

Expecting Respect

**The Peer Education Project:
A school-based learning model**

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Developed under agreement with the Minister of Education, Province of Alberta,
Canada

The Alberta Teachers' Association, Edmonton T5N 2R1

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Printed in Canada

ISBN: 1-897189-79-6

Introduction

The purpose of this booklet is to describe the Peer Education Project, a school-based learning strategy. Expecting Respect is a program within the Peer Education Project that promotes healthy decision making among youth.

This booklet provides information to help you decide whether a project like Peer Education—more specifically, the Expecting Respect program—will meet your school’s needs. A detailed project manual and lesson plans will be available at a reasonable cost to schools wishing to participate. In addition, schools and their community partners are welcome to phone the City of Edmonton Community Services at (780) 5983 or fax (780) 496-5852.

What is the Peer Education Project?

Characteristics of peer education

Peer education is a learning model whereby students teach their peers information, values and behaviors about issues that impact members of similar age or social groups. As a school-based learning model, peer education has the following characteristics:

- **Peer education is based on a prevention philosophy.** This approach views youth as capable and valuable resources to facilitate change in their schools and communities. Adult mentors work in partnership with youth to maximize their strengths and develop their leadership skills. “Successful prevention programs in schools should address multiple facets of the student’s life, and use multiple strategies” (*Journal of Adolescent Health* 1997, 17).
- **Peer education is an effective strategy for change.** Since young people frequently turn to their peers for information and advice, students can play an effective role in encouraging their peers to develop responsible attitudes and engage in healthy decision making. School-based research has shown that peer-led interventions are more effective in reducing health risk behavior than teacher-led interventions (Botvin 1990; Perry 1998).

Studies suggest that peer-led interaction involving factual information, modeling and rehearsal of roles or situations is successful in producing attitude changes and the intention to change behavior (Bernard 1991; Sloane and Zimmer 1993).

- **Peer education is different from peer counselling.** Peer educators are trained to provide information in a classroom or workshop setting and are not expected to be counsellors.

Project objectives

1. To recruit and train junior and senior high students as peer educators.
2. To support peer educators to make a classroom presentation to their peers promoting healthy decision making and violence-free relationships.
3. To develop partnerships between schools and the community to sustain the program in schools.
4. To evaluate the effectiveness of peer education as an educational strategy.

What is the Expecting Respect program?

Program description

- Expecting Respect is an Edmonton-wide, collaborative program involving junior and senior high school students, schools and community partners. It is a preventive approach designed to promote healthy decision making and violence-free relationships.
- The program is linked to the Alberta Teachers' Association's (ATA) Safe and Caring Schools Project.
- The program is in the third year of a three-year pilot. Thirty-one schools are currently participating.
- In the 1998–99 school year 400 students were trained as peer educators. Throughout the school year, they made classroom presentations in pairs or triads to their fellow students in different topic areas.
- Lesson plans have been developed with input from students. All peer educators follow these lesson plans when making their classroom presentations.

The topics included in the Expecting Respect program are as follows:

Junior high school

- Forming Healthy Relationships
- Bullying
- It's a Jungle Out There
- Test Your Knowledge About Alcohol and Other Drugs
- Media Advertisements: Do They Show the Real You?
- Tobacco: Stop Before You Start

Senior high school

- Healthy Dating Relationships
- Sexual Health
- Sexual Harassment
- Conflict: What's Your Style?
- Sexual Boundaries
- Media Madness: Tobacco Curriculum

Program partners

The following are partners in Expecting Respect in Edmonton:

- ATA's Safe and Caring Schools Project
- City of Edmonton Community Services
- AADAC Youth Services Edmonton
- Planned Parenthood Edmonton
- Community Health Promotion and Prevention Services, Capital Health
- University of Alberta, Faculty of Education
- Students and staff in Edmonton Public and Catholic Schools
- Edmonton Police Services
- Abuse Prevention Services
- TERRA Association
- AIDS Network

The Community Partners in this project were recruited because they all have a mandate to provide school-based prevention programs. A strong, sustained commitment has continued because of the positive outcomes observed. If the Peer Education Project were to develop additional programs to Expecting Respect, other partners would need to be recruited.

Rationale for the Program

All the partners involved in this project are committed to its success because they share the following shared beliefs:

- Establishing positive, healthy social relationships is a crucial element in the education of our youth. Schools have a rich collection of resources which can be used to strengthen the social fabric of the entire community.
- Promoting nonviolence and healthy relationships is the responsibility of the entire community. Pooled resources and collaborative efforts reduce the risk of fragmented interventions, increase the likelihood of dealing with problems at their source, have the potential to reach a larger audience and are more cost-effective.
- Youth are their own best resource in promoting attitudinal and behavioral change with their peers. Education programs about healthy

relationships have traditionally been delivered in schools by community agencies. Feedback from students supports the greater effectiveness of youth-to-youth programs compared to adult-to-youth programs.

- The core values of a school-based peer education project are incorporated into each lesson and include gender equality, responsible decision making, respect for diversity and nonviolence.

Benefits of the Peer Education Project

Benefits to peer educators

The following examples from participants in the Expecting Respect program illustrate its benefits to peer educators.

Develops leadership and presentation skills

“The training and presentations have helped me develop confidence.”
—peer educator

“We get to create our own activities and role plays.” —peer educator

Increases students’ knowledge about healthy relationships

“It’s exciting to learn more about healthy relationships and to have everyone in a class listen and get involved.”
—peer educator

Gives peer educators responsibility for sharing their knowledge, skills and attitudes with their peers

“Humor and your own style of presentation help us to talk about sensitive issues.”
—peer educator

“It’s good to make friends with other schools and learn from them when we get together for training.”
—peer educator

Benefits to schools and the community

The following examples from participants in the Expecting Respect program illustrate its benefits to schools and the community.

Offers an alternative learning strategy

“Students enjoy having something concrete to learn and present and they enjoy the positive feedback afterwards.”
—teacher

Augments the curriculum in CALM and Health

“What makes this appealing is the positive focus rather than a program with concentration on problem.”
—school counsellor

Provides teacher satisfaction in mentoring students and developing their leadership skills

“There is a feeling of team cooperation and support among peer educators.”
—teacher

“It’s wonderful to see how committed the students are to making overheads, practising and doing all the other work that goes into a good presentation.”
—teacher

Strengthens school-community connections

“The partnership works because everyone shares a common vision and is committed to the success of the project.”
—community partner

Expecting Respect enables those of us who have traditionally done presentations in schools about healthy relationships and decision making to use our resources more efficiently and effectively.”
—community partner

Benefits to students

The following examples from participants in the Expecting Respect program illustrate its benefits to students.

Helps students integrate information in a more relevant way

“Even if the presentation isn’t really polished, students in the class respond very positively.”
—teacher

“You guys made it fun and it addressed pretty important topics too.”
—male student

Students rate the role plays, scenarios and interactive exercises as the most useful aspects of the presentations.

Increases awareness, which promotes healthier, violence-free relationships

“It was a great presentation. It made me realize that my partner and I could be doing something wrong and now we know how to change it.”

—female student

“It was really helpful to have you identify a lot of different sexual harassment situations because most people think it is only physical.”

—male student

Encourages responsible decision making

“People have to break up when there is violence. It was helpful to learn about what is a healthy relationship.”

—female student

“Doing descriptions of the ‘ideal’ man and woman was good because it helped us understand what the other sex thought was important.”

—male student

Basics of a school peer education project

Overview

Edmonton's Peer Education Project is a partnership between students, schools and the community. Each of these partners contributes skills and resources that are essential for the success of the program. One of the major strengths of this Project is its autonomy in a school. An individual school begins by recruiting interested parents, community members, agencies and organizations. These partners form the local steering committee. Their commitment of resources for training, fund-raising and administration help keep project costs minimal. Dedicated time from at least one teacher or counsellor in each participating school is required to manage the project at the school level.

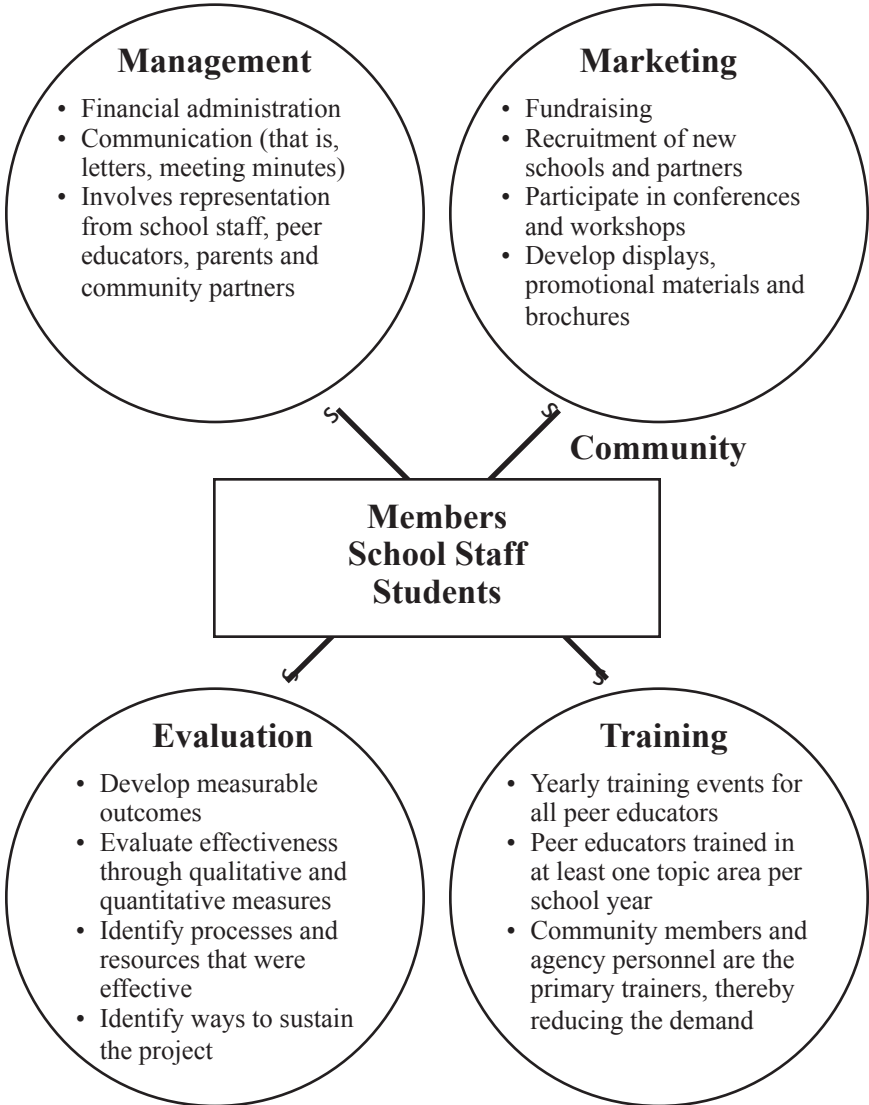
The time commitment required depends on the roles and responsibilities undertaken. On average, teachers who are school coordinators spend 15 hours per month managing the program in their school. Steering committee members attend a two-hour monthly meeting and are available for 12 hours to provide training to students at least once during the school year. Project administration and other activities require additional time.

Peer educators typically spend 8–10 hours per month in classroom presentations or other program related activities. Most peer educators indicate that the time commitment is manageable, especially if they are able to schedule their presentations in advance. Many would appreciate the opportunity to receive credits for participating in the Peer Education Project.

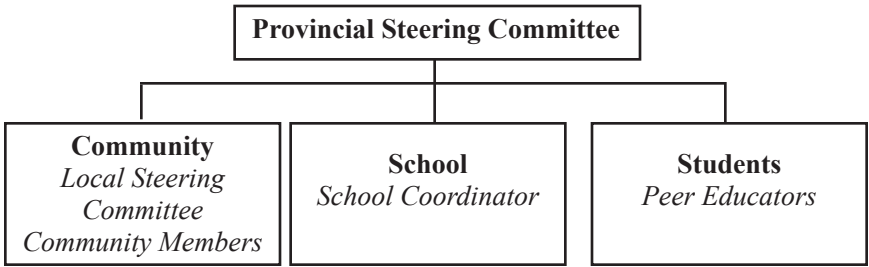
Expecting Respect, which promotes healthy decision making and violence-free relationships, is one example of a school-based program; however, this model is also applicable to other topics relevant to school settings.

Project activities

(coordinated and assigned by the Steering Committee)



Project Structure



Local Steering Committee

The committee meets monthly to

- provide overall direction to the project,
- facilitate for information exchange and problem solving,
- share decision making to promote ownership and commitment,
- organize training events,
- oversee evaluation of project,
- fund-raise and develop funding proposals and
- facilitate communication and support among schools.

School Coordinator

- recruit between 10–20 peer educators each year using consistent criteria,
- schedule presentations to classes,
- collect evaluations,
- ensure students are prepared for presentations,
- participate in curriculum revisions with students,
- provide feedback and support to students regarding presentations,
- provide opportunities for practice sessions in mentorship and skill development,
- request in-kind or financial support from community partners as needed,

Peer Educators

- present to their fellow students in dyads or triads (usually four to six presentations each semester);
- distribute and collect the standardized evaluation form at the end of each presentation;
- preselect one topic area to be trained in per year;
- participate in school-based practice sessions;
- participate in at least one training event each school year;
- assist in marketing the program by presenting to other schools, parent councils, teachers, conferences and so on;

***Community Members
(con't)***

provide training and serve as members of the Local Steering Committee. They may be

- parents;
- staff from nonprofit social service agencies;
- staff from government agencies such as AADAC, Child Welfare, Department of Agriculture (in rural areas);
- local business and service clubs;
- Public Health units;
- City Police or RCMP; and/or
- community leaders involved with youth.

***School Coordinator
(con't)***

- recruit other staff and parents to assist in project management at the school and
- arrange credits for students who are peer educators or who incorporate the activities of peer educators into existing leadership or community service courses.

***Peer Educators
(con't)***

- assist school co-ordinator in recruiting new peer educators by “selling” the project to fellow students;
- develop new materials and exercises to add to the lesson plans; and
- field test and revise the lesson plans to maximize the impact on their peers.

Training elements

A main objective of training is to ensure consistency in the learning of the lesson plans each year. Peer educators share information with one another as well as their excitement and enthusiasm about the project. It is important to have an initial training workshop early in the school year for all peer educators in a specific geographic area. Separate training sessions should be held for junior and senior high schools.

Training is conducted by staff from agencies and organizations in the community. Ten hours of training over two days would include facilitation skills, team-building activities and the opportunity for peer educators to learn the content of the lessons to be presented.

An additional spring event for all peer educators provides an opportunity for feedback about the program effectiveness, lesson plan revision and further skill development.

Training workshops outcomes

- All project partners understand the concept of peer education and their specific roles and responsibilities.
- Content training ensures consistency in the delivery of the lesson plans by the peer educators.
- Peer educators work in pairs to present at least one topic to their classmates.
- Peer educators learn presentation and facilitation skills.
- Peer educators feel as though they are members of a team.
- The commitment of community partners is strengthened by their involvement in training activities.
- Mentoring relationships are developed.

Program variations

Once the basic structure is in place, there may be variations in how the program is implemented:

- The numbers and type of community partners may vary.
- Schools may wish to team up with other schools in the community to share the delivery of the lesson plans.
- The number of topics selected to be taught in a school may vary as may the number of peer educators.

- Funding sources and expenditures will be different in each community.
- High school peer educators could help train and mentor junior high students.

How to get involved

This program is available to all interested junior and senior high schools throughout the province. While the Expecting Respect Program was initiated at a community level, it is more likely that it will be school-initiated in the future. The Edmonton Peer Education Project will consult with any interested schools. A training manual will be available, including

- a guide to develop the program structure,
- copies of the lesson plans outlines for training workshops,
- team-building activities and
- evaluation format.

For further information about the program, contact the City of Edmonton Community Services by phoning (780) 496-5983 or faxing (780) 496-5852.

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The Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities (SACSC) Resources



The Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities' resources and materials are available through Alberta Learning's Resources Centre (LRC), 12360 142 St. NW, Edmonton, Alberta, T5L 4X9. Tel: 427-5775 in Edmonton. Elsewhere in Alberta call 310-0000 and ask for the LRC or fax (780) 422-9750. To place Internet orders, visit www.lrc.learning.gov.ab.ca *These materials are eligible for the Learning Resources Credit Allocation (25% discount). Contact the LRC for details.

The Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities has four program areas and an inventory of promotional items:

I. SUPPORTING A SAFE AND CARING SCHOOL

This program area helps build a SACS culture. It includes information about SACS, an assessment tool to aid in planning and quick, easy-to-read booklets that review current research on SACS topics and successful programs.

Safe and Caring Schools in Alberta Presentation: video, overheads and 30 brochures
Q # 445297

The SACSC: An Overview (K-12) (Pkg of 30) Describes the origin and objectives of the project (2001, 4 pp.)
Q # 445298

Attributes of a Safe and Caring School (K-12) (Pkg of 30) A brochure for elementary, junior and senior high schools, describing the characteristics of a safe and caring school (1999)
Q # 445313

The SACSC: Elementary Booklet Series (16 booklets) (K-6) (see LRC website)
Q # 445610

The SACSC: Secondary Booklet Series (15 booklets) (7-12) (see LRC website)
Q # 445628

Preschool Bullying: What You Can Do About It—A Guide for Parents and Caregivers (1-6) Provides advice on what parents can do if their child is being bullied or is bullying others (2000, 24 pp.)
Q # 445347

Bullying: What You Can Do About It—A Guide for Primary Level Students (K-3) Contains stories and exercises to help children deal with bullies and to stop bullying others (1999, 28 pp.)
Q # 445397

Bullying: What You Can Do About It—A Guide for Parents and Teachers of Primary Level Students Contains tips to help teachers and parents identify and respond to children who are involved in bullying (2000, 12 pp.)
Q # 445454

Bullying: What You Can Do About It—A Guide for Upper-Elementary Students and Their Parents Directed at students who are the victims, witnesses or perpetrators of bullying, and their parents (2000, 16 pp.)

Q # 445321

Bullying in Schools: What You Can Do About It—A Teacher's Guide (1–6) Describes strategies that teachers can follow to stop bullying in schools (1997, 10 pp.)

Q # 445339

Beyond Bullying: A Booklet for Junior High Students (7–9) Explains what students should do if they are being bullied or if they see someone else being bullied (2000, 12 pp.)

Q #445470

Beyond Bullying: What You Can Do To Help—A Handbook for Parents and Teachers of Junior High Students (7–9) Defines bullying behaviours and suggests strategies that parents and teachers can follow to deal with it (1999, 16 pp.)

Q # 445488

Bullying is Everybody's Problem: Do You Have the Courage to Stop It? (Pkg of 30) (7–12)

A guide for senior high students, defines bullying and provides advice on how to respond to it (1999)

Q # 445305

Bullying and Harassment: Everybody's Problem—A Senior High Staff and Parent Resource (10–12) Provides advice for parents and teachers of high school students on how to deal with bullying (2000, 12 pp.)

Q # 445496

Class Meetings for Safe and Caring Schools (K–12) Explains how regular class meetings can help teachers and students work out conflicts before they become major problems (1998, 20 pp.)

Q # 445587

Expecting Respect: The Peer Education Project—A School-Based Learning Model (K–12)

Provides an overview of Expecting Respect, a project that trains junior and senior high students to make classroom presentations on establishing healthy social relationships (1999, 16 pp.)

Q # 445462

Safe and Caring Schools: Havens for the Mind (K–12) Reviews the role of SACS in healthy brain development and learning

Q # 445503

Media Violence: The Children Are Watching—A Guide for Parents and Teachers (K–12)

Contains tips for parents and teachers in countering the effects on children of media violence (1999, 12 pp.)

Q # 445511

Peer Support and Student Leadership Programs (K–12) Describes a number of programs that have been used successfully at various grade levels to encourage students to help their fellow students (2000, 30 pp.)

Q # 445503

Niska News (K–12) A collection of articles about SACS reprinted from The ATA News (1999, 36 pp.)

Q # 445529

Principals' Best (K–12) Describes activities that various schools in the province have undertaken to create a safe and caring environment for students (1999, 16 pp.) See website.
Q # 445545

Volunteer Mentorship Programs: (K–12) Describes a number of successful programs in which adult volunteers were assigned to serve as mentors to school-aged children (2000, 28 pp.)
Q # 445579

Volunteer Mentorship Program: (K–12) A video portrays programs in which adults from the community work with children to help them develop various skills (1999, 9 ½ minutes)
Q # 445602

Volunteer Mentorship Program: A Practical Handbook (includes 3.5" disk) (K–12) Explains how to set up programs in which adults serve as mentors to school-aged children (1999, 44 pp. plus a computer disk containing sample documents used in the program)
Q # 445595

CHECK LRC FOR NEW TITLES

II. TOWARD A SAFE AND CARING CURRICULUM— RESOURCES FOR INTEGRATION

These resources are recommended and approved by Alberta Learning. They integrate violence prevention into all subjects K–6 and are divided into five topics: (approximately 85 pp.)

1. Building a Safe and Caring Classroom/Living Respectfully
2. Developing Self-Esteem
3. Respecting Diversity and Preventing Prejudice
4. Managing Anger and Dealing with Bullying and Harassment
5. Working It Out Together/Resolving Conflicts Peacefully

Student resource sheets are available in French. To order, check (F).

Kindergarten	Q # 445446	F Q
Grade 1	Q # 445371	F Q
Grade 2	Q # 445389	F Q
Grade 3	Q # 445404	F Q
Grade 4	Q # 445412	F Q
Grade 5	Q # 445420	F Q
Grade 6	Q # 445438	F Q

Anti-Bullying Curriculum Materials: Social Studies Grades 10, 11, 12 Developed by Project Ploughshares Calgary, this booklet contains a series of exercises that teachers can use to incorporate the topic of bullying into the high school social studies curriculum (1999, 81 pp.)
Q # 445563

Classroom Management: A Thinking and Caring Approach Written by Barrie Bennett and Peter Smilanich, this manual outlines numerous strategies that teachers can use to cope with misbehaviour in the classroom and create a learning environment that encourages student learning (1994, 342 pp.)
Q # 445660

SACSC series of six full-color posters A series of six full-color posters highlighting the Project's key concepts.
Q # 444836

III. TOWARD A SAFE AND CARING PROFESSION

SACSC trains inservice leaders and workshop facilitators. The following workshops are designed to help teachers implement the curriculum resources.

Toward a Safe and Caring Curriculum—ATA Resources for Integration:

Kindergarten to Grade 6*

Toward a Safe and Caring Secondary Curriculum—Approaches for Integration*

A series of short sessions focused on strengthening SACS teaching strategies is also available.

IV. TOWARD A SAFE AND CARING COMMUNITY

This program area is designed to help all adults who work with children—parents, teachers, coaches, youth group leaders, music instructors—model and reinforce positive social behaviour, whether at school, at home or in the community. The community program includes a series of 2-2½ hour workshops for adults and older teens.

Living Respectfully*

Developing Self-Esteem*

Respecting Diversity and Preventing Prejudice*

Managing Anger*

Dealing with Bullying*

Working It Out Together — Resolving Conflicts Peacefully*

Who Cares? brochures (Pkg of 30) Provides background on the Safe and Caring Communities Project, a collaborative effort between the ATA and Lions Clubs of Alberta (1998)

Q # 444654

Who Cares? CD-ROM and brochure Describes the Safe and Caring Communities Project, a collaborative effort between the ATA and the Lions Clubs of Alberta (1998)

Q # 444646

Who Cares? video and brochure Describes the Safe and Caring Communities Project, a collaborative effort between the ATA and the Lions Clubs of Alberta (1997, 11 minutes)

Q # 444638

Toward a Safe and Caring Community Workshops Action Handbook: A Guide to Implementation Provides specific information about how to implement the ATA's Safe and Caring Schools Project—Toward a Safe and Caring Community Program. In addition, the handbook provides suggested activities and strategies to help communities continue to work on issues related to enhancing respect and responsibility among children and teens.

Q # 455304

Violence-Prevention Catalogue of Alberta Agencies' Resources Compilation of the information that was gathered from over 200 organizations and community groups who work in the area of violence prevention, and with children and youth in character development through community leadership

Q # 455312

SACSC PROMOTIONAL ITEMS

SACSC cards with color logo and envelopes (Pkg of 40) Blank card and envelope, featuring the SACSC logo

Q # 444547

Niska hand puppet Featuring the Niska mascot

Q # 444555

Niska labels (800 peel & stick labels per pkg) Featuring the Niska mascot

Q # 444571

Niska mouse pad 8 ½" by 9 ½" featuring the Niska mascot

Q # 444563

Niska tattoos (125 per pkg) A 1½" by 1½" temporary tattoo featuring Niska

Q # 444597

Niska water bottles (5 per pkg) 5 white plastic water bottles featuring the Niska logo

Q # 444612

Niska zipper pulls (5 per pkg) Bronze, featuring the Safe and Caring Schools Logo

Q # 444589

SACSC award buttons (Pkg of 30–2 ¼" white buttons)

Q # 444620

Safe and Caring Schools and Communities coffee mug

Q # 444604

Safe and Caring Schools and Communities pencils (Pkg of 30) Inscribed with "Toward a Safe and Caring Community"

Q # 444662

Niska T-Shirt (white, featuring the Niska mascot front and back)

Q # 444745 adult X-large; Q # 444737 adult large; Q # 444729 adult medium;

Q # 444711 adult small; Q # 444703 youth X-large; Q # 444696 youth large;

Q # 444688 youth medium; Q # 444670 youth small

SACSC men's golf shirt (white, featuring the Niska mascot)

Q # 444787 X-large; Q # 444779 large; Q # 444761 medium;

Q # 444753 small

SACSC women's golf shirt (white, sleeveless, featuring the Niska mascot)

Q # 444828 X-large; Q # 444810 large; Q # 444802 medium;

Q # 444795 small

***All workshop materials can be ordered from the SACSC office by inservice leaders and workshop facilitators who have successfully completed the training: e-mail office@sacsc.ca, fax (780) 455-6481 or phone (780) 447-9487.**

