



School Safety Matters

December 2017

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Just Published

We recently published this new SafeSchools Training course:

1. *Commercial Mower Safety*

Call 1-800-434-0154 for a free trial account today!

Bullying Reporting & Tracking System

Confidentially report safety concerns, including bullying, harassment, and intimidation via phone, text, email, and website!

[Request a Demo](#)



'Tis the Season for Thanks



The holiday season is the perfect time to reflect on all the things that we're thankful for and to look with excitement to the year that's just ahead.

Thank you to all of our wonderful readers who enjoy our School Safety Matters newsletter each month. We hope you and your family have a safe and joyful holiday season.

We'll see you in 2018!

Human Trafficking Awareness



January is Human Trafficking Awareness Month and a good time to make sure your employees and staff are educated on human trafficking identification and awareness. Human trafficking is tragic, it's real, and it's affecting thousands



of students in schools throughout the U.S. Even more disturbing is the fact that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services estimates that over 50% of trafficking victims are children. The exact number of people being trafficked in the U.S. is hard to pinpoint because of the underground nature of the crime. Many of the children trapped in trafficking situations aren't smuggled into the country from far-away places; they're U.S. citizens who are held captive in their own country.

Human trafficking is a form of child abuse and as a school staff member who is entrusted with the safety of children, you may someday be in a position to protect a child who is a victim of human trafficking. Some warning signs to look for in a victim of human trafficking include:

- Unexplained school absences or attending school irregularly.
- Unable to answer questions about where he or she lives or tells his or her story with inconsistent details.
- Has a demeanor that suggests fear, paranoia, anxiousness, psychological distress, or submissiveness.
- Has multiple injuries, such as bruises, cuts, burns, or branding marks.
- Shows signs of physical abuse and/or malnourishment.
- Exhibits fear or a behavior change when law enforcement is mentioned.
- Remains very quiet, as if unable to speak.
- Is a member of a gang, a runaway, or homeless.
- Displays a lack of knowledge about the community.
- Possess no form of personal identification, such as a passport.
- Has little or no personal possessions.
- Possess multiple hotel room keys or large amounts of cash.
- Shows evidence of being controlled or appears to be in a relationship with someone who is dominating.
- Has a sexually transmitted disease, trouble walking, or poor dental hygiene.

Identifying victims of human trafficking is challenging. Victims are often distraught and psychologically damaged. They often receive threats from the trafficker, including that if they talk to anyone they or their family may be harmed. If a child confides in you that he or she is the victim of abuse, it's your obligation to immediately and carefully follow the procedures and policies of your district to report the abuse. **Do not investigate the crime yourself.** Doing so could endanger you and/or further endanger the child.

The [SafeSchools Online Staff Training System](#) offers a [Human Trafficking Awareness](#) course to help build awareness among school staff members regarding the trafficking of minors. This course will help you learn to identify (and potentially prevent) occurrences of human trafficking. Topics covered include sex and labor trafficking basics, identifying victims of trafficking, and what to do when you suspect a student is a victim.

For more information on this course, or a free trial of SafeSchools Training, please contact us at 1-800-434-0154 or info@safeschools.com today! You can also visit our website at www.SafeSchools.com.

New SafeSchools Training Course: Communication Skills and Styles



Communication is sometimes an underappreciated skill, and often can be taken for granted. A lot of times, we don't see its benefits until we're in a situation where there's been some poor communication, or a complete lack of it altogether. Whether you're speaking publicly, managing projects, teaching, or learning something new, communicating effectively is an invaluable part of a professional or academic toolset.

Experts agree that people tend to prefer one of two styles of communication: direct or indirect.

1. **Direct communication** is often used to convey a clear instruction or intention, strategy, authority, or in some cases urgency. In this style, words that are spoken or written are often meant to be understood plainly- without underlying analysis or interpretation. Direct communication works well when there is a need for timely, clear communication. This can include situations involving a clear set of rules, guidelines or laws, fast-approaching deadlines, emergencies and many other factors. Direct communication often involves short, clear, and honest exchanges or responses between parties.
2. **Indirect communication** includes using indirect, or more subtle methods of giving or receiving information, and usually relies on collaboration with listeners. Indirect communication is often used to foster discussion among professionals or students or to allow a friendly exchange of thoughts or opinions. In this style, words might have an underlying intention or meaning. Indirect communication is helpful in situations involving team projects as well as group discussions. In short, it works well in, and helps maintain, a collaborative environment. Indirect communication might come in the form of a question, and often shows that the speaker is receptive to new information, or expects feedback on an underlying intention.

The [SafeSchools Online Staff Training System](#) now offers a [Communication Styles and Skills](#) course that provides basic information on the types and styles of communication, as well as ways to communicate more effectively with others. Topics include types, characteristics and styles of communication, and ways to strengthen your communication. This course also includes an interactive component that helps course takers assess their own communication styles.

For more information on this course, or SafeSchools Training in general, please contact us at 1-800-434-0154 or info@safeschools.com. You can also visit our website at www.SafeSchools.com.

Better Accountability in Fort Worth ISD

For a large district like Fort Worth Independent School District in Texas, it can be challenging to track training completions for a large number of employees. Hear how Aracely Chavez, Executive Director of Classified Learning, uses the [SafeSchools Online Staff Training System](#) to track staff training and help transform the district into a more accountable workforce.



Learn How SafeSchools Training Helps Fort Worth ISD Create a More Accountable Workforce

We'd like to say a special thanks to Aracely for participating in this video with us.

To learn more about SafeSchools Training or to request a free trial, please call 1-800-434-0154, email us at info@safeschools.com, or visit our website at www.SafeSchools.com.

Visit Us in Person!

Throughout the year, you can find our staff at various trade shows, conferences, and education-related events across the country. Look for the SafeSchools booth this month at the following event and be sure to stop by and say "Hello":

[Texas Association of School Personnel Administrators \(TASPA\) Winter Conference](#)
Austin, TX, 12/13-12/15

School Safety News

[Study: Schools Not Prepared to Address Teen Dating Violence](#)

[High School Safety Includes Protecting Teens' Data](#)

[School District to Implement New Sexual Misconduct Education Program](#)

[School Board Approves Youth Suicide Prevention Policy](#)

[Social Media Comment Sparks Concern, School Officials Take Action](#)

[School Psychologist Apologizes after Controversial Comment on Social Media](#)

[Mother Blames Vicious Bullying for Teen Son's Suicide](#)

[School, Students Respond after Video of Violent Bullying Goes Viral](#)

[Moms Claim Children Were Attacked at School](#)

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