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# Center for the Prevention of School Violence

## center.link

Dr. Pamela L. Riley, Executive Director

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### S.A.V.E. – REACHING FOR THE ULTIMATE IN STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

The Center for the Prevention of School Violence encourages everyone to focus on our nation's most valuable resource, our youth. Involving students in the prevention of school violence is just one of the promising strategies of the Center. By involving students in the various aspects of school violence prevention, including safe school planning, ongoing extracurricular activities, and activities to heighten awareness, students have a sense of ownership in providing safer environments for learning. If you do not have a Students Against Violence Everywhere (S.A.V.E.) chapter, now is an excellent time to kickoff this valuable program at your school.

**Students Against Violence Everywhere (S.A.V.E.)** was once again the most requested program of the Center last school year. Thanks to the many students involved in preventing school violence, other students are taking notice and want to become involved. S.A.V.E. has now spread to 28 states, with over 65,000 students involved! These students no longer want to be seen as "the problem", rather they want to reassure us that they are part of the solution.

S.A.V.E. chapters are student directed. Students learn about alternatives to violence and practice what they learn through school and community service projects. As they participate in S.A.V.E. activities, students learn conflict management and mediation skills and the virtues of good citizenship, civility, and nonviolence. At the high school and middle school level, S.A.V.E. chapters operate as an extracurricular activity. The S.A.V.E. approach in elementary schools integrates important knowledge and skills about safety into academic disciplines and provides children with opportunities to practice skills in activities that will make their schools safer. When children learn these skills, they are less likely to engage in acts of violence or to be victims of violent behavior.

S.A.V.E. started because of the grief students expressed for the senseless death of a fellow student in 1989. S.A.V.E. has drawn students together and taught them to respect each other. The Center for the Prevention of School Violence serves as the national clearinghouse for S.A.V.E. For more information on S.A.V.E., check out the updated S.A.V.E. web pages at [www.nationalsave.org](http://www.nationalsave.org) or contact the Center for an implementation manual.



### CHEVROLET SPONSORS S.A.V.E. INITIATIVES

As part of a new initiative by Chevrolet to support positive youth development, S.A.V.E. has been chosen as a nonprofit group they will sponsor. Dealerships will be working with local S.A.V.E. chapters to promote safer school environments. S.A.V.E. is honored to have been chosen as part of this important initiative and to have this opportunity for S.A.V.E. chapters. For additional information contact the Center.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

## WHAT'S NEW AT THE CENTER?

Dr. Pamela L. Riley



Plenty -- starting with our *new* approach to Center.link. This approach allows us to organize center.link thematically. The first theme, student involvement, is certainly a fitting one. The Center for the Prevention of School Violence is committed to keeping a focus on students in the services that it provides as a primary point of contact for information, programs, and research about school violence prevention. Research shows that students who feel connected to or are involved in schools are less likely to participate in negative behaviors.

In addition to the *new* center.link, the Center also has some other *new* information. The Center is now part of North Carolina's Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and will serve at the forefront of prevention efforts that will be pursued. It also is located in a *new* office location. The *new* location will enable the Center to expand its clearinghouse and offer on-site trainings and professional development workshops.

This *new* center.link marks the beginning of a *new* era for the Center. It also brings assurance that the Center will continue to offer service and support to those who are working to prevent school violence, and it will continue to stay focused on students. Nothing *new* for us on that one!

## CENTER FOR THE PREVENTION OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE

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SCHOOL VIOLENCE .  
LET'S GET IT OUT OF  
OUR SYSTEM!

## LIGHTS, CAMERA, AND ACTION! SCHOOL VIOLENCE IS ON TRIAL!

### The Students vs. School Violence - i i i i i

An inspiring courtroom drama that places a character, who represents school violence, on trial for its existence. In this video, the students gain an increased understanding of what school violence is and explore their responsibilities in its prevention.

The one-hour video and accompanying guide are instructional tools that communicate directly with youth about issues that concern them. The video and guide provide thought-provoking opportunities for discussion and challenge students to take responsibility for their own actions in the prevention of school violence. The video project emphasizes that school violence is not just one type of action or one type of problem; prevention needs to start by addressing the everyday occurrences that interfere with the safe, secure, and caring environment schools strive to achieve.

**The Students vs. School Violence** is an ideal tool for educators who want to inspire their students to become involved in school safety. (Rated **TP** for thought provoking.)

## S.A.R.A. for STUDENTS

There is a step-by-step problem solving approach that can help a school identify problems and the effectiveness of the school's response to the problems. It is called S.A.R.A.:

- Scanning
- Analyzing
- Responding
- Assessing

Making this approach student-driven is crucial. The approach provides students with defined roles for preventing violence in the school.

**Scanning** involves the entire school community coming together to brainstorm about a priority problem that exists within the school. **Analyzing** involves examining the information and data gathered about the priority problem and figuring out why the problem exists. **Responding** involves taking the information from the analysis phase and formulating a response to the priority problem. **Assessing** involves determining if the response implemented helped solve the problem.

Applying the S.A.R.A. problem-solving approach is a step-by-step framework in which school violence can be addressed, but the most important step is involving students in the entire process. Having this approach centered around students empowers them to initiate a positive change and make a difference in their school community.

## A WAVE POP QUIZ

Are you ready for a pop quiz?

1. Have you ever had a school safety concern and not known whom to turn to?
  - A. Bullying
  - B. Verbal threats toward you or a friend
  - C. Gun on campus
  - D. All of the above
2. What is a WAVE?
  - A. Science term
  - B. Greeting
  - C. Working Against Violence Everywhere (WAVE)
  - D. All of the above
3. How can you get involved in school safety?
  - A) S.A.V.E.
  - B) Conflict management
  - C) Peer mediation
  - D) WAVE
  - E) All of the above

The likely answer to #1 is "D."

"D" is "All of the above." Most safety concerns you can talk about with a trusted adult, but sometimes you may feel uncomfortable or you may not know who to talk to at all. The students in North Carolina have been given another means to communicate their concerns via a 24 hour - 7 day a week toll-free anonymous tip line - The WAVE line.

The answer to #2 is "C."

"C" is "Working Against Violence Everywhere" or WAVE. It is an educational campaign that accompanies the WAVE line. This campaign provides (students, teachers, parents, anyone) the resources needed to raise awareness of school safety concerns. Wallet cards, student and parent brochures, and an interactive web site ([www.waveamerica.com](http://www.waveamerica.com)) are provided once a school enrolls in the WAVE educational campaign.

The answer to #3 is "E."

"E" is "All of the above." You make the difference by getting involved and speaking up. Get your school involved. Talk to your principal about WAVE and other strategies. Use your S.A.V.E. chapter to implement WAVE.

Your grade?

That depends on you. You don't have to give your name. You don't have to pay for the phone call. You do need to get involved!

## TIPS FOR THE S.A.V.E. – WAVE CONNECTION

1. Hand out the wallet cards and brochures to students.
2. Purchase magnets and glue the wallet cards to the magnets. Place one card on each locker in the school.
3. Update the WAVE awareness center with supplied materials and original work.

4. Introduce the new program and promote throughout the year to the student body through the morning announcements, Channel-One, or a school-wide assembly.
5. Place posters and brochures on display for parents outside the school office for a Parent Awareness Center.

*Thanks to Western Alamance (NC) High School's S.A.V.E. chapter and the S.A.V.E. advisors of Charlotte-Mecklenburg (NC) schools for their suggestions.*

## SUCCESS IN LAW-RELATED EDUCATION THROUGH SUCCESS IN SERVICE LEARNING

The Center for the Prevention of School Violence emphasizes the importance of developing responsible citizens as a promising effort in preventing violence in our schools and communities. Law-related education is part of the Safe Schools Pyramid because of this need to teach youth not only about their rights, but also about their responsibilities in areas of the law, government, the Constitution, and in daily civic activities. However, it is difficult to emphasize to youth that they "should" be and feel a part of their community without providing opportunities to learn first-hand. Service learning projects, when implemented appropriately, provide youth skills and attitudes conducive to producing competent and responsible youth.

*What is Service Learning?* Of course the main rewards of service learning are in the form of personal growth and social responsibility. There are other components of successful service learning projects. A well-organized service learning program or project emphasizes what is taught in school (or other learning environment) by taking the learning process beyond the classroom. It allows for students to apply academic skills and knowledge in true-to-life situations, while building empathy towards others and their community. Service Learning provides opportunities for students to think critically, problem-solve, and enhance communication skills with other youth and adults. Successful service learning projects:

1. Engage students in significant, genuine service to the community/school.
2. Provide opportunities for other people to depend on the actions of young people.
3. Include tasks that challenge the students' thinking—ethically and cognitively.
4. Provide opportunities for students to make decisions and have responsibility that can affect the outcome of the project.
5. Have adults and young people work together on common tasks.
6. Provide a systematic reflection on the service experience.
7. Produce a final product from the students' efforts.

(List adapted from Street Law Inc.'s Service Learning Packet)

Service learning is more than the "good feeling" of doing for others. It involves careful planning, follow-through, and a final production of service, mainly by students—not educators or adults. Service learning is exactly as it sounds, learning by serving.

## INVOLVING STUDENTS IN CLASSROOM RULES

Make your school days fun and enjoyable by practicing the rules and laws that can help reduce violence. With your students, identify classroom/school rules and public laws and policies that will promote safety and security throughout your school. You can find some of these activities in the *Elementary S.A.V.E. Manual* to help you spread the message to others about a positive and safe environment. As a citizen of your community and a valuable role player in your school, we ask that you encourage others such as, students, school faculty, parents or other family members to help with this important cause. Involving parents and soliciting their input helps motivate students and parents to communicate more freely with each other. This open communication may be the crucial first step in preventing violence.

When establishing classroom rules, it is important to focus on solutions to issues that arise in the classroom, rather than on the past events leading to the conflict. Students should brainstorm solutions for possible rule breakers. The bottom line is....involve your students in creating the rules that guide their behavior.

Here is the TOP 10 LIST for establishing effective rules in the classroom:

- 10) Establish classroom rules **WITH** your students' input.
- 9) Rules should be clear and simple.
- 8) Rules should conform to students' and teachers' rights and responsibilities.
- 7) Rules should reflect respect for personal space. For example, Keep feet on the floor and hands to themselves.
- 6) Rules **MUST** be reasonable, yet made in good faith.
- 5) Review rules periodically.
- 4) Have a system in place for students to discuss situations/incidents with a teacher and/or faculty member, or through peer mediation.

- 3) Rules should encourage thinking, for example, Stop and **THINK** before you **ACT**
- 2) Develop a *Plan of Action* for rule breakers. and the #1 answer is...

## COMMUNICATE AND ENFORCE RULES TO ALL STUDENTS CONSISTENTLY!

## PEER MEDIATION AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Has your school experienced the rewards of peer mediation and conflict management training? Peer mediation training teaches students how to help other students resolve and manage conflict while conflict management training provides teachers and students the skills to manage everyday conflicts within the school setting. Here is a sample of some of the different curricula that are available:

### **Preservice Teachers**

Conflict Management Project: Training for pre-service teachers so that they are able to solve classroom problems and manage conflict productively, make available more class time for academic instruction, and contribute substantially to the creation of safer learning environments in schools. Contact: Center for the Prevention of School Violence, 1-800-299-6054

### **Kindergarten – Grade 3**

Conflict Resolution for Kindergarten - Grade 3: Teaches basic concepts of resolution including listening skills, anger management, diversity, and negotiation. It also includes ideas to make conflict management a regular part of classroom activities. Contact: Mediation Network of North Carolina, (919) 929-6333

### **Grades 4-12**

We Can Work It Out! Teaches students life skills including recognizing triggers, active listening, and generating options. Students reinforce these skills by learning the mediation process and participating in mock mediations. Contact: Center for the Prevention of School Violence, NC, (800-299-6054)

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