

APRIL IS CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH



Sexual misconduct in our schools has reached epidemic proportions. It is one of the leading causes of litigation against public schools, removing hundreds of millions of dollars from the classroom statewide each year! The impact on student lives, the learning process, the district's reputation in the community, and the amount of district resources spent on defending these matters is immeasurable. It is important that districts make the commitment to do more to raise awareness on this most important issue as student safety is our #1 priority.

To assist districts in bringing awareness to this important matter, Keenan has made the Child Abuse Prevention Microlearning Series available to member districts through P&C Bridge. Districts can now access the 22 courses by simply clicking on a tile on the P&C Bridge homepage. Districts can then assign, view and play, or share the courses with staff and colleagues.



Other ways to show support are to post Child Abuse Prevention Month flyers around district campuses or establish a "wear blue day" at your district and encourage staff and students to take photos that can be posted to social media with the hashtag: **#reliefprotectskids**.

For access to Best Practices and Training Resources
Visit <https://www.keenan.com/Knowledge-Center/School-Safety-Center/Abuse-Prevention>

GRADUATION SPECTATOR SAFETY

Graduation is a busy time of year for schools and their staff. Planning for graduation ceremonies is an important step to ensure a safe and memorable experience for all. **Some items to consider include:**

- Parking
- Seasonal Temperatures
- Bleachers/Seating
- Lighting, Exits, Maximum Occupancy
- Security
- Local PD/FD/Emergency Plans

Parking

Onsite parking – make sure there is designated parking for the event and adequate staff onsite. Training for staff and proper personal protective equipment (e.g. gloves, hats) should be provided. Security for parking areas and a communication method, such as cell phones or two-way radios, should be available.

If offsite parking is used, ensure crosswalks are designated and there is proper lighting. Contact local law enforcement if needed.

Weather

You never know what the weather will bring in May and June. It can be cool but more than likely it will be hot. Be prepared for high temperatures which can be a significant risk to the school staff and attendees if the event is outdoors. Control measures (e.g., shade, water, first aid trained personnel) should be implemented. Consider the time and duration of the event. Again, communicate with the local EMT/Fire Department prior to the event if high temperatures are in the forecast.

Bleachers & Seating

Inspect your bleachers, theater seating, etc. Are the bleachers made of metal and will they be exposed to direct sunlight? Are your handrails adequate and free of sharp edges? Are barricades adequate to prevent falls? Do you have ADA access and egress?

Lighting Areas & Maximum Occupancy

Inspect parking areas for defined walkway lighting leading to the event and theater lighting prior, during and after the production. Ensure exit lighting is properly illuminated.

Security

Prior to the event, ensure staff are properly trained on possible threats and the proper response including communication/specific codes/channels. Work with local law enforcement and ensure your Emergency Operations Plan is up to date and functional.

Graduation Ceremony Cancelled

Loomis News reported that the graduation ceremony at Del Oro H.S. was cancelled by the fire department after the event was deemed a "mass casualty event."

Emergency responders who treated 15 people for heat exhaustion and transported five to local hospitals, two were Code 3 with lights and sirens.

Wheeler said the first call for possible heat exhaustion came in at 9:15 a.m., just 15 minutes after the ceremony for the Class of 2013 began.

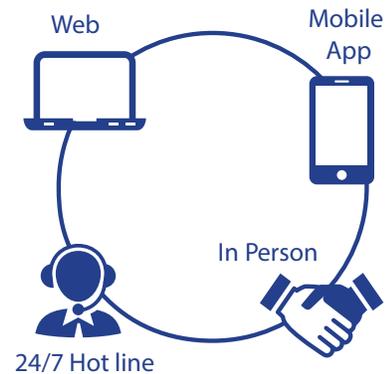
Access and egress from the high school was "truly a challenge," Wheeler said, because of the huge crowd, estimated at 7,000, attending the ceremonies in hot, humid conditions. Estimates on the temperature at the time of the event was 91 degrees, with humidity. The audience sat in the metal stadium bleachers, tightly packed together with heat radiating off the all-weather track and artificial turf field.

STOPIT/WETIP



In January the STOPit mobile and web apps were launched with 24-hour monitoring to assist with school safety and student reporting. The program is seeing early success with over 120,000 students now protected in schools who have added the app. STOPit is used by over 600 schools in California and has helped schools avoid many issues like bullying, sexual violence, threats and mental health incidents by learning of these issues early. Make your district the next to sign up!

The program is simple, fast, and powerful. It is a logical extension of the current WeTip program and utilizes the same 24-hour staff to monitor mobile app tips in addition to phone tips.



Join now and keep our schools and students safe by promoting an "if you see something, speak up" culture.

Already a WeTip member and want to add the mobile app? Visit <https://stopitsolutions.com/safer-wetip-member/>

Not a member yet and you want this straight forward program to help your schools? Visit <https://stopitsolutions.com/safer-non-wetip-member/>

WATER-RELATED FIELD TRIPS

Some field trips involve easily identifiable water exposures, such as lakes and oceans. Other field trips that have water exposures may not be as obvious; such as the hotel swimming pool. Still, others may not appear to be an exposure at all (i.e., a prom night held on a boat). As a district sets and implements its policies in this area, it is important that thought is given to include all possible instances where water may be a hazard. **Districts have experienced a number of drowning and near-drowning incidents some of which include:**

- A student on an educational field trip stayed overnight in a hotel with a swimming pool with no lifeguard on duty. While using the pool under field trip staff supervision, a child fell into the pool, went under for almost a minute and nearly drowned.
- A kindergarten teacher invited her class and supervising parents over to her house for a pool party. One of the children almost drowned in the teacher's pool.
- On a field trip to a lake, a student forgot to bring swim wear but went swimming wearing regular pants. The saturated pants made it difficult to swim, dragging him underwater, almost drowning the student who was in a coma after his rescue.

Education Code 35330 provides that all persons making a field trip or excursion (essentially the same thing: field trips are primarily educational and excursions primarily recreational) are deemed to have waived all liability claims against a district. However, a recent court decision (which was later reversed upon review) asserted that the immunity under 35330 was lost if the supervision was clearly inadequate. In the case of the teacher's swimming pool noted above, a claim was made against her homeowner's policy, which was denied because of the 'business' exclusion.

The severity potential of any drowning incident is significant, of course, and even if districts have liability protection under Education Code 35330, the emotional effect of such a student death on parents, fellow students, teachers and the community is almost immeasurable. **As a result, some members have gone beyond the risk transfer recommendations and developed strict policies, for example:**

- When school groups wish to participate in swimming activities where paid pool or waterfront staff is not provided, the school group must provide a trained lifeguard. This includes the use of motel/hotel pools on overnight field trips. In other words, no lifeguard, no water activity.
- Under no circumstances shall a teacher or other school employee invite a group of students to their private residence for a pool party.

Some effective risk control methods are:

- Lifeguards are the best accident prevention strategy. They should be certified by the Red Cross in adult CPR, standard first aid and lifeguard training. The general accepted lifeguard to swimmer ratio is 1:25, but this could be lowered at times if the exposure area is larger and if there is a higher percentage of depths greater than standing level height. See the Red Cross Swimming and Water Safety handbook.



- Before students are allowed to begin any water activity, a strict overview of the rules governing the area needs to be provided, especially in open areas like lakes and the ocean. Particular attention should be given to any governing signage. If these rules are not followed by a participating student, their water privileges should be revoked.

- Field trip supervisors should review the swimming capabilities of all participating students with the parents or guardians so they can advise the lifeguards if any of the children have drifted into areas that they cannot handle based on their prior experience.
- Under no circumstances should any student be allowed to go in the water wearing regular street clothes.
- Procedures to follow in the case of an accident should be established and reviewed.

Field trip permission forms should include the following four elements:

- A parent or guardian's signature authorizing the activity (if the student is 18 or over, they will also need to sign the form).
- Notification to the parent or guardian that participation in the activity is voluntary and not required by the district; such notification should cite the liability immunity in Education Code Section 35330.
- A medical authorization section outlining any medical conditions or allergies of the student.
- Adequate hold harmless and indemnification language.

A single form encompassing all potential activities during the school year may be used, but the risk is more effectively transferred if a separate form is used for each activity.

MANAGING IAQ ISSUES

Reports of indoor air quality (IAQ) concerns from staff, students, and the general public, are actually quite common. Whether it is a report of foul odors, excessive dust or particles, or even a suspected presence of mold, the basic structure of how best to respond is the same. **Consider following the steps below every time you receive a report of an air quality concern: General rules to follow:**

1. Be receptive to ALL complaints that you receive.
2. Be transparent throughout the entire process.
3. Most reports of concerns are due to simple misinformation. Therefore, educating the person/people reporting the concern on some basics of IAQ can go a long way.
4. **DOCUMENT EVERYTHING.**

Start with the basics. Interview the person/people who reported the concern. You will want them to share what their concerns are and what health symptoms or discomfort they may be experiencing.

Next, visually inspect the area of concern. Look for obvious sources that may be contributing to the concern such as moisture or evidence of moisture (i.e., stains), non-functioning HVAC systems, personal refrigerators/food items, signs of rodent droppings or nesting, indoor plants, indoor “pets,” air fresheners, cleaning supplies, etc.

Then, look for sources outside such as access points under the buildings (rodents/water), overspray from nearby sprinklers, proximity of restrooms, sewer/septic vent pipes, trash cans, standing water, and/or operations occurring nearby.

Move beyond the basics. If your investigation has not resulted in any obvious explanations that address the concern, it may be the case that outside expertise is needed. This may involve the collection of air, surface or other environmental samples. The challenge is there are countless “things” that can be tested (e.g., mold, volatile organic compounds (VOC), fibers in the air). For this reason, sampling should only be undertaken as a secondary step following the investigative actions discussed above, thus making your initial information gathering all the more valuable.

Some of the most common causes for basic IAQ concerns and readily achievable solutions to address basic IAQ concerns include:

1. Inadequate ventilation - the HVAC system is not circulating enough fresh outside air.
2. Visual dirt on the supply or return air vents can raise occupant concerns.
3. Housekeeping - visual dust and debris accumulation on infrequently cleaned surfaces increases particulates and appears unpleasant, thus raising occupant concerns.
4. Thermal comfort.
5. Pets, rodents and other animals.
6. Stained ceiling tiles.
7. Moisture and mold.
8. Food storage.
9. Air fresheners, perfumes and other chemicals.
10. Morale.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Indoor Air Quality for Tools for Schools has several resources for schools on preventative maintenance to help increase student health and academic performance in schools.

[IAQ Tools for Schools Action Kit](#)



The EPA developed this guidance to show schools how to carry out a practical plan of action to improve indoor air problems at little or no cost using straightforward activities and in-house staff. The Action Kit provides best practices, industry guidelines, sample policies and a sample IAQ management plan.

[IAQ Tools for Schools Framework for Effective School IAQ Management](#)

This set of strategies, approaches and techniques can help you immediately put the IAQ Tools for Schools guidance into action to achieve results.

[School IAQ Assessment Mobile App](#)



This app is a “one-stop shop” for accessing guidance from the EPA’s IAQ Tools for Schools Action Kit. Once you have conducted a school walk through, the mobile app allows you to submit assessment checklists to help you track and prioritize IAQ-related follow-up actions based on proven strategies for addressing critical building-related environmental health issues.

[IAQ Professional Training Webinars](#)



The web-based trainings in the [IAQ Master Class Professional Training Webinar Series](#) and [IAQ Knowledge-to-Action Professional Training Webinar Series](#) provide school district staff across the country with the knowledge needed to start, improve or sustain an IAQ management program within their school or school district.

[Energy Savings Plus Health: Indoor Air Quality Guidelines for School Building Upgrades](#)

This guide is written primarily for school facility managers and energy managers to help them collaboratively manage the relationships between energy efficiency upgrades and IAQ in schools.

Learn more about the IAQ Tools for Schools guidance and access other valuable school environmental health resources at www.epa.gov/iaq-schools.

HEAT ILLNESS PREVENTION – STUDENT SUMMER ATHLETICS

School district outdoor workers like grounds, maintenance, custodians and campus supervisors are not the only people we need to worry about regarding heat illness prevention. As the hot summer season rapidly approaches, young athletes will begin a flurry of outdoor sporting events and activities. In fact, many student athletes are multi-sport participants with overlapping practices and training sessions throughout the summer season.

Unfortunately, the combination of summer heat, increased humidity, strenuous exercise, clothing that limits evaporation of sweat, inadequate adaptation to the heat, too much body fat, lack of fitness, and athletic competition can be extremely dangerous to all participants including the coaches and instructors. Even the most highly conditioned athletes can become victims of heat related illness if they do not take special precautions when exercising in hot and humid weather conditions.



The Two Types of Heat Illness

1. **Heat Exhaustion – Symptoms include:** heavy sweating; painful muscle cramps; extreme weakness; nausea and/or vomiting; dizziness and/or headache; normal or slightly high body temperature; fainting; fast, weak pulse; fast, shallow breathing; and clammy, pale, cool and/or moist skin.
2. **Heat Stroke – Symptoms include:** no sweating; mental confusion; delirium; convulsions; dizziness; hot and dry skin; possible muscle twitching; pulse can be rapid and weak; throbbing headache; shallow breathing; seizures; unconsciousness; and coma. Body temperature may range from 102-104 degrees Fahrenheit or higher.

Heat stroke is the most serious of all heat related illnesses and should be treated immediately as a medical emergency. In most heat stroke victims, the body's cooling system has stopped working and the core temperature rises to dangerous levels. Heat stroke can result in lifelong effects to the body and may be fatal if left untreated. Other heat related illnesses such as heat cramps and heat exhaustion are less severe and require less drastic measures to treat, however, they should not be ignored. These are warning signs that your body is approaching heat stroke levels.

Athletes generally suffer from exertional heat stroke, which differs slightly from the traditional types of heat stroke previously mentioned. In exertional heat stroke, victims continue sweating, despite the increased core temperature. For athletes, heat stroke is diagnosed when the body's core temperature rises above 105 degrees Fahrenheit with mental status changes such as disorientation, confusion, loss of balance, and diminished coordination. If any of these symptoms are present, proper emergency treatment and cooling the patient is essential to preventing collapse, coma, and ultimate death.



Early warning signs of heat stroke can be subtle and may include: irritability, confusion, apathy, belligerence, emotional instability, vomiting, undue fatigue, or irrational behavior. Chills and goose bumps signal a shutdown of skin circulation creating a rise in body temperature.

Heat Stroke Prevention

Acclimate to hot humid conditions slowly:

- Pace practices and duration.
- Practice early recognition - keep an eye out for early warning signs.
- Provide shade, ice water and misting fans for rest breaks.
- Focus on high risk athletes (those not as fit or having high body mass).
- Avoid exercising in the hottest part of the day and wear light, loose clothing. Suit-up in stages.
- Hydrate well before, during, and after exercising using proper hydration techniques.

Replace lost electrolytes (sodium, potassium, and magnesium) by eating food and drinking sports drinks low in sugar (drink 16-20 oz/hour). Competitive sporting activities in the summer months have been the focus of student athletes for decades. Increased pressure to compete at the highest level has young athletes training and pushing their bodies to the limit. Basic knowledge of heat stroke signs, treatment, and prevention allows student athletes to compete at the highest level without the risk of suffering the lifelong effects associated with heat-related illnesses.

Preventing heat stroke hinges on acclimations, hydration, pacing activity, cooling and vigilance. Cool first and transport second. An Emergency Action Plan (EAP) should be in place in case of any emergency as a prompt and appropriate response in any emergency situation can save a life. The EAP should be designed and practiced to

address all team levels and all practice and game sites. A Heat Illness Prevention for Athletes course is available on Keenan SafeSchools.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE RISK MANAGEMENT REWARD PROGRAM WINNERS!



The NCR Risk Management Reward Program is designed to recognize and reward member districts' proactive efforts to reduce incident frequency and severity through utilization of Keenan SafeSchools online trainings modules. The Risk

Management Committee chooses the courses each year, this year two Child Abuse Prevention Microlearning Series courses were chosen.

Those districts that had 25% of their employees take these courses between 8/1 – 12/31 were entered into a lottery drawing to win \$2,500. Congratulations to the 10 winning districts:

1. Banta Elementary School District
2. Castro Valley Unified School District
3. Fowler Unified School District
4. Junction City School District
5. Maple Creek School District
6. Oak View Union Elementary School District
7. Pacific Elementary School District
8. Potter Valley Community Unified School District
9. San Benito County Office of Education
10. Tulelake Basin Joint Unified School District