

SAPP Network News

January 2004

New Year – New Beginnings

In education, we are fortunate; we have two beginnings - August and January. I hope this January new beginning brings renewed spirit and excitement for 2004. We are renewed and excited about what this year will bring to the SAPP Office. As always, we continue to work on projects that support you in our collective mission of meeting the social/emotional needs of students (and each other!). By doing so, we support the District strategic goals of valuing diversity and increasing achievement.

We cannot forget the power of positive school climate, attitude, social skills education, and our own emotional well-being in the overall educational picture, a picture which has gotten narrower because of the outside demands placed on us. Although these goals (academic achievement vs. healthy students) are often seen as at odds with each other, they in fact support and reinforce each other while providing balance to all of us. We will continue to support the District and SAPP goals through staff development, mini-grants, data and evaluation support, etc.

An important step to gathering data on school climate occurred this fall as Pam Duran and I conducted focus groups with students as a follow-up to the School Climate Survey. Thanks to each of you for your on-site support and organization. The groups provided us with valuable feedback on the Survey and how we can improve/refine it to make it an accurate tool.

I'll just highlight a few of the other projects in which we are involved. We will be offering our "Bully-Proofing Your School" training February 4 (this is a train-the-trainer model; once you have this training, you can take the training back to your school staff). We will also be offering the ASIST training (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills training) February 18 and 19 at the Education Center. This training focuses on developing "suicide first aid" skills for identifying suicidal intentions and effectively intervening in suicidal situations.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge and thank Boulder County Public Health (Barett Dunn and Chuck Stout), our Evaluations Office in BVSD (Carolyn Haug), the State Health Department, Barb Conroy, all of our High School administrators, and the many volunteers who helped us administer the Youth Risk Behavior Survey this fall. Results from the survey will be out in March and provide us with much needed information on the risk behaviors of our students.

Enjoy your second new beginning.

Lisa Cech