PROGRAM SUMMARY

The CTA State Council of Education, in response to the critical and growing problems of high risk students in our schools, approved the creation of a High Risk Training Program for school personnel.

A committee was appointed and charged with the task of formulating training for educators targeting specific areas of high risk: Consultants, all experts in their respective fields, were retained by CTA and worked closely with the committee as they explored the key areas to be included.

Extensive input was obtained from CTA Legal, Instruction and Professional Development and Human Rights Departments to ensure consistency with both law and current CTA policy.

The intent of this training is to increase teacher awareness of these issues, provide skills and strategies for dealing with high risk behaviors, and provide resources and referral information. A key aspect of this training focuses on helping teachers develop a clear understanding of what their roles and responsibilities are in addressing these issues.

These workshops are designed to be presented in your local Chapter or Service Center Council. School staff will be trained by teacher trainers who have been carefully selected from around the State and who possess a strong commitment to student and teacher advocacy, as well as an in-depth knowledge of their subject area. Specialists in adult learning strategies have trained this cadre of trainers. We are confident that the program will be of the highest quality available.

The members of the High Risk Program Committee would like to commend the leadership of CTA for their commitment and support for this project. Their mandate and encouragement have enabled CTA to be in the forefront in delivering this vital information to our members.

PROGRAM UPDATE

Hundreds of training workshops have been presented. Evaluations of the programs have been exceptional and reflect the fact that there is a great demand for this kind of awareness training program to address at-risk students.

Currently, there are a total of five (5) training programs available to assist educators to become more aware of the problems and issues of at-risk students.

HIGH RISK TRAINING PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

1. Promote academic achievement.
2. Increase teacher awareness of high risk student issues.
3. Help teachers recognize high risk student behavior.
4. Provide skills and strategies for dealing with high risk behaviors in the classroom.
5. Provide information about referring students to appropriate services and resources.
6. Build advocacy skills so that teachers can help bring more attention and resources to meet the needs of students.

POLICY: HIGH RISK TRAINING

1. High Risk Program workshops may be offered through a school district if these conditions are met:

    a. The chapter and district mutually agree that the training is needed.

    b. Staff members at the school(s) are given the option of attending and/or choices of training sessions.

    c. This district assumes the following costs:

        (1) Travel expenses for trainers.
        (2) Lodging expenses, if required.
        (3) Release time for trainers and participants.
        (4) A $5.00 per person materials charge.

2. High Risk Program workshops may be offered to outside groups if the following criteria are met:

    a. Preliminary informal screening determines that the group is "friendly" to CTA.

    b. An appropriate trainer (topic, geography, date availability) is contacted for willingness to conduct training.

    c. The organization is contacted to confirm or reschedule training.

    d. A confirmation notice is sent in writing to the trainer giving times, dates and locations.

    e. Materials are sent to the organization requesting training or to the trainer.

    f. All costs are borne by the outside organization.

DESCRIPTIONS OF HIGH RISK PROGRAMS

Academic Achievement

In order to create an environment for academic achievement, a wide variety of social issues that impact the classroom must be addressed. The High Risk Training Program is designed to expand knowledge, develop skills and provide instructional strategies and resources in order to create an environment of respect, reduce feelings of isolation and promote a community of caring.

Recommended time – Three (3) hours for each workshop (can be condensed to two (2) hours or 90 minutes depending on the workshop).

1. Self Esteem (Time: 90 min.-3 hours)

This informative workshop is designed to help teachers and other education employees learn strategies for enhancing self esteem in students. CTA is aware that self esteem is a critical factor in both student and teacher performance. At the heart of student behavior is the ability to make wise and safe decisions. A person's self esteem is a key contributor to those decisions.

2. Reducing the Risk: Teen Suicide (Time: 90 min.-3 hours)

The Surgeon General has declared suicide a “serious public health problem.” This workshop is designed to address the sensitive area of youth suicide. It has the goal of increasing the knowledge of stressors related to suicide and reviews warning signs. Participants will develop skills to approach students with suicidal tendency behavior, develop referral procedures and review the importance of resiliency and “asset building.”

3. Gang Intervention (Time: 90 min.-3 hours)

No longer strictly a problem of the inner city, gangs are pervasive across all ethnic, gender, socioeconomic and geographic boundaries in California. This workshop provides information about youth gangs in California, and more importantly, why students join. The role of teachers and schools in gang intervention is thoroughly discussed. This workshop also provides a segment for developing a plan of action for participants, schools and communities.

4. Child Abuse and Neglect (Time: 90 min.-3 hours)

   The incidents of child abuse in California have risen steadily from 713,391 in 2004 to 905,000 in 206. This workshop focuses on what constitutes abuse and neglect, and how to recognize its signs and symptoms. The California law that defines the duties imposed on teachers in reporting suspected cases of child abuse and neglect is reviewed.

5. Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Youth: Breaking the Silence

   As students struggle to deal with gay and lesbian issues, educators need factual information so they can correct the misinformation about homosexuality. This training will provide participants with strategies for reducing hostilities towards gay and lesbian students and learn ways to create a safe free learning environment for all students. In addition, participants will learn what their Chapters and Service Centers can do to promote tolerance and understanding of these issues.

Components -What's It All About (Time: 20 min.-30 min.)
Introductory information on the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Youth: Breaking the Silence workshop. This 30-minute segment precedes each module.

Module 1 – What We Know (Time: 70 min.-90 min.)
Presents factual information about homosexuality and raises awareness of the negative impact of homophobia and heterosexism on all students. An opportunity is provided to identify problems in the school environment-affecting students.

Module 2 – What We Can Do **(Time: 70 min.-90 min.)**
Reviews the negative impact of homophobia and heterosexism on all students. Provides strategies for helping educational employees to reduce hostility toward gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students.

Module 3 – What We Can Teach **(Time: 70 min.-90 min.)**
Provides an opportunity to include curriculum about sexual orientation, sex roles and gender identity to enable youth to understand and develop healthy attitudes toward gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students.

Module 4 – How We Can Lead **(Time: 70 min.-90 min.)**
Identifies a role for local chapters in resolving some of the problems and issues regarding gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students and members. Participants develop an action plan for ensuring educational opportunities at the local level.

Ninety Minute Essential Elements Workshop
This workshop presents factual information from Module 1 – **What We Know** and from Module 2 **– What We Can Do**.