

MICHIGAN Safe Schools INITIATIVE

The Education Alliance

- Michigan Association of School Boards
- Michigan Education Association
- Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators
- Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals
- Michigan Parent Teacher Association
- Michigan Elementary and Middle School Principals Association
- Michigan School Business Officials
- Michigan Federation of Teachers and School Related Personnel
- Michigan Association of School Administrators
- Middle Cities Education Association
- Michigan Business Leaders for Education Excellence
- Michigan State University College of Education

Auburn Hills Police Department

Big Rapids School District

City of Sterling Heights

Crime Victim Services, Michigan Department of Community Health

Hazel Park Schools

Incident Management Team

Inkster Public Schools

Jackson Community College

Joseph A. Young & Associates

Lansing Schools District Department of Public Safety

Lansing Police Department

Marshall Public Schools

Mason Public Schools

Metropolitan Association of Improved School Legislation

Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police

Michigan Association of Public School Academies

Michigan Center for the Prevention of Violence in Schools, Ferris State University

Michigan Department of Education

Michigan Department of State Police Prevention Services

Michigan Department of State Police Emergency Management Division

Michigan Family Independence Agency

Michigan Municipal League

Michigan Regional Community Policing Institute

Michigan Sheriff's Association

Michigan Township Association

Michigan State University School of Criminal Justice

Middle Cities Risk Management Trust

National Center of Community Policing

Neighborhood Associations of Michigan

Office of Drug Control Policy - Michigan

Department of Community Health

Prosecuting Attorney Coordinating Council

School Employer Trust/School Employers Group

State 4-H Youth Program

Sterling Heights Emergency Services

U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms

U.S. Secret Service

Walter French Academy

Western Michigan Risk Management Trust

Fast Facts....

Some Suggestions for America's Safe Schools Week Activities:



WORKING WITH SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Place board members at the top of your mailing list so that they receive copies of every distributed communication.

Invite board members to visit school sites regularly. Vary the itinerary to include lunch with students and staff. This personal contact helps break down barriers and stereotypes.

Incorporate safety topics into the curriculum. For example, social studies/civics classes can discuss the public's attitudes toward the public schools; physical education courses can include instruction on physical safety; chemistry classes can examine the negative effects of drugs on the human body; English classes can correlate literature study with essays on self-esteem, character-building or student misbehavior; and graphics classes can promote safer campuses by designing posters featuring effective safety messages.



WORKING WITH SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

Often school employees are the only contacts community residents have with a school. Consistent district communication can minimize internal conflict and promote teamwork.

Coordinate school safety workshops that outline the relationship of school safety to quality education and emphasize the need for public support of schools. Educate employees about their specific safety responsibilities. Invite law enforcers, lawyers, judges, health and human service officials, and probation officers to teach about the juvenile justice system and its relationship to effective schools.

Sponsor classroom management seminars. Use actual case studies, such as student misbehavior problems from local schools, as part of the training. This helps teachers identify more readily with such situations and mitigates an attitude of "that doesn't happen here."



WORKING WITH STUDENTS

Students are both causes and victims of much of the crime and misbehavior on campuses. Initiate programs to promote student responsibility for safer schools.

Coordinate student courts. Student judges, lawyers, jurors, bailiffs and court clerks, trained by local justice system experts, hear and try cases involving fellow students. Student courts make real judgments and pass real sentences.

Purchase conflict resolution curricular materials that will provide staff and student training in solving problems and conflicts. Enlist student mediators to calm tensions among classmates and to provide a positive influence on school climate.

Develop a "buddy system." Assign current students to newcomers to facilitate easy transitions. Assign older, bigger students to look out for students who seem to be bullied by others.



WORKING WITH PARENTS

In “Discipline: A Parent’s Guide”, the National PTA identifies parents’ main responsibility: Set a good example. Children learn more by parents’ actions than from parents’ words. Parental pride and involvement in the school sets a positive example for children. Call parents at home or even at work to congratulate them on a child’s special achievement or to thank them for support on a special project. Short letters of appreciation or thank-you notes are also very well received.

Help establish a policy in which parents become financially liable for damage done by their children. Parents and children need to be made aware of the serious consequences for criminal actions. (This already is state law in many parts of the country.)



WORKING WITH COMMUNITY LEADERS

Just as community’s work together to prevent crime with “Neighborhood Watch” programs, local residents can mobilize to make schools safer. Hold a series of briefings for community residents to inform them about school problems directly affecting the neighborhood. Form “School Watch” programs in which neighbors around the school are asked to watch for and report suspicious activities to school or law enforcement officials. Post signs on the school grounds: “This school is protected by a neighborhood School Watch.”

Start a “Safe House” program that recruits responsible community residents. Children learn that homes posting “Safe House” signs are safe places to go if they are in danger or need assistance. Volunteers need to be closely screened before they are accepted as participants.



WORKING WITH SERVICE GROUPS

Most communities have dozens of service, civic, religious and other special-interest groups. Each organization’s headquarters or the president’s address should be included on the mailing list to regularly receive the district magazine and other important announcements and publications.



WORKING WITH BUSINESS LEADERS

Businesses have an immediate vested interest in good schools: quality education for children of their employees. Businesses also have a long-range interest: a well-trained work force. The quality of life and the quality of education in the community are inseparable.

Coordinate career days and field trips to business offices and production plants. Witnessing the practical application of skills can make students more appreciative and understanding of classroom instruction.

Promote “adopt-a-school” programs. This trend in school-business partnerships unites a business with a school needing resources the business can donate, such as equipment or excess supplies.



WORKING WITH GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES

Identify the key government officials and political representatives in your area and add their names to your mailing list.

Consider teaming government representatives with students to propose solutions to real problems faced by students and schools, including drug abuse, dropouts, vandalism, personal safety, and fiscal and social problems.



WORKING WITH LAW ENFORCERS

Establish an “Officer Friendly” program at your schools. Invite local law enforcers to make presentations to students on child safety, drug abuse prevention, and juvenile justice practices and policies.

Coordinate student and staff “ride-along” programs. The one-on-one time with officers on patrol is an effective means for law enforcers to gain respect and inspire confidence.

Work with law enforcers and parents to come to the school site and fingerprint young children as a safety measure. The prints then are given to the parent or guardian.

Pair up law enforcers with high-risk youths, similar to the “Big Brother” program. Such relationships can be an important step in changing delinquent behavior patterns.



WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

A school issue reported by the media is likely to have considerably more impact on public attitudes than the same message presented in the district magazine or delivered by the district administration. Contact the local media to have them do public service announcements on safe schools week. They can ask people call in to say what their school is doing.