

School counseling outcomes sponsored by the Massachusetts School Counselor's Association



West Springfield High School

425 Piper Road West Springfield, Massachusetts 01089
Phone: 413-263-3478 Fax: 413-263-3489
www.wsps.org Enrollment: 1358 Grades 9-12

PRINCIPAL'S COMMENTS

As principal of West Springfield High School, I support the implementation of the Massachusetts Model for School Counseling. The Guidance and Counseling Department are an essential part of a larger team that maintains a safe environment for our students. Through a variety of programs, activities and communications, I believe that the school counselors play a vital role in the academic success of our students. Our counselors meet the needs of our students, school and district through data driven services to promote safety and success.

Mr. Peter Dufresne

STUDENT SUPPORT PERSONNEL TEAM

The school counselor plays a vital role in implementation of services, including academic, career development, and social emotional support. The counselor's caseloads are broken down by grade, alphabet, and vocational placement. Success is evaluated by completion of school wide and district goals. Department Chair, Mrs. Kathleen Jachym, oversees each team member's specific responsibilities for the successful design and implementation of the guidance programs.

Mrs. Kathleen Jachym, Chairperson M.Ed.
Mrs. Bonnie Cofer, School Counselor CAGS
Mr. Edward Jacques, School Counselor/Vocational Counselor, M.Ed.
Mr. Michael Scanlon, School Counselor MBA, MA
Mrs. Dina Sibilia, School Counselor Terrier House MA, NCC, NCSC
Mrs. Shamis White, School Counselor, MA
Mrs. Louise Fullam, Adjustment Counselor MS, LMFT
Mrs. Denise Gagnier, Adjustment Counselor, MSW, LICSW
Mrs. Jean Aloisi, Administrative Assistant
Mrs. Deborah Santaniello, Administrative Assistant

The team collaborates with other staff which may include administration, school resource office, health coordinator, school nurses, school psychologist, special services, district social worker, attendance supervisor, district curriculum director as well as classroom teachers. They serve on a variety of teams both school and district wide. They are members of local and state professional groups. The department members are responsible for the design and implementation of the program. Team members have monthly staff meetings as well as additional time during the school year to develop the school guidance curriculum.

*West Springfield High School:
A learning community committed to excellence.*



SCHOOL CLIMATE AND SAFETY

It is the policy of the West Springfield School District to provide a safe learning environment for all students. Based upon rising concerns nationwide, the West Springfield High School Guidance Department began to look at bullying and specifically Cyber-bullying issues. The term “cyber-bullying” is a relatively new concept. However, in today’s society the outcome of incidents can be devastating to students, schools, and communities. A survey was developed, as a result of a training attended by a counselor and student leaders, yielding the following results:

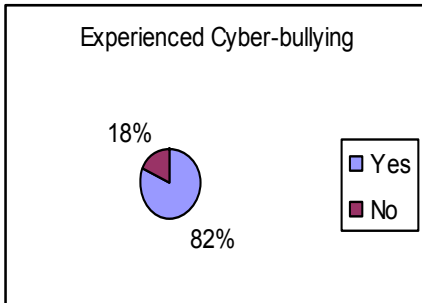


Chart 1: Out of approximately 250 students surveyed, 82% have experienced cyber-bullying. Cyber-bullying is defined as harassing, derogatory or negative comments over the internet or via cell phone.

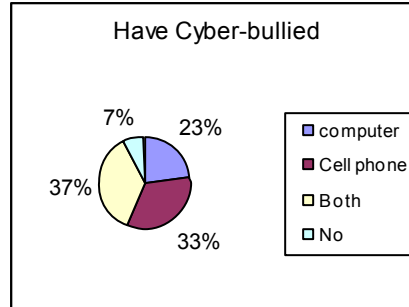


Chart 2: The majority of the students that have bullied other students have done so either by the use of text messages or by the use of social networking sites.

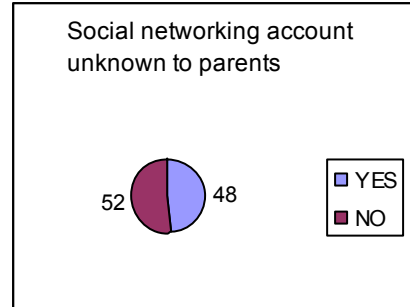


Chart 3: Out of approximately 250 students surveyed, 48% of the responses indicate that they have a social networking site account that their parents do not know about.

As a result of these surveys the guidance and counseling department implemented the following strategies:

- State Senator Stephen Buoniconti and State Representative James Welch spoke to a school counselor and students to review proposed legislation, Senate No. 2630. This proposed bill is meant to address bullying and cyber-bullying in the schools.
- A newsletter was developed for parents with information about cyber-bullying.
- Class discussions were centered around how to address cyber-bullying at West Springfield High School.
- The School Resource Officer and Vice Principal held a training for parents regarding safe internet use.

Focus for Improvement

West Springfield High School will identify a point person to address cyber-bullying within the school. West Springfield High School, in conjunction with recommendations from the guidance and counseling department, will promote the cyber-bullying policy and utilize assistance from community resources. West Springfield High School staff will look for alternative ways to provide students and parents information on safely navigating the internet. West Springfield Guidance and Counseling Department will do this by providing information to students in the beginning of the school year during their ninth grade library orientation session. Based on the number of parents that attended the cyber safety session, The Guidance and Counseling department at West Springfield High School will suggest other ways to promote safety such as holding safety sessions at different times and at different locations throughout the year. Finally, the Guidance and Counseling Department will focus on linking internet safety with the Massachusetts Career Development Education Benchmarks within classroom or small group sessions.