

Ministry of Education

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MEMORANDUM TO: Directors of Education

FROM: Elizabeth Harding
Director, Learning Environment Branch,
Instruction and Leadership Development Division

DATE: January 18, 2010

SUBJECT: Keeping Our Kids Safe at School Act

The purpose of this memo is to inform you about the support materials available to you to help communicate to staff and parents about new legislation coming into effect on February 1, 2010. The legislation outlines the requirements for responding to and reporting incidents, notifying victim's parents and delegation of authority.

Keeping Our Kids Safe at School builds on Ontario's safe schools strategy and is part of a comprehensive response to the Safe Schools Action Team (SSAT) Report, *Shaping a Culture of Respect In Our Schools: Promoting Safe and Healthy Relationships*. It will help to create a positive school climate and help make schools safer for students and staff.

To supplement the training on the new legislation, we are offering these additional supports to help staff understand the changes and communicate them to parents.

Attached to this email you will find:

- 1/ fact sheet for parents, also available on the Ministry website
 - 2/ matte article for school newspapers
 - 3/ detailed Questions and Answers (Q and As) for school staff available in this email only.
- These Q and As relate to the *Keeping Our Kids Safe at School Act* and Revised Policy and Program Memoranda (PPM) 144 and 145.

The fact sheet explains the requirements for staff to respond to incidents of inappropriate and disrespectful behaviour and report serious student incidents to the principal, and what happens when an incident is reported. Principals can share the fact sheet with students and parents in report cards, distribute it at assemblies, make it available in the school or guidance counsellor's office, or distribute through any other means they feel appropriate.

The matte article offers another way to communicate with parents about the legislation. It can be used in a school newsletter or on a school website.

The Question and Answers are intended to help board staff clarify any issues about the requirements for responding to or reporting on incidents, notifying victim's parents and delegation of authority. They will not be posted on the Ministry website.

The Ministry also has other materials online and in print to help answer parents' questions about school safety. Schools can use these materials to reach out to parents and promote discussion on this important topic. They can be used in individual interviews with parents, at parent information nights, or other occasions when parents may have questions about various aspects of school safety.

They include:

1/ *Making Ontario Schools Safer*: an overview of the changes that have come into effect with progressive discipline, suspension and expulsion.

2/ *Bullying: We Can All Help Stop It*: this brochure is available in 22 languages.

3/ *A Parent's Guide to the Code of Conduct*: an outline of the roles and responsibilities for school staff, parents, students and community partners.

4/ *Progressive Discipline*: an overview of Ontario's new approach to discipline.

5/ *Suspension and Expulsion: What Parents Need to Know*: a detailed guide to the suspension and expulsion process.

Copies of any of these documents can be ordered through the ServiceOntario website at www.serviceontario.ca/publications using your EDU name and password.

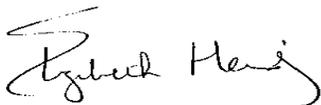
Schools who have forgotten or have not received their user name and password, can send an email to webpubont-EDU@ontario.ca.

These documents can also be downloaded at www.ontario.ca/safeschools as a PDF.

In addition to the materials attached in this email, you should also have received an instructional DVD that enhances the training for school staff. The training modules are also available online at <http://bill157.apandrose.com>.

We hope you will find this information helpful. Thank you for helping us build a more positive learning and teaching environment.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Harding,
Director, Learning Environment Branch,
Instruction and Leadership Development Division
Ministry of Education