



UpStanders: Stand Up to Bullying is a program of the Holocaust Memorial Resource and Education Center of Florida. UpStanders provides students with the knowledge they need to be positive change agents in their school. Students are empowered to stand up and speak out if they witness bullying. As 9 out of 10 bullying incidents occur when no adults are present, students play a vital role in both bullying prevention and the promotion of a positive school climate where all students feel respected and safe.

Rooted in Holocaust education, the UpStanders Program encourages students to explore why people behave the way they do. Long before the *Final Solution*, the Nazis and their



collaborators used language to insult, demean, isolate and dehumanize their victims, much like bullies treat their targets. The majority of witnesses to the Holocaust were bystanders who did nothing to prevent their friends and neighbors from being subjected to discrimination and violence. The program is meant to inspire students to realize that they have the ability to make a difference for good; to be a positive influence in the lives of others, and while doing so to improve their school community.

Approximately 1 in every 4 students experiences bullying as either a target or bully, and nearly all students witness bullying. Research shows that bullying can cause depression, substance abuse, poor health, delinquency, and significantly weaken academic performance. According to Central Florida students, the most pervasive kind of bullying is verbal harassment and the students who are targeted most frequently either identify as LGBTQ or are perceived as LGBTQ. In addition, the third most encountered cause of bullying is race, ethnicity, and national origin. The UpStanders Program teaches students that diversity is something to be celebrated. Through Holocaust education, we can inspire young people to speak out against the prejudice and discrimination that allowed the Holocaust to happen, empowering them to create inclusive environments.



The key to any bullying prevention program is the ability to strengthen a school's climate so that safety and positive relationships are seen as priorities for parents, administration, teachers, and especially, for students. Since its inauguration in 2010, the UpStanders: Stand Up to Bullying Initiative has served more than 20,000 students in Central Florida. Evaluation results from the Eripio Institute indicate that 99% of students learned how to prevent bullying as a result of the UpStanders Initiative. The initiative, which provides teacher training as well, also resulted in a 13% increase in students who feel there is a caring adult at their school that they can go to about bullying issues.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

1. Field Trip to the Holocaust Center (6th Grade)

Students visit the Holocaust Memorial Resource and Education Center in Maitland, Florida. They learn the history of the Holocaust and how it relates to human rights and American ideals. They also explore how prejudice and bias can escalate into violence and discrimination and discover the power of speaking out against bullying. This presentation is 2 hours.

2. Becoming an Upstander: School-based Presentation (6th Grade)

Program Coordinator, Bailey Robb, visits schools and presents to students about bullying prevention. Students are provided with a tool-kit for how to recognize bullying and safe ways to intervene in order to stop bullying. The key to empowering students is turning bystander behavior into 'UpStander' behavior. This presentation is 45 minutes.

3. Speaker, John Halligan: School-based Presentation (7th Grade)

Students hear the personal testimony of renowned speaker John Halligan, whose son took his own life after being bullied in elementary and middle school. Mr. Halligan encourages students to think about the consequences of bullying as they relate to teen depression and society as a whole. John is also available to do an evening program for parents that focuses on information he and his wife Kelly wish they had known. This presentation is 1½ hours.

4. Rescuers: School-based Presentation (7th Grade)

Mitch Bloomer, the Holocaust Center's resource teacher will provide an in-school presentation on the history and lessons of the Holocaust as they relate to the UpStander concept. Thousands of lives were saved during the Holocaust because of a few Rescuers who were ready to take risks to protect their friends and neighbors because it was, simply, the right thing to do. Mr. Bloomer has developed a curriculum that draws a clear connection between bullying, bystanders and the Holocaust. His message to the students is that they can learn to become an UpStander rather than a bystander. This presentation is 45 minutes.

5. Enrichment Activities (7th and 8th Grade)

In addition to the core program components, the UpStanders Program includes bullying prevention trainings for parents and teachers. Also, when students are in 8th grade, they are encouraged to serve as mentors to younger students through activities such as starting an UpStanders after-school club, creating PSAs, participating in poster competitions, etc. The program is also accompanied by a curriculum guide that draws clear connections between the lessons of the program and concepts already being addressed in the classroom.

Additional Resources

Online Teacher Trainings

Curriculum Guide for Teachers

How to Start an UpStanders Club

Tip Sheets for Students and Parents

Evening Programs for Parents

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