Changing the color of incidents: Green Dot trainers in Yokosuka

Story and photo by Joe Schmitt, CFAY Public Affairs

Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) hosted a "Green Dot" course that ended Sept. 15. The three-day class taught the attendees how to train others to intervene in incidents of violence, stalking, abuse or sexual harassment and to create an environment where these incidents are less likely to occur.

"It's called 'Green Dot' because, when you look at a map of a spreading epidemic, they usually put a little red dot on the place it happened. We are putting green dots on the map where people have chosen to help someone or they saw something and stepped in to prevent a problem," said Dorothy Edwards, director of Green Dot Etc.

The course was presented to and accepted by the Department of Defense (DoD) at the end of 2010. In 2011, the trainers began going to commands and installations to "train the trainers." Members from the surrounding military communities would come to a central location like CFAY FFSC to learn these skills and take the ideas back with them.

"We are giving the students the tools to create more sustainable training. We will not have to come back and train new people every six months. The students will become the teachers and continue to train others with what they got from this class," said Edwards. "It's also relationship based. When the students return to their command as trainers, people are going to learn better from them because it's someone they know from their community."

Each day of the class has a different focus and shifts from the first day where students are just listening to the second day where the students do some talking and interacting. The last day, the students act out situations and discuss how their training has taught them to intervene.

Students of the "Green Dot" course act out possible situations of violence, stalking, abuse or sexual harassment and the appropriate responses they learned. The course trains service and community members to become teachers when they go back to their command where they will train others in how to intervene and prevent incidents.

"We are going to get this information out there, that's the most important thing," said Personnel Specialist 1st Class Katrice Delaney, one of the students from Misawa Air Base Personnel Support Detachment. "We let people know how important it is as a bystander to say something and not just stand there. Anybody can step up and change a situation before it goes too far."

During the last day of the class, Delaney and her group acted out a skit of possible situations that they thought could happen when service and community members were at a bar. The instructor would call out a type of response they learned during class; distract, intervene, and others. The students responded with the tactics they learned from the class.

"These types of things can effect mission readiness," said Edwards. "When we are working to reduce their numbers we are not just making a better, safer place to live and work, we are also improving how the military functions. It will be a better connected, more ready work force when people take the time and try to create that green dot."

The Sullivans School welcomes parents with open house

Story and photo by Steve Parker, The Sullivans Elementary School Public Affairs

The Sullivans School welcomed the parents of students from the Yokosuka and Ikego communities, who visited the school during their annual school open house, Sept. 15.

Parents visited their children's classroom teacher for short fifteen minute sessions to meet the teacher and receive information. There were three of the short sessions allowing parents of multiple children to visit each child's teacher. They received information about how to access Dolphinet, the Sullivans School intranet site, and they also got a chance to see where their children spend much of their day before coming home.

Sullivans held an earlier event, billed as a sneak peak on Aug. 26, the Friday before school actually started. Both annual events, the open house and the sneak peek, are designed to ease student's and parent's transitions into a new school year. Parents who had attended the sneak peek were already familiar with the classroom and the teacher. Many of the parents, however, were visiting the classrooms for the first time at the open house.

Many students relished the opportunity to accompany their parents around the classrooms and show off their projects.

Teachers fielded many questions ranging from cafeteria menus to homework policies and were very grateful for the chance to get the word out to parents. Lynette Borom, a fourth-grade teacher, spent much of her time showing parents how to access the new math curriculum from home. "I was glad for the opportunity to showcase for parents the newly adopted DoDEA (Department of Defense Education Activity) math curriculum with its large online component," Borom said.

DoDEA Pacific provides a comprehensive pre-K-12 education to the children of military and eligible civilian personnel families serving throughout Asia. The 48 schools in DoDEA Pacific are comprised of more than 24,000 students and 3,100 full-time professional educators and support staff. The schools are geographically organized into four districts: Guam, Japan, Okinawa and South Korea.

(Left) Satsuki Murphy watches her son, Sean Murphy, display his fourth-grade technology class online project, Sept. 15, while his friend Titus Miner looks on.