



A SCHOOL-WIDE APPROACH

Fostering Positive Educational Climates

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Company Overview

Crisis Prevention Institute Inc. (CPI) is the worldwide leader in evidence-based de-escalation and crisis prevention training. Since 1980, we have helped train more than 15 million people within service-oriented industries.



We are dedicated to changing behaviors and reducing conflict for the *Care, Welfare, Safety, and SecuritySM* of everyone. We believe in the power of empathy, compassion, and meaningful connections. We believe personal safety and security are the antidotes to fear and anxiety. It's a philosophy that is central to everything we do, and traces back to our beginning. It is what defines and differentiates us and informs our core beliefs.



We teach the world that by combining the right skills with dignity and respect, you create well-being throughout schools and districts.



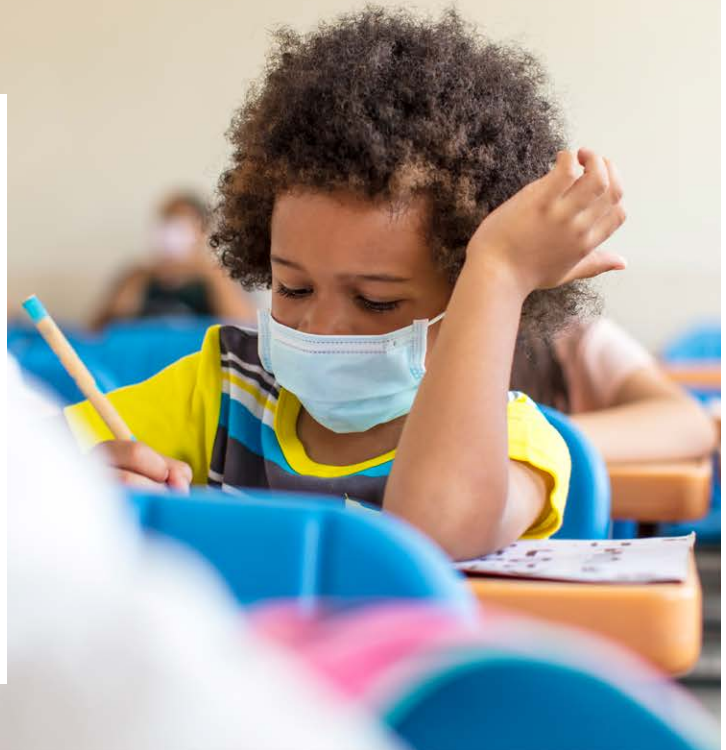
“CPI is consistent, reliable, evidence-based, and provides an initiative for our staff to begin using these techniques the day after training is conducted.”

JOHN HEIDERSCHIEDT, DIRECTOR OF SCHOOL SAFETY AND CULTURE, U-46 SCHOOL DISTRICT, ILLINOIS

[READ CASE STUDY >](#)

School Climate & Culture

A positive school climate is one that supports student success, demonstrates staff retention, and provides a safe, healthy learning environment.



This guide will help you empower all layers of school staff with the skills and confidence to deliver consistent care and safety. Inside you'll gain a better understanding of why a strong focus on school climate is critical to your learners, along with these evidence-based materials:

- ✓ **5 Fundamental School Climate Strategies**
- ✓ **Self-Assessment: How Will You Own Your Part of the Integrated Experience?**
- ✓ **Self-Assessment: Your Behavior Choices**
- ✓ **6 Solid Strategies for Minimizing Disruptive Behavior and Maximizing Instruction Time**



“Measuring school climate can help us to understand what was and what is, so that we can move forward to what could be.”

DR. H. JEROME FREIBERG

School Climate Expert, Professor in the College of Education at the University of Houston, Director and Founder of the Consistency Management & Cooperative Discipline Project, and Editor of the Journal of Classroom Interaction

Why is School Climate So Important?

Your choices within a student’s learning environment factor significantly within the health and sustainability of your school’s overall climate and culture. The same applies to your successful collaboration with your colleagues, students, and their families.

Developing a robust and sustainable school climate is about more than student outcomes. It can also retain passionate educators by surrounding them with support. Developing strategies to keep the teachers you have is critical to successful retention and staff development for the long term.

When it comes to making a positive difference, it’s never too late.

Even the simplest change to your individual behavior management approach can make a profound difference in a student’s life. You have the ability to positively impact the community of your classroom and enrich the climate of your school.

According to the National School Climate Center, a positive school climate illustrates the following attributes:

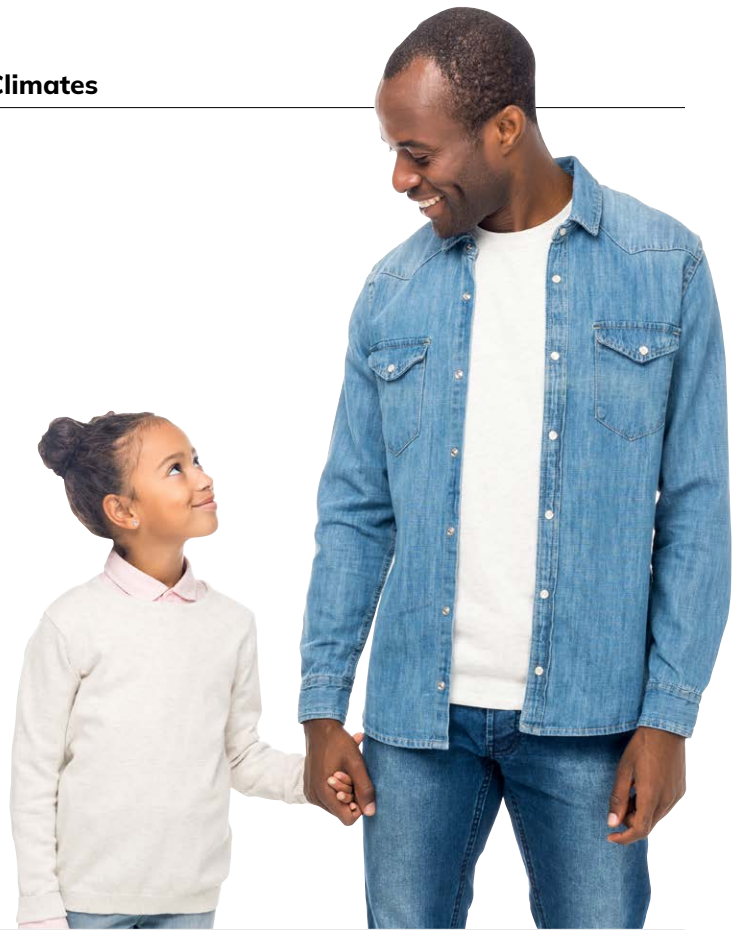
- > **“Norms, values, and expectations that support people feeling socially, emotionally, and physically safe.”**
- > **“People are engaged and respected.”**
- > **“Students, families, and educators work together to develop and contribute to a shared school vision.”**
- > **“Educators model and nurture attitudes that emphasize the benefits and satisfaction gained from learning.”**



Start with School Climate Surveys

School climate surveys can help you strategically target specific areas of concern.

The US Department of Education has made surveys available to districts to assess the “climate” or environment of schools in the district. The target audiences for the surveys include students (grade 5-12), parents, instructional staff, and non-instructional staff.



Areas to Focus On

The EDSCLS School Climate Model or Safe Supportive School Model was developed by a national panel of researchers and other experts in the field. This model highlights three main domains that determine a positive school climate. All three should be looked at as a single best practice in policy and should be kept in focus as you conduct your survey:

> Engagement

- Cultural and linguistic competence
- Relationships
- School participation

> Safety

- Emotional safety
- Physical safety
- Bullying/cyberbullying
- Substance abuse
- Emergency readiness/management

> Environment

- Physical environment
- Instructional environment
- Physical health
- Mental health
- Discipline

Make sure to include students, staff, and families when surveying school climate. This can help you prioritize training and development in areas where it’s most needed, while enhancing dynamics between your school and the community it resides in.



5 Fundamental School Climate Strategies

Understanding that physical, social, and emotional components are intrinsically linked to behavior management and academic performance, doing your part to support a healthy school climate is vital.

These five fundamental school climate strategies are an excellent place to start.

1 Establish Common Values

From administrators and teachers, to support staff, students, and parents, common values centered around courtesy and respect should be a top priority. Knowing that behavior influences behavior, always remember that your own positive attitude will foster a school climate that values respect.

2 Assess Your Environment

The look and feel of your school tell staff, students, and visitors what to expect. When examining the environment, look at the hallways, parking lots, and classrooms; ensure they are clean. Adequate lighting, consistent speakers, and a reporting system are additional environmental factors to stay on top of.

3 Pay Attention to Warning Signs

Watch for cues from students and colleagues that may indicate distress. This can present itself through changes in behavior, routines, facial expressions, posture, and even tone or volume of voice. These warning signs will help you identify the student or colleague's intentions and will help you take a supportive attitude that focuses on prevention.

4 Develop Policies and Procedures

Established plans and expectations outlined in the form of policies and procedures help ensure consistency in language and an understanding of both the expectations in place and the school's vision.

5 Create and Execute Staff Development Plans

Staff come to the job with teaching skills but become even more effective as educators when they have the skills and training to prevent and de-escalate challenging behavior. Those skills instill confidence in the teacher while also providing a sense of security for students and fellow colleagues.

Once you've embraced these best practices, the next step is to ensure consistent check-ins with staff. Regularly meeting with your colleagues will identify and strategically target the specific areas of your school climate that could use improved enrichment.

The more you consistently assess your school's climate, the more attuned you will become to having a feel for the current state it is in. School climate surveys like we mentioned prior will help determine if your feel for the current climate aligns with that of students and staff.



CPI & School Climate

Below are successes CPI education customers have seen by utilizing evidence-based training and materials to successfully improve their school climate.

Focusing on Verbal Interventions First

U-46 School District was experiencing a continuous increase in physical aggression and fights in all five of its high schools and several middle schools. Unskilled interventions led to injuries to both students and staff, in addition to an increased rate of expulsions.

Through *Nonviolent Crisis Intervention*® Training and the use of CPI specialty topic materials on setting limits, trauma-

informed care, and dealing with bullying, a positive school climate was fostered. Suspensions decreased by 75% over five years, fights continue to decrease year-after-year, and staff's focus has been able to remain on teaching instead of discipline. U-46 School District credits its positive school culture to the improved staff confidence in handling disruptions and managing behaviors that were gained through CPI techniques and approaches.



“Standardized behaviors foster a more dignified treatment of students, parents, staff, and others.”

MARK SCOTT, LOS ANGELES COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION, CALIFORNIA

Creating an Environment Conducive to Learning and Growing

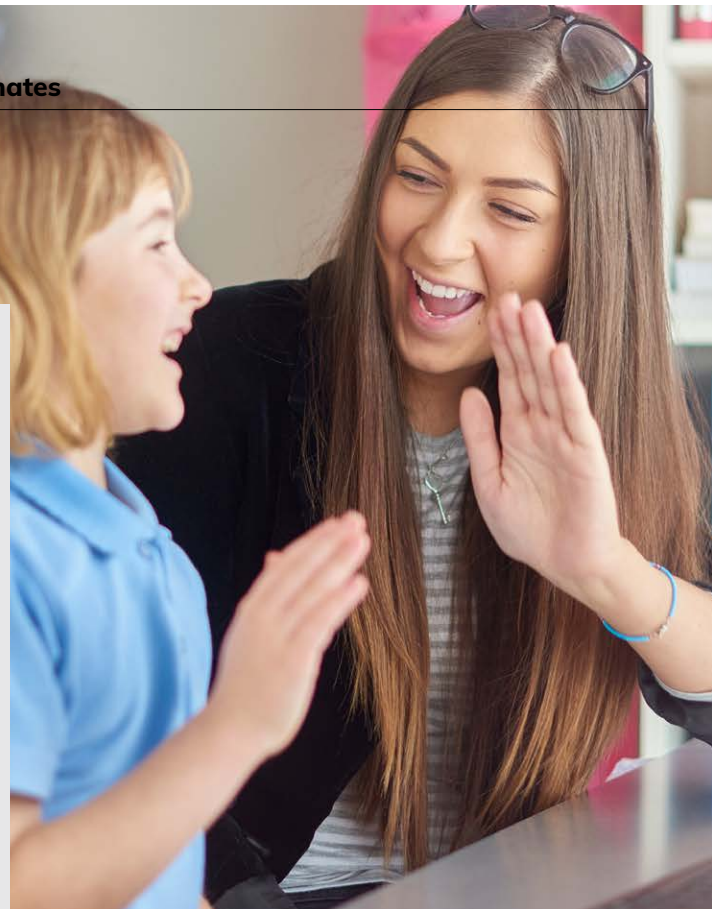
The Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE), the nation's largest regional education agency, needed a comprehensive yet flexible approach to reducing the number of violence incidents while also creating a safer environment in which to educate and care for children.

By adopting policies based upon the CPI philosophy to categorize training and

operational procedures, LACOE established and continues to maintain comprehensive training. This has resulted in staff that can match techniques learned through CPI to their everyday classroom experiences. A validated and more knowledgeable staff has provided LACOE with a healthier learning environment that focuses on a positive climate.

The Integrated Experience

At CPI, we refer to the way our personal behavior impacts the behavior of those around us as the Integrated Experience. It is the cornerstone of everything we believe about behavior management.



What does this mean as you work with students? You cannot control the way your learners behave, but you can control your own behavior and reactions. It's critical to remember the Integrated Experience and know that your behavior will influence your students' behavior. Your anxiety can bring forward their anxiety. But equally as important; your calm demeanor will entice their calm, focused behavior.

The following pages contain self-assessments to help you reflect and plan for how the Integrated Experience will play a role in your daily interactions at school, as well as the strategies you can take to make your own positive behavior choices.

Once you've reflected, it's time to put our best practices into action and set your students up to succeed.



Your behavior as an educator has the power to change the course of students' lives as adults.

SELF-ASSESSMENT:

Own Your Part of Each Integrated Experience

In the educational setting, there are ostensibly four basic Integrated Experiences you stand to participate in each day, and how you choose to own your side of each one can absolutely influence their success.

> STUDENT: How can I positively impact my interactions with students?

> CLASSROOM: How can I positively contribute to the classroom/school space in which I work?

> STAFF: How can I positively improve my collaboration with staff across my school?

> SCHOOL: How can I positively enrich my school's climate and culture so that everybody has a better chance of success?

SELF-ASSESSMENT:

Your Behavior Choices

Making positive behavior choices is not only beneficial to those around you, but also to yourself; allowing you to avoid burnout and vicarious trauma in your career. Bringing your colleagues on board and working together to support positive, behavioral interventions across your school can make demanding work significantly more manageable. You will reap the benefits of a healthy learning environment, and so will your learners.

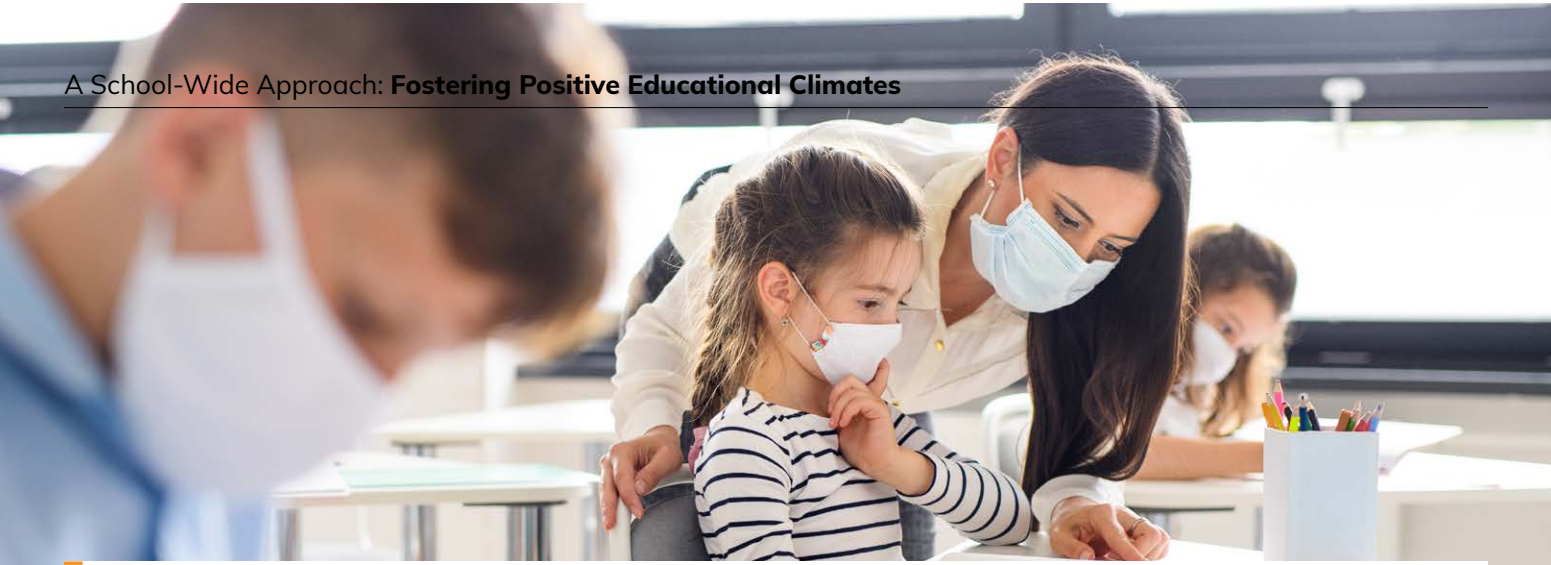
> What commitments will I make in my personal approach to behavior management?

> What strategies will I use to keep myself calm and keep my students on track?

> What approach will I take to de-escalate disruptive behavior, and help students re-engage successfully in the classroom after a crisis?

> What values will I anchor my attitude in so that I can make this school year my most successful yet?

> How will I bring staff, students, and their families together to collaborate on a positive and proactive approach to behavior management?



6 Solid Strategies for Minimizing Disruptive Behavior and Maximizing Instruction Time

1 LEAD BY EXAMPLE— model respect and caring in your actions.

2 SEEK TO BE RESTORATIVE, and not punitive, in handling challenging or disruptive behaviors.

3 TAKE A TRAUMA-SENSITIVE APPROACH that meets students where they are and gets them where they need to go.

4 TRY TO COLLABORATE with all the key adults in a child's life to establish consistency that can help students master self-regulation.

5 SUPPORT INCLUSION by strategically integrating classrooms and activities wherever possible.

6 UNDERSTAND WE ALL HAVE A PART TO PLAY in sustaining a culture of caring and safety in schools.



A Positive School Climate Starts Here.

> Contact us for more information at crisisprevention.com or call **800.558.8976**.