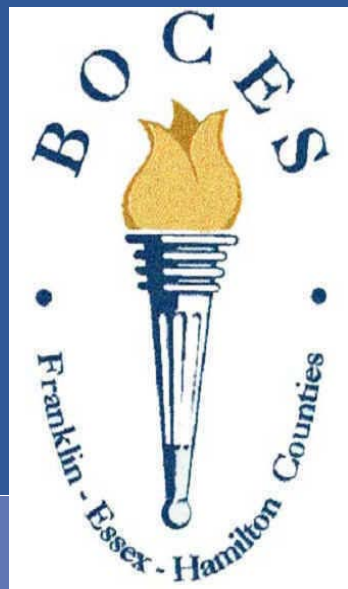


# Safety Newsletter Spring 2011



## Franklin-Essex- Hamilton BOCES

Safety Newsletter



## PIRC SPOTLIGHT: Strategies for Reducing Bullying

Parents should work together with their school districts in finding the best anti-bullying program or solutions for their schools. Keep the following in mind:

- ✚ Research on anti-bullying programs has shown mixed results. What has worked in one school may not always work in another each school needs to determine whether to purchase a commercial anti-bullying program or develop their own.
- ✚ Successful programs focus on parental involvement, increased playground supervision, and firm disciplinary rules for bullies.
- ✚ The longer the duration of the program, the greater the improvement. Programs worked best with youth over the age of 11 because they have more advance thinking abilities to grasp the concept of bullying.
- ✚ Requesting bullies and victims sit together to talk was ineffective because bullies often put on a good face an deny their behavior, while the victim, in the presence of the bully, feels intimidated
- ✚ The research has also shown that in order to combat bullying, intervention must be regularly reinforced an must involve the entire school community: teacher, parent, children who are bullied, witnesses to bullying, bullies, school bus drivers and cafeteria workers.

Due to the recently passed “Dignity for All Students Act” (effective July 1, 2012) school districts in New York must provide staff training and designate one person in each school who will be specially trained to deal with bullying issues.

<http://www.nyspirc.org/info/index.php/parent-resources>

## PLAYGROUND SAFETY

Each year, more than 200,000 children go to U.S. hospital emergency rooms with injuries associated with playground equipment. Franklin-Essex-Hamilton BOCES along with New York State Insurance Reciprocal provided Playground Safety training to the component districts in April to help districts become ready for the busy playground season. Use this simple checklist to help make sure your school playground is a safe place to play.

- ✚ Make sure surface around playground equipment are covered with wood chips, mulch, sand, pea gravel, or mats made of safety-tested rubber or rubber-like material, at a depth consistent with critical height determinations. Check that protective surfacing extends at least 6 feet in all directions from play equipment.
- ✚ Check for dangerous hardware like open “S” hooks or protruding bolt ends. Check for sharp points or edges in equipment. Check for spaces that could trap children such as openings in guardrails or between ladder rungs, and be sure they meet specifications.
- ✚ Look out for tripping hazards, like exposed concrete footings, tree stumps and rock. Make sure elevated surfaces, like platforms and ramps, have guardrails to prevent falls
- ✚ Check playgrounds regularly to see that equipment and surfacing are in good condition. Carefully supervise children on playgrounds to make sure they are safe.

The US Consumer Product Safety Commission has created an updated *Handbook for Public Playground Safety*. The guidelines in this handbook have been referenced in the playground Safety Law, NYCRR Part 4605. This handbook can be found at [http://www.consumer.state.ny.us/educating/safety/playgrounds\\_safety.htm](http://www.consumer.state.ny.us/educating/safety/playgrounds_safety.htm)



### What Can You Do to Keep Your Schools “Fire Safe”?

- 1 Plug computers into grounded outlets or surge protectors. Prohibit use of extension cords and don't overload outlets. Plug electrical appliances into properly grounded outlets.
- 2 Maintain a clear path to exit doors/rescue windows. Do not keep classroom doors wedged open. Exits are indicated with emergency lighting and signs. Doors should be readily operable from the egress side without the use of a key.
- 3 Keep combustible materials away from source of heat and do not store them within 24 inches of the ceiling. These items should not be stored in classrooms. Keep lighting fixtures free of hanging materials and maintain a 7-foot minimum clearance. Artwork and teaching materials should be limited to 20% of the corridor walls.