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.

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.

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

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
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


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