



School Safety Newsletter

Volume 4, Issue 5

December 2016

Illinois State Police Safety Education Unit Offers Free Training

One of the Illinois State Police's (ISP) goals is to "Improve the quality of life for our citizens through unimpeachable integrity, public service, training and education." To help reach that goal, the ISP has a Safety Education Unit with Safety Education Officers (SEO) around the state. SEOs are available for schools and businesses who would like additional training for driver's education classes, school-wide presentations or community events. This training is FREE for anyone interested. The following is a partial list of topics the Safety Education unit has to offer:

- Abuse & Abduction Prevention
- Bike Safety
- Child Safety Seat
- Computer Crimes
- Defensive Driving
- Driver's Education
- Drug Awareness
- DUI Prevention
- Farm Safety
- Firearms safety
- Gangs
- Motor Carrier Safety
- Motorcycle Safety
- Prism
- Prom Night
- Safe Schools
- Scams
- School Bus Safety
- Seat belts & Child Safety Seats
- Stranger Danger
- Teen drivers
- Workplace Security
- Zero Tolerance

Trooper Christopher "Joey" Watson, a Southern Illinois' SEO, has worked with multiple schools to include a full day training for driver's education classes. Topics discussed are the FATAL-4 (distracted driving, drinking, speeding, and seat belts) and Scott's Law which requires motorist to change lanes if safe to do so and reduce speed when approaching stationary emergency vehicles which display flashing warning lights. One of the highlights of this training includes a driving simulator for students to experience the dangers of drinking and driving, and texting and driving. The training has gotten rave reviews from driver's education teachers. This experience has greatly improved the educational value for future drivers. SEO's from around the state can help set up training such as this.

SEO's can also help with the new and changing laws. Effective January 1, 2017, HB 6131 amends the codes for the 2017 - 2018 school year, to provide driver's education courses (in public, non-public, and driver training school). Information presented "shall include instruction concerning law enforcement procedures for traffic stops, including a demonstration of the proper actions to be taken during a traffic stop and appropriate interactions with law enforcement." The SEO's can help with this new requirement and now have available a 15-minute training video.

Public Act 099-0720 HB 6131 <http://ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/fulltext.asp?Name=099-0720>

For more information about the Safety Education Unit, visit: <http://www.isp.state.il.us/safety/eduprogs.cfm>

To ask questions or schedule a safety presentation or program, please contact:

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future through
information
sharing*

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Here's How to Tackle Cyberbullying

Excerpts from the full article: Advice to Melania Trump: Here's how to tackle cyberbullying

December 8, 2016, CNN, Kelly Wallace

<http://www.cnn.com/2016/12/08/health/cyberbullying-advice-melania-trump/index.html>

Empower the bystander

One of the main things the future first lady could do is put a spotlight on the need for better training for children on what it means to actually stand up to cyberbullying, said Carrie Goldman, an award-winning author and anti-bullying educator. "There's this misconception (that) if somebody attacks you, then all of the people who are supporting you respond by attacking your attacker, but that just perpetuates the cycle of cyberbullying," said Goldman, author of "Bullied: What Every Parent Needs to Know About Ending the Cycle of Fear."

"We really need to teach kids standing up to bullying doesn't mean you go flood the wall of the bully with hate. It means you flood the wall of the target with support," she said. If somebody sends out a hateful Tweet or an Instagram post about somebody a tween or teen knows, they might think they are standing up to the bully by retweeting the post and criticizing it with comments such as "Isn't this awful." But that just gives the bully the attention he or she might be seeking and expands the pain and hate.

Instead, Goldman said, we need to teach kids to post affirming messages on the wall of the target, such as "I believe in you" and "I care about you." "Give that person the attention that they need and shut down the attention that's going to the aggressor," said Goldman, who is also author of two children's chapter books with storylines about social cruelty.

Our young people really need more guidance on how to be "first responders," said Matthew Soeth, co-founder of #ICanHelp, an online social media support network for kids. He and his colleagues give presentations to schools across the country and let students know that if they see anything troubling online, they can call attention to the problem and get help by using the #ICanHelp hashtag or through a direct message to the company.

"When we're in a constant state of fear, people tend to seclude themselves, or they're afraid to act," said Soeth, a former high school English teacher. They think, "Well, if I stand up for this person, then I'm going to get into trouble, too" or "I don't want to get in trouble. I'm not going to tell anyone."

But if young people know there are steps they can take without fear of retribution, they may be more inclined to speak up and report it, and stand up and support each other. "Once kids start tagging and using the hashtag, then they kind of piggyback on each other. It's like a bat signal," he said.

Schools need to be educated too, he said. He co-created a national help line, iCanHelpline, being piloted this year, that provides advice to schools on digital issues impacting students. Shortly after the help line went into effect, Soeth and his colleagues heard from a school that was having a problem with a social media network.

"I asked, 'Hey, how long has this page been up?' and they said, 'Two months,' and I was like, 'Really? Why so long?' Their reply? 'Well, we really didn't know we could do anything about it,' so there's a huge education component."

The power of the positive

Another thing to do, experts say, is call attention to the positive things students are doing online. Seventy percent of bystanders who observed harassment either online or in-person tried to make the victim feel better, according to a 2015 study (PDF) by the Crimes Against Children Research Center at the University of New Hampshire.

"The vast majority of kids want to help," said Anne Collier, a journalist, youth advocate and executive director of a national nonprofit, The Net Safety Collaborative, which provides support to school communities on digital, physical and social-emotional safety. "We don't see that in the news much. We don't see that celebrated, much less reported, so that's, I think, the best place to start is, let's tell the truth about what's going on," Collier said.

Among the numerous examples: Two students at William B. Bristow Middle School in Brentwood, California, were tired of negativity on campus, so they started an anonymous compliments page on Instagram, said Soeth, whose #ICanHelp showcased the project on its website. The two middle-schoolers started complimenting random people on campus. Soon, they were getting submissions from people naming other people to be complimented, so they started a special "Compliment for a friend" on Fridays. You'll find posts such as "You are super sweet! You are such a fun person to be around," "You're hilarious" and "I like your hair."

The students have since graduated and turned the project over to current students at the school. So far, the page has had over 1,000 posts, boosting the self-esteem of the kids receiving the public compliments. "When I got complimented on the page, it actually gave me a lot of confidence, so now when I'm presenting in front of class or in a group, I have volume and eye contact," one student said in a video posted on YouTube.

"It just became this great model," said Soeth. "This is another piece, I think, that some schools are missing is, here's this

Monthly Webinars!

First Wednesday of
Every Month at 10
am (Except
January, July, and
August).

Next Webinar

Wednesday,
February 1, 2017

Each webinar has a
round table discussion
at the end. Questions
are always welcome!

To participate, you must be
a vetted member. For
more information please
email [schoolsafety@isp.
state.il.us](mailto:schoolsafety@isp.state.il.us)

Here's How to Tackle Cyberbullying (Continued)

positive outlet online, showing what kids can do, engaging students, and just by following something that's positive, generally their outlook, their demeanor and the types of accounts they choose to follow and who they choose to interact with will be much improved." Emphasizing the positive helps change social norms, said Goldman, the author and educator.

"If people only see stories about the negatives, it's very easy for them to have the feeling that everything is awful, everything is terrible," she said. "We have found that if we go into schools and we show students that most of their online activities are either neutral or even kind, then we influence them to continue to be that way. It's almost like creating the environment and then making a self-fulfilling prophecy about it."

The importance of social-emotional learning

Any expert on bullying will say that you can't look at it in isolation. You have to think about what led to the bullying behavior, and often, it is a lack of empathy on the part of children. Consider the stats: College freshmen today are 40% less empathetic than they were 30 years ago, according to research by the University of Michigan, which analyzed empathy among almost 14,000 college students.

Part of the problem is technology, educational psychologist Michele Borba told me a few months ago. Children "are more and more plugged in, and you don't learn empathy facing a screen, and right now, you're encouraged to learn feelings by circling emojis, and that ain't going to cut it," said Borba, whose newest book is "Unselfie: Why Empathetic Kids Succeed in Our All-About-Me World."

More schools seem to be getting that message, with an increase in social-emotional programs across the country. (My children's school started a program just this year.) "If you look at the schools that are approaching behavior first by helping kids learn to recognize and regulate their emotions, that will help them change behavior," said Goldman, author of "Bullied."

If a child can recognize how he or she would feel if they were on the receiving end of hate, then that understanding and mindfulness might lead to empathy and refraining from posting something cruel about another person, she said. More emotional intelligence can also help children protect themselves from becoming a target.

"A kid who is emotionally intelligent will be able to say, 'Gosh, every time I'm on Instagram, I don't feel good. I walk away from it feeling sadder or insecure, like I'm missing out on everything, so I guess I'm just going to spend less time on Instagram,'" Goldman said. "The kids who have that emotional intelligence are able to use that awareness of how they feel to take behavioral steps that are more protective."

The need for 'cyber civics'

Beyond a focus on social-emotional learning, what's needed is comprehensive social media education in schools across the country, said Alan Katzman, founder and chief executive officer of Social Assurity, a social media educational company that helps students leverage social media platforms they use every day for their future. He pointed to "cyber civics" classes, such as the curriculum being taught to middle schoolers in California by CyberWise, a digital medial literacy platform for tweens, teens, parents and educators.

"We're not teaching about the realities of social media education," said Katzman, who regularly meets with students. "Students don't know that everything they put out there is discoverable. ... They're shocked when I tell them anyone in the world who wants to find anything you've posted can." If more young people were aware of this, he believes, there would be a reduction in the cruelty we see on social media. Young people might think that they are hidden behind a wall of anonymity and that, when they send a mean post, nobody will ever know they sent it, he said.

"I believe if we teach the essentials, I think students will self-regulate themselves with that knowledge, and I think you would see this going down, because nobody wants to get caught." We need to empower our kids with the knowledge about social media platforms and what the ground rules are, he said. "They don't come with user manuals, and they should," he said.

Dads Step into Action After School Safety Scores Fall

November 28, 2016, Chicago Tribune, Rafael Guerrero

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/elgin-courier-news/news/ct-ecn-dads-in-action-st-1129-20161128-story.html>

Philip Novello and Sebastian Dubiensi are easy to spot inside and outside Oakhill Elementary School on most weekday mornings. The parents wear neon yellow shirts with "Dads in Action" emblazoned on the front. It refers to a small group of fathers at the Streamwood school taking some time out of their days to volunteer, assist students, and make their presence known. "It's always nice helping out," said Novello. "And the parents, they really like us being here."

In its second month, Dads in Action has five members who help out by monitoring the playground or assisting in classrooms, said Oakhill Principal Laura Alegria. The volunteers come in before school, after school, or both if they have the time. The program is response to low scores for safety on the most recent 5essentials survey. According to the 2016 survey's results, Oakhill ranked below average with students when it came to general safety. Oakhill scored a 23 on safety, compared to a 42 average for comparable schools or the statewide average of 53. Among the issues is a combined 60 percent of responding students said they either didn't feel safe or somewhat safe outside or around the school. Students, though, said they were safer inside Oakhill, as only 16 percent and 13 percent said they felt unsafe or somewhat safe in the hallways and in their classrooms, respectively.

Alegria said she wanted to change the culture among the 435 students that there is anything to fear both inside and outside the building. "The goal is to make the school a more welcoming place," she added. Oakhill educators tapped into the idea of fathers participating in school. Dads in

Mia Ray Langheim
School Intelligence
Officer



Dads Step into Action After School Safety Scores Fall (Continued)

Action became reality to excite the students and to increase parental involvement among dads, who generally lag behind moms when it comes to in-school participation. "We decided to create something that was only for the dads," Alegria said.

Volunteers like Novello and Dubiensi receive schedules identifying what they will do on a given day. For the most part, it is a mix of being a chaperone and tutor. On Tuesday, Dubiensi spent the first 30 minutes outdoors, monitoring children playing and hanging out at the bottom of the hill on the building's north side. He then went inside the school as classes started. "I spend 20, 30 minutes, just watching the kids, see if they need help," said Dubiensi, who also had the chance to spend a few minutes in his son Patrick's first-grade classroom. On Tuesday, he tried assisting Patrick with an assignment, which happened to be Spanish. Dubiensi joked his son was teaching him Spanish more than he is helping him.

"For the kids, they like to see the parents," added first-grade teacher Maria Iglesias. "The students feel important, they want to do better when they're around. It's encouraging that they want their parents to partake in activities." Novello, meanwhile, spent the first half of his morning patrolling outside, much like Dubiensi. He then spent a few minutes at Otilia Garcia's classroom, where he could see his second-grade daughter, Guiliana, before performing the duties of a hall monitor.

"The kids feel respected (with our presence)," added Dubiensi. "Plus, if they see somebody with the (yellow) shirt, they tend to be more quiet." While there are only five currently participating in Dads in Action, Alegria hopes others will sign up as more parents become aware of the volunteering initiative.

Sandy Hook Public Service Announcement Warns of Subtle Signs of Gun Violence

December 2, 2016, CNN, Shachar Peled

<http://www.cnn.com/2016/12/02/health/sandy-hook-gun-violence-psa-trnd/>

Evan finally bumped into the girl he'd been searching for over the entire school year. They had been leaving each other notes on a desk, neither knowing the identity of their mysterious pen pal. But the much-awaited encounter was cut short when a single gunman appeared behind them at the school's gym entrance.

In a chilling new public service announcement (PSA), Sandy Hook Promise -- the gun violence prevention group led by families of those killed at Sandy Hook Elementary School -- conveys a powerful message, concealing and then revealing signs that may lead to gun violence.

While we watch Evan's story, a darker tale is unfolding in the background: the evolution of a school shooter. But unless you're watching closely, you'll miss it. And that's kind of the point of the PSA.

"We wanted to create an impactful visual to show that violence is preventable if you know the signs. Many people are unaware of that there are specific signs that people give off that can indicate a violent act is imminent," said Nicole Hockley, co-founder and managing director of Sandy Hook Promise. Her first-grade son, Dylan, died in the Sandy Hook massacre. "These acts are preventable when you know the signs. Everyone has the power to intervene and get help. These actions can save lives."

Hockley said the organization timed the release to the holiday season, when violence spikes. "We saw that over the Thanksgiving holiday in Chicago, when 70 people were shot, nine of them fatally. We know that people will be spending a lot of time with their families in the coming weeks, and we thought this could inspire them to have important conversations about how to prevent violence together," she said.

"We want this video to inspire hope in those who watch it, to show them that we are not helpless in the face of gun violence and that there is something all of us can do to prevent it," Hockley added.

Stephen Teret, founding director of the Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Policy and Research, said the video is powerful and "extraordinarily well done. It just flipped my stomach at the end. "I'd like to see the take-home message to be, we need a prevention policy in addition to the students, parents and teachers spotting a student creating havoc.

Teret added, however, that "policy is difficult to make in this area."

On December 14, 2012, Adam Lanza killed 20 children and six adults at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, in one of the worst mass shootings in US history. Lanza also killed his mother at their home.

The families of nine of the Sandy Hook victims filed a lawsuit against the gun manufacture, but it was dismissed. On Thursday, the Connecticut Supreme Court said it will hear an appeal from the families.

To visit the Sandy Hook Website: <http://www.sandyhookpromise.org>

To view the Sandy Hook Promise YouTube channel that includes the video Evan and See Something in English and Spanish, visit: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC15MxshIyRwoFNsFut6UZdA>

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