

Communities and Schools in Action

A publication of the Safe Communities ~ Safe Schools Initiative

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Sheridan School District

Sheridan School District is a small community in Arapahoe County that is bordered by the Denver metro area to the north and Jefferson County to the west. As highway traffic was replaced by the construction of the interstate, local businesses and neighborhoods in the area declined. Although Sheridan is part of a suburban county, few services are offered to residents within the city of Sheridan. Many immigrants come to Sheridan and face language, transportation, and cultural barriers. Approximately 30% of Sheridan residents live below the poverty level, and rates of violent crime are substantially higher than in neighboring communities.

In Sheridan, the intrusion of social problems into the classroom vastly complicates the job of the schools. Many students come from an environment that lessens their chances of success in school.

The district has 2000 students in K-12 with an Early Childhood Center (Head Start and Pre-School). New district Superintendent, Judy Kary, along with the local school board have embraced the need to create more positive school environments through "civility," even making it part of the school district's standards. The Safe Community ~ Safe Schools project, coordinated by Family Resource Center Director, Tina Podolak, involves working with local civility teams in each individual school, as well as a district-wide civility team which works to coordinate and streamline all of the prevention efforts in the district. Currently, results of student and staff surveys are being reviewed as the district prepares to plan for strategy and program implementation in the fall. For more information, please call Tina at (303) 789-4171.

Community and School Needs Assessment

A critical component of safe school and community planning involves conducting an annual community and school assessment. Assessments provide planning teams and the community with vital information about safety issues within the school and community; and they become the benchmark against which future gains in safety can be measured.

There are essentially seven steps involved in conducting an assessment: define the problems and goals, specify the objectives, choose tools for evaluation, address issues of consent and confidentiality, collect the data, analyze the data, and interpret and disseminate the findings.

The assessment report should be disseminated to all individuals involved in the safe school and community planning process. It should be used to make specific adjustments to current safety measures, and recommendations for future programming.

Effective Prevention Programming

Once a school and community have done a needs assessment, it is time to address the needs that were identified and to strengthen current assets.

As more and more practitioners and policymakers are discovering, it is critical to consider programs and strategies that have been evaluated and proven to be effective. Too often in the past, time, energy and money have been invested in programs that have not been evaluated, do not work, or have even been shown to be detrimental.

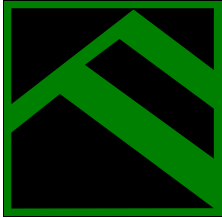
Fortunately, in recent years, a number of studies have been done to determine effective programs. Communities dedicated to safety should consider these programs first before implementation. (For information on programs, please see pg. 2.)

Summit County School District

Summit School District is located in the mountains of Summit County approximately 80 miles west of Denver. There is one high school, one middle school and six elementaries serving the towns of Dillon, Breckenridge, Frisco, Silverthorne, as well as the resorts and neighborhoods of Summit Cove, Keystone and Copper Mountain. Approximately 2700 students attend the Summit School District.

School and community officials in Summit County embraced the Safe Communities ~ Safe Schools planning process as an opportunity to begin to address some of the growing issues that were occurring for the students in the district. Since launching the SCSS project in Summit County in September 2000, over 60 different community members and students have participated in five large group-planning meetings. Several sub committees have been established to work on individual components of the plan including an executive committee, a crisis team and social support team. The crisis team is nearing completion of a comprehensive crisis management plan and the social support team has begun to look at the needs of students related to school climate. Currently, the large planning team is waiting for the results of SCSS surveying that was done in every elementary and in the community to move ahead with the designing of specific prevention and intervention strategies to promote a safe school and community.

Summit County has historically been a community that collaborates well together and the SCSS process is no different. In addition to school representatives, meetings have been well attended by law enforcement agencies, social services, prevention services and many other youth serving agencies. The planning team is excited to move forward with additional planning efforts and welcomes any questions from other communities about our SCSS activities. For more information, please call Karen at 970-668-3011.



Safe Communities ~
Safe Schools
Center for the Study and
Prevention of Violence
University of Colorado
439 UCB
Boulder, CO 80309-0439

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<i>Safe Communities ~ Safe Schools</i>		
<p align="center">PARTNERS</p> <p>The following organizations have contributed their support, expertise and/or financial assistance to this initiative...</p> <p>COLORADO ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS COLORADO ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL EXECUTIVES COLORADO ATTORNEY GENERAL COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY, DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE COLORADO EDUCATION ASSOCIATION COLORADO FEDERATION OF TEACHERS COORS BREWING COMPANY METRO-DENVER & FRONT RANGE SAFE AND DRUG FREE SCHOOLS THE COLORADO TRUST UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO AT BOULDER</p>	<p align="center">SCSS INITIATIVE</p> <p>CSPV, in partnership with The Colorado Trust, developed the Safe Communities ~ Safe Schools (SCSS) Initiative in response to requests from the Colorado education community. The goal of the Initiative is to help schools and communities create and maintain a positive and welcoming school climate free of drugs, violence, intimidation and fear - an environment which is strongly supported by the community, and in which teachers can teach and students can learn. To achieve this goal, CSPV is assisting schools in Colorado in designing individualized safe school plans based on the five components of the Safe Communities ~ Safe Schools Model:</p> <p align="center">SCSS Planning Team Site Assessments Prevention Programming Social Support Team Crisis Planning.</p>	<p align="center">CENTER FOR THE STUDY AND PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE</p> <p>University of Colorado at Boulder 439 UCB Boulder, CO 80309-0439 303-492-1032</p> <p>Delbert S. Elliott, Director Jane M. Grady, Assistant Director Landa Heys, Communications Coordinator Tonya Aultman-Bettridge, Technical Assistance Coordinator Mary Beth Abella Holly Bell Jennifer Carroll Michelle Beaulieu Cooke Beverly Kingston Rhonda Ntepp Judith Vanderyn Dorian Wilson Darci Card</p>

Effective Prevention Programming (cont. from pg. 1)		
<p align="center"><u>Model Programs</u></p> <p>In order to identify effective violence/drug prevention programs, the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence (CSPV) has established the following criteria: strong research design; evidence of significant deterrent effects sustained at least one year; and multiple site replication. These criteria have been difficult to meet and currently only ten programs are considered "model" programs: Big Brothers Big Sisters, Bullying Prevention Program, Functional Family Therapy, Life Skills Training, Midwestern Prevention Program, Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care, Multisystemic Therapy, Nurse Home Visitation, PATHS, and Quantum Opportunities.</p>	<p align="center"><u>Promising Programs</u></p> <p>Some programs come close, but do not meet all of the stringent criteria of the model programs. These programs can be considered "promising" programs, which CSPV defines as those which have an effect on one or more of the factors related to violence or drug use. Promising programs do not need to be replicated, and they may have small effect sizes. Some promising programs may move up to the model category as more information and program results become available over time. For a complete listing of the programs that CSPV has identified as "promising", please call CSPV or visit the CSPV website.</p>	<p align="center"><u>Other Programs</u></p> <p>Unfortunately, the majority of programs available today have not been evaluated for effectiveness. Some programs have been evaluated, but the methods used in doing the evaluation were not scientifically based or may have been faulty. Still other programs have been evaluated but have been shown to have no effect on the program participants, or worse, have shown to be detrimental. All of the above are programs which CSPV would place in the "other" category. These are programs which CSPV would not promote.</p>