes sessions on managing anger, resolving conflicts peacefully, and promoting peace. An optional one-day workshop provides an introduction to hands-on experience with the curriculum. Program goals are: To help students understand the value of peaceful conflict resolution and study peaceful role models; To enable students to learn ways to manage their own anger; To teach students a wide repertoire of techniques for reducing the level of tension in conflicts and resolving the conflicts peacefully; To encourage young people to apply their skills by planning and carrying out a service-learning project relating to peaceful conflict resolution. It is viewed as equipping educators and parents to help young adolescents take responsibility for finding peaceful solutions to conflict. Program implementation results in improved school climate, fewer discipline referrals, a safer school environment, and increased family and community involvement.

For more information, see:

<http://guide.helpingamericasyouth.gov/programdetail.cfm?id=669>

For program information, contact:

Program Representative at 800/446-2700

Michigan Model for Comprehensive School Health Education: This is implemented in over 90% of Michigan's public schools and more than 200 private charter school servicing grades K-12. The model is also in place in over 42 states, foreign countries, universities and medical schools. The program was established as a cooperative effort of seven state agencies to provide an efficient delivery mechanism for key disease prevention and health promotion messages. The current curriculum facilitates interdisciplinary learning through lessons that integrate health education into other curricula (e.g., language arts, science, math). Stated advantages of the program include: Cost savings on the purchase of support materials; training for teachers; responsiveness to the need for new curricula; efficient delivery of a wide range of curricula and support materials; mechanisms for parent support; and a nationally recognized, research based curriculum. Research reports indicate that the Michigan Model substance abuse lessons had a statistically significant positive impact in curtailing rates of alcohol, tobacco and marijuana use in middle school students. A 1996 national program analyses done by Drug Strategies, Inc. of Washington, DC published under the title "Making the Grade," designated the Michigan Model as one of the top substance abuse prevention programs in the United States. The Michigan model was the only comprehensive health program to receive this "A" designation. They also rated the Michigan Model as one of the best violence prevention programs in the United States.

For more information, see:

bridging Student health Risk and Academic Achievement through Comprehensive School Health programs, Journal of School health, August 1997. 67 (6).

For program information, contact:

The Educational Materials Center (EMC) at Central Michigan University, 139 Combined Services Building, Central Michigan University, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859 Ph: 800/214-8961 e-mail: emc@cmich.edu
web: <http://www.emc.cmich.edu/>