

## More About the Keystone Program

*In 1999, the U.S. Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, and Justice embarked on a unique and unprecedented collaboration, creating the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative in response to rising concerns about youth violence and school safety. This Federal grant, available to communities across the country, recognizes that violence among young people is caused by a multitude of factors—including early childhood, family life, mental health, and substance abuse issues—and that no single action can be counted on to prevent it. As such, the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative takes a broad approach, drawing on the best practices and the latest thinking in education, justice, social services, and mental health to help communities take action.*

*Safe Schools/Healthy Students has provided financial and technical support to more than 200 schools and communities in urban, suburban, rural, and tribal areas nationwide. In turn, grantees partner with local school districts, law enforcement agencies, public and private mental health services organizations, and community-based organizations. The result is a coordinated, cooperative effort that recognizes the complexity of youth violence.*

*The diversity of Safe Schools/Healthy Students grant recipients is vast, and the Initiative recognizes and respects each community's capacity to best address its own vision for youth violence prevention. Funds are used creatively to link new and existing services at each grant site, making it easier for children and families to get the comprehensive support they need. Incorporating strategies for prevention as well as intervention, grant funding allows schools and communities to address issues of youth violence as they appear—while working to prevent violence before it starts.*

*Additionally, grantees use programs and services with a proven track record of success to help them achieve their goals. These “evidence-based” programs might include efforts to promote students' cooperation with their peers, set standards of behavior, develop healthy student/family relationships, increase parental involvement in schools, build emotional resiliency, and strengthen communication and problem-solving skills.*

*Results are important. As communities implement different strategies, outcomes are evaluated and progress is measured. Success stories abound in communities of every size and from every region of the country. Collectively, Safe Schools/Healthy Students grantees are making an enormous impact on the quality of life for the children, families, and communities they serve.*