

**Safe Communities Institute
Safe School Climate Certificate Program
Curriculum
(24 hours)**

Session 1:

Course: Building a Safe School Climate for all Students

Instructor: John Vandenburg

Description: This class will serve to help participants understand, develop, evaluate and manage their safe school climate initiatives. The class will provide an overview of numerous risk factors and youth trends impacting the development of a positive school climate and the safety of all students. Participants will learn the importance of establishing a stakeholder network and the partnerships needed for effective prevention and intervention planning. Participants will learn how to maintain the stakeholder network and utilize student engagement activities to assess, measure, and address the critical issues impacting a safe school climate for all students.

Course: School Safety Plans – It starts here!

Instructor: Tom Steele

Description:

For learning to take place, students have to feel that they are in a safe, caring, positive and inclusive environment. Schools have a responsibility to provide equal educational opportunity and prevent discrimination. Every kindergarten through grade 12 school should have a Comprehensive School Safety Plan (CSSP) that includes all elements of school safety, including conditions at the school such as climate and physical environment, disaster planning, safe ingress and egress of pupils, parents, and school employees. This class will discuss the components of a CSSP including methods to improve school climate and physical environment.

Session 2

Course: Gangs

Instructor: Dr. Aquil Basheer

Description: This class will provide an overview on violence intermediation, public safety and hardcore gang intervention. In addition, this lecture will discuss the history of gangs in LA and how they have evolved since the 60's, this talk will also include perspectives on working with incarcerated youth and in neighborhoods where community violence is prevalent. He will be providing a comprehensive overview with answers and solutions to address this important topic.

Course – PLUS Program Development

Instructor: John Vandenburg

Description: Discover how to utilize youth leadership classes to empower students to gather data and work alongside the PBIS/MTSS Team, School Safety Team, and the School Climate Committee to address the critical issues impacting their school climate. The PLUS Program is a three- part cyclical process that includes (1) implementing youth development initiatives, (2) consistently assessing the environment, and (3) planning actions that are reflected in the data findings. In this class, participants will gain access to Direction Survey and set up a user account for their school or district. Understanding how to gather consistent quantitative data using Direction Survey will enable school sites with trending data to effectively action plan throughout the school year. Participants will begin the process of developing surveys that will serve as a tool to assess the experiences of the students, staff and parents.

Session 3

Course: Sex Trafficking and Social Media Exploitation in a School Environment

Instructor: Opal Singleton

Description: Sex trafficking and social media exploitation are two of the fastest and most damaging crimes that affect young people through out Southern California. Often the grooming and recruitment process starts on campus. Based on real cases, we will examine a variety of types of gang trafficking, types of pimping, methods of grooming, medical signs of abuse and the psychological factors impacting a victim's decision to request assistance. We will explore how predators, pimps and pedophiles use social media and peer pressure to access, groom, recruit and exploit teenagers. We will discuss advanced technologies such as mass audience live streaming, crypto currency, encryption, artificial intelligence, Discord, gaming chat rooms and the Dark Net are used in social media exploitation, sextortion and child abuse materials. We will identify signs a student may be a victim of exploitation and how to report it.

Course: Trends, Prevention, and Intervention: Strategies for Reducing Vaping and Other Related Disciplinary Issues

Instructor: Phillip Falcetti, MPH; Ashley Devin; Emily Lobo; Blair Veraza – National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependency

Description: This class is designed to provide insight into developing a positive school-wide culture. The strategies presented will reveal tips on leadership skills, increasing student engagement, reducing suspension rates and fostering a safe environment on your school campus. Attendees will be educated on current vaping trends and will learn how to implement activities and presentations to reduce and address existing issues.

Course: PLUS Program Development

Instructor: John Vandenburg

Description: This class will examine a series of youth development research findings and safe school recommendations that will serve as the foundation for program planning. Participants learn the protective factors needed to effectively address building healthy youth and a safe school climate. Research shows that in the development of a Peer to Peer program the students and staff involved are key indicators of the success of the program. In this class, participants will learn the essentials to selecting the right student leaders and staff to oversee the implementation of the PLUS Program. Participants will identify roles and responsibilities as they begin to develop the organizational infrastructure of a Youth-Led Participatory Action Research model for student leadership.

Session 4**Course: Homegrown Violent Extremism****Instructor: Dr. Erroll Southers**

Description: The emerging phenomenon of homegrown violent extremism necessitates a more robust and interdisciplinary understanding of how individuals progress through radicalization and engage in violent activity, revealing the factors and motivations that can lead to domestic acts of terror. The information and analysis presented during this course are intended to build a comprehensive understanding of HVE by reviewing the complexities of defining terrorism generally and homegrown violent extremism specifically. Violent extremism as a phenomenon will be explored through its multifaceted characteristics, the role of legitimizing ideology and the factors that contribute to violent action. We will examine racial, religious and issue-oriented extremist ideologies, their motivations and how individuals may become recruited and radicalized to the point of considering an attack in furtherance of their political objective(s).

Course: Focusing on Mental Wellness in K12 Education**Instructor: Gina Seiz, LCSW**

Description: According to the World Health Organization, mental wellness is defined as “a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community. ”<http://www.americanmentalwellness.org> ”
- Mental wellness encompasses our emotional, psychological, and social well-being and finding and finding balance in these areas. It is also discovering how to perform at optimal levels in each of these areas to maintain balance or a state of well-being.

This interactive class will give participants activities and tools, to be used in any setting, to tap into these areas and help promote mental wellness. If we can empower youth to take an active role in discovering the key to their own mental wellness, success in all areas will follow

Course – PLUS Program Development

Instructor: John Vandenburg

Description: Research is finding that student voice is an essential ingredient in youth development and an effective source to assess a Safe School Climate. In this class, participants will learn how to gather qualitative data using a student led forum. In a forum, a diverse cross section of students will identify the critical issues impacting their school climate. This forum process enables school site leadership with a consistent source of information that represents the voice of all students. The forum builds a community of young people who engage in a discussion that not only recognize the risk factors impacting their schools, but as important they single out student activities/interventions that are needed for action plans.

Session 5:

Course: From Victim to Defender: Teaching Students to Combat Bullying

Instructor: Dr. Eric Landers

Description: Research has consistently demonstrated that bullying in schools is a global problem. It threatens students' well-being everywhere. The issue, however, is identifying how many of these incidents constitute bullying, versus simply conflict or poor social skills. Many times, students are left without the social skills to solve simple conflict which eventually leads to bullying. To address this issue, students need to be equipped with the skills to advocate for their own well-being. This session focuses on teaching students to identify what is bullying and what is natural conflict. Participants will learn how to teach students to advocate for themselves, find solutions, or seek help without being a labeled snitch. Participants will engage in discussion about methods to identify bullies and victims of bullying, how to lead students in instruction to prevent bullying, and how to empower all students to act as defenders rather than victims. At the end of this session, participants will develop a school-wide plan for teaching students to identify conflict, identify instances of bullying, and identify higher order social emotional skills to prevent "conflict" from becoming bullying. Emphasis is placed on the prediction and prevention of conflict rather than the traditional reactive approach to bullying.

Instructor: John Vandenburg

Description: Developing effective action plans will be the result of the quantitative and qualitative data findings of the PLUS Program. Participants will learn how to utilize a set of tools to help in the development of a comprehensive Safe School Climate action plan. Activity development will align with PBIS/MTSS, School Wide SEL initiatives, and Safe

School Plans. Participants will utilize their own local quantitative data to identify the risk factors impacting their schools. Participants will then use those findings to begin the process to develop activities/interventions that can serve as protective factors for all students.

Session 6

Course: Suicide: Prevention, Intervention, Postvention

Instructor: Dean Lesicko

Description: Suicide is the second-leading cause of death for those ages 10-24. The rate for this age group has climbed steadily since 2007 and has taken an even stronger upward trend since 2011. This workshop will address some of the factors that appear to be affecting this trend and will provide some strategies to help schools address this growing concern. Additionally, participants will be provided with some postvention strategies to help assist students, families, and staff members in the aftermath of a suicide death.

Course: PLUS Program Development

Instructor: John Vandenburg

Description: Situational learning through tabletop discussions are effective in working through a variety of scenarios that impact school safety and building a positive school climate for all. Participants will work through in teams a series of tabletop discussions, that will help in the development of their action plans. Participants understand how to use Tabletop discussions as a needs assessment tool for their planning, as well as a training source for staff and student development. The situational learning tabletop will require participants to apply the knowledge, tools and program development strategies they have accumulated throughout the Safe School Climate Certificate program.