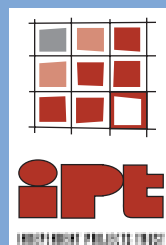




# *Protecting Your School From Violence and Crime*

*Guidelines for Principals and School Governing Bodies*



These guidelines were produced by the IPT under the auspices of CASS (Community Alliance for Safe Schools), an independent alliance of government departments and government, non-government, community-based and voluntary organisations that are working together to help provide programmes for school security. The guidelines were drafted over three months at the end of 1998, edited in February 1999, presented at a CASS public meeting on 24 February 1999 and distributed for comment until end March 1999. We would like to thank all those organisations and individuals whose ideas, comments and contributions made these guidelines possible.

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# *Introduction*

**T**here is no magic in this book. It requires hard work and co operation to create school environments free from crime and violence. These guidelines offer information and practical advice to the two groups who are in a position to provide a plan for school security according to the South African Schools Act of 1996 (Chapter Three, Section 16).



## ***These groups are:***

- The School Governing Body (SGB), which is a legal body of parents, educators, non-teaching staff and learners (in the case of secondary schools) who are responsible for governing the school including its safety aspects.
- Professional management which refers to those who administer the school on a daily basis (the principal, deputy principal, and various educators).

It is emphasised in the Schools Act that the professional management and SGB must act in partnership with all the stakeholders in the school to ensure that schools provide a good education in a secure environment. This information provides a way forward that is in concert with Department of Education policy.

These guidelines are divided into three sections which together will provide you with an overview of some critical components in creating a security plan for your school. These include:

- 1 Taking responsibility for security : The School Security Committee
2. Assessing and monitoring your school security problems
3. Planning for School Security, including:
  - Community involvement
  - Securing the premises
  - Creating democratic management
  - Training, education and awareness

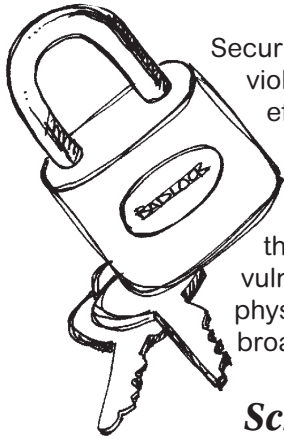
Thus, section by section this book will guide you through the various aspects of creating a secure school environment.

## Section One

# Taking Responsibility for School Security

## What is a Secure School?

**A** secure school environment is one in which the occupants have a very low risk of physical, emotional and psychological injury.



Security refers to the measures that we take to make the school environment free of crime and violence. This is done by making arrangements within the school, and coordinating people's efforts in such a way as to lower the risk of violence and injury.

It is critical that school governing bodies and school management take full responsibility for addressing the problems of security. A school is a place where children are without their parents for six to eight hours every day. If that school is not secure, the learners are vulnerable to thieves, drug peddlers, rapists, gangs and other perpetrators of emotional and physical assault. This booklet addresses these sorts of problems specifically rather than the broader issue of safety (fire safety, first aid, etc).

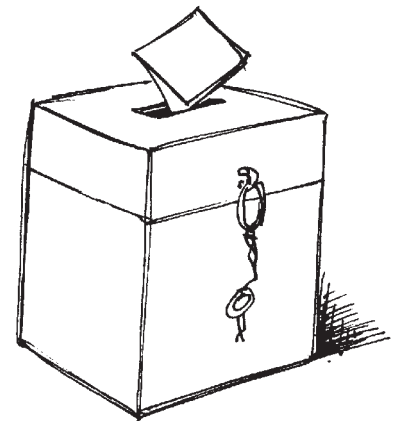
## School Security Committees

The first step in creating a school security plan is for the School Governing Body to set up a School Security Committee (SSC). This should be made up of a reliable group of learners, educators, and community members who are given the responsibility of preparing, implementing, and monitoring the school's security plans. The formation of a responsible committee creates accountability and a group to drive the process.

## Who should be on the School Security Committee?

The SGB should make a list of all the people and groups concerned with school security and then select the best possible security committee for their school. Very often, plans fail without energetic leadership so individuals should be recruited based on their skills as well as their interest and concern regarding security issues. Of course, it is important to include:

- members of the governing body
- educators
- learners (Secondary Schools)
- local government representatives
- representatives of Youth Organisations
- a representative of the Community Police Forum
- representatives of local businesses
- key stakeholders in your community



Among the most important community members to invite to participate is a representative of the local Community Police Forum and/or representatives of the local police station. At each police station there is also a GOCOC (Ground Operational Co-ordinating Committee). This committee is there to help the police to work successfully with the community. They can help you in a variety of ways including the identification of your security problems. Furthermore, the SAPS in coordination with the Community Alliance for Safe Schools (CASS) have established an Area Priority Committee on School-based crime. This means each station in the Durban area is already making plans to tackle school security problems. So, contact your nearest police station and speak to the officer in charge of community policing. For further information you can also contact your Area or Provincial community police forum co ordinator (Contact lists are provided at the back of the book).

## ***Areas of Responsibility***

The School Security Committee (SSC) should be responsible for:

1. identifying the school's security problems
2. liaising with significant people in the community
3. drafting a school security plan
4. overseeing and monitoring implementation of the plan
5. charting the rise or decline in school based crime and violence

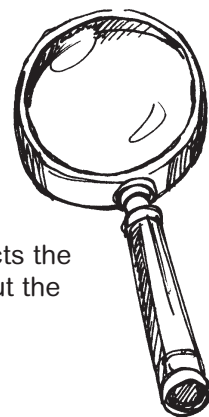
These five tasks will be further reviewed below but not before examining the relationship between the SSC and its supervisors, Professional Management and the SGB. Ultimately, the SSC is a planning and oversight committee that must report to those two bodies. It is important that these roles are not confused as the SSC should not take on the powers of disciplining students, controlling school expenditures, or otherwise setting policy. It must become a tool and aid to the existing statutory bodies charged with these responsibilities. The Principal, SGB members, and others involved in management are the ultimate decision-makers and are responsible for:

- forming the SSC
- overseeing and monitoring its progress
- insisting on and receiving SSC progress reports at every meeting
- allocating funds
- helping to raise additional funding for the SSC special projects
- making office, school and wall space available for SSC activities
- encouraging school support for the SSC
- helping to monitor violent and criminal incidents

This relationship will be born in mind as we outline the five main tasks of the School Security Committee below:

### ***Identifying the School's Security Problems***

The first task of the newly formed SSC must be to identify the priority crimes and the biggest security problems that confront the school. This step enables the SSC to make recommendations to the SGB as to which problems to address first. The SGB must then take this into account when budgeting available human and financial resources to security problems. In turn, this affects the Security Plan. Section Two of this guide is devoted to explaining how to go about the task of identifying the school's security problems (see page 10).



### ***Liaising with Community Members***

Once the SSC has prioritised the security needs of the school, they should meet with the SGB to discuss the available human and financial resources to address the priority problems. In most schools there is likely to be both a deficit in resources and a need to work together with key members of the community. One way to solicit some help is to call a community meeting to discuss and address the school's security problems. The SSC should take up this task of determining the kind of help that is available from the surrounding community. To maximise attendance, the SSC should not just rely on printed notices but actively contact, lobby and recruit the aid of the various talented individuals and organisations that might help develop and implement a plan.

Organising a community response is hard work and some tips to overcoming the obstacles one confronts in this effort are given in Section Three (Part One) on page 18.

## ***Drafting a School Security Plan***

In order to ensure that your school is a safe place, you must have a written security plan that says everything in detail about security specific to the school. A good security plan is:

- easily understood
- documented in writing so that it can be passed around, shared, and discussed
- easy to implement
- within the budget allocated by the SGB and/or community donations
- accountable (who is responsible for which security efforts?)

The SSC must make sure that the plan makes optimal use of the people and materials in the school and any help offered by the community. Often helpful departments and people are forgotten. For instance, if there is a metal shop or woodworking shop in the school, a good plan might make use of the classes to produce burglar bars for windows or safety signs for walls and fences (see also Section Three, Part Four on Training and Education). No department or talented person should be forgotten in this effort.

The main elements of a good security plan are detailed in Section Three, starting on page 16.

## ***Implementing the Plan***

Once the safety plan is written, it should be circulated in draft form among the learners, educators, and community members for comment. The period allowed for comments should be strictly time-limited, no more than a month, for one cannot accept comments indefinitely. Then the safety committee must type up the final plan.

The final security plan must

- include time-tables of when each objective should be achieved
- detail how much it will cost
- detail who is responsible for what
- and include a plan for monitoring progress

It is very important to print a list of activities and outcomes that can be marked off as each task is completed. This should be visibly posted and monitored by the SSC. Costing should be done in concert with the SGB and Professional Management. You may find that only parts of the plan can be implemented initially and therefore the SSC must proceed according to its stated priorities. If no one is held accountable for the areas of security to be addressed, the plan will fail. Monitoring progress is outlined below.

## ***Monitoring***

Monitoring the plan involves two major tasks. Firstly, the SSC must see that each member of the security committee does what he/she is supposed to do, and by the due date. The security committee should meet as often as it needs to in order to ensure that the work is completed timeously. Weekly review meetings are recommended. All people concerned with security in the school should report to the security committee. The SSC should report any lapse of duty to both the professional management and the school governing body.

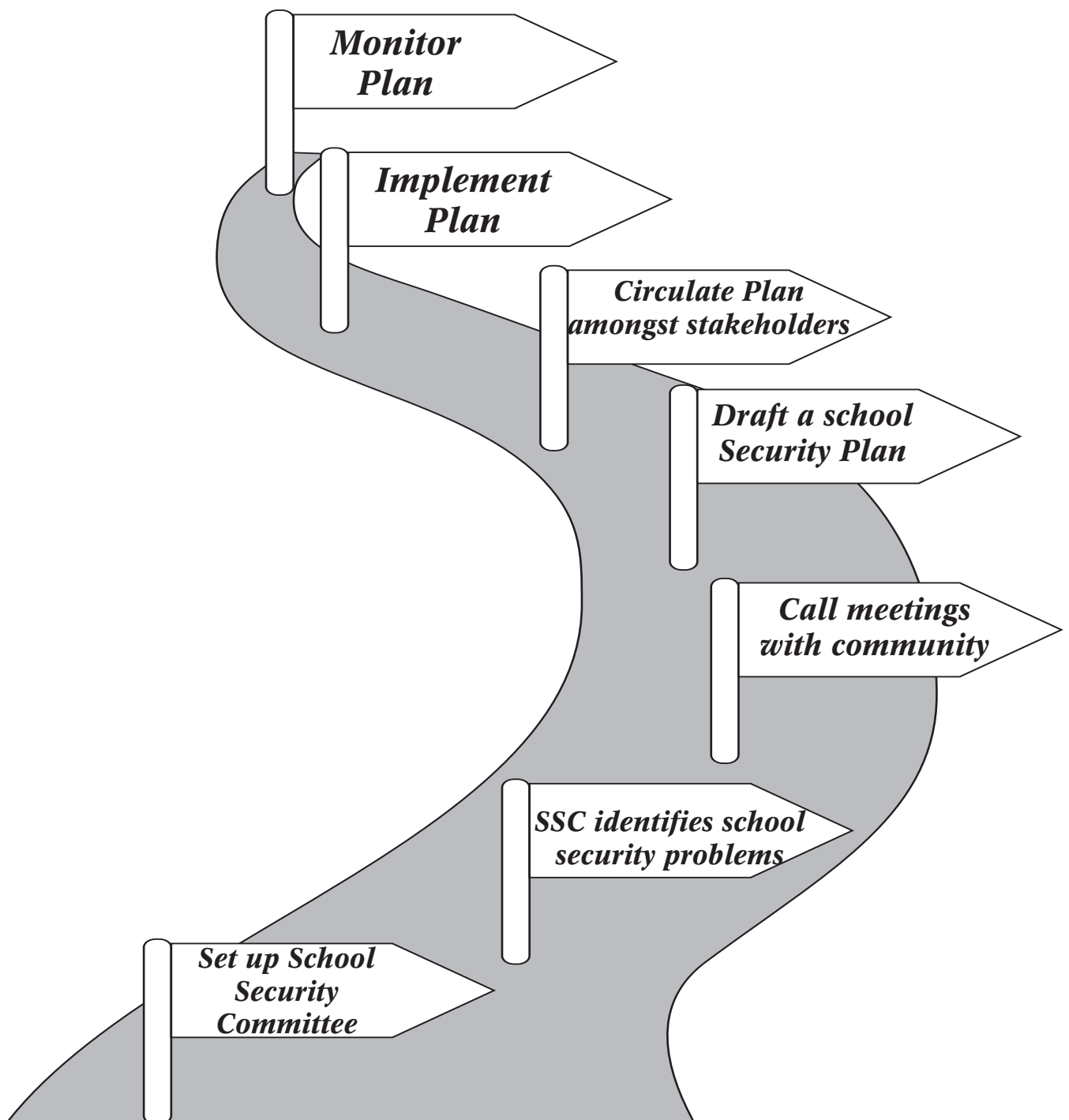
Secondly, the SSC must see what kind of progress is being made in case any element of security is not being addressed or implemented. There should be a special meeting each quarter to review the record of violent and/or criminal incidents. Tools to help you monitor your plan are further provided in Section Two.

## ***Conclusion***

Once the SGB and Professional Management have overseen the formation of a school security committee with identifiable tasks and timetables, they have taken a key step toward dealing with the security problem. Without this step, a school is unlikely to achieve the kind of driving authority that can generate a comprehensive plan to create school security. However, neither the SGB nor Professional Management can then surrender total responsibility for security to the SSC. This is, in effect, only a sub-committee of the SGB.

Thus, the SSC is just a vital wing of a larger body whose activities must be well co-ordinated for the security plan to be effective.

## **The Road to a Safe School**





## Section Two

# Assessment and Monitoring

The first task of the School Security Committee must be to assess the school's risk of crime and violence. This can be assessed in three ways. Firstly, the school should invite local experts in security to inspect your school. Secondly, every school must keep a record of incidents. Thirdly, the school must diagnose its existing security measures.



## Security Inspection

The SSC should seek out and invite experts in security to thoroughly inspect their school and advise on problems like poor entrance control, inadequately secured doors and windows, and other infrastructural problems that might be addressed. One source of expertise might be the Ground Operational Co-ordinating Committee at your local police station. Another source might be the Community Policing Forum. There may even be members of your local community with backgrounds in security that you can invite to participate in the SSC. You may also seek out the advice of other experts in security listed at the back of the book. The important issue is that by taking a hard look at the present security arrangements, you may identify problems that can be dealt with relatively painlessly but had been overlooked because there was no organised approach to security problems.

## Record of Incidents

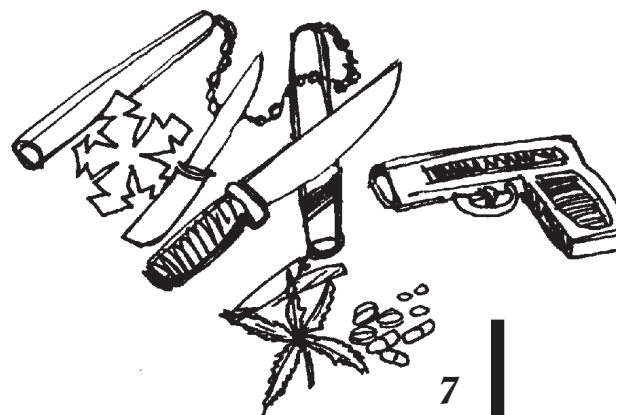
Good safety strategies are based on good information so it is essential that your security plan includes collecting records of violent incidents. This is the key to both diagnosing and monitoring your school security problems and of tracking progress towards the goal of a secure school.

Every single violent and criminal incident must be dutifully recorded by the school management and made available to the School Security Committee. Records should be collected for the following kinds of incidents:

- fighting and bullying
- assault and battery
- kidnapping
- homicide
- threat/intimidation
- hate speech
- sex offences
- sexual harassment
- disorderly conduct
- robbery
- theft of any kind
- breaking and entering
- alcohol use
- drug possession or usage
- drug trafficking
- trespassing
- gang activity
- weapons possession
- vandalism
- arson

The Table on page 9 shows that the record of incidents should include:

- **the date** and time of the incident
- **the type of incident** (according to the categories listed above)
- **where it took place** ie in class, on the playground, outside school gates etc
- **who was involved** ie learners, staff, parents, out of school youth etc

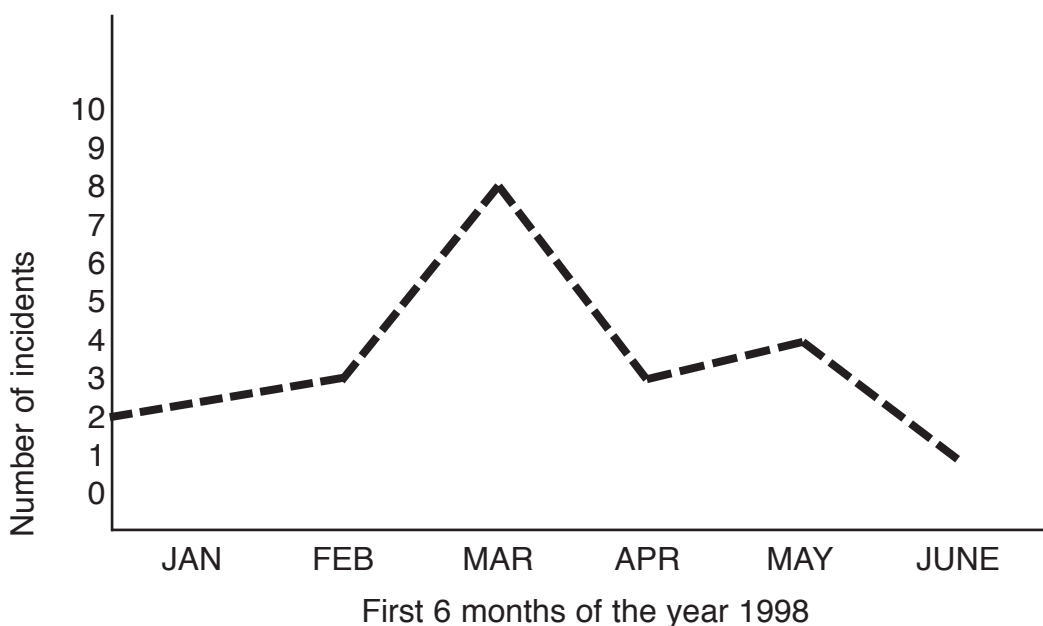
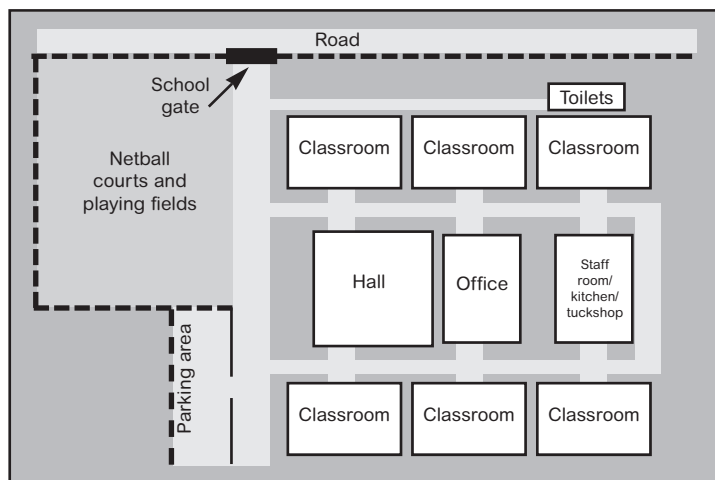


- **a description of the incident** ie what exactly happened and who witnessed it
- **actions taken** ie what did the school do?

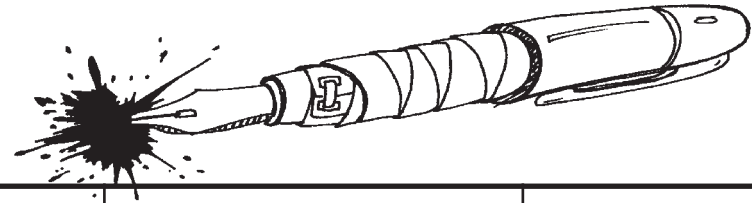
Since the SSC is not in charge of discipline, it is the Professional Management that must keep these records. However, the SSC must analyse, chart, and map them. Firstly, the incidents should be categorised, totalled and reviewed by the SSC at the end of every term so that you know which kind of incidents are in decline and which might be rising. This information should be reported to the regular SGB meetings. Charting and mapping is further discussed below.

### ***Charting and Mapping***

As a monitoring function, it is highly recommended that the SSC make a wall chart that expresses the number of incidents per term. This could be posted in the principal's office or in the SSC operations room for schools with the good fortune of having office space that can be allocated to the School Security Committee. The wall chart will allow both the SSC and Professional Management to see if security is improving or declining on a quarterly basis. It is also helpful to make a map of the school (draw a bird's eye view) and mark where the incidents take place. This will give you an idea of the most insecure areas, where monitoring of learners needs to be increased, and where security infrastructure needs to be fortified.



# *Table One : Record of Incidents*



date of incident	type of incident	where it took place	who was involved	description of the incident

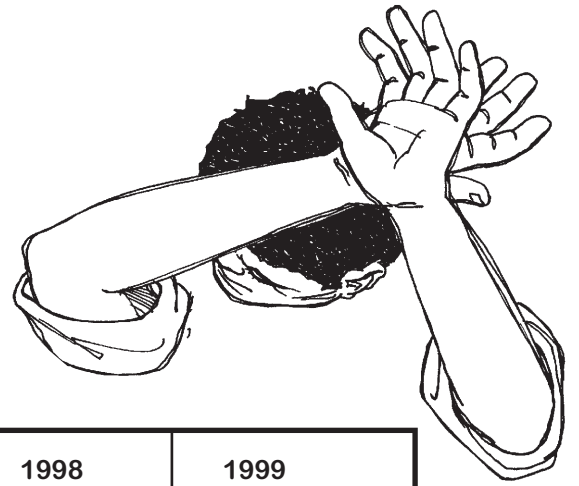
## ***Diagnosing the Existing Security Conditions***

The tables that follow will help you think more clearly about the security problems that you have already experienced in your school.

First, there are two tables - Table Two and Table Three - to help you come up with the priority crimes in your school. Then a 50 point diagnostic test helps you identify the security problems that you need to address.

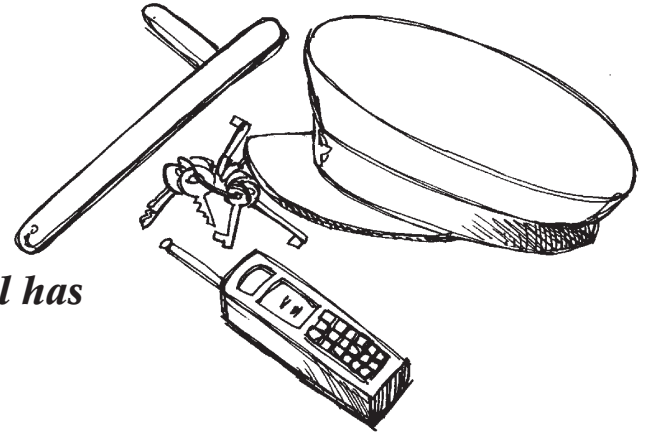
Please note that if you have difficulties filling in the two charts about the kinds of criminal incidents that have occurred in your school, then you have already identified a major security problem: no record of incidents!

**Table Two: Crimes Against People**  
 For each year, 1997, 1998 and 1999, fill in the block with the number of times your school has experienced the violent crimes listed in the left hand column. If you have not kept a record of incidents, try to estimate. Then total the figures.



Type of Incident	1997	1998	1999
disorderly conduct			
hate speech/verbal abuse			
bullying			
physical fighting			
assault			
assault with grievous bodily harm			
kidnapping			
murder			
sexual harassment			
sexual assault/rape			
armed robbery			
robbery			
vehicle hijacking			
threat/intimidation			
trespassing by gang members			
alcohol consumption			
drug use/possession			
drug pedalling			
possession of weapons			
<b>TOTALS</b>			

**Table Three: Property Crimes**  
**For each year please fill in the block with an estimate of the number of times that your school has experienced this type of property crime and the estimated damages or losses.**



Type of Crime	1997	estimated loss or damages in rands	1998	estimated loss or damages in rands	1999	estimated loss or damages in rands
Breaking and Entering						
Vandalism						
Burglary						
Arson						
Theft of personal items						
Theft of school equipment						
Theft of vehicles						
Theft of structural material						
<b>TOTALS</b>						

# *Existing Security Conditions : A 50-Point Diagnostic Questionnaire*

---

## ***A. Location.***

---

Answer yes or no to each question. Score TWO points for every 'no' answer

1. Is your school located in a high-crime area?
2. Is there an informal settlement nearby?
3. Are there gangs operating in your area?
4. Is your school in a poor and disadvantaged area?
5. Is the nearest police station more than ten minutes driving time from the school?

## ***B. Management.***

---

Answer yes or no. Score TWO points for every 'yes' answer

6. Does your school have a documented (written) security plan?
7. Do you have a school security committee?
8. Does your school try to use democratic management principles, by including everyone in the school in open decision making?
9. Have your school rules been generated through a democratic process, i.e. were school learners involved in making the school rules?
10. Is everyone in every class given a fair chance to air their views?
11. Does your school have an equal opportunities policy?
12. Corporal punishment is illegal. Has it been eliminated from your school?
13. Does your school keep a record of violent and criminal incidents?
14. Is there a well-known method for reporting incidents of physical and verbal abuse?
15. Does the school have a system of identifying and referring to counselling those children who are prone to violence?
16. Are there well-known consequences or penalties for being a member of a gang?
17. Are there definite consequences for any kind of violence or crime?
18. Does your school prosecute criminals and offenders?

## ***C. Security of Premises.***

---

Answer yes or no. Score TWO points for every 'yes' answer.

19. Is your school properly fenced around the entire perimeter?
20. Does your school have volunteers or guards who patrol the perimeter?

21. Does your school have one or more security guards?
22. Does your school have a system for watching and checking on learners as they move about the grounds and buildings?
23. Does your school put up posters with the phone numbers of Crime Stop and the local police station, so that crimes can be reported?
24. Has your security officer, principal, or security committee contacted the local police station and discussed emergency arrangements and police reaction times?
25. Does your school regularly conduct weapons searches?
26. Is there an access control system to prevent trespassing?
27. Are all visitors met and greeted at the entrance?
28. Can all doors and windows be locked and secured?
29. Does your school have a caretaker?
30. Does your school have a strong room?
31. Does your school make use of any electronic security devices (alarms, sirens, panic buttons, etc.)?
32. Is all valuable equipment listed in a stock book and marked with the name of the school?

#### ***D. Community Involvement.***

---

Answer yes or no. Score TWO points for every 'yes' answer.

33. Is your school used for organised community activities after hours and on weekends?
34. Does your school have community sources of support and advice on security issues?
35. Is your school represented at the community policing forum?
36. Does your school have a community school watch programme?
37. Does your school receive assistance from local business?
38. Does your school have assistance from non-government or community-based organisations?
39. Are there after-school youth programmes available to learners?

#### ***E. Rules and Procedures:***

---

Answer yes or no. Score TWO points for every 'yes' answer

40. Have the school rules, procedures, and code of conduct been discussed and explained at the school assembly?
41. Are important rules and procedures written onto notices and circulated around the school?
42. Does the school keep the local, national and provincial regulations on security in an accessible place?



## ***F. Training:***

---

Answer yes or no. Score TWO points for every 'yes' answer

43. Does your school have an education programme in security awareness?
44. Does your school offer training in conflict management?
45. Does your school use peer mediation?
46. Are trained counsellors (or teachers) available to troubled learners?
47. Is there an education programme for dealing with substance abuse?
48. Is there diversity training to encourage an understanding with those of other races, gender, cultures, and sexual orientation?
49. Is there a sex education programme to help prevent sexual violence?
50. Has the staff been trained in crisis intervention?

## ***Scores:***

---

<b>Less than 50:</b>	Your school has many serious security concerns to address
<b>52-70</b>	Your school has a security plan that helps but needs much improvement
<b>72-80</b>	Your school has many elements of a sound security plan but there remain difficult areas of security to be addressed
<b>82-100</b>	Your school security plan is very well advanced--keep it up!

*Section Three*

# *Elements of a good Security Plan*

---

*Once a school security committee is in place, and the school's problems have been diagnosed, it is time to draft a plan. A successful security plan depends on four essential elements as shown below.*



Dynamic leadership and Democratic management



Educating and training



**A SECURE SCHOOL**



Community ownership and community partnership



Securing the school environment

*It is these key aspects which are further addressed in the four sections which follow*

## Section Three : Part One

# Community Ownership and Community Partnerships

**R**esearch has shown that crime rates drop considerably with increased community involvement. This includes both increased community usage of the school and community partnerships on security issues. In one study, two schools which were situated very close to each other, had very different rates of crime. The one with community ownership and partnerships was hardly affected by crime and violence, while the other was vandalised and subjected to theft and gang activity.

**Community ownership** means making the school into a community-owned place where many different kinds of activities, not just schooling, can take place. Schools which are very busy with school and community activities have the benefit of greater security.

The kinds of after-school activities that increase community ownership include:

- sports programmes
- exercise classes
- game clubs (e.g., chess competitions)
- social clubs
- adult education
- community meetings

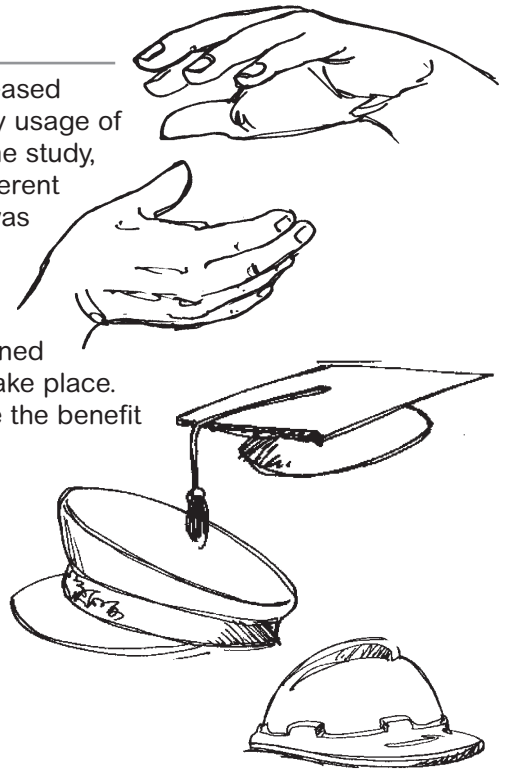
**Community partnerships** mean that the school co-operates with other people and organisations in the area who volunteer to provide services or supplies to the school. In this way, school security is enhanced. Community partnerships have seen these kinds of results:

- community-organised after-school watches, where volunteers take turns to guard the school
- adult volunteers to monitor learners as they move about the school in the daytime
- talented people, with experience in security, who share their knowledge with the School Security Committee
- business sponsorship of security infrastructure like fences and alarms
- better police response times
- parents and teachers volunteering to conduct after-school programmes for school-age children like clubs, sports, dances, and other activities

## Organising Community Partnerships

Community ownership and community partnerships do not just simply happen. Often, a school must initiate the relationship. Some possibilities include:

- distributing information that the school is available for evening use by placing notices in local shops, clinics, libraries, and by sending out pamphlets etc.
- organising workshops on different subjects of community interest like health issues, small business development, care of the environment, literacy



- setting up adult education classes
- organising festivities like cake sales, flea markets or a dance
- a community awareness day on the theme of security
- letters to parents asking for their assistance

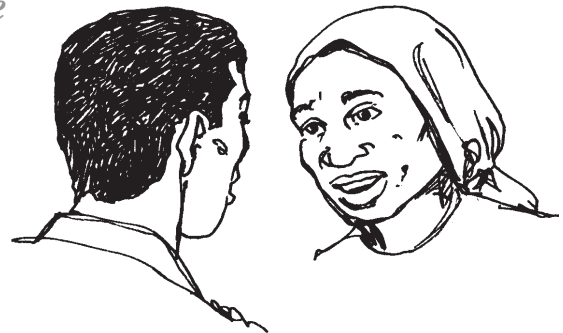
**Organising community partnerships** is not easy and individuals often give up before they have really even started. When it comes to community organisation, one has to be patient and accept that the struggle for safer schools is not an overnight matter. It takes deep commitment, patience, optimism, and a conviction that the community is essential in the search for a secure school.

We have identified some common obstacles to effective community organisation in this province along with some tips on how to get over them.

### *Obstacles to a community-based response*

These include:

1. a lack of community initiative
2. the culture of silence
3. the politics of suspicion
4. poor reporting in the press



1. **A lack of community initiative** often results when people wait for others to take responsibility for security. The most common excuse is to wait for the government to solve the problem. Whatever the causes, government and provincial authorities do not have the funds or the information to wipe out school violence. Most provinces are barely able to cover the costs of basic schooling.

#### **What can we do about this?**

The most important response to low levels of community involvement is to turn the tables on top-down leadership and start at individual school level, by building community partnerships. If the security committee takes command and initiates activities, they will attract local involvement and eventually provincial and national leaders will be attracted too. Everyone likes success, and those schools that are doing something to solve their security problems will get more aid than those that do nothing but complain about the situation.

2. **A Culture of Silence** is the second key problem you will face when building a community response. Many local leaders, school administrators, and educators are reluctant to admit that their schools are violent. People are often told that there is little or no crime, only to discover that this same school has a long history of crime-related problems. Some principals and teachers offer no information at all, saying that they are 'not allowed' to speak to the media or researchers about violence in schools. Sadly, there are some incidents in which pupils have been knifed or raped, and no charges have been laid, and the matter has not even been reported or investigated.



It is hard to inspire people to create safer schools if too many of them want to pretend that no problem exists! Thus, the 'Culture of Silence' is a major obstacle in building safer schools. It is necessary to break the culture of silence in order to co-operate with police, to build communities, to make a security plan work.

### What can we do about this?

The best way to end the culture of silence is to increase levels of co-operative behaviour and trust. Rather than avoiding police, media, researchers, NGOs and others, schools must reach out and involve as many role players as possible. Building alliances is the way to combat intimidation. Being afraid of gangs and criminals only increases their activities. A school must identify and recruit community members and actively campaign for their aid and support. In acute cases of intimidation, the police must be contacted (anonymously if necessary - numbers are provided at the end of this book) and a plan made to end the threat of violence.

3. **The Politics of Suspicion** is the third problem. In South Africa and especially KwaZulu-Natal people have been traumatised by racism, aggression, and even a war-like environment. This has made many people afraid and suspicious of one another and with no history of working together people find it difficult to now work as a team.

### What can we do about this?

The only way to deal with this is to leave politics and other affiliations out of the effort to protect school children. Every school security committee should make every effort to include all races, political affiliations and cultures in the process and work together openly and honestly. They should form a pact to bar politics from the common struggle to protect their children.

4. **Poor Reporting** in the local press is a problem since, the press often look for angles that sell newspapers but they do not report accurately on the roots of violence and what can be done about it. The media is always a part of any well-coordinated effort to create safer schools, but guidelines should be developed so that more emphasis is placed on explanation and identifying solutions, rather than on sensational headlines which promote sales, but do not foster good relations.

### What can we do about this?

The answer is not to reject the media but rather to develop better relations with the press. The security committee should invite members of the press to workshops, and ask them to help report on positive progress and solutions to school-based violence. The deeper involvement of journalists will also help sensitise them to the problems of poor media and what they can do to help.



## Section Three : Part Two

# Securing The School Environment

One of the principal ways to combat school crime and violence is to make sure that the school premises are physically secure. This means two things:-

- Firstly, making sure that the entrance, exit, and movement of people on the school grounds is controlled.
- Secondly, it means protecting school property, equipment, furniture and materials.



There are many ways to control movement and protect property, some of which are listed below. The list contains a range of responses some of which require little or no resources and others which require greater resources. You should choose solutions which are appropriate for your school and environment.

### 1. Security of People on the School Premises

It is important to control the movement of people throughout the school and to know who and where everybody is. This can be done by:

#### 1.1 Security Guards And Caretakers

Every school in a high risk area should have a visible security guard day and night. In cases where the school cannot afford a 24-hour security guard, volunteers from the community should take turns watching and monitoring the school (see Section Three: Part One which examines Community Ownership). Ideally there should also be caretakers on the school property, but the school must ensure that they are well equipped, and that they are supported by the local police as well as the community police forum.

**Where a security guard is employed, make sure:**

- he is equipped with a cell phone or radio for rapidly reporting criminal activity.
- he is not armed or he could be targeted for the weapon.
- he is provided with a guard house near the entrance for protection from the elements, to maintain morale, and to increase efficiency.

The guard should be included in SSC meetings and be introduced to the local police and given their telephone number.

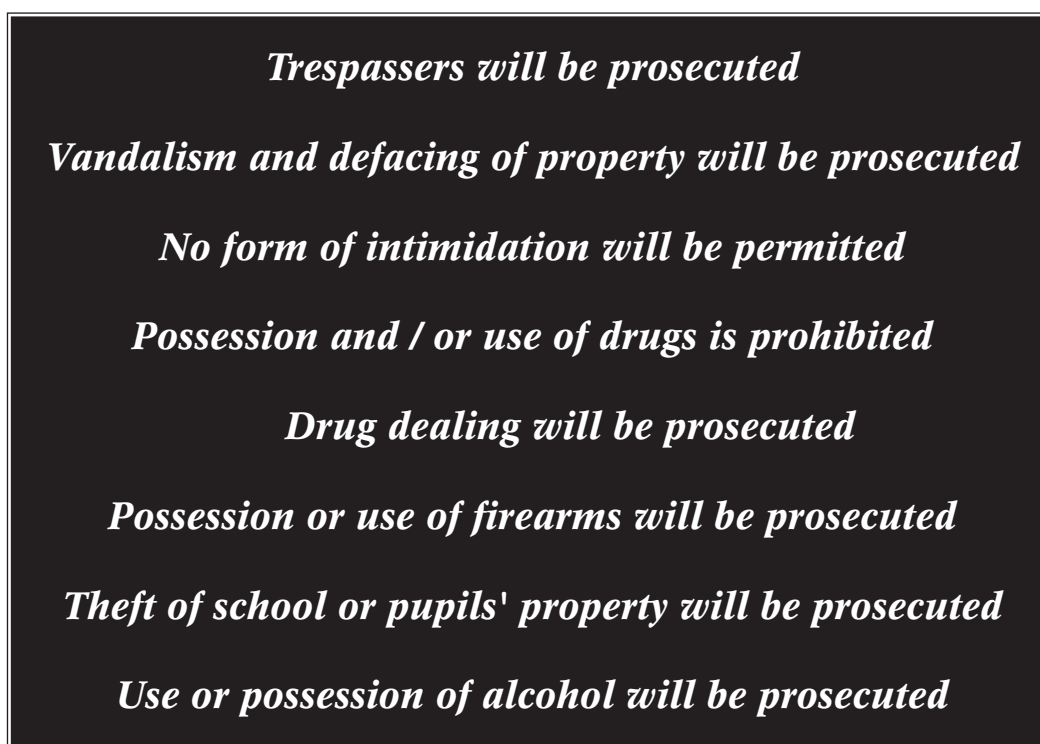
The school should consider registering the guard with the Security Officers Board (031 301-1110). For R39.90 fingerprints are taken and a background check is conducted on the guard to certify his identity and to determine if there has been any criminal record.

#### 1.2 Movement Control

Use only one entrance / exit to the school, and lock all the others. In this way it is easier to keep a watch on people in the school, and to identify strangers.

- When school is in progress, lock the gate, so that no-one can enter or leave without the knowledge of the security guard or those on 'watch'.

- Visitors to the school should be met by the guard and accompanied to the office. A sign should be posted advising all visitors to phone prior to visiting so that they are expected.
- Late comers to school must also be accompanied to the office by the guard.
- Pupils and staff must be instructed to report the presence of all strangers or trespassers on the property.
- Make sure that there are several notices in your school, and especially near to the telephone, which show the phone number of the nearest police station, as well as the CRIME STOP number (0 800 11 12 13).
- Erect signs in your school that tell people that crime is not permitted and that offenders will be prosecuted eg



### **1.3 Control And Restriction of Weapons, Firearms And Drugs**

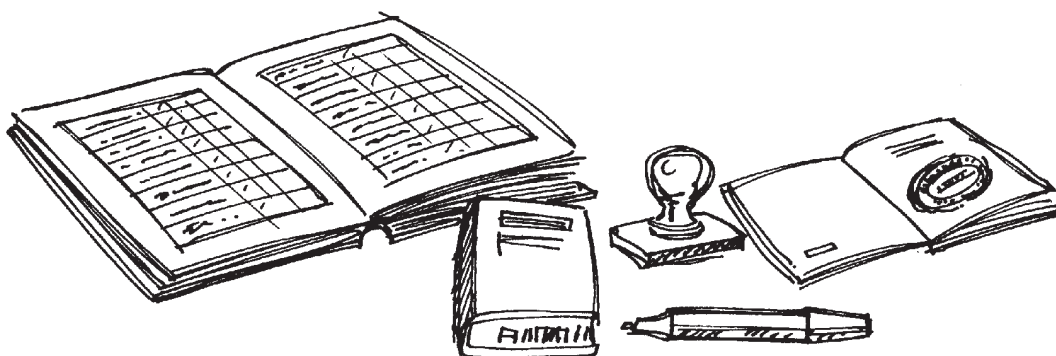
A school cannot be a secure place if there are weapons and drugs on the property. The following are some control measures that may be used according to certain provisos (especially in regard to searches) that are outlined further below:

- Conduct random searches of pupils, their desks, bags, lockers etc. Do this frequently, and without warning but according to constitutional provisions as discussed further below.
- Conduct random searches of visitors according to the provisos outlined below. This will deter people from bringing weapons or drugs into the school.
- If you suspect that there are weapons on the property, ask the police to search with dogs which are trained to sniff them out. Do the same if you suspect that there are drugs in the school.
- If pupils or any other people in the school are found to have drugs or weapons, they **MUST** be prosecuted. It is important for school security that the word spreads that this is a school which prosecutes offenders.
- Set up a system in your school so that pupils / teachers can hand in weapons (apart from guns which should never be in schools) such as sticks, knives, etc. These can then be locked up and returned at the end of the school day.

There are two ways in which a school may conduct a search. Firstly, the school may set up a system of conducting its own searches. Secondly, if there is sufficient suspicion of drugs and weapons in the school, the police may be requested to obtain a magistrate's warrant and conduct a search and seizure operation in the school. If the magistrate grants a search warrant, the school must be prepared to offer the police a plan showing the school's layout, the school timetable, and other information to help them set up a successful operation.

Every learner has the constitutional right to privacy. However, in public places the individual's personal right to privacy is considered in relation to the rights of the state and the community. Weapons and drugs in schools are illegal and violate the rights of others and therefore searches may be conducted with the following provisions:

- learners must be warned that periodic searches will be conducted in the school
- parents must be informed that random searches will be conducted in the school
- random searches must also be included in school rules which are circulated
- males must be searched by males
- females must be searched by females
- both males and females must be searched in a private place
- learners' property must be respected during the search
- fairness and openness must be part of the entire procedure (consider making searches part of the school's code of conduct.)



## ***2. Protection of School Property***

Vandalism and theft are major problems in many schools though much of this can be halted through proper physical controls.

### **2.1 Physical control of property**

Here are the principal ways to prevent theft and vandalism:

- **Burglar guards** : They should be flat metal bars at least 1.25 cm thick.
- **Strong Room** : Make sure that all expensive equipment is locked up in a secured room that has good burglar guards and a strong security door. All rooms which store equipment should be secured with security gates.
- **Security guards** : At night, there should be a security guard who patrols the property, using a well-trained guard dog to deter any criminal activity
- **Lighting** : The school should have good lighting on the outside of the building to light up the grounds, as well as the corridors. This lighting should be sensor controlled and come on whenever there is movement in the grounds.
- **Boundary Fencing** : The borders of the school grounds should have walls or good fencing or even plants that have sharp thorns and grow very thick, eg bougainvillea, cacti, etc.



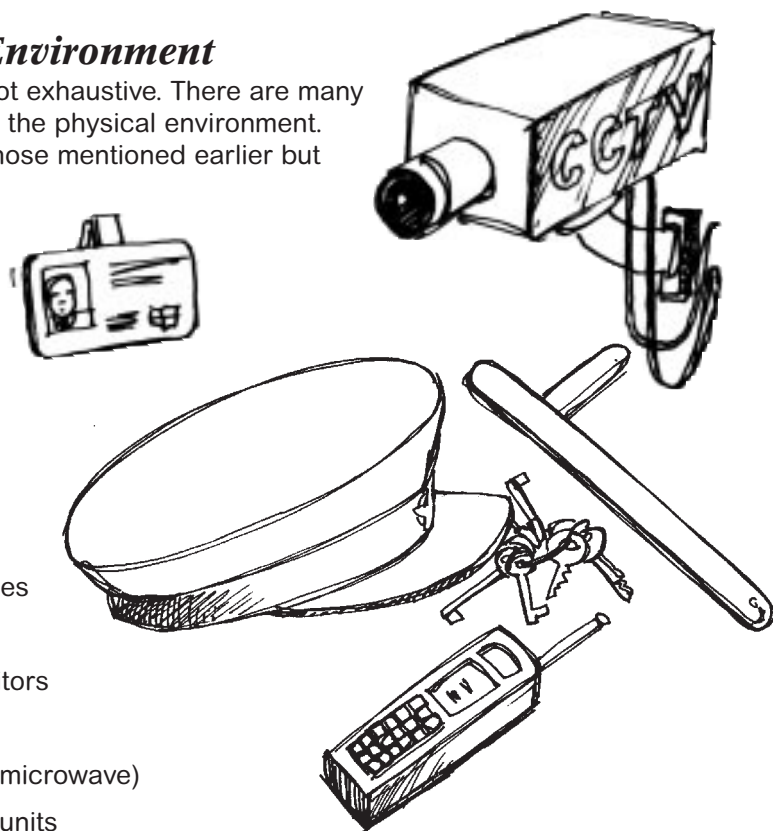
## 2.2 Inventory And Marking All School Property

All school furniture and equipment should be listed in a stock register and then stamped with the school stamp (books etc) or engraved with the school name which makes it difficult to sell and easy for the police to identify.

## 3. Other Means of Securing the Environment

Of course, the suggestions we have made are not exhaustive. There are many types of security measures that can help secure the physical environment. Many of these require greater resources than those mentioned earlier but some schools utilise:

- Panic buttons
- Metal detectors
- Electronic alarm systems
- Electronic Gates
- Electric Fencing
- Swipe Card Access
- School Identity Cards
- Safety lamination on window panes
- Bullet proof glass
- Closed circuit cameras and monitors
- Fireproof safes
- Movement detectors (infrared or microwave)
- Radio linkage to armed reaction units



Each school must look at the human and material resources it has available to provide for security and make a plan accordingly.

## Section Three : Part Three

# Democratic management

**E**ffective management is one of the key ways to make schools secure. This is because when teachers, learners and their parents feel that they are an important part of the school team, they will also try hard to make it a safe place in which to teach and learn.

In schools where learners feel safe, they often stress the caring nature of the school, and use phrases like 'we are like a family'. We need to ask what kind of school makes learners and educators feel part of the same family?

It is usually one in which democracy is practised through management structures and processes, and these are built on three key principles:

- **transparency** – everyone knows what is going on
- **inclusion** – everyone has a say
- **participation** – everybody actually does something to achieve the goals



Democratic school management based on these principles improves the school in a number of ways:-

- **communication** in the school is improved. Whatever the school is trying to achieve will be more successful if everyone is clear about what is required
- **decision-making** is improved as schools are often large and complex, and many interests and opinions need to be considered
- **a sense of responsibility** is developed as staff, learners and parents are more involved and therefore feel it is 'their' school

School management built on democratic principles will be able to:-

- reduce the risk of violence within the school, and
- unite the school to withstand outside threats, e.g. gangsterism

This is one of the reasons why the S A. Schools Act of 1996 rules that schools should be democratically run, and why SGBs were established.

## *Establishing a Democratic School Culture*

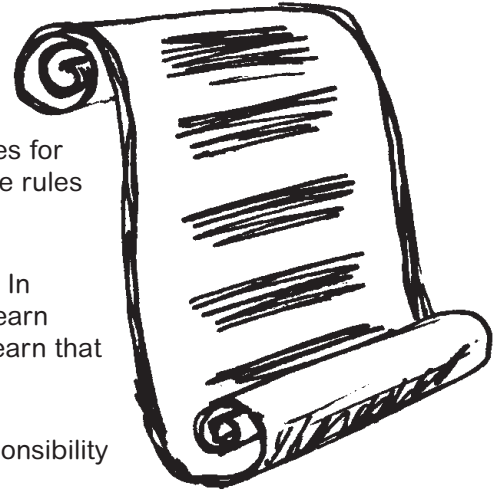
No management plan for school safety can succeed without a **culture of democracy**. This means that everyone treats the other as having equal rights and opportunities regardless of whether they are teachers or learners, men or women, boys or girls, black or white, disabled or not. Everyone is seen as included and belonging. Democratic culture means that everyone is valued equally and there is mutual respect.

## Democratic Rules

If you want to have a culture of safety, it is particularly important that all the school rules apply equally to everybody. To make this work well, it is best to involve everybody in working out a set of rules for the school as well as a set of punishments. Learners will keep to the rules better if they have had a part in making those rules.

Creating a democratic culture also requires democracy education. In addition to learning about this in history classes, pupils must also learn about how it operates in the classroom and at school. They must learn that rights are balanced by responsibilities

- if I have a right to have my say, then I have the responsibility to listen to others have their say
- if I have a right to have my things protected, then I also have a responsibility not to steal things from other people
- If I have a right to be treated with respect and politeness, then I have a responsibility to treat others the same way, too
- If I expect people to be punctual, then I have a responsibility to turn up on time myself



Clear rules, agreed to by everybody, help to create an ordered school, where people can understand what is happening and why, because they have been a part of making it that way. It is more important to reward good behaviour than to punish bad behaviour. Numerous studies show that positive reinforcement is a more effective tool than punishment for instilling discipline.

## Managing Conflict Democratically

However, in spite of all these procedures, conflict can and does occur in most schools. For this reason it is necessary to set up a permanent structure for resolving conflict in the school.

Various organisations exist in KZN that will advise and train schools on the skills and processes of peaceful **conflict resolution** and many of these organisations train learners in **peer mediation**. A list of these organisations is included at the back of this book.



Peer mediation occurs when specially trained fellow learners (or staff) act as a go-between in a conflict situation between two people or groups of people. Some successful schools have established **conflict resolution committees** consisting of staff and students who deal with a wide range of conflict

situations, from name calling to sexual harassment. The idea is that this committee can be called upon as soon as a conflict arises and before it gets too serious and leads to violence. If a fellow student intervenes quickly to cool tempers and calm the people, more serious incidents can be avoided.

**Corporal punishment** (hitting children) has now been banned in all schools, because it does not promote an ordered caring school where everyone is valued and respected. Corporal punishment is an act of violence and is an assault on a person.

*'Perhaps there is no greater consensus among clinical observations and research literature anywhere than that relating to the finding that aggression breeds aggression and that violence is a learned response ... The roots of much family violence and even much international violence are traceable to violent child rearing and punitive pedagogies' (Holdstock, 1990:354).*

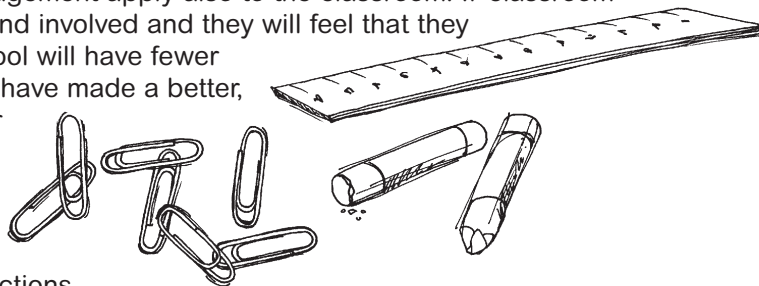
A school based on democratic principles which includes everybody will have fewer disciplinary problems and no need at all for corporal punishment. But this does not mean that there is no need for any punishment at all. There are many other ways of disciplining learners, besides hitting them and also means of preventing the need from arising, including:

- finding out what is wrong (why is the child always late or falling asleep?) And trying to help with the problem
- avoiding discipline problems in the first place through good classroom teaching and a well organised school making it clear that bad behaviour has been noticed, not ignoring it and letting it get worse
- verbal warnings, written warnings and detention (for very serious misdemeanours it is possible to suspend or expel the student)
- making the punishment suitable for the crime: e.g. if a student has thrown litter on the floor, then the punishment should be to clear it up - he or she doesn't need to be beaten as well
- referring a discipline problem to the conflict resolution committee, discipline committee or principal

### ***Managing the Democratic Classroom***

The reason we need good school management, is so that we can have good teaching and learning in the classroom. The principles of good school management apply also to the classroom. If classroom teaching is good, then learners will be interested and involved and they will feel that they are making progress, and the teacher and the school will have fewer discipline problems. In this way good teaching will have made a better, more peaceful school where learners feel that their school is worth protecting.

All lessons should be well planned, with clear goals and a definite purpose and should use suitable methods and resources. Clear aims, instructions, explanations and tasks make a good lesson. And a good lesson keeps learners involved and interested and therefore leads to a more peaceful school. It is also important for staff to mark student's work regularly and thoroughly, as this assures learners that their work is important and that the teacher cares about what they do.



Variety is important in keeping learners interested. In fact, every lesson should be a series of 'mini-lessons' e.g. introduction-explanation-activity/task-conclusion. There should be lots of variety across a series of lessons.

Lecturing at pupils does not involve them, and they become passive. It is acceptable for teachers to address the whole class, but this should not be the only way they are taught. Learning should be interactive, and students should take part in their own learning. Interesting and lively lessons will increase motivation and decrease conflicts.

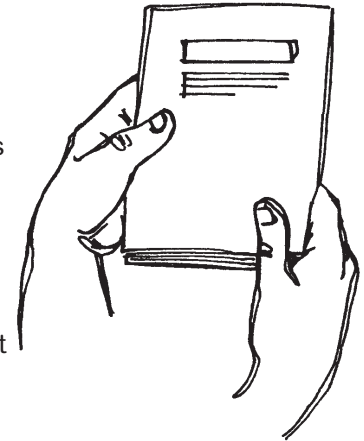
A good classroom teaching personality is also helpful. Although each teacher has a unique personality and teaching style, it is usually agreed that all good teachers are patient, confident, good humoured, firm (not unpleasant or repressive) enthusiastic, warm, consistent, reliable, and not 'superior' in their behaviour towards learners. A good teacher manages a classroom well without seeming to, so if he or she can create an atmosphere of quiet confidence and authority, the battle for classroom control will be half over before it has begun.

Effective school management for a safe and peaceful school is not achieved by chance. It is planned for by the whole school, and requires energy, commitment and understanding. It also involves all the groups included in school management. It will not guarantee a safe school, but without it a safe school will not be possible.

## **Section Three : Part Four**

# **Training and Education**

**I**n the previous sections we have spoken about various elements of school security - community involvement, managing a school democratically, ways to secure the school environment. If all these elements of school safety are going to work it means that individuals must be given certain information, skills or knowledge and that a common goal is agreed upon. Education and training is the fourth element which ensures the success of the previous three.



The process of education and training should begin with the establishment of joint goals and values for the school through a transparent, inclusive, and participative process. Thus, everyone in a school must look together at these two questions and find answers for them:

**Values** - what do we think is important?

**Goals** - what are we trying to achieve?

And the best way to work out the school's values and goals together is through a series of workshops in the school. These workshops should include learners, educators, and staff. When everyone has agreed on the values and goals, they are written down and displayed so that they can be referred to whenever necessary. This process also helps to give the school an identity, so that new learners and educators know what the goals are, what the school stands for and what to expect from it.

Following this process, there are four primary ways in which the school community can be taught about security. These are:

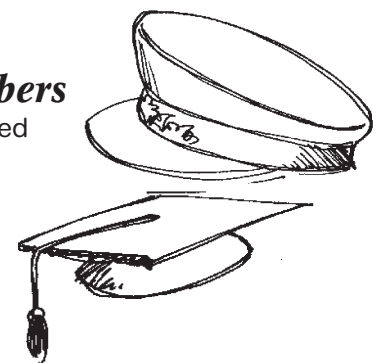
- workshops for educators and community members
- workshops for specifically identified learners
- teaching about security within the curriculum of the school
- sharing of information through print i.e. newsletters, posters

### **1 Workshops for Educators and Community Members**

Workshops for educators and community members could be broadly divided into two main types, strategic workshops and skills building workshops.

#### **Strategic workshops**

These are workshops organised by the SSC to which all the people involved in school security must be invited. They must spend some time together deciding on what problems they all think are important based on the information gathered. They must also decide and agree on how they would like to achieve a secure school and they must identify what resources are available.



#### **Skills Building Workshops**

These are workshops in which the participants are trained in interpersonal skills. Even in the poorest communities a co-ordinated security programme which is run by committed people can have an enormous impact. However, working together is not always easy and in order to have understanding and harmony, people need to develop effective communication skills, group problem solving skills and team skills.

It is most effective to develop these skills in a workshop to which all role players are invited. A list of service providers is included at the end of this chapter. There are also numerous books and manuals available to enable schools to run their own workshops and a list of these is also included.

## ***2 Workshops for Learners***

It is important that learners are also educated and informed about the school security plan. They should have been part of the committee which devised the security plan, and now need to be given the appropriate skills to carry it out. Learners should be selected to have special training in skills which are needed in order to have secure school.

These skills can be put into two separate categories - interpersonal skills and procedural skills.

### ***Interpersonal Skills:***

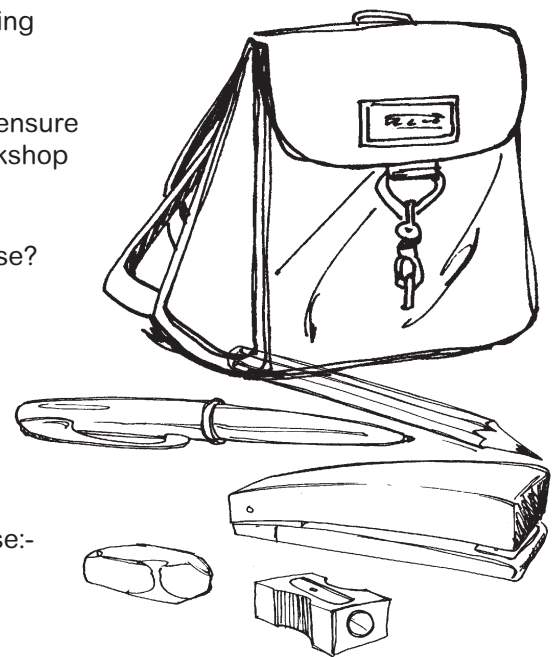
All schools everywhere, will experience some conflict at some time, and much of this conflict will be between learners. So it is important that learners are trained in the skills they need to cope with this conflict, and so avoid fights and on-going quarrels.

When choosing a workshop for your schools' learners, you should ensure that you get the right workshop. A basic conflict management workshop should include, at least, a combination of the following:

- what is conflict and where and how is it likely to arise?
- the different types of conflict handling styles
- some effective communication skills
- assertive behaviour and how it can help
- group problem solving techniques

A **mediation** workshop would need all of the above, as well as these:-

- what is mediation?
- the process of mediation
- the skills of mediation



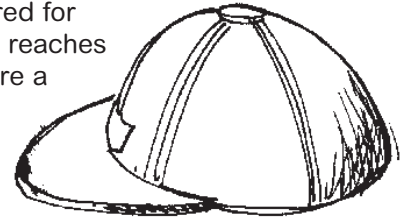
### ***Procedural Skills***

Once a school security plan has been developed it is important that learners be given the skills to implement the plan. Each school will have its own needs but some possible procedural skills include:-

- monitoring and access control processes
- skills in handling visitors
- how to identify strangers and who to tell
- first aid and emergency procedures

### 3 Curriculum Themes

One way of improving attitudes and building the knowledge and skills required for better security is to incorporate the subject into the curriculum. This method reaches all learners in the school in a cost effective and sustainable manner. There are a number of ways of including security issues into existing subjects. The following are a compilation of stimulating and interesting suggestions given in "School Safety and Security" by Dr Mike Kirby, Cambridge, UK.



#### *Mathematics*

In mathematics the teachers should get learners to

- Measure and map the school grounds and buildings
- Present the data from risk assessment surveys in a statistical form
- Count the number of visitors to the school in a given week and devise an access control system for the school
- Calculate the losses incurred by the school in relation to a particular security risk
- Report and record incidents of vandalism
- Use measuring exercises to determine the best location for security signs and equipment
- Calculate the time it takes to respond to safety and fire alarms

#### *First Language*

In either English, Zulu or Afrikaans lessons learners should

- Write / edit personal security guidelines for learners
- Discuss security issues
- Produce security notices for use in school
- Prepare a school publication on security issues
- Give a presentation to parents on school security
- Use creative writing to express feelings about theft and vandalism and the impact these crimes have on people
- Prepare and implement a survey to collect information about learners' attitudes to bullying, racism, vandalism etc.

#### *Science and Technology*

Learners could be asked to

- Investigate how fires start and the damage they can do
- Make a miniature security alarm
- Assess different types of technology currently being used for access control
- Assess the best construction features and materials for school furniture and equipment with the aim of reducing vandalism
- Use appropriate technology to produce solutions to problems of vandalism in school.
- Discuss and research the physical and psychological impact of trauma on individuals



## *Information Technology / Media Studies*

Using the media and other sources of information the learners could

- Devise a process for monitoring information about visitors to the school
- Investigate the use of IT for the school's security measures
- Use graphs and diagrams to present data from risk assessment surveys
- Use IT to create a communication link between your school and others in the area to exchange ideas and information on security issues
- Use information from newspapers, television, radio and the Internet to: plan a safe school trip
- identify suppliers of security devices and assess the various systems
- investigate security risks
- Use IT to produce a rota for a SchoolWatch team

## *History and Geography*

Links between security and these subjects can be made by asking learners to

- Study the history of health and safety legislation (give relevant acts)
- Discuss the safety and security issues that schools in the past had to address e.g. a school in the 19th century
- assess the security risks associated with particular locations that staff and students may visit on a school trip
- Produce a plan of the neighbourhood showing main access routes to and from school, and identifying any hazards in the areas surrounding the site.
- Produce a scale map of the school and use it to identify the best location for security lighting, access control systems etc
- Produce a map of the neighbourhood identifying both secure areas and high risk areas

## *Art and Craft*

Learners can contribute to school awareness of the security plan and to improving school security by

- Designing and producing murals to deter graffiti
- Assessing the appearance of the school and suggest improvements through landscaping, decorations, artwork etc
- Producing information posters about the school security plan
- Designing and producing notices for a SchoolWatch theme
- Making a model of the school building and grounds to use in planning safety and security measures



## *Physical Education*

These lessons can be used to give learners an opportunity to

- Study routines for responding to accidents
- Practice security routines for getting away from an assailant
- Practice CPR routines and basic first aid



## *Life skills / Health Education*

Where these subjects are available they are ideal for allowing students to

- Discuss bullying and develop strategies for coping with the problem
- Develop an awareness of racism and its causes and problems
- Consider ways of dealing with threats and intimidation
- Discuss responses to physical assault
- Explore conflict handling techniques
- Practice communicating assertively



## *Section Four*

# *Conclusion*

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**T**his short guide on "Protecting Your School From Violence and Crime" provides the most basic outline of how to improve your school's security. We have explained who should take responsibility for school security and how to go about drafting and implementing a plan. This includes a section on how to analyse your existing situation and the elements that would enter into a basic plan of security.

The coverage we have provided could be greatly expanded but then we would not be able to provide an affordable method of reaching as many schools in need as possible. Thus, we have stuck to the basics and kept the disadvantaged school in mind. Most of our recommendations can be implemented by any school with:

- real commitment
- a principal who is a good and caring manager
- a functioning governing body
- enthusiastic and interested people to drive the process

In other words, your school does not have to be rich to have the basics of a sound security plan; only well-managed and seriously committed to making your school a place that is safer for children to learn and play. A school lacking in sound management and without commitment to the security of its learners and staff must be identified by the Department of Education and placed on the right footing before it can ever be helped.

For most schools, this means that security is within reach given the proper plan and the right people to drive the process. In the course of meeting this challenge each and every School Security Committee should discover a multitude of creative ways to help bring about security.

Not even touched upon were ideas like creating partnerships with University Art Departments to improve the appearance of the school or community campaigns to raise both awareness and financing for a multitude of security projects. These ideas and many more rest in your hands and further illustrate that it is not money that counts but human will and imagination. This is something that springs from within but there is no greater catalyst than the security of our children in which the future of this country rests.

# List of Service Providers

**Business Against Crime (BAC)** .....3351017

**Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation Trauma Clinic** .....011- 4035650

Conducts training for researchers, trauma counselling, conflict resolution in schools and police management in transition

**Children's Rights Centre** .....3076075  
Training and resources in Children's Rights

**Culture of Learning, Teaching and Service(COLTS)** .....3606582

COLTS is an education department campaign which intends to create functional crime free school environments

**Diakonia Council of Churches** .....3056001

Diakonia involves churches in Local Peace Committees and Community Police Forums and links volunteer peacemakers with situations requiring monitoring and/or intervention They run 14 Community Resource Centres in townships and informal settlements. offering advice on paralegal issues

**Education Quality Improvement Programme (EQUIP)**.....2075434

Assistance to schools in forming a committee with learners, teachers, parents to decide the needs of the school

**English Language Educational Trust (ELET)** .....320501

To develop English teaching where English is used as a second language

**Independent Projects Trust (IPT)**.....3058422

Research, Material Development and a Resource Centre specialising in conflict management and mediation.

**Media In Education Trust (MiET)**.....3034206

Produces reader-friendly educational materials and training to promote democratic, resource-based and outcomes-based education. Supports the use of print and electronic media to enhance education.

**Vuleka Trust**.....7771363

Facilitates and promotes conflict resolution and mediation and conducts youth programmes and training courses

**NICRO(National institute for Crime Prevention and Reintegration of Offenders)**.....3042761

Has several programmes aimed at the prevention of crime and violence in communities, on the streets and in the home.

**Streetlaw**.....2601291

Provides training in Human Rights and Conflict Resolution. Produces the SA Human Rights Year Book as well as training material for teachers.

**Community Police Board - Durban Area** .....083 7611356

Contact Person : Terry De Lacy

**Civilian Secretariat for Safety and Security**

Gen van der Merwe-.....3606572  
(Co ordinates the provincial crime prevention strategy)

**Security Officers Board** .....301 1110

## HELP LINES

**Advice Desk for Abused Women** .....8202862

**Aids Line**.....0800012322

**Crimestop** .....08000111213

**Childline** .....3032222

**Lifeline**.....232323

**Rape Crisis** .....031 453668  
/ 0331 424447

**SANCA**.....3032202

**Ambulance** .....10177

**KZN Dept Of Welfare**.....5078827

**University of Natal Social Work Dept** .....2602390

## SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE CONTACTS

**Local Police Station**

**Flying Squad** .....10111

**SAPS Youth Desk** .....3604767

**SAPS Area Committee on School Based Crime** .....360 4562

(Snr Superintendent M Marais).....083 436 9125

**SAPS Head of Crime Prevention**

**Durban Area**.....360 4222  
(Director Kitching)

**SAPS Provincial Commissioner**

(Commissioner CPJ Serfontein).....3604824

This office will provide names and numbers of all area commissioners

**SAPS Provincial CPF Coordinator**.....3604877

**Provincial Victim Empowerment SAPS**

**Co ordinator**

Supt. Lynette Prinsloo .....3604981

