



Inspire

Spring 2011

Changing the Face of Leadership

Dear Inspire Reader-

There is an exciting new endeavor at the Center—it has the Center’s youth staff energized, the students eager to learn, and the local school administrators rallying behind the Center to promote it. It has a second-grader waking up early every Thursday in anticipation...

“I wake up at 6 a.m. because I know that it is leadership group day”

The vision of the program—to inspire disadvantaged youth to develop the leader within – to change the face of leadership one student...one school...one community at a time. We decided to start in our own “backyard” to pilot the program—to change the face of leadership in one of the most disadvantaged elementary schools in Fort Wayne Community Schools—Fairfield Elementary.

Not your average leader : The goal of the program—to take a group of 10 students from each grade, kindergarten-5th grade, that are not currently identified as leaders but have hints of leadership potential – either in positive or negative ways and develop their budding leadership qualities over the course of a school year. Eventually, this group of students will evolve into a leadership team which will change the face of leadership within one school.

One step...one student...one class...creating a change in leadership: The process of the program—to start with a “single step” by working with students to develop their nonviolent leadership skills. It begins by teaching students that personal accountability and awareness are the first steps to making changes in their life. Once they take personal accountability for their thoughts, actions, feelings, and words they are able to change their path in life.

The change is beginning: After winter break, Center staff went in to meet with the students individually. Many of them rushed into the leadership room to tell staff about all the changes that they had made. They talked of teachers noticing differences in their attitude, their peers noticing changes in how they interacted with them, and their parents noticing a change in how helpful and respectful they were.

“My teacher complimented me on my behavior this week, which is a big deal, because it has never happened to me before” 3rd grader

Inspiring Change. One person...One family...One world



Inspiring Change

The process of changing culture beyond the individual: Once the process of change begins to unfold within each student and within each grade the next metamorphosis of the program begins.

Thoughts from the principal of Fairfield Elementary:

At the mid-year point, we are more than pleased with the progress. Student data shows the students in this program have improved attendance, better focus on learning as evidenced by their engagement in the classroom and achievement data, and have reduced the number of behavior referrals of the most challenging students in the program. In one particular student's case, the student was expelled last year. His current standing is that he has had no behavior referrals, has an over 98.8% attendance rating, and is above benchmark in all subject areas. A second student was one of the top ten suspended students in 2009-2010 and has yet to have a behavior referral in 2010-2011.

Beyond the first year: The goal is to create leadership teams, a network of students, kindergarten – 5th graders, who would eventually change the culture in their school by turning students who struggle with issues of bullying and defiance into students who are leading their peers and their school through positive peer interactions and involvement. Those student teams, with the support of the Center, would use the learned skills to mentor their peers, developing the same positive leadership skills in those students – therefore completely changing the culture of their school by handing the power of change over to the students.

Beyond the school walls: We are also attempting to establish an ongoing community service project for students during the second and third year of this project to further connect the students with their community and their “inner leader.”

Celebrating Change: Honoring the change in students—the change (from displaying negative signs of leadership to positive leadership) will be challenging for the students and the school, therefore we will host an end of the year celebration/recognition ceremony for students where their accomplishments will be highlighted for their parents and the community as a whole.

CfN's Coordinating Panel

Kim Miller

Brindha Hariharan

Susan Minke

Sherwin Kepes

Barbara Linden

Laura Boyer

Paul Ricketts

Jennifer Mabe

Lisa Dunkin



Come visit us on Facebook...Fort Wayne Center for Nonviolence

What the Youth Program offers:

Youth Nonviolence Program: 14 week-long program which consists of 12 weekly group sessions and two individual interviews for youth ages 7-18 years who are struggling with issues of violence.

Youth Thinking Errors Program: 14 week-long program, with an opportunity for an 8 week early release, that focuses on combating thinking errors in youth while at the same time teaching youth critical thinking skills. This program is offered to youth ages 7-18 years who are struggling to make positive decisions in their life.

School-based Program (i.e. Changing the face of Leadership) See program highlights in this edition

Youth Served In-house in 2010: 96

Outcome:

98% of youth clients agree that they can apply the things they learned at the CFN in their own lives, with 76% strongly agreeing

Jan '10-Dec '10

Youth Served in the schools during 2010: 230

Outcome:

81% of students stated that they learned NEW skills during the program
2009-2010 School Year

**These numbers and outcomes are from the school-based program prior to it's revisions and updates*

What youth are saying about the Center..

"This program has helped me realize that stepping [down from a fight] doesn't make you the scared person, it only makes you the more mature person."

"I'd just like to thank you for this opportunity, it's been very positive on my life and I thank you for helping me become a better person overall."

"I learned that I cannot control anybody else's actions or thinking and that it starts with me."

"Things have improved for me. I am more happy all the time. I think that I could always apply the lessons that I have learned here out in the real world."

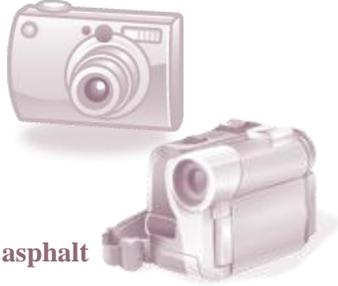
"I promise to be somebody someday and to pass on the knowledge that I have obtained in the program onto others that are like the person I was."



Keep up with all the Center news at ...<http://www.centerfornv.org>

Center's Wish List

- Digital camera
- Video Camera (which support DVDs)
- Instrumental CDs
- Projector (for computer-Microsoft compatible)
- Laminator
- Diapers & Wipes
- Bubbles
- Markers
- Clay
- Construction Paper
- Playground balls
- Office supplies
- Boxes of Kleenex
- (3) 5 gallon bucket of asphalt
- Gift Certificates to...
 - Lowes
 - Home Depot
 - Meijer
 - Target
 - Michaels



Services of the Center

All services are also available in Spanish

- Adult Violence Intervention Programs
- Support Groups
- Mother's Intervention Program
- Child-Centered Parenting After Divorce
- Violence Intervention for Youth
- Thinking Errors Intervention for Youth
- Changing the Face of Leadership (school-based programming)
- Trainings

Mission: To provide education, support, and advocacy to end domestic and other forms of violence while modeling equality and power sharing



Check us out on

235 W. Creighton Ave.
Fort Wayne, IN 46807
www.centerfornv.org



Center for Nonviolence