

Creating Safer Schools

Course Outline

Course Description

In today's world children and society are bombarded with violent, graphic, and realistic images of cruelty on a daily basis. Conflict in our schools has escalated dramatically in the past decade. School shootings, cyberbullying, gang violence in rural and suburban areas were once unknown in many educational environments.

It was one thing to play cops and robbers in the 1950's using your imagination when the bad guy was shot by the good guy. Today, with the brutal movies, video games, and television images in both shows and the news, there is nothing left to the imagination. Reality is often horrendous. Cell phones and the internet allow bullies to victimize in an instant as well as globally.

Coping and conflict resolution skills which were once taught by cohesive, attentive families, caring relatives, and communities are now being learned at the hands of adolescent, inexperienced peers on the streets. The sense of community is disappearing as social isolation takes over. Social contact is lessening as children spend more and more time alone, in front of the TV playing video games.

One child in four is bullied at school. One in five admit to bullying. Recently, a government report on school shootings showed that the only common trait among student shooters was that they all have a long history of being bullied. In schools where fear and anxiety are the norm, students can't learn and achieve.

Objectives

The aim of this course is to create a classroom climate in which all students feel safe. One child in four is bullied at school. One in five admit bullying. Recently, a government report on school shootings showed that the only common trait among student shooters was that they all have a long history of being bullied. In schools where fear and anxiety are the norm, students cannot learn and achieve. Following the completion of this course and the assigned materials and exercises, you should be able to:

- Identify the root causes of violence in U.S. culture
- Explore the link between violence and conflict
- Identify various types of bullying, both direct and indirect forms
- Develop awareness of the consequences of bullying, both personally and socially
- Review research findings relating to the causes and effects of bullying
- Learn and apply effective strategies for preventing and eliminating bullying both in their classrooms and their schools
- Identify the primary problem of gangs and define "gang"
- Determine the influence of multi-risk factors on gang membership
- Identify and discuss the six themes of the Peaceable School/Classroom

Curriculum Design & Time Requirements

Students will be involved in a variety of tasks to complete course requirements. The following methodologies will be used during the course: lectures, reading, individual and group discussions, cooperative learning, applied practice assignments, development of lesson plans and unit, and reflective written responses. This is a 45-hour on-site class offered for graduate credit (3) or professional development/in-service credit. The course takes place over two weekends or one week.

Course Materials

The required textbook for this course is *Can We ensure Safe Schools? A Collaborative Guide on Focused Strategies for School Safety* edited by Fern Aefsky.

Session Outline

Session	Topics	Due Dates/Assignments
Introduction	Introductions, Syllabus, Schedule, Textbook, and Course Web site	Reading & Web Assignments Written Assignments Introduction
Session 1	Overview of Violence Prevention and Conflict Resolution	Reading & Web Assignments Review this Session's assigned reading and view the "Must See" websites Written Assignments Reflection (2) Talking Points (3)
Session 2	Identifying Different Types of Bullying Behavior	Reading & Web Assignments Review this session's assigned reading and view the "Must See" websites Written Assignments Talking Points (3) Reflections (2)
Session 3	Victims and the Audience	Reading & Web Assignments Review this session's assigned reading and view the "Must See" websites Written Assignments Talking Points (2) Reflections (2)
Session 4	Empowering Children - Strategies for Parents and Teachers	Reading & Web Assignments Review this session's assigned reading and view the "Must See" websites Written Assignment Talking Points (3) Reflections (2)

Session 5	Cyberbullying	Reading & Web Assignments Review this session's assigned reading and view the "Must See" websites Written Assignments Talking Points (3) Reflections (2)
Session 6	Cyberbullying- Prevention	Reading & Web Assignments Review this session's assigned reading and view the "Must See" websites Written Assignment Talking Points (3) Reflection (3)
Session 7	Identify Gangs in Our Schools	Reading & Web Assignments Review this session's assigned reading and view the "Must See" websites Written Assignments Talking Points (2)
Session 8	Gangs in Our Schools- Intervention and Prevention	Reading & Web Assignments Review this Session's assigned reading and view the "Must See" websites Written Assignment Talking Points (2) Reflections (2)
Session 9	Conflict Resolution	Reading Assignments Review this session's assigned reading and view the "Must See" websites Written Assignments Talking Points (2) Reflection Questions (2)
Session 10	Bringing it all Together	<u>Reading Assignments</u> <u>Written Assignments</u> 1. Formulate a plan for intervention and prevention within your school or community 2. Construct handouts with knowledge about bullying and gangs to promote prevention

Grading

Assignment	Points	Grading Scale	
Participation and communication	30	100-93	A
In-class assignments	20	92-85	B
Final reflections	20	84-77	C
Final project	30		
Total points	100		

Student Requirements

- Attend all class sessions for the requisite number of hours and actively participate in all class activities.
- Complete the assigned written reflections.
- Group activity participation throughout the course.
- Hand in a final project at the end of the course

Student Academic Integrity

Participants guarantee that all academic class work is original. Any academic dishonesty or plagiarism (to take ideas, writings, etc. from another and offer them as one's own), is a violation of student academic behavior standards as outlined by our partnering colleges and universities and is subject to academic disciplinary action.