



NEWS RELEASE

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Thursday, April 3, 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CIVIL LIBERTIES GROUP URGES PRIVACY COMMISSIONER, SCHOOLS TO PROTECT STUDENTS

The BC Civil Liberties Association today filed a complaint with the BC Privacy Commissioner David Loukidelis that contends that the 2008 Safe School and Social Responsibility Survey violates the privacy rights of students. The Safe School and Social Responsibility Survey is administered by the BC Centre for Safe Schools and Communities at the University College of the Fraser Valley to over 80,000 secondary students across BC.

Students are asked in the Safe School survey to admit to various criminal activities, and although the survey claims to be confidential and anonymous, there are no protections for students should law enforcement officials want access to these admissions. The longitudinal survey tracks individual students over time, and that method of tracking individuals provides the means to identify a specific student's survey. Each student that participates can have their survey traced back to them, including any admissions of participation in criminal activity.

BCCLA President Jason Gratl: "This is not one of the delicate cases involving a tension between research and intrusiveness. This is a case in which proper safeguards could easily be put into place to anonymize survey data but the University College is stubbornly refusing to put them in place."

The BCCLA also sent a letter today to BC's School Superintendents urging School Boards not to allow the Safe School Survey and Social Responsibility to be administered.

Copies of the letter to School Superintendents and the complaint to the Privacy Commissioner for BC, both of which outline the BCCLA's concerns with the Safe School and Social Responsibility Survey, can be found at www.bccla.org.

[Letter to Privacy Commissioner](#)
[Letter to Superintendents of Schools](#)

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