



Stories of Success in Bullying Prevention

Innovative School-Based Programs



This report **highlights valuable lessons** learned about **bullying prevention** from Pennsylvania schools involved in Highmark Foundation initiatives.

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
The Problem of Bullying	
The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program	
Lessons from the Field	

Successful Practices	8
Integrating Bullying Prevention into Existing Initiatives	
Adopting Strategies to Engage Students and Staff	
Encouraging Collaboration and Cultural Competence	
Address Concerns Arising from Increased Awareness	

Challenges/Lessons Learned	16
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Future Directions	16
Social and Emotional Learning	
Addressing the Needs of Urban Schools	
Linking School and Community Strategies	
Call to Action	

References	22
-------------------	-----------

Introduction

Imagine scenes of bullying in schools: a 12-year-old boy repeatedly shoved against a wall by a stronger boy, a ninth-grade girl taunted for months about her clothes, a small group of students excluding another from a lunch table week after week. Whatever form it takes, bullying is a persistent and widespread problem in the United States. It has been associated with chronic mental health issues and decreased academic performance, and in extreme cases, suicide.

In response to this issue, the Highmark Foundation (Foundation) has invested more than \$10 million in bullying prevention. Its bullying prevention strategy was developed and implemented in partnership with the Center for Safe Schools and the Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention at the Windber Research Institute. These organizations worked closely with Dan Olweus of the University of Bergen, Norway and Susan Limber of Clemson University to design a large scale public health intervention for bullying. Between 2006 and 2011, the Highmark Foundation supported the implementation of the evidence-based Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP) in more than 400 schools in the regions served by Highmark Inc., in an effort to reduce the incidence of bullying in schools and help children lead happier, healthier lives.

In 2012, the Foundation expanded its efforts to include strategies other than the OBPP. The Foundation sought to support OBPP sustainability by helping educators align and integrate best practices in bullying prevention with other evidence-based programs and practices. It also provided technical assistance and resources to schools that chose not to adopt OBPP, but were interested in addressing school bullying. Most recently, the Foundation has focused on the identification and development of strategies to address the needs of urban schools and promote school-community partnerships for bullying prevention.

This report highlights the valuable lessons learned from schools involved in the Highmark Foundation's OBPP effort and describes some of the Foundation's recent efforts to expand its impact on bullying prevention in Pennsylvania.

The Problem of Bullying

In recent years, increased attention has been given to bullying because of its prevalence among youth and the negative impact on school climate and youth development. Bullying is associated with children's emotional and physical health



Coalition Strategy

The formation of coalitions are **invaluable** to projects of this size and scope since they offer **broader networks** of mutual support that facilitate successful information sharing, technical assistance delivery and increase accountability.



Coalition Partners

Center for Safe Schools

Clemson University – Institute on Family and Neighborhood Life

Highmark Foundation

University of Bergen, Norway –
Dan Olweus (Program Founder)

Windber Research Institute – Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

problems and, in extreme cases, school shootings and suicide. The consequences impact victims and bystanders. According to the 2011 Indicators of School Crime and Safety Report, 23 percent of public schools indicated that bullying was a discipline problem occurring at least weekly.

The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program

The Highmark Foundation recognized that there were many bullying prevention efforts under way throughout Pennsylvania. However, it made grant funding available to schools interested in implementing the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program because the OBPP was designated as a Blueprint Program by the Center for the Study of Prevention of Violence. OBPP focuses on implementing new systems within the school to improve the climate and reduce incidents of bullying and related behaviors. When OBPP is implemented as prescribed by the program developer, it can lead to reductions in bullying and to improved bystander responses.

The Highmark Foundation used two different approaches to disseminating OBPP in Pennsylvania schools. The HALT! Bullying Prevention Program was a district-wide model of implementation, managed by the Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention at the Windber Research Institute. PA CARES (Creating an Atmosphere of Respect and Environment for Success) targeted individual school buildings and was supported by the Center for Safe Schools. Both programs provided schools with access to certified Olweus consultants, materials to support implementation and technical assistance for up to 18 months.

The OBPP is most effective when all program elements are implemented as designed, according to research. That is why the Highmark Foundation invested in strategies designed to help schools succeed. Schools that experienced challenges implementing many program components in the first 12 months were provided additional technical assistance, while schools that were identified as model OBPP sites were provided the opportunity to participate in a pilot program known as the Olweus Quality Assurance System (OQAS).

Lessons from the Field

The impact of the Highmark Foundation's investment in bullying prevention has been documented in the report *Bullying Prevention: The impact on Pennsylvania School Children*. The report details how bystander attitudes and behaviors shifted and bullying was reduced through the Foundation's investment in bullying prevention using a public health model. While the report describes the implementation strategies and results, it did not describe the types of changes that occurred at the school level that produced the systemic changes needed to reduce bullying.

In order to better understand how OBPP was successfully implemented in schools across Pennsylvania, interviews were conducted with educators in nine schools that were implementing OBPP as it was designed. The schools included one OQAS school and eight schools that had demonstrated high levels of fidelity on the PA CARES teacher survey. The schools

included five elementary and four secondary schools, were located in urban, suburban and rural communities and had total enrollment that ranged from 300 to 2,500 students.

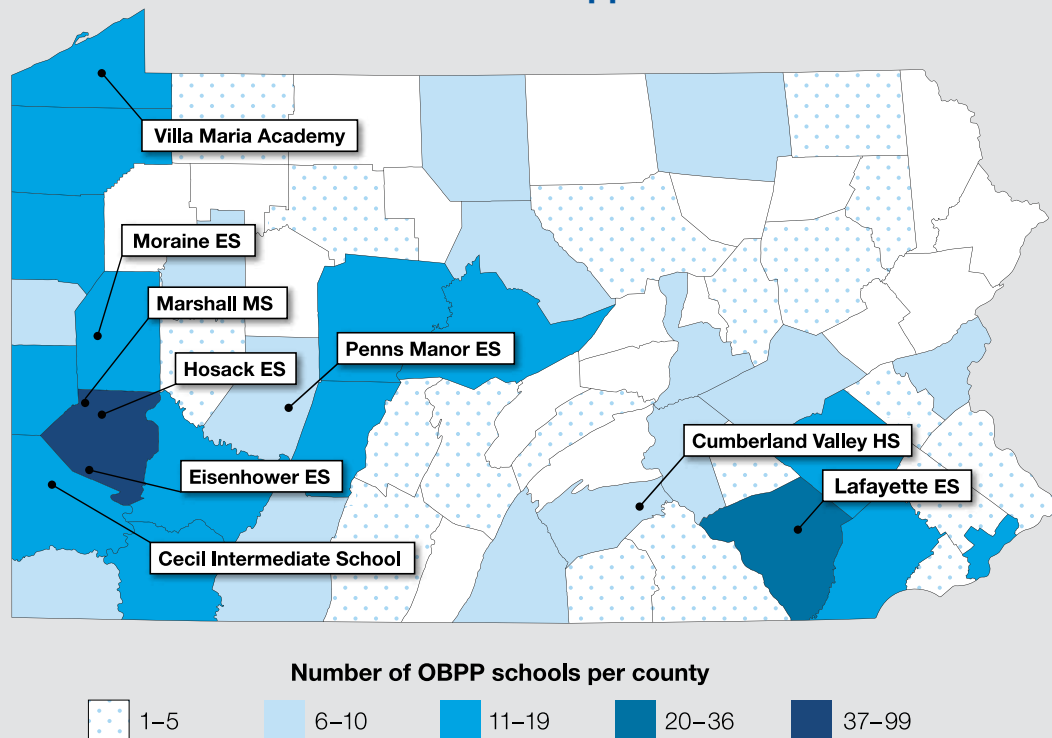
Figure 1 shows where the schools are located as well as the number of schools that implemented the OBPP in each county through Highmark Foundation funding.

An open-ended interview process was designed that guided interviews and discussions with school staff to learn what contributed to each school's success in implementing the OBPP. The protocol examined:

- Details about how school staff implemented OBPP
- What challenges accompanied implementation
- What impact OBPP had on students
- What changes occurred within the school and classroom environments

Figure 1

Stories Sites and Schools Receiving Highmark Foundation Support





Successful Practices

Success comes in many forms. Through interviews, four distinct themes emerged that seemed to be hallmarks of successful bullying prevention programming. Specifically, successful schools:

- Integrated bullying prevention into existing initiatives
- Adopted innovative strategies to engage students, staff and parents
- Encouraged collaboration and cultural competence
- Addressed concerns resulting from increased awareness of bullying issues

Here are some examples of what this looked like in practice.

Integrating Bullying Prevention into Existing Initiatives

OBPP is a framework and set of practices for addressing bullying – it is not a pre-determined set of lessons or activities. This allows schools flexibility in determining how OBPP will be implemented, who will play leadership roles, and what will be done to bring the program to life among students. According to those interviewed, successful schools integrated the program into the school environment and daily routines, keeping students and staff aware of the bullying prevention efforts with minimal effort. For example, Cecil Intermediate School (McDonald, Pa.) worked with its art department to create a mural with messages that corresponded closely with OBPP.

Eisenhower Elementary School (Upper St. Clair, Pa.) made curricular connections to OBPP during reading activities. If a reading assignment or storytelling activity included messages about tolerance or cooperation, teachers made connections to bullying in those lessons. For older students attending Marshall Middle School (Wexford, Pa.), teachers made a similar link between world literature lessons about tolerance of different cultures and bullying prevention strategies. These strategies served as continuous reminders for teachers and students about the schools' commitment to bullying prevention.





We made a large **peace symbol** on the wall in our lower hallway. And **all the students** have their hands on the wall, painted various colors, just to **build unity** and spread the word **peace** throughout the building.

– Cecil Intermediate School

Other schools integrated OBPP with existing pro-social learning initiatives, such as character education programs at Moraine Elementary School (Prospect, Pa.).

We have a character trait of the month program. Last month, it was leadership. All of the members of our school teaching staff, custodians, nurse and principal have a little coupon book, and when you see a student displaying that character trait, you might give the student a coupon. The individual then places the coupon in a container, and at the end of each month, coupons are randomly drawn recognizing that student for displaying that character trait. It becomes a cultural norm that demonstrates that this is the way we do things, and this is the expectation. I consider it fairly simple and sustainable.

Villa Maria Academy (Erie, Pa.) linked the OBPP bullying prevention rules to its official school values:

Before we had Olweus, we lived by what we call the “Five Ps” – polite, prompt, prepared, productive and positive – with posters displayed all over the building. Now we’ve turned the posters into “Good PR,” which is the Five Ps and our four (anti-bullying) Rules underneath them, “We will not bully others.”

Integrating bullying prevention strategies into existing practices can simplify the implementation process and provide opportunities for the schools to strengthen established systems and procedures. As the principal at Villa Maria Academy said:

Our level of bullying program consequences falls right into place with our discipline system. So it wasn’t anything that students weren’t used to, and it really integrated very, very well.

The school also developed a series of short videos to reiterate the school’s values and expectations. Parents were required to watch these videos with their children, actively involving them in the bullying prevention program.



Adopting Strategies to Engage Students and Staff

Programs like the OBPP provide a structure for schools to organize their bullying prevention efforts. Teachers and administrators are able to creatively expand on OBPP to give it additional relevance to the school population and increase buy-in among students and staff.

Students at Cumberland Valley High School (Mechanicsburg, Pa.) founded a club called, “It Takes One (ITO).” The mission of ITO is “to foster a school culture in which people not only have the courage to make a stand against bullying, but also the desire to do so.” All Cumberland Valley High School students can join the ITO club, with club leaders serving two-year terms. The club develops and implements bullying prevention activities, such as assemblies and visits to middle and elementary schools to spread bullying prevention messages.

The efforts of ITO members had a powerful effect on incoming freshman at the school, according to a school administrator. Incoming freshmen were familiar with the ITO message because high school students had visited middle school buildings to teach lessons about tolerance of inclusion. When



Simple ways of **integrating** the program into everyday life at the school kept students and staff **aware** of the schools' bullying prevention efforts.

the same students oriented them to OBPP, the message was familiar and ninth graders accepted the program with little question. Some freshman even joined the ITO group and helped to produce ITO videos about racism, which were broadcast on the school's network.

Other schools adopted creative ways of engaging staff in OBPP leadership. At Hosack Elementary School (Allison Park, Pa.), all OBPP meetings were scheduled for a common time at each grade level. This not only provided all students access to the community-building and problem-solving meetings, it created opportunities for teachers to collaborate with other teachers at their grade level in planning OBPP meetings. Similarly, Marshall Middle School assigned specific weeks for content area (e.g., math, English, social studies) teachers to implement OBPP class meetings. A different content team was responsible for developing and delivering OBPP lessons during their scheduled week. This approach not only distributed the workload but it ensured all teachers had a stake in the OBPP's success and an active role in delivering anti-bullying messages.



As one Marshall Middle School teacher explained:

One week all of the physical education teachers would see all of the students and would teach a lesson about bullying. The next week, the world language teachers would teach a lesson about bullying or diversity. Then the third week, English teachers would take the lead. All the involved teachers created lessons and shared them in their respective week. They were fantastic.

At Moraine Elementary School, teachers engaged older elementary students to help younger ones:

To a young, primary-aged child, older children are cool, have status and hold a lot of influence. Moraine Elementary School holds meetings where the younger students are able to report bullying to the older students and receive advice. Usually those older students, if they think the report is serious, will come to a teacher and share what they were told. Then it gets dealt with. Older students have real status among the primary students. It has been helpful to use that status and let them talk to each other.

Not only did Moraine Elementary School's engagement of students increase student knowledge and awareness of bullying, but it infused the idea of helping one another into the school's culture and involved all students in the bullying prevention efforts. In this school, teachers observed clear examples of student empathy and concern for others as a result of the bullying prevention program. This example was shared by one educator:

I have several students who ride the bus to school with one of my autistic students. These students came to me and reported that terrible things were said to this child on the bus over and over again. It definitely fit the definition of what we're telling them bullying is. They reported this to me, and I've been able to deal with the students doing the bullying. At one point in time, the students would not have tried to make the bully stop what he was doing. Now, they realize that they needed to help the student. They had the student walk with them when getting off the bus.

Encouraging Collaboration and Cultural Competence

Collaboration is critical in schools. When collaboration between teachers is frequent and focused on students learning, achievement improves. Similarly, effective collaboration between educators and parents is essential for supporting youth development and students' academic success. Given the importance of collaboration, it is not a surprise that a bullying prevention committee is a central component of the OBPP program. However, in successful schools, collaboration occurred outside of formal committee meetings. It occurred among students, between teachers and students and with parents and members of the community.

Educators consistently noted that meaningful collaboration resulted after they genuinely listened to the concerns of parents, invited parents and students into leadership roles and acknowledged how cultural differences may impact their approach to bullying issues. Such was the case at Cumberland Valley High School, where parents were invited to contribute their perspectives about bullying at a staff training session. One student's parents chose to share a very personal story, in the form of a letter, about their child's experiences with bullying at the school:

Once the school received the parent's letter, we asked them for permission to share that story anonymously with the whole staff. The letter's contents clearly told our staff that these are the kinds of things you don't see because students don't want you to see them. The type of things that are going on here at Cumberland Valley High School happen even to student athletes, the type of student who could be sitting in any one of our classes.

The parents of the student supported the school's bullying prevention efforts in two ways: they brought a compelling reason to engage school staff in bullying prevention and helped break down stereotypes about what typical bullied students are like. This act opened teachers' eyes to the prevalence of bullying and motivated some to intervene in situations that they may have ignored.

Parents at Penns Manor Elementary School (Clymer, Pa.) were also key partners in working with school staff to prevent bullying in their school:

We had three parents on the bullying prevention committee that met with school administrators and were willing to spend time working with school staff on this issue. A lot of initial brainstorming meetings occurred, talking about things that garnered enthusiasm for OBPP. It just took off from there.

When teachers and parents work together as equal partners, effective change can occur to address bullying. Yet, in many schools, barriers exist to effective collaboration. According to an educator at Lafayette Elementary, teachers need to be aware of how cultural and language issues impact students' relationships. They also need to know how to adapt interventions, like OBPP, to meet the needs of students and parents:

We have about nine different languages here and many students coming from refugee camps. There are a number of cultural implications and sensitivities that we need to be aware of. For instance, males' roles in the family may be very different in some cultures. So, when I am discussing bullying with a father or talking about his son's response to a bullying situation, I need to demonstrate a very strong sensitivity to these issues.

Teacher-student collaboration was also evident in several of the schools interviewed. In elementary and middle schools, students created and displayed posters with school bullying rules and served as "buddies" to early elementary classmates. Older students took on more complex projects. Some produced videos, wrote plays for assemblies and served as student ambassadors for the program.



The physical education teachers talked about the locker room behavior and how **bullying** can occur during those situations, what to do if it occurs, ways to handle it and how it makes people really feel. The students heard a **loud and clear** message in physical education class.

– Marshall Middle School

The work of the OBPP is organized by a coordinating committee. When these committees meet regularly and are empowered to solve problems, it creates enthusiasm for the program. As one Penns Manor teacher reported:

Our team is really open to lots of ideas. When we meet, we're creative and all pull together. There is rarely dissension during meetings. We try to talk things out and come to consensus. Besides support from school administrators, a great team is needed...Very good administrative support is needed because without that, you don't get anything done. Having principal buy-in for the program enabled us to carry out our ideas.

Address Concerns Arising from Increased Awareness

After students and staff learn the definition of bullying, it is repeated in classroom meetings and displayed on posters and murals. Through this process and specific training activities, teachers and students become more aware of bullying and how to respond to it. Students learn strategies for demonstrating support for bullied students. They also learn that their teachers expect them to report suspected bullying problems. Once students make reports, teachers need to take action. This can be a challenge in the context of teachers' busy schedules. Yet, successful schools recognize that adult intervention is critical to OBPP success.

Once a report is made, staff take action. Students understand that teachers are going to do something about it and realize it is not something they can easily get away with anymore.

– Cecil Intermediate School

Shortly after a class meeting, a child saw a student mistreat another student in the hallway and it was something that he typically would not have reported. The student went into the principal's office and said, "We just had our class meeting and what I saw wasn't right." He then stepped up and reported it and the principal took action. It's a lot of those little things that add up.

– Cumberland Valley High School

In successful schools, teachers and staff define bullying in consistent ways, and they are comfortable discussing bullying with students. Teachers have regular conversations with students about bullying and social relationships, and work with students to brainstorm solutions to social problems. These types of discussions and other bullying prevention activities raise awareness about bullying and increase the likelihood that bystanders will respond in a supportive way.

When teachers in a school **work together** to create clear, **positive messages** about bullying prevention, the effort is more likely to be **successful.**



Successful schools recognize that creating a common language about bullying should not be contained to the school. Parents also need to learn what bullying is, how to respond and how to work with the school. One of the more poignant cases of parent awareness occurred at Penns Manor Elementary School, where parents were invited to monthly lunches to improve their understanding of OBPP. During one of those meetings, a staff member observed parents who described the emotional toll bullying had on youth:

I thought that was great because there were issues that would have never come up had we not invited parents to that meeting. At a few of the meetings we had parents crying when recalling (examples of) bullying. Those issues were brought to a head and resolved. Otherwise, they probably would have continued to fester.

In this case, talking about the bullying prevention program strengthened both parents' and the school's commitments to bullying prevention. Bullying prevention impacts everyone within the program's sphere of influence.

I do believe that the teachers have become more proactive. Because of their comfort level in responding to bullying issues, students have increased their awareness too.
– *Marshall Middle School*

I think the biggest success is our kids' understanding of how they can help. If they're being bullied, they know what they can do, or if they see bullying, they know how they can help (or ask an adult for help). The expectation is if it's safe and you're able, you should help a child being bullied or tell another child to stop bullying. So a third-grader on the bus was verbally bullying a first-grader and this fourth-grader stepped in and said, "Please stop that." I think those are the success stories, so if we get this generation of children to understand it's not ok to bully, they can do something about it in a safe way. That's a total victory and something that will change society over time.
– *Eisenhower Elementary School*



An **increased awareness** creates an expectation that **educators will respond** to students' and parents' concerns.

Challenges/Lessons Learned

In addition to the successes that resulted from OBPP implementation, educators described three common challenges they encountered while putting the program into place. The most common challenge was implementing the many different OBPP components in the context of other curricular demands and competing initiatives. School staff found creative ways to handle the logistical challenges by building OBPP into the school schedule and by integrating the bullying lessons into existing curricula or activities. Schools that were implementing other school-wide approaches to improving school climate (such as Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) benefited from aligning programmatic activities to minimize duplication of efforts.

Other common challenges included obtaining buy-in from teachers and promoting parent engagement. Research suggests that staff may be resistant to school-wide bullying prevention efforts if their awareness of bullying issues is low or if they do not have confidence that their efforts will result in improvements for students. Additionally, it may be difficult for schools to engage parents as partners in bullying prevention if the school has not established strong partnerships with parents to address other issues.

The challenge of working with parents was described in unique detail by one educator who teaches in an urban school. She noted that parents in her community were not just disconnected from bullying prevention efforts because of the demands of work and family life, but that there were language and cultural barriers between some school staff and parents. There were also norms in the community that supported aggression under certain circumstances, which required the school to develop bridging strategies to help make the school's bullying prevention efforts relevant to the community outside of school.

Current and Future Directions

Social and Emotional Learning

As these schools have found, OBPP can provide a valuable framework for organizing a school's bullying prevention efforts. There are opportunities to strengthen bullying prevention through the combined use of a multi-tiered bullying prevention framework and interventions matched to the needs of the students and staff of the school. In addition to school-wide bullying prevention efforts, social emotional learning (SEL) programs can help students master skills that will prepare them to respond effectively to interpersonal challenges, including bullying.

SEL programs "build children's skills to recognize and manage their emotions, appreciate the perspectives of others, establish positive goals, make responsible decisions and handle interpersonal situations effectively," according to Mark Greenburg and colleagues. A SEL program supports individual development and enhances students' connection to school and positive connections to staff and each other. When selecting an approach to bullying prevention, schools should consider the unique characteristics and needs of their students. If bullying is a primary concern and other forms of interpersonal violence are uncommon in the school, then OBPP may be sufficient to address the school's needs. If educators identify a range of social or behavioral concerns among students, the school may benefit from additional school-wide strategies, such as Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS).





The **factsheet**, “Bullying Prevention in Urban Schools: Strategies for Success” is available on the Highmark Foundation and Center for Safe Schools websites.

In order to support schools in determining how OBPP and PBIS may be compatible with their bullying prevention goals, the Highmark Foundation and its partners have published a white paper on OBPP and PBIS in schools. They have also developed guidelines for selecting SEL programs to complement bullying prevention efforts. These resources are available on the Foundation’s website:

www.highmarkfoundation.org/initiatives/bullying_prevention

In addition, the Third Thursday Webinar series, hosted by the Center for Safe Schools, addresses these and other topics. Archived webinars can be found at:

www.safeschools.info/bullying-prevention/professional-development

Addressing the Needs of Urban Schools

While PA CARES and HALT! supported implementation of the OBPP in many urban schools, few reached the same level of implementation success of schools detailed in this report. Urban implementers of OBPP may struggle to implement the program due to the nature of students’ needs and teachers’ own attitudes about their ability to intervene effectively. Successful urban schools, like Lafayette

Elementary, benefited from multi-year engagement with a skilled OBPP consultant, supplemental OBPP fidelity support and public recognition of their achievements through OQAS. Not all urban schools accessed these supports.

To better understand and address the bullying prevention needs of urban schools, the Foundation implemented three additional strategies between 2012 and 2014: it conducted a qualitative study on OBPP implementation in urban schools, it convened a workgroup which published a fact sheet on bullying prevention in urban schools and it initiated a partnership with three urban districts focused on building capacity for effective bullying prevention practice.

The factsheet, “Bullying Prevention in Urban Schools: Strategies for Success” is available on the Highmark Foundation and Center for Safe Schools websites. It recommends that, in addition to implementing school-wide systems and practices to address bullying, urban educators should:

- Address diversity as part of the school climate and bullying prevention efforts
- Plan for student and staff mobility
- Understand and address issues that impact bystander behavior
- Engage families and community organizations in bullying prevention efforts

A pilot project in three urban districts is focused on addressing these issues and SEL in the context of OBPP implementation. One notable outcome of this work is the recognition that trauma plays a role in the bullying dynamic, especially in communities with high level of violence and crime. This led the Foundation to focus resources on building urban schools' capacity to address trauma among students. In 2014-15, personnel associated with five urban school districts were provided training in two different evidence-based programs to address student trauma: Supporting Students Effected by Trauma (SSET) and Cognitive Behavioral Interventions for Trauma in Schools. During the 2015-16 school year, the school districts will be using SSET to supplement their bullying prevention efforts. Specifically, they will be identifying students affected by trauma, including them in SSET support groups and tracking their behavior change and bullying experiences.

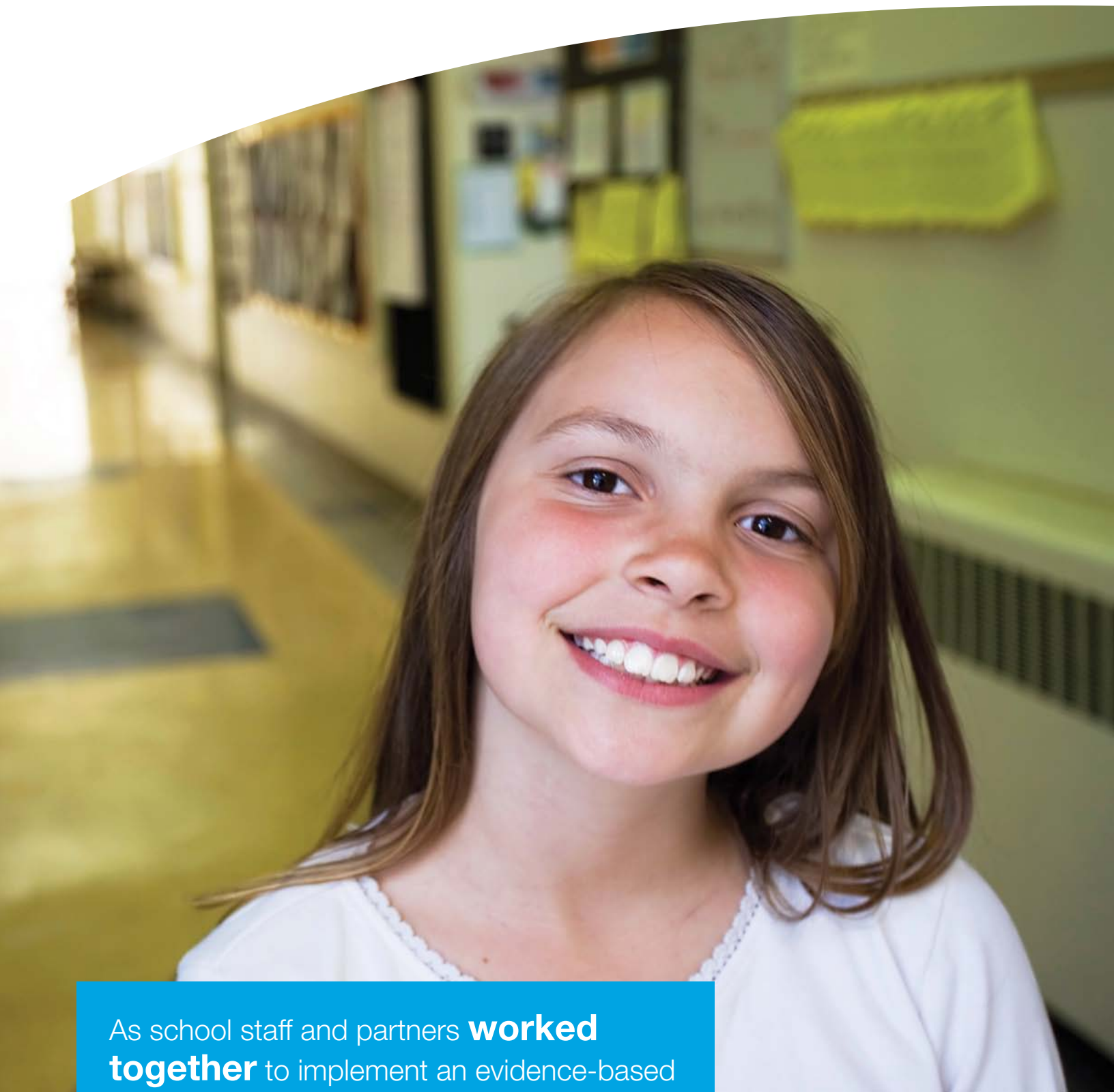
Linking School and Community Strategies

The Highmark Foundation is also working with educators in non-school settings to bring bullying prevention strategies to youth in communities. The Foundation's community strategy builds off its work with OBPP by linking school-based bullying prevention efforts to community efforts. The Foundation partnered with the Pennsylvania Afterschool/Youth Development Network to publish a fact sheet for afterschool care providers "Bullying Prevention in Out-of-School Time Settings." It also provided mini-grants and technical support to 24 community groups working in partnership with local schools to address bullying.

Research supports the viability of community-supported prevention efforts. The Communities that Care (CTC) model of local coalition-building, for example, has been associated with reduced rates of violence in communities by focusing stakeholders' attention on using evidence-based programs to address risk and protective factors among youth. The Highmark Foundation's work with communities, though different from the CTC, reinforces the importance of schools and communities working together to align bullying prevention strategies, while maintaining an emphasis on evidence-based programming.

Trauma plays a role in the bullying dynamic, especially in communities with high level of **violence** and **crime**.





As school staff and partners **worked together** to implement an evidence-based bullying prevention program, **new opportunities to think creatively and work collaboratively** to address student bullying **emerged**.

Call to Action

Educators across the state have successfully implemented OBPP, despite competing priorities and significant community needs. Successful schools built effective, sustainable, bullying prevention practices by integrating bullying prevention into existing initiatives; adopting innovative strategies to engage students and staff; promoting collaboration; and ensuring students and staff were prepared to address any concerns raised by increased awareness of bullying issues. In schools where bullying issues existed alongside other significant behavioral concerns, schools have been able to supplement OBPP with other evidence-based programs, including PBIS, SEL programs and trauma-informed interventions.

The Foundation's investment in bullying prevention has exceeded the investment of any private organization in this issue. As a result, more Pennsylvanians are aware of what bullying is and how to respond and schools are implementing programs and interventions that are proven to work. As the Foundation looks to the future, it has identified some systemic strategies that have the potential to take bullying prevention efforts to the next level. Critical to this work will be continued establishment of cross-sector partnerships to support schools' efforts.

Evidence-Based Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Programs

Steps to Respect

Steps to Respect seeks to decrease school bullying by increasing awareness and responsiveness among school staff, foster socially responsible beliefs among students and teach social-emotional skills to decrease bullying.

More information www.cfchildren.org/steps-to-respect

PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) Program

The PATHS Program is grounded in SEL. PATHS helps elementary children learn to resolve conflicts peacefully, handle emotions positively, empathize and make responsible decisions. It has earned the highest possible rating from the elite Blueprints Project of the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence, University of Colorado.

More Information www.channing-bete.com/prevention-programs/paths

Too Good for Violence

Too Good for Violence (TGFV) is a school-based violence prevention and character education program for K-12 students. It enhances pro-social behaviors, skills and protective factors. TGFV curricula are geared to each grade level through eighth grade, in addition to a high school curriculum. Trained staff delivers the program.

More Information www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/ViewIntervention.aspx

I Can Problem Solve (ICPS)

The I Can Problem Solve program helps elementary students develop alternative solutions, anticipate consequences and effectively solve problems. Lessons are 20 minutes in length, introduce central SEL concepts and provide skill instruction in social and emotional competencies. Student-teacher dialogue is a key component of ICPS.


More Information www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/ViewIntervention.aspx

These partners should work together to:

- Establish parent-school-community partnerships to plan and implement bullying prevention strategies in communities, including strategies to align school-community supports for students affected by bullying.
- Provide relevant, sustained technical assistance to urban schools to ensure evidence-based bullying prevention and school climate efforts are able to take root and grow.
- Identify and disseminate tools that will support research-based bullying prevention practice. This includes model policies, bullying and school climate surveys and SEL programs that align with bullying prevention efforts.
- Expand funding for program materials, training and technical assistance to support bullying prevention and violence prevention in schools.

Such strategies align with the Highmark Foundation's effort to empower communities and schools to work together to create sustainable systems. Having invested in more than 400 schools with OBPP, there is now significant knowledge in communities to improve their response to bullying in the future.

A call to action for bullying prevention requires cooperation and resources from the commonwealth, school and district leaders, teachers, parents, students, community members and bullying prevention experts. The prevention process each school follows must be tailored to its unique circumstances, but collaboration and integration of valued programs is necessary to ensure the sustainability and expansion of evidence-based prevention efforts. The Foundation looks forward to continuing its work in bullying prevention with these important lessons in mind.



The prevention process each school follows must be **tailored** to its unique circumstances, but collaboration and integration of valued programs is necessary to ensure **sustainability**.

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The Highmark Foundation and the Center for Safe Schools have been working together since 2006 to implement strategies to keep Pennsylvania children safe from bullying and other forms of peer aggression. For more information about this work, visit **www.highmarkfoundation.org** and **www.safeschools.info/bullying-prevention**.

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