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 Ilisa Bertolini, Andi Bistline, Ling Busche, Eva Jo Meyers, Meyla Ruwin, and Curtiss Sarkey for their contributions. See the SFUSD School Health Programs Department web site for documents included in this guide: [www.healthiersf.org](http://www.healthiersf.org).

Please submit articles or resources for future editions to:

**School Climate Committee—School Health Programs Department**

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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](http://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™* [www.search-institute.org](http://www.search-institute.org)
- SFUSD Peer Resources
- Soul Shoppe, Vicki Abadesco
- Youth Leadership Institute, San Francisco, CA [www.yli.org](http://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,
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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.