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Gambling analysts estimate that teen-agers make up about 1 million of the approximately 8 million compulsive gamblers in the United States.

# School Safety

NCJRS

JUN 7 1993

UPDATE

## ACQUISITIONS

### Gambling at school is not a problem: You wanna bet?

Pitching pennies against a schoolyard wall, flipping cards, a friendly game of blackjack, slamming pogs, betting on sports: Youth gambling can take many forms. While students indicate that schoolyard gambling extends across the country, school officials rarely admit that it is occurring on their campuses. Yet, gambling and wagering money on sports can bring serious consequences for young people.

The *Boston Globe* and the *School Board News* cited these examples of U.S. teen-agers who got involved with gambling at school:

- A Massachusetts teen-ager ran a sports betting ring at Westwood High that involved 21 students. He was fined \$5,000 and spared a jail term.
- Two years ago, a senior at Daniel Hand High School in Madison, Connecticut, was found guilty of bookmaking at school. He had taken bets from more than 25 of his classmates.
- A Merrimack Valley (Massachusetts) boy's gambling debts totaled \$1,000. He claimed that 50 students were betting routinely at his high school.
- A teen-ager from Worcester, Massachusetts, ran up a \$2,600 gambling debt. He fled home after a bookmaker threatened his life.

Teen-age gambling is on the rise. The *Los Angeles Times* estimated that as many as 7 million juveniles nationwide gamble for money, with more than 1 million of them experiencing problems. Durand Jacobs, a Redlands, California, psychologist and vice president of the National Council on

Problem Gambling, conducted a series of gambling studies involving 3,700 students from 17 high schools in California and four other states. As the *Los Angeles Times* reported, more than one-third of the students surveyed in 1989 said that they had bet money before their 11th birthday. More than 80 percent of the students had wagered on a variety of games with family and friends by the time they were 15 years old. Jacobs also estimated that as many as 4 percent to 6 percent of high school and college students could be diagnosed as problem or pathological gamblers.

According to *Investor's Business Daily*, other gambling experts estimate that teen-agers make up about 1 million of the approximately 8 million compulsive gamblers in the United States. Some studies by gambling researchers indicate that teen-agers are two and a half times more likely than adults to go through periods of gambling addiction.

Gambling at school can occur in a variety of ways. Teen-agers bet on sports in pools organized by peers at school. During football season, students often place weekly bets on professional teams. During basketball season, pools for the college playoffs are common. Some students report playing blackjack for money at school. They never put money on the table but disguise it as a friendly game of "21" so that teachers will not catch on. Junior high students report that kids gamble in the bathrooms "or places that aren't obvious" with lunch money or pocket change, tossing coins into the air and betting on heads or tails.

In California and Hawaii, some school officials have banned games played with the newest craze, pogs. Pogs are small cardboard discs similar to those found on caps of milk or juice bottles. Pog games usually involve betting novelty pogs or money on competitions that combine both chance and skill. Some games involve "slamming" a stack of pogs; others involve flipping the pogs into air, similar to coin tossing. One middle school student reported that he sometimes flips pogs for a dollar, sometimes for 25 cents. When he does not have money for lunch, he tries his luck to win lunch money.

Last year, *Weekly Reader* published an edition for high school students that covered teen-age compulsive gambling. Highlighted in the issue was a student survey revealing that

## COVER STORY

50 percent of students reported that they play state lotteries, 40 percent bet on sports, and 35 percent bet on games of skill such as pool.

As the Super Bowl draws near, school administrators should be aware that, in some areas of the country, the most popular and fastest-growing form of gambling on junior high, high school and college campuses is sports betting. Sometimes this betting is backed by local bookies or people with connections to organized crime. Last January, Massachusetts law enforcement officials reported that organized bookmaking rings were flourishing in many of the state's high schools.

Students are vulnerable targets. They can be easily lured by the chance of quick winnings and a line of credit that allows them to bet heavily on professional and amateur sports with money they do not have. High school students are also considered a low-risk investment to the financial backers of the bookmaking rings. Parents generally assume the gambling debts of their children, fearing that harm will come to their children if the debts are not paid.

Researchers have called gambling the fastest-growing teen-age addiction. "The Emergence of Youthful Addiction," a study on teen-age addiction conducted by Howard Shaffer of Harvard University's Center for Addictive Behavior, warned that illicit gambling among young people is increasing at an alarming rate. According to Congressional testimony which cited this study, the next decade could bring more youth gambling problems than the current number of youth drug abuse problems.

Serious difficulties associated with youth gambling often do not show up until adulthood. Natural controls that limit young people can hide potential problems. For example, kids do not have large bank accounts, credit cards or huge financial obligations such as rent or mortgage payments.

Patterns of teen-age and adult gamblers are similar, but gambling addiction develops much more quickly for teens than for adults. Teen-age gambling addiction can occur within six months to two years, experts say. The Connecti-

cut and Minnesota councils on compulsive gambling report that a compulsive gambler — adolescent or otherwise — goes through three stages toward addiction. They include:

- **The winning stage**, during which the gambler is hooked. It often does not take much money to hook a teen-age gambler. Losses are rationalized as bad luck. A teen-ager may daydream about gambling to escape reality and think that gambling is his or her most exciting activity.
- **The chase, or losing stage**, when losses increase and self-esteem is jeopardized. Lying often starts, and in this

stage a teen-ager might start to sell prized possessions to gamble.

- **The desperation phase, or rock bottom**, when the young gambler can experience severe mood swings, fail in school and commit crimes. Panic sets in, and gambling takes precedence over all other activities.

The *School Board News* reports that a typical pattern among students begins when they gamble with their allowance and lunch money. To get cash, teen-age gamblers may then start selling stereos or other personal possessions, or they may take money from their parents. Desperate, teens often begin to shoplift to support their betting habits.

While gambling can be fun and seemingly innocuous, once it becomes an addiction, it can ruin a person's life. For student addicts, fun can turn to terror when loans build and bookies threaten, "Pay or else!"

Many young people and their parents consider gambling to be harmless, with consequences that

seem to be much less serious than those that result from involvement with drugs, alcohol, violence or teen-age sex. Gambling can, however, expose youngsters to crime, truancy and a desire for easy money.

Parents often believe that legal sanctions will discourage any "really serious" gambling problems for those under 18 years of age. Parents do not generally seek help for their children until the accompanying problems — stealing and

### Signs of trouble

Questions to ask yourself, if you think you have a problem:

- Do your friends gamble?
- Do you ever lie about your gambling?
- Do you ever borrow money to gamble?
- Do you feel that people like you more when you gamble?
- Do you ever lose sleep over gambling?
- Do you attend or watch sporting events on television when you should be doing something else?
- Do you bet money you don't have?
- Have you ever stolen money to pay for gambling?
- Do you most want to gamble when you are under stress?
- Do you gamble with your parents?
- Does gambling affect your reputation?
- Does gambling keep you from focusing on schoolwork? work? family?
- Has gambling made your home life unhappy?
- Have you ever considered self-destruction because of gambling?

Source: (Hartford, Connecticut) *Courant*, March 29, 1992, citing the Connecticut and Minnesota councils on compulsive gambling.

## COVER STORY

truancy — come to their attention. This reluctance to seek professional help or to go to authorities means that researchers and investigators are unable to determine exactly how widespread the problem of youth gambling actually is.

Last year, *The Record* (Bergen County, New Jersey) reported that a large number of teen-agers in several well-to-do New Jersey communities became hooked on sports gambling. During one week, the Bergen County Prosecutor's office received two separate complaints about youths being threatened with injury by fellow students for failing to pay their gambling debts. In some cases, youngsters were kidnapped, beaten and "shaken down" by both fellow students and bookmakers. Some New Jersey parents felt forced to draw upon bank accounts, IRAs or second mortgages on their homes to bail out their children. Some of the young bettors had accrued gambling debts of nearly \$30,000.

*The Record* reported that, as a result, the Bergen County Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse began conducting two-hour seminars on teen-age gambling at schools around the county. The seminars intended to educate high school teachers about how to identify and help students with gambling problems. In addition, support for the passage of a law aimed at reducing youth gambling in New Jersey gained momentum. A bill was proposed that would require schools to warn students about the dangers of compulsive gambling, just as many schools currently warn students about the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and drug abuse.

In Connecticut, as a result of several reports of high school bookmaking rings and the court case involving the Madison student-bookie, the state has implemented a task force to investigate how schools can help combat the growing problem of teen gambling. As in New Jersey, some want the issue added to the school's health curriculum, which already focuses on alcohol and drug problems.

The Minnesota Council on Compulsive Gambling has a pilot school-based prevention project to teach teens about the dangers of gambling. The Minnesota lottery transfers \$500,000 a year to the state Department of Human Services for programs to combat compulsive gambling among both teens and adults, according to the *Star Tribune*.

One of the only places teen-age compulsive gamblers can get help is Gamblers Anonymous. However, young gamblers typically do not fit in with the adult gamblers, many of whom have lost jobs and families and suffer from adult problems. Philadelphia has a regular Gambler's Anonymous meeting for 13- to 15-year-olds, which is thought to be the first program offered solely for younger teens.

America may be sending conflicting messages to young people about what is or is not considered appropriate behavior. As with the issues of crime and violence; alcohol,

tobacco and other drug use; promiscuity; and economic gain, gambling is promoted indiscriminately to consumers of all ages through legitimate avenues.

Many states promote gambling as a popular revenue source. According to the *School Board News*, 37 states sponsor daily or weekly lotteries. Twenty-three states have authorized casinos. Hawaii and Utah are the only states that do not permit some sort of legalized gambling.

Unfortunately, the message reaches young people. A study by the Massachusetts Division of Public Health found that 70 percent of Massachusetts seventh-graders had purchased a lottery ticket. Atlantic City casinos turned away 1.6 million juveniles and escorted another 202,000 off their floors during the four-year period ending in 1992, according to the New Jersey Casino Control Commission.

Although gambling may not be a large problem on most school campuses, isolated incidents of gambling and bookmaking at several schools serve to warn parents and school administrators of the dangers of this addictive behavior. What today may be an innocent game of poker or a friendly bet on a professional game of sports may tomorrow be an addiction that threatens a life and puts others in danger.

Since gambling is often a covert activity among young people, school officials are well-advised to investigate the possibility of a gambling problem on campus and take appropriate steps to prohibit any related behaviors. While compulsive gambling is yet another one of society's ills that is too big for schools to tackle alone, educators may not want to pass on the opportunity to educate and inform students about the dangers of gambling.

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## Prevention efforts focus on violence, drugs, parenting

### Train the trainers workshop scheduled

Co-sponsored by NSSC and the *Safe and Drug Free Schools* newsletter, the "Safe School Conference" will feature national experts and working-level educators talking about violence prevention. The conference, to be held January 12 through 14, 1995, in San Diego, will help participants understand how to plan for safe and orderly middle and high school campuses and train them to present safe school workshops in their own districts. Conference fee is \$495. Discounts are available. Handouts include a safe school staff development lesson plan, two 25-minute videos and the 122-page *Safe Schools: A Planning Guide for Action*. Call 1-800/454-5644 for registration information.

### Reinforce drug prevention through art

Murals Reflecting Prevention is a program designed to meet the need for creative approaches to alcohol, tobacco, and other drug education for students in all grades. Schools and community groups across the country can work together to create colorful murals with powerful messages regarding drug abuse prevention. The culmination of the program is a national exhibition in Washington, D.C., featuring a selection of murals created for the project. Schools and organizations that wish to participate should send for the registration form and free resource material by January 30, 1995. Write: Learning Systems Group, 1331 F Street, NW, Suite 800, Washington, D.C. 20004.

### Public TV campaigns against violence

To help combat youth violence in America, many of the nation's public broadcasters, private foundations, community organizations and corporations have formed a powerful alliance. The "Act Against Violence" campaign, a two-year effort, will employ TV and radio programming; community- and school-based activities; print materials and publications; and computerized on-line resources. The campaign will be launched with a four-hour special, "What can we do about violence? A Bill Moyers Special," premiering on PBS January 9 from 9:00 to 11:00 p.m., EST, and January 11 in

the same time slot. A resource guide is available at no charge by sending a postcard to: Act Against Violence Guide, P.O. Box 245, Little Falls, NJ 07424-0245.

### Parental contact scores

A report in the September issue of *Pediatrics* gives a boost to positive parenting practices as preventative medicine. Parents who keep track of their children, spend time with them and talk with them apparently have children who are less likely to be troublemakers or to choose friends who use tobacco or alcohol. Researchers at Louisiana State University Medical Center and the University of Southern California, working with 5th- and 7th-graders, found, over a period of several years, that children with "involved" parents are also less likely to use alcohol and tobacco themselves.

### Cleveland assists teen parents

A study in Cleveland shows that financial rewards help keep teen-age parents in school. For every month that they attend school regularly, teen parents receive \$62 extra in welfare benefits. Conversely, benefits are cut \$62 if they have more than two unexcused absences or drop out of school. In addition to the financial incentive, the Learning, Earning, and Parenting program (LEAP) offers services such as child care and transportation assistance. The full report, "The Educational Effects of LEAP and Enhanced Services of Cleveland," is available for \$15 from Manpower Demonstration Research Project, 3 Park Ave., New York, NY 10016.

### Florida clarifies who's in charge

New state policy affirms a school's right to maintain order. Florida teachers are now permitted to remove violent or disruptive students from the classroom by suspension. The students are moved to either an alternative program or classroom. Teachers may also use force when necessary to protect themselves, other students or other persons from violence. Law enforcement officers must notify the school within 24 hours when an enrolled student commits a juvenile offense outside of school if that offense would be a felony if committed by an adult. To back up this suspension policy, the state has allocated almost \$13 million for alternative classrooms and programs.

### PREVline on line

The public can now access the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information's PREVline for information about alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. Access is through Internet (path: telnet ncadi.health.org; then press the enter key; User-id: new) or direct dial (301/770-0850; User-id: new).

## Judge rules in favor of hair-length codes for male students

Last spring, Clovis (California) Unified School District went to court to successfully defend a hair code policy that prohibits male students from having hair that falls below the mid-point of a stand-up shirt collar. Fresno County Superior Court Judge Stephen J. Kane supported the district's position and ruled against a few parents who sued the district. The issue was whether or not the Clovis Unified School District's Dress and Grooming Code Regulation No. 2105 violates the United States and California constitutional guarantees of equal protection and due process. In his statement of decision, Judge Kane wrote:<sup>1</sup>

Any successful school depends upon competent teachers, specific curriculum, high expectations for its students and a comfortable learning environment in which the student can feel safe and secure both psychologically and physically. CUSD is a model school district because it continually strives to achieve these objectives. A safe and secure, nondistracting environment is a critical prerequisite for effective education. A dress code and grooming regulation is an essential component for maintaining such a learning environment. It reduces distractions. It provides consistency to the students from kindergarten through twelfth grade. It assists school authorities in more easily detecting campus intruders. It aids in the identification of persons affiliated with some gangs. It also recognizes the correlation which exists between long hair in males and defiant behavior. The Dress and Grooming Code, including the male haircut regulation, is part of the discipline framework which contributes to an effective learning environment. ...

If a male student refuses to comply with the haircut regulation, he may not attend one of the conventional schools, but may attend alternative schooling with the Enterprise Program, which consists of substantial home study time, little or no extracurricular activities and minimal social interaction with other students. ...

Plaintiffs' suggestion the CUSD should be targeting 'behavior' rather than appearance is poor advice. The logical extension of that argument is that authorities

should wait until disruptive or violent behavior occurs before any action is taken, and that preventative measures, which are designed to anticipate problems before they occur, should give way to dealing with problems after they occur. That kind of thinking will certainly make schools less safe and less effective for learning. ...

The evidence in this case establishes beyond doubt that the Dress and Grooming Regulation No. 2105 and the male haircut requirement within that regulation are necessary to promote the compelling governmental interest in providing competent schooling. ...

The precious value of our Constitution is degraded when it is relied upon to correct every perceived wrong. Constitutional law should not support the extension of personal freedom to the point where it impinges upon the rights and safety of others. Here, the perceived wrong is a school regulation limiting hair length for male students. The regulation does not deprive them of an education. ...

The framers of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which guarantees equal protection and due process under law to all citizens, could not have intended nor could they have foreseen that those constitutional guarantees would be used against a school district in this context.

The appropriateness of a school district hair length regulation should not be the business of the courts to decide. It is a subject which rightfully falls within the business and discretion of the school district. As stated by the *Montalvo* ... court:<sup>2</sup>

In approaching this subject [male student hair length regulation], it should be recognized that, by and large, school administrators and personnel are professionally trained individuals, who are competent and dedicated experts in the field of education, which is something the courts are not.

In the absence of very clear abuse of their power and authority, bordering on capriciousness, arbitrariness or bad faith and/or clear constitutional proscriptions, the court should let stand their decisions as to what is required and not required in the day-to-day administration of the affairs of the schools. A court may disagree with the judgement of school personnel, but such disapproval provides no license or authorization to assert their authority, substitute the court's judgement for that of the administrators, or take over the operation of their schools.

### Endnotes

1. *Derrek Casebolt by Taunya Gilstrap v. Clovis Unified Sch. Dist.*, No. 484107-8 (Cal. Superior Court, Dept. 61, June 15, 1994.)
2. *Id.* at 15-16, citing *Montalvo v. Madera Unified Sch. Dist. Bd. of Educ.*, 21 Cal. 3d 330, (1971).

# Courts address school safety issues: case law update

### No qualified immunity

A principal who failed to take action that was obviously necessary to prevent a teacher's sexual relationship with a student is not entitled to qualified immunity from the student's action based on 42 USC § 1983. *Lankford v. Doe*, 15 F.3d 443 (5th Cir. 1994) (en banc), cert. denied, \_\_\_ U.S. \_\_\_, 63 LW 3008 (1994).

### Champagne and prom don't mix

The New Jersey Board of Education decided that a local school board acted reasonably in denying students participation in graduation exercises as a result of their having admittedly consumed champagne in violation of the local school board policy while en route to the prom. The policy, which prohibits attendance at the prom in "unsatisfactory condition," had been clearly communicated to both parents and students. The court affirmed the decision without an opinion. *Freedman v. Park Ridge, N.J. Bd. of Educ.*, 63 LW 3114 (1994), cert. denied, \_\_\_ U.S. \_\_\_, 63 LW 3249.

### Sex is outside scope of employment

A teacher in the Johnson City (New York) Central School District pleaded guilty to the crime of endangering the welfare of a child and was sentenced to jail. The parent of the student brought action against the teacher and the school district alleging that the district was responsible for the teacher's acts of misconduct. The superintendent had received a telephone call about the teacher's inappropriate sexual behavior and immediately met with the teacher, who denied the accusations.

The court held that the acts of sexual misconduct were clearly outside the scope of the teacher's employment and thus the doctrine of *respondeat superior* did not apply. The district did not breach its duty of supervision by permitting the teacher to meet with the student behind locked doors. The teacher's proclivities to engage in inappropriate sexual behavior with students was neither known or foreseeable at the time of the incidents. *Mary KK v. Jack LL*, 611 N.Y.S. 2d 347, 90 Educ. Law Rep. 1178 (A.D. 3 Dept. 1994).

### Reasonable suspicion v. probable cause

The search of a high school student that resulted in the seizure of two bags of marijuana by a school district police officer was determined to be reasonable under the Fourth Amendment. The question of whether or not the officer needed probable cause to search was never raised. The court used a straightforward *New Jersey v. T.L.O.* analysis and found that the search was reasonable in inception and reasonable in scope. *Wilcher v. State*, 876 S.W.2d 466, 91 Educ. Law Rep. 719 (Tex. Ct. App. 1994).

### District must pay wrongful death award

A wrongful death damage award of more than \$1 million for the drowning death of a seven-year-old child that occurred while he was on a school field trip was not excessive enough to entitle the school district to a new trial or, as an alternative, a lowering of the award by the judge (remittitur). According to the court, the jury received proper instructions, a precise formula for calculating the loss suffered did not exist, and the evidence demonstrated that the child had a close relationship with his parents and sister. *Johnson v. Washington County*, 518 N.W.2d 594, 92 Educ. Law Rep. 981 (Minn. 1994).

### No need to *Mirandize* student

The dean of the school acted independently of the police when questioning a student about the theft of another's jacket, and thus was not required to administer *Miranda* warnings prior to the questioning. *In re E.M.*, 634 N.E.2d 395, 91 Educ. Law Rep. 651 (Ill. App. Ct. 1994).

### You're too young to wear that T-shirt

An Indiana elementary school principal was entitled to qualified immunity in connection with a claim that he violated a student's First Amendment rights by prohibiting her from wearing T-shirts with messages that were critical of the school. The messages on the shirts included "Racism," "Unfair Grades" and "I hate Lost Creek."

The student argued that wearing the shirts did not disrupt the school and that she had not violated the *Tinker v. Des Moines Indep. Community Sch. Dist.* standard set forth by the U.S. Supreme Court. The principal did not argue that the T-shirts were disruptive (the standard determined by the *Tinker* Court), but that age is a factor in considering the extent of the First Amendment freedom of a particular student (relying on later U.S. Supreme Court cases *Fraser* and *Kuhlmeier*).

Thus, the *Tinker* decision, which applied to high school students, does not apply in the same way to elementary students. *Baxter by Baxter v. Vigo County Sch. Corp.*, 26 F.3d 728, 92 Educ. Law Rep. 36 (7th Cir. 1994).

## Washington Safe Schools Committee shares solutions

In October of 1992, the Washington Safe Schools Advisory Committee, formed by State Superintendent Judith Billings, was charged with developing recommendations for the safety of the students in the state of Washington.

Since formation, the committee has proposed legislation, recommended training for safe school planning and developed safety strategies to share with schools statewide. The following are examples of the specific topics the committee has addressed in its "Sharing Safety Solutions" series.

### Video surveillance on school buses

Video cameras are a tool to assist bus drivers in monitoring students. By using video cameras, drivers can focus on safely transporting students while identifying persons who might be misbehaving or vandalizing the bus.

Before considering the use of video cameras on buses, school districts should have policies and procedures in place that address and support both bus behavior rules and consequences for misbehavior and training for drivers in both student behavior management and safety.

Emphasis on increased safety will sell the idea of video cameras on buses to the community, the school board and central administration. Research to help with the decision to use cameras should include information from school districts that already have cameras, for example, the cost of the system, recovery costs for vandalism and/or lawsuits, and statistics on improved bus behavior.

Transportation supervision staff should involve and work closely with drivers and their bargaining union from the onset of the planning process. Drivers need to "buy into" the program and know that the camera is not "out to get" drivers but rather to help them drive more safely and assist with student control on their routes.

Long before installation, the public needs to be educated about the use of video cameras on the school bus. Stress safety as the prime purpose. Parents will want assurance of confidentiality. They need to know that should their child have a problem, only authorized district personnel, the parents and child will be allowed to view a tape of the child.

School board policy will need to include a statement regarding the fact that students may receive bus conduct reports for actions witnessed by the driver or filmed by the video camera. Policies also need to be established in advance to answer questions regarding related issues, including random use of the cameras, driver involvement and knowledge of installation, who has access to the tapes, consequences for student misbehavior and driver discipline.

### Pagers, cellular phones and drugs

Telephones and pagers make it easier for students to buy or sell drugs on campus. Students can call a specific number to place their orders and/or receive directions for where to go to buy drugs. Schools should discourage this by:

- *banning student use of all pagers, cellular phones and similar devices on campus.* Some parents state that they give communication devices to their children in order to make contact with their child. Schools should explain to parents how the use of these devices benefit the drug community, the school's procedures for getting messages to students in a timely manner should the parent really have to reach the student during school hours, and the consequences for possessing such a device at school.

- *contacting the local telephone company to arrange for incoming call block on all student-accessible pay phones.* Many times when students are selling drugs, they use the pay telephone to place/receive drug orders. By blocking incoming calls, drug sales via the telephone are discouraged.
- *providing only rotary-type phones for student use.* When using a rotary phone, students can place calls as usual, but they cannot use the digital tones to leave coded messages for someone else. If it is necessary to have a digital phone accessible to students, it should be located in a place where it can be monitored at all times. Student-accessible phones are best located in the main office where any number of people can overhear the conversation.

Staff members should be alert to the potential student misuse of telephones. Caution staff strongly about letting students use phones at staff desks or offices.

Pay telephones must be located in an area where they can be easily monitored. In determining these locations, consideration must be given to the various events that a school sponsors, the nature of the school campus, and the needs of both students and adults on campus to use telephones.

*Information regarding the Safe Schools Advisory Committee and the "Sharing Safety Solutions" series is available by contacting Carol Strong or Denise Fitch, Washington Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Old Capitol Building, P.O. Box 47200, Olympia, WA 98504, 206/753-5595.*



# NSSC REPORT

## Crisis planning partners

Developing a close partnership with local law enforcement officials is a prerequisite to successful preparation for and management of a school crisis. A number of actions can result in positive police/school relationships:

### Before a crisis:

- Invite law enforcement officials to come to your school annually to conduct a training program for teachers and staff. This tactical training should cover law enforcement procedures in an emergency and how school employees can cooperate and respond to the emergency.
- Report any weapon incident or criminal activity on campus to law enforcement. A gun at school is not simply a disciplinary matter; it is a criminal offense.
- Provide law enforcement with a detailed map or blueprint of your campus.
- Designate code words to be used for police radio communication during a school crisis. This may help to prevent further confusion, since parents, the media and others often monitor the police channel. Code words may forestall general alarm and ward off a flood of phone calls and unneeded

arrivals on campus during the crisis. Any information that is placed on local airways could create further crisis problems for the district.

### During a crisis:

- When a gun is reported on campus, call immediately for help from the police, especially when a serious weapons/ hostage situation is unfolding. Law enforcement officials who are trained in disarming individuals should be involved on the scene.
- Once the police have been called, someone from the school should stay in constant communication with them to advise them of new developments.
- Law enforcement officials should be met at the predesignated location so that they can be promptly escorted or directed to the crisis area. A campus map should be made available on the scene.

### After the crisis:

- Any weapons that are confiscated should be turned over to the police.
- A complete written report of the incident should be given to law enforcement officials.

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