

# School Safety

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THE JOURNAL OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION (ISSN 0021-8480) is published bimonthly, October through May, and a summer issue for June, July, August, and September by the Department of Education, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600. TELEPHONE (301) 680-5075, FAX (301) 622-9627; E-mail: 74617.1231 (CompuServe). Subscription price, U.S. \$17.25. Single copy, U.S. \$3.50. Second-class mailing paid at Silver Spring, Maryland, and additional mailing office. Please send all changes of address to Southwestern ColorGraphics, P.O. Box 677, Keene, TX 76059, including both old and new address. Address all editorial and advertising correspondence to the Editor. © Copyright 1997 General Conference of SDA, POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE JOURNAL OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION, P.O. Box 677, Keene, TX 76059.

**W**hy devote an entire issue to school safety? One of the most striking changes in society in the past 15 to 20 years has been the increase in violence in our communities. Schools have not been immune to such problems. As crime and violence have increased rapidly in the world and in public schools, they have also had an impact on students in Adventist schools. Students cannot achieve their potential in a climate of fear or violence.

“A school is only Christian when there is in it more love, more joy, more peace, more patience, more kindness, more goodness, more faithfulness, more gentleness, and more self-control than in the world outside.”<sup>1</sup> I believe that these qualities are evident in our schools. However, if we allow violence and crime to enter our campuses, we will not have schools where children and youth are unafraid or where peace prevails.

As Adventist Christian educators, we must make sure that our schools display many more of these qualities than is found in the world outside. How can we have more love, peace, kindness, or gentleness if students in our schools are bullying, threatening, hitting, or stealing from one another?

This special issue addresses some of these topics. The authors will suggest ways to cope with violence on campus, how to use conflict resolution to make the school safer, how to teach children and youth to be resilient, and many ways to teach children and youth to protect themselves.

One of the articles will address how to prepare and implement a school-wide safety and security plan. In today’s world, it is as important to do this type of planning as to have a disaster preparedness plan.

Our schools are really only as safe as administrators and teachers make them. One of the important roles of administrators and teachers is to know the law so they can avoid being negligent. In the article “Negligence—King of Torts,” Attorney Charles McKinstry addresses the legal implications of negligence, and offers suggestions for administrators, teachers, and support staff.

Also included is a list of resources that you should find helpful. These resources are divided into reports, studies, and surveys; journals and magazines; staff development programs; organizations; and books. All addresses and phone numbers were up to date at the time of publication.

Since teachers and administrators deal with their students’ personal as well as academic needs, it seems appropriate to include a list of “Hotlines” that provide help for kids.

In a world of violence and strife, our schools need to teach peace as a counter-cultural value. It is their responsibility to see that classrooms and campuses are places where the peace that Jesus promised is taught and practiced. “Peace is what I leave with you, it is my own peace that I give you.”—Paul E. Plummer.

*Dr. Paul E. Plummer is Professor of Education at Pacific Union College, Angwin, California, and Co-ordinator for this issue. The editorial staff expresses appreciation for his organization, hard work, and enthusiasm, without which it would never have become a reality.*

**REFERENCES**

1. Peter Haile, “What Makes a Christian School,” *The Journal of Adventist Education* 36:5 (Summer 1974), p. 5.
2. John 14:27, *Good News Bible*.

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**Paul E. Plummer**