



Research Supporting SACSC Principles

SACSC believes in...

- the “four As” of Safe and Caring Schools: Attachment, Achievement, Autonomy, and Altruism.

Research shows...

- four key principles¹ for successful violence-prevention programs are:
 - positive interest and constructive involvement from adults.
 - firm limits on unacceptable behaviour.
 - consistent use of non-hostile, non-physical discipline rather than punishment.
 - authoritative (not authoritarian) adult-child interaction.

SACSC believes in...

- modeling, supporting and reinforcing positive social behaviour.

Research shows...

- a nurturing environment where adaptive behaviours are modeled improves students’ relationships, behaviour, and achievement in school².

SACSC believes in...

- teaching children in a way that builds respect and responsibility, builds self-esteem, develops anger management, prevents and deals with bullying and develops an ability to solve problems and resolve conflict peacefully.

Research shows...

- in order to be safe and caring, a school culture must teach students to stand up and speak out against bullies³.
- students need to be empowered to work with each other and with adults to keep schools safe³.
- successful violence-prevention programs teach students conflict resolution, stress relief, anger management, mediation and communication skills⁴.

SACSC believes in...

Giving children support while they correct the harm they have caused, rather than relying on suspension, helps children take responsibility for inappropriate behaviour.

Research shows...

- students who are suspended or expelled from school are most often labelled ‘trouble-makers’, at-risk for failing academically or dropping out of school, involved in the criminal justice system, and sitting at home or out on the streets, with no educational alternatives⁴.

¹ Olweus, D. (1993). *Bullying at school: What we know and what we can do*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.

² Walker, H., Colvin, G., & Ramsey, E. (1995). *Antisocial behavior in school: Strategies and best practices*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks Cole.

³ Orbit (2004). Interview with Barbara Coloroso. *Orbit*. Vol 34, No 2 (2-5).

⁴ Zuker, M.A. (2004). A legal perspective on school violence and bullying. *Orbit*, Vol 34, No 2 (14-17).

SACSC believes in...

- using teaching strategies such as cooperative learning to develop communication skills, encourage collaboration and provide opportunities for practicing positive social behaviours.

Research shows...

- cooperative learning reduces conflicts among different racial, ethnic, social, and economic groups by providing opportunities for students to make and maintain friendships⁵.
- cooperative learning is an effective tool for preventing violence³.
- cooperative learning improves problem-solving skills and enhances language learning in Aboriginal students⁶.
- cooperative learning groups do better on tasks than do students working as individuals⁷.

SACSC believes in...

- all school staff integrating and reinforcing safe, caring and inclusive concepts into the curriculum as well as into whole-school and extra-curricular activities.

Research shows...

- violence prevention programs must be fully integrated into the student's program of study in order to be effective⁵.
- how individual teachers view themselves as contributors to the whole school appears to be important to their level of satisfaction beyond the classroom⁸.
- to effectively prevent violence and bullying, schools must provide training for all school staff, not just teachers⁴.

SACSC believes in...

- the importance of collaborating with parents, community members and other organizations to promote safe and caring concepts because children and youth are the responsibility of all the adults in the community.

Research shows...

- that a relationship of trust between the school and the home has positive effects on student learning^{9 & 10}.
- school districts that reported academic improvements based on achievement test results had made partnerships with community agencies¹¹.

⁵ Coghlan, R. (2000). The teaching of anti-violence strategies within the English curriculum. *English Journal*. May 2000 (84-89).

⁶ Demmert, W.J. Jr. (2001). Improving academic performance among native American students: A review of the research literature (Report No. NCRTL-RTR). Charleston, W.V. ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools.

⁷ Johnson, D. W., Johnson, R. T., and Taylor, B. (1993). Impact of cooperative and individualistic learning on high-ability students' achievement, self-esteem, and social acceptance. *Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol 133, 839-844.

⁸ Ma, X. and Macmillan, R. (1999). Influences of workplace conditions on teachers' job satisfaction. *Journal of Education Research*, Vol 93, No 1 (39-47).

⁹ Bryk, A. and Schneider, B. (2002). *Trust in schools: A core resource for improvement*. New York: Russel Sage Foundation.

¹⁰ Karcher, M.J. (2002). The cycle of violence and disconnection among rural middle school students: Teacher disconnection as a consequences of violence. *Journal of School Violence*. Vol 1, No 1 (35-51).

¹¹ Maguire, P. (2003). District practices and student achievement: Lessons from Alberta. SAEF.



Qualitative Research Data Collected Using Focus Group Methodology

❖ SACSC Programs Improve Student Achievement and Motivation in School.

“The SACSC lessons are building self-esteem and making students more self-assured. The SACSC activities have generated excitement in the students that we don’t often see.” (Teacher, Wabasca, 2005)

“We are seeing a real willingness in the kids to be involved and express themselves to their peers that we never saw before, especially in kids that were reserved and quiet.” (Teacher, Wabasca, 2005)

“We have high school students that used to test at elementary levels that are now testing at a grade 12 level. They have turned their whole lives around. They are speaking in mature ways about mature subjects, because we have been incorporating SACSC topics in all the classes.” (High school teacher, Wabasca, 2005)

“The ‘Expecting Respect’ student group has grown by leaps and bounds. They are meeting twice a week on their own time and have really improved their leadership skills.” (Teacher, Wabasca, 2005)

“Our Kindergarten class is just flying this year and I think it definitely has to do with SACSC. We’ve become aware of the idea of safe and caring, so now it is always there, in everything we are doing. (Administrator, Wabasca, 2005)

❖ SACSC programs improve student attendance by creating a safe, caring and comfortable atmosphere for students and staff

“We have 17 out of 20 students that were labelled non-attenders and reluctant learners now regularly attending class. These are students that, four years ago, never attended school. I believe it’s because I now incorporate the safe and caring values and lessons into every moment of every class, everyday. They come now because it’s become safer.” (High school teacher, Wabasca, 2005)

“A lot of the at-risk students are coming to class and participating more because they enjoy the interactive work and hands-on activities that SACSC lessons use.” (Teacher, Wabasca, 2005)

“Attendance has gone up in every class (since SACSC).” (Administer, Wabasca, 2005)

“It’s easier to learn when you want to come to school.”(High school student, Wabasca focus group, 2004)

“People like to come to school (now) because they know it is safe.” (Elementary student, Wabasca focus group, 2004)

❖ SACSC programs reduce bullying and violence in schools and communities.

“There is not as much violence this year, and there is less fighting everywhere. Students are feeling safer because they are no longer afraid of getting beat up.” (Junior high students, Wabasca focus group, 2004)

“In grade one and two I got called mean things and I also got hit... now I can tell a teacher to stop the bullies.” (Elementary student, Wabasca focus group, 2004)

“I have gotten nicer...I used to push people off snow banks, but when (SACSC) started, I learned not to do that and I haven’t done it ever since.”(Elementary student, Lakedell focus group, 2005)

“We have students that are emotionally, physically and psychologically endangered. SACSC is absolutely working for them. They haven’t blown up since we started the lessons (about anger management).” (High school teacher, Wabasca, 2005)

“There is a change in the playground, now people say stop when others are hurting or bothering them and the students do stop, they listen.” (Elementary student, Lakedell focus group, 2005)

“Last year I didn’t help people when they’d get hurt and this year I’m helping them.” (Elementary student, Lakedell focus group, 2005)

“Physical violence has gone way down (since SACSC).” (Administrator, Wabasca, 2005)

❖ SACSC programs improve the learning environment for students and staff.

“I have noticed a difference in myself and in the other staff since SACSC started. We make a point to reach out to others now. We have all become kinder. We are reaching out to the parents more. Its not hard work and the rewards are great.” (High school teacher, Wabasca, 2005)

“It’s nice to see that adults care about the students. Teachers that are open, listen and care make a big difference.” (High school student, Wabasca focus group, 2004)

“Now I’m listening more and addressing issues immediately.” (Teacher, Wabasca focus group, 2004)

“I like Safe and Caring Schools because there are no bullies around.” (Elementary student, Wabasca focus group, 2004)

“It’s really taken an effect on the kids... I can see it in the school and I can see it on the bus... (the students) talk about the goose... they talk about how they’re supposed to behave and how to respect one another. It’s a really big improvement.” (Support staff, Wabasca focus group, 2004)

“I have students from grade 12 coming into my class at lunch because it’s become a safe room. They come to hang out with the younger students and work on projects, even on their own time.” (High school teacher, Wabasca, 2005)

“Now teachers talk to students about problems instead of sending them to the office.” (High school student, Wabasca focus group, 2004)

“There is a friendlier feeling in the staff room, and generally among staff members.”(Teacher, Wabasca focus group, 2004)

“The lower elementary has really come together – the children have really responded and are more caring toward one another.” (Administrator, Wabasca focus group, 2004)