

Creating a Positive School Climate

2nd Edition



Tools & strategies to create a positive environment at school, in the classroom, in after school programs and at home.



SFUSD
Student Support
Services
Division



This ***Positive School Climate Guide*** was created to assist school sites in enhancing their school climate and creating a safe environment where all students and staff can reach their optimal success. It was first distributed in 2006-07, this is the 2nd edition with NEW information as requested by SFUSD staff. Our hope is to assist sites in taking students where they are and taking them to where they have the potential to go.

***Creating a Positive School Climate*, 2007.**

This guide was edited by Ali Vieira-Metzler, School Health Programs Department, San Francisco Unified School District. Special thanks to Ilsa Bertolini, Andi Bistline, Ling Busche, Eva Jo Meyers, Meyla Ruwin, and Curtiss Sarikey for their contributions. See the SFUSD School Health Programs Department web site for documents included in this guide: www.healthiersf.org.

Please submit articles or resources for future editions to:

**School Climate Committee—School Health Programs Department
1515 Quintara Street
San Francisco, CA 94116**

We would like to give credit to the following organizations whose materials and/or adaptations are included in this guide:

- California Department of Education, *Getting Results*, produced by Health and Education Communication Consultants
- Community Network for Youth Development (CNYD), San Francisco, CA www.cnyd.org
- Putting Assets in to Action*, Region 4 Bay Area Safe & Drug Free Schools County Coordinators
- San Mateo County, Child, Youth and Family Service Program Prevention Services
- Search Institute: *Pass It On at School and 40 Developmental Assets*TM www.search-institute.org
- SFUSD Peer Resources
- Soul Shoppe, Vicki Abadesco
- Youth Leadership Institute, San Francisco, CA www.yli.org
- Bonnie Bernard, Senior Program Associate, West Ed
- ExCEL After School Program Mentors: Laura Chavez, Mateo Chavez, Emily Formosa, Socorro Gamboa, Ryan Keeley, Cristen Robson, Lacie Stiewing,

Table of Contents

A. Positive School Climate: Background & Overview

- A-1-2** Background Information for School Climate: *Goal IV, Asset Building, Positive Behavior Strategies*
- A-3-4** Overview: Goal 4 of the Academic Site Plan
- A-5** SFUSD Flow Chart for Goal 4 of the Academic Site Plan
- A-7-8** Frequently Asked Questions: *Goal IV, Asset Building, Positive Behavior Strategies*
- A-9-10** California Healthy Kids Survey Overview: *External Assets: Caring Relationships, High Expectations, Meaningful Participation*
- A-11** Search Institute 40 Developmental Assets
- A-13-14** Relationship Between Current Educational Issues & Building Developmental Assets
- A-15** The Correlates of Effective Schooling and the Developmental Assets
- A-17-22** School Wide Behavior Management Systems
- A-23-24** SFUSD Health Education Curriculum

B. Positive School Climate: Overall Tips & Strategies

- B-1** Start to a Positive School Year
- B-3** Asset Power
- B-5** Asset Building Difference
- B-7** Asset Building Affirmations
- B-9-10** Best Practices for Asset Building and Youth Development in a School Setting
- B-11-13** Improving Student Conduct on the School Campus
- B-14** School Rules & Expectations for Common Areas
- B-15** Alternatives to Office Referrals
- B-17** Responding to Bullying or Name Calling: Tips for On-the-Spot Intervention
- B-19** De-Escalation Tips Sheet
- B-21** Responding to Anti-Gay/Homophobic Slurs
- B-23** Cybersafety & Cyberbullying: Tips for Safety on the Internet
- B-25** Celebrate Achievements
- B-27-28** Student Fish Bowl Focus Group Activity
- B-29-30** Developmental Assets for Staff Survey

C. Strategies for a Positive Classroom Climate

- C-1** Forming Respectful, Caring, Genuine Relationships with Young People
- C-3** Ideas for Schools and Teachers to Build Assets
- C-5** An Asset Checklist for Youth
- C-7** Guidelines for Creating a Great Behavior Management System
- C-8-9** Examples of Rewards and Consequences
- C-10** Alternatives to Referring a Student for Suspension
- C-11** 10 Easy Tips for Managing a Group of Students
- C-13-14** Student-Led Conferences
- C-15-17** Best Practices of Turnaround Teachers

D. Creating a Positive After School Program Climate

- D-1-2** SHPD ExCEL Best Practices Tip Sheet– Youth Development & Asset Building
- D-3** How to Guides Overview
- D-5** How to Form Respectful, Caring Relationships with Young People
- D-6** 50 Ways to Show Kids You Care
- D-7** How to Use Positive Behavior Management
- D-8** 99 Ways to Tell a Student They Did Something Great
- D-9** How to Develop Youth as Conflict Mediators
- D-10-12** Conflict Resolution Agreement, Conflict Mediation Process, I-Messages
- D-13** How to Hold A Family Night
- D-15-16** How to Give Youth Opportunities for Choice & Sample Program Sign-Up
- D-17-18** How to Create A Student Advisory Group & Program Application
- D-19-20** How to Foster Youth-Led Service Learning & Service Learning Planning Form

E. Creating a Positive Home Environment

- E-1** Parents & Caregivers: Contributing Positive Asset Building, Youth Development and Character Education for San Francisco’s Young People
- E-3-4** Asset Building Ideas for Parents and Guardians
- E-5-6** Asset Building Ideas for Individuals
- E-7** Recruiting Parent & Family Volunteers
- E-9-10** Resources for Working with Parents/Caregivers

F. Monthly Health Awareness Asset Focus Activities

- F-1** SHPD Health Awareness Contacts
- F-3-11** Health Awareness & Asset Focus Year Long Overview
- F-13-14** September Curriculum Guide & *Setting Agreements Activity*
- F-15-16** October Curriculum Guide & *Creating Positive Parent & Caregiver Connections*
- F-17-20** November Curriculum Guide & *Operation Fight Back Anti-Tobacco Campaign*
- F-21-24** December Curriculum Guide & *Smashing Myths about HIV/AIDS Activity*
- F-25-27** January Curriculum Guide & *Day of Kindness, No-Name Calling Week Activities*
- F-29-30** February Curriculum Guide & *Run California/Run America Activity*
- F-31-32** March Curriculum Guide & *Writing a Snack Policy Activity*
- F-33-36** April Curriculum Guide & *National Youth Service Day, Day of Silence Activities*
- F-37** *May Foster Care Month Tips Sheet*

G. Tips for Staff Development/Training

- G-1-12** Monthly Asset Building Activities for Meetings/Classroom use
- G-13-14** Staff Warm Up Activity: Name Tag Switch & Sharing the Positive
- G-15-44** SHPD School Climate Training Module
- G-45-75** SHPD Behavior Management Training Module

H. Resources

- H-1-4** Resources for Youth Development
- H-5-7** Getting Results Article

Creating a Positive School Climate

Resource Overview & Implementation Suggestions

PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

- *The **primary purpose** of the “Creating a Positive School Climate” guide is to provide school site staff with tools and strategies to help students, staff and families feel safe and welcome within the school community.*
- *The **secondary purpose** is to provide school sites with real life techniques to assist in developing a comprehensive Goal 4 of the Academic Plan that supports young people’s positive development and provides strategies for developing positive behavior within the site.*

This guide describes research based practices to develop Positive School Climate techniques for use in San Francisco Unified School District. We hope you find this guide useful and are able to share the information with colleagues and youth. The following chapters have been identified to meet the needs of your school community:

- A. **Positive School Climate: Background & Overview**– Theory, policy and best practices to create a caring school community.
- B. **Positive School Climate: Overall Tips & Strategies**– Resources to improve the overall school climate.
- C. **Strategies for a Positive Classroom Climate**- Activities and articles on creating an effective classroom environment.
- D. **Creating a Positive After School Program**– Step by step guides to implement best practices in classroom and after school program environments.
- E. **Creating a Positive Home Environment** - Resources to support parents and caregivers.
- F. **Monthly Health Awareness Asset Focus Activities**– Curriculum guides and activity suggestions for school wide activities to boost school climate.
- G. **Tips for Staff Development/Training** – Step by step activities to train staff on how to infuse school climate, asset building, resilience, youth development and behavior management into the school community.
- H. **Resources**– Links to organizations and information to create a positive school climate.

Each chapter has tools and activities to use with youth, school staff and adults in the community. We suggest that sites utilize this resource in the following ways:

- ✓ ***Conduct an activity at a staff meeting or professional development workshop***
- ✓ ***Hold discussions throughout the year with staff to improve school practices***
- ✓ ***Put resources in school staff’s boxes to encourage positive interaction with youth***
- ✓ ***Plan school wide activities and events***

We know it is up to all of us to make our schools a positive place to be each and every day. Our hope is that when we walk in to a school or a central office department that we are greeted with a smile, we receive assistance by the staff and that expectations are clearly posted in visible areas.

Please let us know if you need further assistance. If you have questions please contact School Health Programs Department at 415-242-2615.

