



NISKA

NEWS

Volume 4, Number 3

November 2000

A tribute to Becky Pretli



Becky Pretli's enthusiasm, sincerity and frankness will be missed by members of the ATA's Safe and Caring Schools Steering Committee.

Working with the steering committee since its inception in 1996, Becky has provided insight from a school teacher's and an administrator's perspective. Her input was invaluable in the formulation of the project's goal and the development of "Supporting a Safe and Caring School: Common Attributes."

Becky is an openly caring principal teacher who greatly values the students in her life. She often asked for their input to help with the development of our SACS approaches and resources.

The ATA's Safe and Caring Schools Steering Committee congratulates Becky and wishes her well in her new position as an assessment specialist with Alberta Learning's Learner Assessment Branch.

Stage Kids: Musical theatre performance kits

Looking for new, cool and entertaining scripts?

If you are interested in powerful, socially aware drama that seeks to entertain as well as educate, check out Stage Kids The Edu-Tainment Company.

This registered, nonprofit, charitable and Canadian company has been writing professional musical theatre scores and scripts since 1986, from which it has developed an extensive repertoire. Each production surrounds a topical social issue of interest to children and youth today. Stage Kids has a unique mandate, which leads The Edu-Tainment Company to create purposeful theatre that seeks to "promote and encourage positive self-esteem, character

building and social responsibility [in young people] that ultimately results in acceptable behavior and respect for others."

Its newest musical, *The Election*, premiered in Toronto in the spring of 2000. This show, which deals with issues of bullying, harassment and the impact these negative forces have in our schools, has captivated numerous young audiences with its story of "passion, urgency and truth."

The Election is available to educators and community theatres in the form of a musical theatre performance kit for \$189 (plus shipping and handling) in Canada. For more information or to order, please visit <www.stagekids.com> or phone 1-888-53-STAGE.

Journaling about bullying: Part 2

JoAnn Blatchford, a teacher at Stettler Middle School, has provided the ATA's Safe and Caring Schools Project with a series of excerpts from her students' journals about what they see as solutions to violence. The journal topic was "What are some real-life solutions to combat violence/bullying in schools?"

The first three excerpts appeared in the October 2000 issue of Niska News. Below is the remaining excerpt:



“At some time or another, pretty much everyone in our society will have been somehow affected by bullying. Whether they are picked on all through school or are on the other end and occasionally spew out a rude comment to a “loser,” bullying is common in almost everything we do, especially at school. We see people being bullied all the time, to the point where we almost ignore it. But the thing is bullying can have lasting effects, deeper than just the noticeable scars.

“I mean, as we’ve seen before many different times, bullying can be blamed for a lot of serious situations. As in suicides, often people who kill themselves have been bullied and feel that this is their only way out. Also, as in the Columbine shootings, those kids claimed that the way the others in their school bullied them was their reason for such a bloody rampage.

“As for the rules we have in Stettler Middle School regarding bullying, I think to a point they’re as much as we can do. We discourage

put-downs, prohibit weapons, punish people who get into fights... what more can be done?

Obviously, the previous rules haven’t done that much good, but the next step isn’t very clear. The government feels that more money should be put into having increased numbers of school counselors, more people to talk to about the things that go on in today’s schools. But I know that I, personally, would way rather talk to my teacher who was educated about the matter of bullying and violence, if a trauma were ever to occur in my school, than to some stranger. Also, I think that to truly get rid of as much bullying as we can, we have to try to have the rules enforced more by the students. I mean, if your peers tell you to stop, you’re more likely than if you were lectured by a teacher. I think we need to have students stick up for other students, and soon it will be “uncool” to pick on people.

“Of course, this is really easy for me to say, as I’m just writing down a suggestion in a short essay for language class, not trying to save our school from future suicides or violence. But even still, we need to acknowledge all of the bullying going on in our school, not ignore it, and try to make it everyone’s problem. If we work together, we’ll be able to lessen the toll that bullying takes on SMS.”

Greetings from Nepal

The ATA’s Safe and Caring Schools Project has been contacted by Chauyen Lai Shrestha, president of Youth Alliance for Development in Nepal, who is interested in establishing a working relationship between Alberta and Nepalese schools on issues of violence prevention. If your school is interested in participating in the endeavor, please contact Mr Shrestha at Youth Alliance for Development, PO Box 3969, Kathmandu, Nepal, tel: 00977.1.277173, fax: 00977.1.331964, email: <chauyen@col.com.np>.

“Mirroring” teens’ emotions can help solve problems

“Mirroring” may be able to help you get to the heart of what your teen is trying to tell you.

In “mirroring,” you use your own words to gently reflect back your teen’s feelings and emotions. This is very different from imitating, a sarcastic technique in which you repeat back exactly what you hear.

The following conversation is an example of how mirroring works:

Your teen: “I’m going to quit that stupid football team!”

You: “You really sound upset. It must have been a bad day at practice.”

Your teen: “And I’m so sick of my hands hurting all the time from that stupid ball!”

You: “It is so frustrating when you’re working really hard and things don’t go right.”

Your teen: “I dropped that stupid ball five times today!”

You: “You’re worried about the game on Saturday.”

Your teen: “What if I drop an important pass and let everyone down?”

You: “No doubt about it, your position on the squad is a big responsibility. It’s so understandable that you want to do your best.”

Your teen: “I really do! Maybe I just need a hot shower and a good night’s sleep.”

In mirroring, don’t vent your own emotions. This will only serve to start an argument. And don’t give advice. Gentle affirmations keep your teen talking and point him to his own solutions.

Source: Sean Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens*, 1998 (Fireside, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020), ISBN: 0-684-85609-3, paperback, 266 pp., \$14.

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Make Internet experiences safe with rules, supervision

From e-mail to research, the Internet can be a wonderful tool for children. But parents often worry about their child’s safety online. The FBI recommends these safety tips for families:

- **Set rules.** Don’t let your child play on the Internet unless you are nearby to supervise. Put the computer in a place where you can keep an eye on what your child is doing. Know the sites your child visits.
- **Talk about your values.** It’s up to you to let your child know which sites are off limits and why.
- **Be careful about giving** out personal information. Unless you say it’s okay, your child’s name, phone number or address shouldn’t be given out.
- **Remember that people** may not be who they seem. You can’t see or hear people on the Internet. The person who says “she” is a “12-year-old girl” could be a much older man.
- **Be careful about face-to-face** meetings with online friends. Your child should check with you first. A meeting should be in a public place, and you should be present.

Source: “Safety Tips for Kids on the Internet,” FBI, <http://www.fbi.gov/kids/crimepre/internet/internet.htm> (6/00).

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**University of Alberta
Faculty of Education
Department of Educational Psychology**

EDPY 497 (B3)/597 (B10)
Safe and Caring Schools and Communities
Winter Session
January 2001

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Email: <charles.norman@ualberta.ca>

Course Outline

Course Description

This one-credit course will be offered in conjunction with the 2000 Safe and Caring Schools & Communities Conference, "The Solution Lies Within All of Us...", November 23-25, 2000, at the Shaw Conference Centre in Edmonton. Students will select presentations from the conference offerings, which are of interest and relevance to their own professional/learning context. The expectation is that student will attend 12-13 hours of conference presentations. The course is scheduled for the 2000/2001 Winter Term (January to April 2001) and will involve a project in addition to conference attendance, as described under Course Requirements.

Course Requirements

- Attend conference sessions as scheduled (total of 12-13 hours).
- For each session attended, the student will record title, name of presenter, length of presentation, as well as completing a brief summary of the key points for each session and a brief critique of each session as relevant to the student's own professional/learning context.
- Submit a short paper of 8-10 pages (for 497 credit), or 12-15 pages (for 597 credit), discussing relevance and applicability of selected content presented at the conference, to the provision of a safe and caring environment for children and youth. Provide support for your views from the Safe and Caring literature.
- Please discuss the topic you propose to address in your paper with Dr Norman ahead of time to ensure suitability and feasibility. This can be done using phone or email or in person during the conference.
- Paper and summaries to be submitted to Dr Norman by or before April 11, 2001.

Grading

This course will be graded on a credit/non-credit basis.

Course Weighting (1-0-0)

This course carries one credit.

Please contact Loretta Moore in the Department of Educational Psychology at (780) 492-1151 for information on registering for the course. Students must register prior to January 12, 2001.

Niska News is a newsletter produced by the ATA's Safe and Caring Schools (SACS) Project for school and community members. The goal of the SACS Project is to encourage practices that model and reinforce socially responsible and respectful behaviors so that learning and teaching can take place in a safe and caring environment. Achieving this goal requires the involvement of not just parents and teachers but also all the important adults in a young person's life. This newsletter is designed to provide timely, up-to-date information about the project. For more information, contact the SACS office by phoning 447-9487 (in Edmonton) or 1-800-232-7208 (from elsewhere in Alberta). Copying and distributing Niska News is permitted as long as the source is credited. The newsletter is available online through the Alberta Teachers' Association's website at <www.teachers.ab.ca>. Please go to the Publications section and then to Newsletters/Fact Sheets.



SAFE AND CARING SCHOOLS & COMMUNITIES CONFERENCE

Nov. 23, 2000 - Preconference - Westin Hotel
Nov. 24 and 25, 2000 - Conference - Shaw Conference Centre

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Pre-conference sessions:

Pre-conference sessions will be offered on Thursday, November 23, 2000 from 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. at the Westin Hotel. The pre-conference fee is \$150.00 in addition to the conference registration fees (includes materials and lunch). The pre-conference sessions will provide in-depth training in the following areas:

1. *Supporting Safe, Secure and Caring Schools in Alberta* (administrators, police, trustees)
2. *Toward a Safe and Caring Curriculum ECS - Grade 6* (elementary)
3. *Toward a Safe and Caring Curriculum - Behavior Strategies* (secondary)
4. *Toward a Safe and Caring Curriculum - Instructional Strategies* (secondary)
5. *Toward a Safe and Caring Community* (school councils/parents/other adults)
6. *Conflict Resolution and Mediation Training* (General)

Group rates:

Group registration rates will only be applicable if registration forms are submitted together. Teams must be from same school, district or organization. Each team member must complete a form at the time of registering. Substitutions will be permitted during the conference. No refunds will be made after November 10, 2000 for members under the group rate. One receipt will be issued to the originator of the cheque or money order.

Hotel information:

The Westin Hotel, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada is the location for the Preconference and the host hotel for the main conference which is at the Shaw Conference Centre. Delegates are responsible for their own reservations and will be accommodated on a first come, first booked basis. Please make your hotel arrangements as soon as possible by calling the Westin (780) 426-3636 and asking for the SACS conference rates.

Day care services:

Day care services will be available on-site at the Shaw Conference Centre during the conference (But not at the Preconference at the Westin Hotel). Services will be provided for \$10.00 per day. Please indicate on the registration form whether you are in need of this service and for how many children. Parents are responsible for providing their child's lunch each day.

Cancellation/refund policy:

- Refund cheques will be issued after December 1, 2000 less \$40.00 processing fee
- A \$25.00 fee will be applied on all returned cheques due to non-sufficient funds.

Registration deadline:

November 1, 2000: Receipts will be mailed on or before November 1, 2000.

November 2, 2000: \$40 late fees applied. Receipts will be available for pickup at the conference.





SAFE AND CARING SCHOOLS & COMMUNITIES CONFERENCE CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

TO RECEIVE THE GROUP RATE, REGISTRATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED TOGETHER
One Registration form per person. Reproduce as Needed. Registration Form must be complete.

Name _____
(As it should appear on the name tag: First, last)

Title: _____

School/District/Organization: _____

Address: _____

Daytime phone w/area code: (____) _____ Fax: (____) _____

E-mail address: _____

Do you want your e-mail address added to the SACS list server (for future announcements) yes no

Would you be interested in being a moderator for the conference? yes no

Do you require special provisions? yes - please specify _____

Do you require day care services? yes days needed _____ # of children _____

(\$10.00 per day for day care services)

Ages of child(ren) _____

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FEES

Please applicable fees

	Before Nov. 01/00	After Nov. 2/00
	GST included in all prices	
Pre-conference (not included in Conference fee)		
Nov 23, Thursday: (Session # _____) <small>Indicate session attending</small>	\$150.00 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$190.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
Conference:		
Nov 23 – 25, Thursday Evening, Friday & Saturday	\$170.00 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$210.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
One day only: Fri _____ or Sat _____	\$110.00 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$150.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
Group rate 6-10 delegates, per person:	\$150.00 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$190.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
Group rate 11+ delegates, per person:	\$140.00 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$180.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
Student (ID # _____)	\$ 40.00 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 80.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
Day Care Services: \$10.00 per day X # of days: _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
TOTAL \$ _____		\$ _____

Please make Cheques/Money Orders Payable to: **Safe and Caring Schools Conference** (No purchase orders)

TO RECEIVE GROUP RATES, REGISTRATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED TOGETHER

Complete and mail registration form(s) and payment(s) together to:
SACS Conference, Suite 246, 11215 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta. T5K 0L5
G.S.T. # 106694425RT

DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION – NOVEMBER 10, 2000

Any questions contact Brenda Sautner: e-mail: bsautner@netcom.ca

For Office Use Only:		
Date received: _____	Cheque/Money Order #: _____	Amount Received: _____
Daycare: (# of Children): _____	Days Needed: _____	
Preconference	Conference	One day Only
1P <input type="checkbox"/> 2P <input type="checkbox"/> 3P <input type="checkbox"/> 4P <input type="checkbox"/> 5P <input type="checkbox"/> 6P <input type="checkbox"/>	Fri & Sat <input type="checkbox"/>	Fri <input type="checkbox"/> or Sat <input type="checkbox"/>
Receipt #: _____	Sent on: _____	Group Rate: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Cancellation: _____	Date Refunded: _____	Cheque # or Returned Original Cheque: _____