

DATE ISSUED: June 6, 2003 REPORT NO. 03-128  
ATTENTION: PUBLIC SAFETY & NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES  
Agenda of June 11, 2003  
SUBJECT: ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SAFETY PROGRAM  
REFERENCE: Manager's Report No. 02-268, dated November 12, 2002

#### SUMMARY

THIS IS AN INFORMATION ITEM ONLY. NO ACTION IS REQUIRED ON THE PART OF THE COMMITTEE OR THE CITY COUNCIL.

#### BACKGROUND

The San Diego Police Department provides a variety of police services to elementary schools in San Diego. The Juvenile Services Team (JST) officers respond to calls for service, facilitate the School Safety Patrol Program, and teach safety, drug, alcohol, and tobacco awareness and prevention. After piloting the Elementary School Safety Program (ESSP) in 15 local elementary schools in the 2001-2002 school year, this program was presented to 183 elementary schools in the 2002-2003 school year. Public, private and parochial schools, representing every police division within eight school districts, participate in the ESSP.

#### DISCUSSION

The ESSP is, in many ways, neighborhood policing at its finest. The ESSP is a community partnership in which police collaborate with educators, community leaders, and parents to foster the development of children into more informed adults for tomorrow. The essence of ESSP is safety, drug and gang prevention and education. It is designed to give elementary school children the knowledge and skills necessary to develop into future leaders.

The ESSP provides instruction in bicycle and pedestrian safety, drug, tobacco, gang and bullying awareness and prevention, firearm safety and, in the process, builds self-esteem. It also provides instruction in Internet safety, problem solving, media influences, conflict resolution, and juvenile

law. These subjects are presented in every classroom, from kindergarten through fifth grade, over a 36-week school year. These subjects are presented in a literacy-based format that satisfies the San Diego Unified School District's literacy requirements.

The ESSP was successfully implemented at the 183 schools using existing JST officers and resources. As a result of the ESSP, the Department has provided more service and better quality safety instruction. The ESSP has provided a positive law enforcement presence on campuses. The ESSP provided the opportunity to develop cooperative relationships with all elementary grades and many more teachers, school administrators, and community members than was possible with prior programs. More than 95,000 students attending elementary schools in San Diego have benefited from the ESSP.

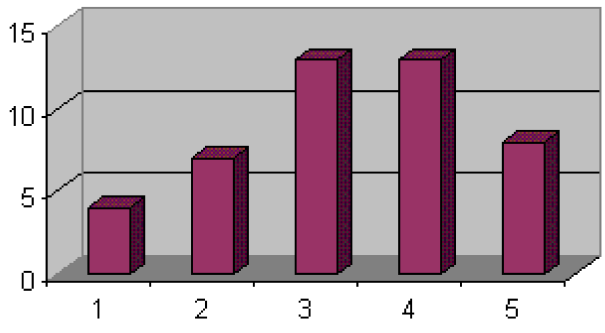
The Department has measured the effectiveness of the ESSP with surveys and statistics. The Department collected data from the participating school districts and its Crime Analysis Unit on pedestrian and wheel-related accidents among school-aged children. The Department also tracked weapons possession on school campuses and "on campus" violent crime. The Department has also monitored Internet related incidents, and accidental medication overdoses by young children. Some of these measures are still in development. The Department has already seen impressive reductions in traffic, bicycle, pedestrian related injuries, and violence and weapon related crime on elementary school campuses citywide.

**Traffic, Pedestrian and Bicycle related injuries among the target age group (6 to 11 yrs.):**

2000 (Prior to ESSP)		2001 (ESSP All Schools)		2002 (ESSP All Schools)		2003 (ESSP All Schools)	
Northern	7	Northern	3	Northern	7	Northern	4
Western	9	Western	11	Western	8	Western	6
Central	9	Central	6	Central	8	Central	8
Southern	7	Southern	8	Southern	6	Southern	7
Eastern	18	Eastern	7	Eastern	3	Eastern	4
Mid-City	30	Mid-City	29	Mid-City	37	Mid-City	15
Northeastern	6	Northeastern	9	Northeastern	9	Northeastern	8
Southeastern	30	Southeastern	30	Southeastern	18	Southeastern	10
Unknown	40	Unknown	31	Unknown	14	Unknown	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>156</b>		<b>134</b>		<b>110</b>		<b>62</b>

<b>Elementary School Violent Crime Statistics</b>	
2001-2002 School Year	2002-2003 School Year (Through 5/20/03)
Total: 49	Total: 1

<b>Elementary School Possession of Weapon Statistics</b>	
2001-2002 School Year	2002-2003 School Year (Through 5/20/03)
Total: 42	Total: 2



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selected and interviewed 45 elementary school principals representing all eight school districts and every police command. Six questions were asked in the survey. Depending on the question, the principal was asked to respond using a scale of one to five, selecting the most appropriate response. As the graphs below indicate, the principals responded with overwhelming support.

**Please rate the effect this curriculum had on the students in your school.**

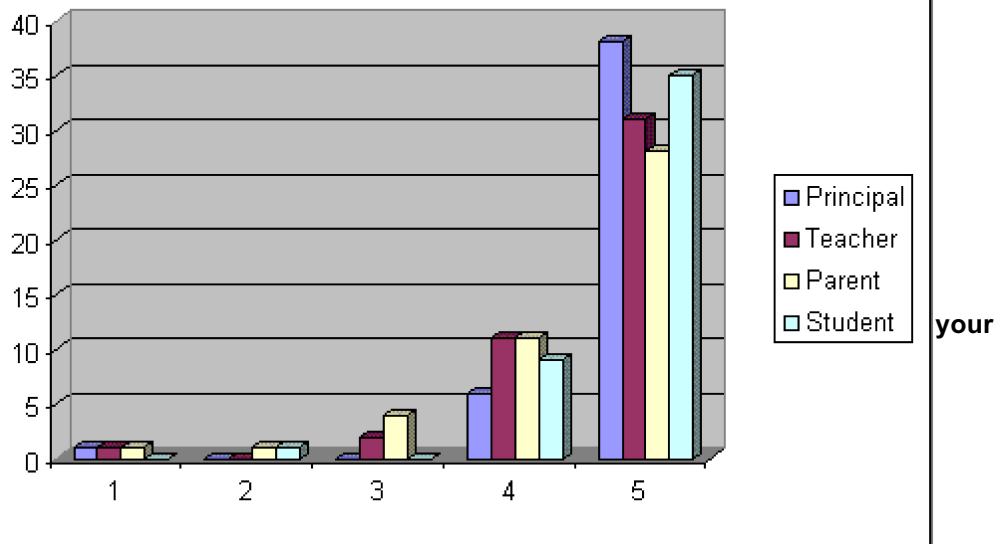
- 1 = Very Negative
- 3 = No Effect
- 5 = Very Positive

**Since ESSP began at your school, has there been a change in the amount of school bullying as compared to the previous year?**

- 1 = Significant Increase
- 3 = No Change
- 5 = Significant Decrease

**Please rate involvement of the teacher in the ESSP Program**

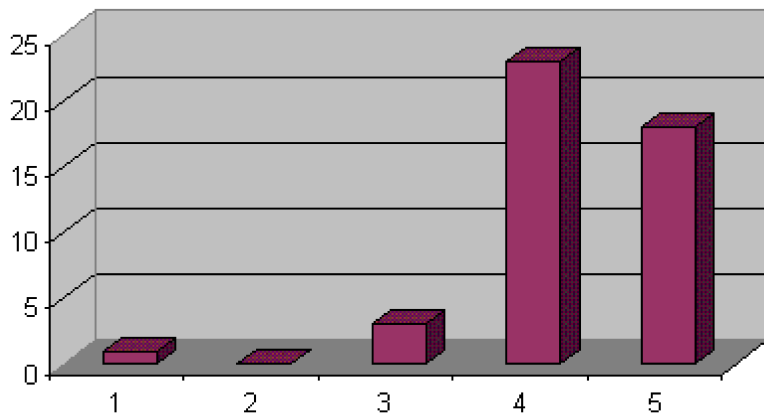
- 1 = Not Involved
- 3 = Somewhat Involved
- 5 = Very Involved



1 = Not Effective  
 3 = Minor Effect  
 5 = Very Effective

**How do you think the presence of an officer on your school site impacts school safety perceptions of the following people?**

1 = Less Safe  
 3 = About the Same  
 5 = Much Safer



gram's primary focus  
complete the  
compared to

1 = 1 = 1 =Much Worse  
3 = 3 = 3 =About the Same  
5 = 5 = 5 =Much Better

### Student Surveys (2001 – 2002 school year)

Officer-instructors randomly selected 750 students from all grades in the elementary schools representing the eight service area commands to complete an evaluation of the ESSP. Four questions were asked in the survey. The response choices were: “1” for not sure, “2” for do not agree, “3” for agree, or “4” for strongly agree. The survey results are captured below:

Breakdown of Student Responses					
	1	2	3	4	Total
1. The elementary school safety program taught me skills I can use in my everyday life.	20	14	301	415	750
2. The officer presented the concepts and information in a way that was easy to understand.	27	9	274	440	750
3. My teacher was involved in the presentations with the officer.	205	237	168	140	750
4. The lessons were easy to understand and interesting.	9	16	210	515	750

## Teacher Surveys (2001-2002 school year)

Officer-instructors randomly selected 40 teachers from all grades and all elementary schools representing the area commands to complete evaluations. Juvenile Administration received 19 completed evaluations. Unlike the student surveys, the teachers were asked to respond in a narrative format to specific questions about the curriculum, officer involvement, ease of instruction, and scheduling. The teacher evaluations were very positive in all areas. Some comments from teachers included:

“The program has had a very positive effect on the students. The students respected the officer and knew she was an expert and had first-hand experience with the concepts being taught. Her involvement supported other programs that the teachers present to the students i.e., Life Skills and Family Life.”

“Students thoroughly enjoyed the course – and looked forward to the weekly meetings. The presentations inspired my students to think seriously about the decisions they make.”

“The students had a very positive reaction to this curriculum, and there was real learning achieved in the classroom.”

“Enlightened some kids on drugs. I would like to see a more “scared straight” approach to drugs and crime.”

“My students were very enthusiastic about the program! I hope it will be available in the future.”

“They are eager to hear about life concerning drugs/gangs/etc., from a police officer’s view point and experience. Officer has great rapport with 5<sup>th</sup> graders and had their complete attention during each lesson.”

“It (ESSP) exposed them to things that we don’t cover in our curriculum. It leads to good discussions and problem solving techniques.”

“Most of my kids felt an impact with the smoking class. They talked about it for days!”

“School safety provided a wonderful opportunity for students to discuss topics that they were concerned about with a professional.”

“The kids really related to officer, very positive involvement, worked well”

“I don’t believe they (students) will ever smoke! The children were eager to discuss each lesson. The kids told me role playing was good, and they seemed to feel the activities were really beneficial.”

**Internet Crime (2002 – 2003 school year)**

In 2002, the Internet Crimes against Children Task Force received 112 inquiries by concerned parents who wanted information on child related Internet issues. In the first four months of 2003, there was a slight reduction (36) of inquiries by parents. This was partially due to the Internet lesson curriculum, in which an informational flier and a code of conduct contract were sent to the parents of every school-aged child who is presented this lesson.

The Department has reached its goal of implementing the ESSP in the elementary schools requesting the ESSP within the eight San Diego school districts in the 2002-2003 school year, replacing D.A.R.E. As resources permit, the Department will continue to offer the ESSP to elementary schools upon request.

Respectfully Submitted,

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John Welter  
Interim Chief of Police  
Police Department

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Approved: P. Lamont Ewell  
Assistant City Manager

WELTER/JDF

Attachment: [1. List of schools by Council District](#)