



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT EMISSARY PROGRAM

Summary



THE INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR
Compassionate Organizations

Phase 1 Principal Cosponsor:



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Table of Abbreviations

ICCO.....	International Center for Compassionate Organizations
ISEP	International Student Emissary Program
PAR Model.....	Integrative Violence Prevention and Restoration Model
WAC-K/SI.....	World Affairs Council of Kentucky and Southern Indiana

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In Brief



The International Student Emissary Program (ISEP) is an education and support program for student leaders in grades 9 through 12 who act as informed and skilled emissaries for safe schools.

With continuing violent conflict throughout the world; the shootings, bullying, and suicides in the United States; and the emerging leadership by young people in the United States to confront and work to end the morbidity and mortality associated with violence, the social environment is primed to apply effective, demonstrated, and evidence-based violence prevention and restoration approaches.

The power of student leadership was clearly demonstrated in the “March for Our Lives” on 24 March 2018.¹ With more than 800 protests encompassing every state in America as well and on every continent in the world (except Antarctica), young people were able to illustrate the problem of gun violence, the need to adopt life-saving legislation, and a drive to get out the vote.² These students produced results in areas of concern to most Americans in stark contrast to the inability of national political leadership to generate similar results.

“The ISEP is designed to give student-leaders everywhere valuable tools to effectively respond to and prevent violence in all forms.”

The “March for Our Lives” — a student-developed and student-led initiative — clearly demonstrates the leadership capability of young people. The ISEP is designed to give student-leaders everywhere valuable tools to effectively respond to and prevent violence in all forms.

The Violence Integrative Prevention and Restoration (PAR) Model is the foundational element of the ISEP. It is a demonstrated, evidence-based and practical approach to violence reduction and prevention built upon a public health foundation (nonreligions, nonpolitical). The model is a significant departure from the traditional punitive approach for dealing with violence (descriptive document available³). The PAR Model has been successfully demonstrated in a broad range of settings from schools to a Level 5 (maximum security) prison.⁴

The ISEP program involves providing PAR Model skills (including compassionate conflict management) to select student leaders in grades 9 through 12. This education program consists of on-site trainings (pilot programs at select schools), self-paced online training programs, webinars, online and onsite conferences, and individual consulting and coaching. A research component is



also included. Using online tools, Student Emissaries will be able to connect, exchange ideas, and provide mutual support.

The ISEP is implemented in five phases:

Phase 1 — Pilot program.

Phase 2 — United States rollout.

Phase 3 — International pilot programs.

Phase 4 — International rollout.

Phase 5 — Continued development and refinement.

“The pilot program is expected to consist of training, feedback, coaching, and research at approximately five schools in a selected school district.”

The pilot program consists of training, feedback, coaching, and research at approximately five schools in one or more selected school districts. Funding will be provided by underwriting sponsors (corporations, service groups, wealthy individuals, and others) and via crowd funding. The launch of this program will be made by the International Center for Compassionate Organizations (ICCO), a United States nonprofit, public health, and public service organization classified as a 501(c)3 charity by the US Internal Revenue Service. The World Affairs Council of Kentucky and Southern Indiana is the program cosponsor and international liaison.

The ISEP leads are:

1. Ari Cowan — recipient of the 1998 National Public Health Award from the United States affiliate of the international physician organization that received the 1985 Nobel Peace Prize. The award was in recognition for his work to end violence. He is also the theorist behind the PAR Model. More information: <https://compassionate.center/cowan>
2. Tony Belak, JD — former university Ombuds and faculty. He is also a former Senior Dispute Resolution Counsel for the Department of Veterans Affairs and mediator and arbitrator as well as a teacher in basic, advanced, and specialized conflict resolution. More information: <https://compassionate.center/belak>

“Student, teacher, and parent awareness of these shootings foster fear, mistrust of the American social system, and a legacy of trauma that can last a lifetime.”

Rationale

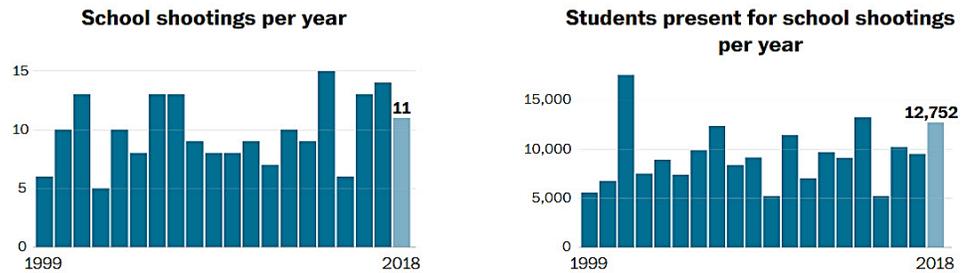
The Lessons of Childhood

The lessons and environment of childhood provides the foundation for behavior in adulthood. Providing young people with safe environments and the knowledge and skills to effectively identify, prevent, and confront unhealthy conflict is essential if humanity is to successfully meet the countless challenges of our time.

Since 1999, more than 187,000 students in 193 primary or secondary schools in the United States have direct personal experience of a shooting at their school.⁵ The graphic on the following page illustrates the number of school shootings and the number of students personally witnessing those shootings from April 1999 through March 2018. Student, teacher, and parent awareness of these shootings



foster fear, mistrust of the American social system, and a legacy of trauma that can last a lifetime.



Note: Data for 1999 begins on 20 April. Figures for 2018 are through mid-March.
Source: Washington Post

While mass shootings at schools are defined as a gunman moving through the school firing at anyone the shooter encounters, these types of attacks are less common than those targeting specific victims, being about three times more common than the indiscriminate attacks.⁶

A study in the journal *Pediatrics* suggests that the emotional damage children experience in school shootings directed at specific individuals can be just as traumatizing as mass shootings.

“The emerging activism following the mass shooting at the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida demonstrates the power of student commitment and leadership.”

Supporting Student Leadership

The emerging activism following the mass shooting at the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida demonstrates the power of student commitment and leadership. The ISEP is designed to provide critical skills for dealing with violence to young people that are motivated and willing to exercise leadership in creating safer schools.

The ISEP is important in the long term because the skills students develop in this educational initiative will be relevant throughout their lives. In every country in the world, the students of today will become the decision makers of tomorrow. As the world moves from nation-states to a transnational structure, leadership skills encompassing proficiencies to deal with local, regional, national, and international conflict will be essential.⁷

Objectives

The objectives of the ISEP are to support safe schools by providing essential knowledge and skills directed at:

1. Reducing and, where possible, eliminating mass school shootings by current and former students.
2. Lowering the number and severity of student bullying incidents.



3. Decreasing and preventing incidents of student suicides and self-inflicted injury.
4. Responding to and successfully managing unhealthy conflict in school settings.
5. Creating a school environment that is inclusive, safe, and compassionate so that threat is reduced, and social and academic excellence is increased.

Program Sponsors

Phase 1: Pilot Program



“The PAR Model is an effective, successfully demonstrated, evidence-based, and compassionate approach to violence response and prevention built upon a public health foundation.”

The Principal Cosponsor of the Phase 1 Pilot Program is the World Affairs Council of Kentucky and Southern Indiana (WAC-K/SI). WAC-K/SI provides opportunities for the residents of Kentucky and Southern Indiana to engage in international issues and global leaders. Their vision is to be the premier regional organization that enhances global economic and political awareness among their constituents.

Phase 2 - 5

Because the scope, environment, and other circumstances of each phase of the program are unique, Principal Cosponsor candidates for Phases 2 – 5 will be identified following the completion of each phase of the program.

Program Design

Description

Applying the PAR Model

The foundation of the ISEP is the Violence Integrative Prevention and Restoration (PAR) Model (descriptive document available⁸). This approach, applied to meeting the challenge of violence in school settings, is an effective, successfully demonstrated, evidence-based, and compassionate approach to violence response and prevention built upon a public health foundation. The PAR Model incorporates advanced thinking about and language for describing violence, provides a new framework for preventing and responding to violence, and presents an effective alternative to the commonly-used traditional punitive-based approaches for dealing with violence.



Training Program

PAR Model training is designed for Student Emissaries — select students who will be trained to identify areas where the risk of self- and other-directed violence is present and have skills to assist at-risk students deal with bullying, social exclusion, social group conflicts, self-harm and suicide ideation, and isolation. Developing student leaders to address these types of issues has been successfully demonstrated by the Youth Ambassador program⁹ in Seattle, Washington. The

general concept has been demonstrated in the ICCO's Compassionate Conflict Trust Leader program for professionals, community members, and organizational line employees.¹⁰



Sample Certificate of Completion

The program is appropriate for students in grades 9 through 12. The ISEP consists of on-site and/or online training consisting of multimedia presentations, lecture, group discussions, small group work, role play, and question and answer sessions.

Participants are provided with a rich body of resources that can be viewed online and downloaded. The program includes self-paced, on-demand elements. This is a practical, in-depth program provided in a stimulating and supportive environment.

Those successfully completing the training receive a Certificate of Completion and a digital badge that they can display on their personal websites, in correspondence, and on printed materials.

“Participants are provided with a rich body of resources that can be viewed online and downloaded.”

The curriculum consists of:

1. **Orientation** — a one-hour multimedia self-paced and on-demand online program. This summary of the ISEP can be viewed by anyone and will be of interest to teachers, administrators, parents, PTSAs, as well as students.
2. **Basic Training** — The fundamentals of ISEP are provided in this training. Participants will have the opportunity to develop practical skills that they can immediately apply. Graduates receive a certificate of completion and digital badge and are referred to as Student Emissaries.

Following implementation and review of the Basic Training and after completing evaluations, student recommendations, and feedback from other stakeholders, we will determine if intermediate and advanced training programs may be offered.



Continuing Support

Formal presentations are supported by an online community structure (to be determined by the student participants) as well as webinars and online video conferencing. Continuing education programs will be considered for ISEP graduates.

Phase 1: Pilot Program

Description

The pilot program constitutes the proof of concept phase of the ISEP. It consists of consulting with individual school districts, student organizations, and PTSA's in the United States to identify the program student candidates. Recruitment may involve online enrollment. Approximately 60 students will be selected to undergo the Basic Training beginning in mid-September 2018. The pilot program will include a feedback/research component to evaluate content, delivery, and support components of the program.

“The pilot program constitutes the proof of concept phase of the ISEP.”

Co-sponsorship

Co-sponsors will provide support to the ISEP in terms of program validation, communication to their constituencies and other contacts, and (in some instances) advisory assistance. Generally, awarding of co-sponsorships will be limited to nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, and government agencies (e.g., school districts, community services departments, youth services).

Funding

Underwriting Sponsorship

For-individual donors and for-profit organizations (e.g., corporations, healthcare systems, media outlets) may participate as underwriting sponsors by providing financial support for the ISEP. Underwriting sponsors will be featured prominently on the ISEP web presence as well as in multimedia offerings, printed materials, and social media.

Underwriting sponsors are identified by the level of their contribution. The levels are:

1. Founding Sponsor
2. Contributor
3. Underwriter
4. The Circle of Care
5. The Circle of Hope
6. The Circle of Honor
7. The Circle of Distinguished Leadership



For complete information on participating as an underwriting sponsor and the minimum levels for each funding classification, contact the International Center for Compassionate Organizations at:

isep@compassionate.center

Supplemental Funding

The cosponsors of the ISEP will seek initial underwriting sponsorship as well as launch a crowd-funding initiative to cover the cost of development and Phase 1 implementation.

Phase 2: United States Rollout

Following the evaluation of Phase 1, student feedback, and research regarding the Orientation and Basic Training programs, the design and stepped rollout of the national ISEP will be started. The foundational considerations for the selection of geographic focus areas will be established. Key considerations for the selection process include the level of challenge faced by a student population, student diversity, and research opportunities (e.g., having a university willing to conduct research at one or more candidate locations).

Phase 3: International Pilot Programs

After initiating programs for the first offerings of ISEP, we will work to establish pilot program locations in the first countries in which the international pilot programs will be developed. We plan to begin with English-speaking countries (Australia, Belize, Canada, Guyana, Ireland, New Zealand, United Kingdom). The decision to begin with these countries is driven, in part, by design and evaluation consistency issues.

Following our experience with the first group of English-speaking countries, we plan to undertake pilot programs in other countries that express an interest in and need for the ISEP. This expansion will require developing an informed understanding of each ISEP candidate country, establishing accurate translation of the curriculum, and recruiting faculty with applicable knowledge about, experience in, and language fluency.

Phase 4: International Rollout

Following evaluation, student feedback, and research regarding the Orientation and Basic Training programs in international settings, the design and stepped rollout of the global ISEP will be started. The foundational considerations for the selection of geographic focus areas will be established. This may include working with and securing the support of US Department of State, the British Commonwealth Secretariat, and/or the United Nations.

Key considerations for the selection process include the level of challenge faced by a country and its students, student diversity, and research opportunities (e.g., having a university or government entity willing to conduct research at one or more candidate locations).

“The international rollout may include working with and securing the support of US Department of State, the British Commonwealth Secretariat, and/or the United Nations.”



Phase 5: Continuing Development and Refinement

A continuing development and refinement process will be a key ISEP focus. This process embodies regular participant feedback, continuing development of the PAR Model, inclusion of new and relevant research, improved communication and education technologies, and information about emerging best practices.

Additional Information

Copies of three White Papers:

1. Rethinking Violence: Toward Developing and Understanding a More Practical Response to the Epidemic of Violence;
2. The Violence Integrative Prevention and Restoration (PAR) Model; and
3. Rethinking International Violence: Applying the PAR Model in International Settings;

can be found on the International Center for Compassionate Organizations website at: <https://compassionate.center/par>

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ISEP Summary 001.docx
REV 2018-04-29

Notes

- ¹ Additional information about “March for Our Lives” can be found online at: <https://marchforourlives.com/mission-statement/>.
- ² “March for Our Lives Highlights: Students Protesting Guns Say ‘Enough Is Enough.’” *The New York Times*, March 24, 2018, sec. U.S. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/24/us/march-for-our-lives.html>.
- ³ A comparison of the traditional punitive approach and the PAR Model can be found in the White Paper. “Rethinking Violence: Toward Understanding and Developing a More Practical Response to the Epidemic of Violence.” This publication is available at no charge from the International Center for Compassionate Organizations’ website: https://compassionate.center/docs/WP-Rethinking_Violence-2018-03-12.pdf.
- ⁴ A summary of documents from the Washington State Department of Corrections as well as the Washington State Legislature is available at no charge and upon request from the International Center for Compassionate Organizations



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- ⁵ Cox, John Woodrow, and Steven Rich. “The Extraordinary Number of Kids Who Have Endured School Shootings since Columbine.” News & Comment. *Washington Post*, March 25, 2018. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2018/local/us-school-shootings-history/>.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*
- ⁷ Dasgupta, Rana. “The Demise of the Nation State.” *The Guardian*, April 5, 2018, sec. News. <http://www.theguardian.com/news/2018/apr/05/demise-of-the-nation-state-rana-dasgupta>.
- ⁸ A comprehensive description of the PAR Model can be found in the White Paper, “The Violence Integrative Prevention and Restoration (PAR) Model.” This publication is available at no charge from the International Center for Compassionate Organizations’ website: https://compassionate.center/docs/WP-PAR_Model-2018-03-06.pdf.
- ⁹ For more information, visit: <http://youthambassadors.net/>.
- ¹⁰ These programs have an average participant rating of 4.8 out of 5 (Excellent). A general description can be found online at: <https://compassionate.center/pgs/tracks/ccm/ctl.html>.