



The Center for
Safe and Secure Schools
Harris County Department of Education

Safety Always First in Education

A Message from the Director



December is here, which means the holidays are near. I want to take this time to personally wish each of you a happy holiday season and a recharged new year.

The new year brings change. The Center for Safe and Secure Schools is currently hiring a new School Culture and Climate Specialist and will officially introduce our new specialist in January.

Our specialists have been busy conducting school safety audits, scheduling school coaching visits and gearing up for in-person workshops and training starting in January. If you need in-person, virtual or on-campus training for emotional or physical safety needs, do not hesitate to contact us.

Visit the Center's [website](#) or call 713-696-0771 for more information.

Have a safe and restful holiday season.

Julia Y. Andrews

Director, HCDE Center for Safe and Secure Schools

Safety Tip of the Month

Keeping your home and family safe from winter fires

Stay informed and keep your home and family safe post-holiday with these statistic and year-end tips.

- Nearly half of home fires occur during December, January, and February.
- 25% of holiday fires are caused by decorations
- Never leave holiday decorations on while sleeping or away from home
- 210 home fires a year are caused by Christmas trees
- Fires caused by Christmas trees are usually deadlier
- Inspect and dispose of any damaged decorations
- Decorations are temporary, remove them after the holidays
- Separate and label indoor and outdoor decorations
- [Arc-Fault Circuit Interrupters](#) can prevent 50% of home electrical fires
- Store decorations in a dry location that is safely out of reach of children and pets
- Remove, inspect and store all holiday decorations by the first week of January



Source: <https://www.esfi.org/wrapping-up-the-holidays-preventing-winter-fires/>

CSSS Member Spotlight

Gary Burnett

*Emergency Management Coordinator
Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District
Office of Emergency Management
"Fire Code Safety Guide"*

This month's CSSS spotlight shines on Gary Burnett, emergency management coordinator for Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District.

The CFISD Office of Emergency Management (OEM) developed a solid working relationship with the Harris County Fire Marshal's Office (HCFMO). CFISD OEM staff routinely attend fire marshal inspections to understand the fire code safety standards and assist campuses with mitigating violations. In addition, routine meetings with school emergency coordinators revealed the struggle with maintaining the fire code safety standards and the search

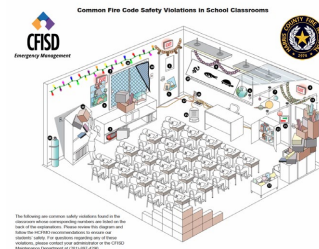


Emergency Management Coordinator,
Gary Burnett

for a solution to keep campuses in a ready state.

In light of this, Gary developed the *Common Fire Code Safety Violations in School Classrooms* graphic to assist. Using a classroom image with fire code violations as a starting point, he tailored the image to guide school administrators and teachers in conducting self-inspections, using the HCFMO fire code safety standards as a guide.

Once complete, Gary sought feedback and approval from HCFMO, which provided positive and enthusiastic approval of the graphic and is now the standard for ensuring all county classrooms are safe and violation-free. According to the HCFMO, school districts within the greater Houston region and across the country have requested the graphic.



A huge thank you to CFISD OEM for sharing this [resource](#). It is a strong example of *Neighbors Helping Neighbors* in the Harris County school district community. CSSS values the partnerships with CFISD, HCFMO and all our Harris County emergency partners.

Grant Opportunities

Doris Day Animal Foundation

Letters of introduction will be accepted only the first month of each quarter (January, April, July and October)

<https://www.dorisdayanimalfoundation.org/grants/guidelines-and-faq>

Bank of America Philanthropic Solutions: David and Betty Sacks Foundation (Texas)

Due: Feb. 1, 2022

To support animal-related initiatives, as well as those in the areas of education, human services, the arts, culture and the humanities. Grants typically range between \$3,000 - \$10,000.

<https://www.bankofamerica.com/philanthropic/foundation/?fnId=146>

Charlotte's Litter

For New Programs and Pilot Programs:

<https://charlottehelenbaconfoundation.org/charlottes-litter/>

<https://charlotteslitter.org/grants/#:~:text=Grants%20may%20only%20be%20applied%20o%20training%2C%20current,requesting%20funds%20for%20the%20purchase%20of%200a%20dog.>

http://charlotteslitter.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/CL_GrantCriteria.pdf

Alliance for Therapy Dogs (ATD)

<https://www.therapydogs.com/alliance-therapy-dogs/>

Registration is affordable. For \$30 a year (plus an initial one-time \$10 new member fee), a team can be registered with ATD and covered by our insurance to partake in the mission of sharing smiles and joy with their dog.

Register Therapy Dog

<https://assistancedogregistry.com/?msclid=dedbc319781210575417a263e41b1e3d>

Human Animal-Bond Research Institute: Addressing Evidence-Based Health Benefits of Human-Animal Interaction

Due: Feb. 24, 2022

To investigate the health outcomes of pet ownership and/or animal-assisted interventions or therapy, both for the people and the animals involved. Topics include (but are not limited to) impacts on diverse and under-represented populations, social isolation and loneliness, suicide prevention, addiction, trauma and/or post-traumatic stress, obesity and heart health.

Awards: 5-6 projects each year; project costs averaging approximately \$45,000 per project for 20 months.

<https://habri.org/grants/funding-opportunities/>

Assistance Dogs Wish List

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/2Q0075SKOZQSB/ref=hz_ls_biz_ex

CSSS Emergency Management

Preventing cyberbullying and harassment over the holidays

The holiday season is here and with school out, students will spend more time online and with family and friends. This downtime can mean more exposure to the threat of online threats or bullying.

Whether online or off, no one is immune to harassment, threats or bullying. People who use electronic communication to bully do not take holidays or vacations.

That's why it's essential that parents, school staff and other adults in the community help kids prevent bullying by talking about it, building a safe school environment and creating a community-wide bullying prevention strategy.



Below are steps to consider if you experience bullying online:

1. Never engage with the bully or the person that is harassing you.
2. Never have any of your friends retaliate in your defense.
3. Save, copy or print out any evidence. A screenshot can be the easiest way.
4. Block and report the person to the social media site you are using.
5. Never meet anyone in person.
6. Tell someone you trust. Preferably a parent or a trusted adult.

Here are some resources:

- [Cyberbullying: Learn what cyberbullying is](#)
- [Federal Laws: Learn more about your civil rights](#)
- [What Schools Can Do: Rules and Policies are defined in schools on how students treat each other](#)

[What Kids Can Do: Things students can do to keep them safe from bullying](#)

source: (www.stopbullying.gov)

Take Care Tuesday Podcast

The Center for Safe and Secure Schools' *Take Care Tuesday* podcast reaches listeners throughout the United States as well as abroad in Ireland, Nigeria, the United Kingdom, Germany and Singapore.



Available now:

**Focus on Learning:
Grace for Students
and Teachers**

Dr. Charles Barrett,
School Psychologist

[Listen Now](#)

BJA STOP School Violence Grant

Grant-Supported Professional Development Training

Digital Threat Assessment Training

In 2021, the BJA STOP School Violence grant will focus heavily on providing social media and online threat assessment trainings during the first half of the year.

Youth Mental Health First Aid

Youth Mental Health First Aid is primarily designed for adults who regularly interact with young people. The course introduces common mental health challenges for youth, reviews typical adolescent development and teaches a five-step action plan for how to help young people in both crisis and non-crisis situations.

Intro to Restorative Practices

This training allows participants to experience the impact of a virtual *Restorative Circle*. Participants will have an opportunity to experience a community building circle process and develop the skills to plan and facilitate a virtual *Restorative Circle*.

Upcoming Training and Events



THIS TRAINING WILL INCLUDE:

- How to establish a digital behavioral baseline
- Application of DTA theoretical foundations
- Current social media platforms: their use, misuse and associated risks
- Online verification and authentication of images
- The data landscape: smartphones, search engines, and social media
- Privacy: staff safety and best practices
- And much more



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In-Person Workshops:

[Jan. 19 - 20](#) - (FREE) - Basic and Advanced Digital Threat Assessment (DTA) Training

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