Greetings ICHES members. Sadly, I write about yet another tragedy in this issue. Unlike the tsunami, it is easy to speculate on how the school shooting in Red Lake High School, on the reservation of the Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians in Minnesota, could have been prevented. The shooting was almost 7 years to the day of the Jonesboro School shooting in Arkansas and a little less than 6 years from the infamous Columbine shooting in Colorado. Yet, too often the primary actions schools seem to take relate to metal detectors and other forms of security and not paying attention to the emotional needs of students and the warning signs that they need help or that they- and others pay the price.

Further, unlike other schools shootings and especially Columbine, this news story made fewer headlines. It certainly has been in the news. But I get the New York Times email headlines, and the day after the shooting I had to scroll down to the fourth article to read about the tragedy. The Schiavo story was deemed more news worthy than our children killing our children. Dare I ask: Is it because it was not a white middle class community? Unlike Columbine, where a parent proclaimed- “I never thought it could happen to people like us”- because the shootings occurred on a Native American reservation, maybe it didn’t seem as relevant. I can only speculate on how much of the lack of coverage has to do with the racism that is still present in today’s world. But I speculate in anger, that there hasn’t been more of an outcry for solutions for our youth- all youth- across the country.

The violence to our youth is a serious issue and still needs to be addressed. A lot of amazing work has been done to advance primary prevention in violence over the last two decades. We can not tire of this issue nor can we let any successes of violence prevention to allow the issue to be neglected. Disasters like this one remind us why we work in this field and that our work is not over yet; as an injury prevention community we must cry out for attention, resources, and strategy directed towards this issue.

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On a different note, 2005 National Injury Prevention and Control Conference is coming up in mid May in Denver. This is a great opportunity for ICEHS members to meet in person (including the ICEHS Leadership) and also to recruit new members. APHA and ICEHS will co-host our booth, so come by and visit us! If you or anyone you know are going to be attending the conference please contact Anara Guard at aguard@edc.org to find out more information about ICEHS activities.

-Larry Cohen