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***The State of South Carolina has been partnering with CPI for more than 15 years to properly equip teachers and paraprofessionals with the tools to deal with potentially violent events. The training provides clear and practical steps that can be safely taken to deal with such situations.***

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## **SITUATION**

"Today's schools operate in complex environments. With the wide variety of students and human dynamics that arise on any given day in schools, in many of our communities there may arise situations that pose a danger to students or staff," according to Mike Paget, Consultant for Students with Emotional Disabilities with the South Carolina Department of Education.

In his three decades of working with students' emotional behavioral development and mental health concerns, Paget has seen a variety of staff training approaches designed to deal with unexpected situations. He estimates that 20 percent of any student population can be considered "at-risk."

"In any group of students you will have a range of kids, including some whose background may cause them to be volatile and reactive. And when situations arise that present a risk to students and staff, no one wants to have to place a hand on a student to restrain them. Ideally you want to be able to handle a situation in a way that that will make it safer rather than worse."

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*"The most common reaction to people who go through training is: 'Everybody in the world needs the de-escalation piece.' They find the skills they learn useful in dealing not only with parents and family situations, but in a wide variety of daily encounters."*

-Mike Paget  
South Carolina Department of Education

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## **RESULTS**

Paget maintains a support network for over 100 trainers throughout South Carolina to provide strategies that have a track record of success in:

- Reducing the frequency and severity of disruptive or dangerous situations.
- Increasing employee confidence and morale.
- Fostering a culture of respect and safety in schools.
- Preserving dignity as well as safety for adults and students.

"We have seen scary situations in which potential violence has been defused and problems avoided thanks to these techniques—the individuals are shown respect and non-verbal cues that are non-threatening or non-provoking to them."

For adults who are not accustomed to dealing with challenging students, Paget finds it is very easy to react to their own anxieties and respond in a manner that does make the situation worse. Paget has found the CPI training, especially the de-escalation skills to be "a wonderful tool to calm the acting-out person as well as the adult. It's a remarkable way to settle everyone down."

## **ABOUT CPI**

CPI was established in 1980 for human service professionals to address the need for crisis prevention and intervention training in safe, respectful, noninvasive methods. CPI remains on the forefront of critical issues and best practices in behavior management based on its founding philosophy of providing *Care, Welfare, Safety and Security*<sup>SM</sup> for everyone involved in a crisis moment. More than 6 million people across the globe have been trained in CPI's *Nonviolent Crisis Intervention*<sup>®</sup> program.

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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