

## CASE STUDY

# South Carolina Department of Education

**> Estimated 20%**  
of any student population can  
be considered "at-risk"

**> 15+ years**  
The number of years South  
Carolina has been partnering  
with CPI

### IMPACT OF TRAINING

- > Potential violence has been defused
- > Increased employee confidence and morale
- > Fostering a culture of respect and safety in schools
- > Preserving dignity
- > Safety for adults and students

### Situation

The South Carolina Department of Education sought to properly equip teachers and paraprofessionals with the tools and techniques to deal with potentially violent student and events, while maintaining a culture of respect and safety.

### Solution

Mike Paget, consultant for students with emotional disabilities, maintains a support network for over 100 trainers with the South Carolina Department of Education. Together they help prepare staff with training that provides clear and practical steps that can be safely taken to deal with situations that pose a danger to students or staff.

### Results >

## Solution

Since integrating CPI's training and techniques, the South Carolina Department of Education schools have seen a reduction in frequency and severity of disruptive events, and an increase in employee confidence.

### Key results:

- Potential violence has been defused and problems avoided thanks to these techniques.
- Reduction in the frequency and severity of disruptive or dangerous situations.
- Implemented techniques to show respect and nonverbal cues that are nonthreatening or nonprovoking to students.
- Fosters a culture of respect and safety.

In his three decades of working with students' emotional behavioral development and mental health concerns, Paget estimates that 20 percent of any student population can be considered "at-risk." "In any group of students, you will have a range of kids, including some whose background may cause them to be volatile and reactive. And when situations arise that present a risk to students and staff, no one wants to have to place a hand on a student to restrain them. Ideally you want to be able to handle a situation in a way that that will make it safer rather than worse."

For adults who are not accustomed to dealing with challenging students, Paget finds it is very easy to react to their own anxieties and respond in a manner that does make the situation worse. Paget has found the CPI training, especially the de-escalation skills to be "a wonderful tool to calm the acting-out person as well as the adult. It's a remarkable way to settle everyone down."



*"The most common reaction to people who go through training is: 'Everybody in the world needs the de-escalation piece.' They find the skills they learn useful in dealing not only with parents and family situations, but in a wide variety of daily encounters."*

– Mike Paget  
South Carolina Department  
of Education

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