



## DEFUSING ANGER & AGGRESSION

Safe Strategies for Secondary School Teachers

### INTRODUCTION

**S**chools can no longer claim with certainty that they are safe places for learning. In fact, safety is one of the most pressing needs facing our schools today. According to the National School Safety Center (2006)\*:

- In 2005, 28 percent of students ages 12 to 18 reported being bullied at school during the previous six months. Of these, 24 percent said they were injured as a result of the incident.
- Between 1998 and 2002, teachers were the victims of 144,000 thefts and 90,000 violent crimes (rape, sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault) at school.
- In 2003, six percent of students in grades 9-12 reported carrying a gun, knife or club to school within the previous 30 days.



\*NSSC Review of School Safety Research (2006). Westlake Village, CA: National School Safety Center.

Educators have to deal with antisocial behavior on a daily basis. Here are some facts:

- Antisocial behavior early in a child's life is the single best predictor of delinquency in adolescence.
- 70% of antisocial youth have been arrested at least once within three years of leaving school.
- Aggressive behavior is very stable over time.
- The more severe the antisocial behavior, the less likely it is to change.

What are the solutions?

- The problems must be owned by society as a whole so that symptoms and causes are addressed.
- Multi-dimensional approaches are needed that address the community, school, and home.
- Approaches must be balanced to include incentives for positive behavior as well as deterrent measures for problem behavior.
- All age groups need to be targeted, from pre-school through high school.
- Best practices should be used to manage and prevent serious problem behavior.