

CDC

For 24 years, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have worked to eliminate health disparities and create healthy communities by funding Prevention Research Centers throughout the United States. The CDC has funded the University of Minnesota's HYD*PRC since 1996.

- Funding

HYD*PRC

The Healthy Youth Development • Prevention Research Center (HYD*PRC), housed at the University of Minnesota, Department of Pediatrics, is one in a network of 35 academic centers whose main objective—as a PRC—is to link science to practice through community collaborations.

The HYD*PRC provides training, technical assistance as well as research and evaluation expertise to projects like Lead Peace.

- Funding
- Project leadership
- Facilitators (Lead)
- Coordination and administration
- Research/Evaluation
- Applied youth development and public health strategies
- Sustainability

partners

Minneapolis Public Schools

Minneapolis Public Schools and community partners, through a federally funded Safe Schools/Healthy Students grant, are building better learning communities where students and staff are safe and healthy, respected and challenged and engaged. Lead Peace is one of the strategies employed through this grant.

- Curriculum training
- Leadership
- Research/Evaluation
- Facilitators

Hennepin County Village Social Services

As community support provider, the mission of the Village is to provide services that will improve the physical and emotional health, safety, stability, self-reliance and livable income of the residents.

The Village has collaborated with Minneapolis Public Schools on the Northside since 2001. The Lead Peace partnership emerged from this early groundwork.

- Project conception
- Project leadership
- Facilitators (Lead)
- Coordination and administration
- Applied youth development and social group work strategies
- Curriculum adaptation
- Community outreach
- Wrap around services
- Sustainability

Community Facilitators

- Kwanzaa Church's Nia-Imani Family and Youth Development Center
- ACES
- Beacons Minneapolis
- Graduate social work students from U of M, Augsburg, St. Catherine



Lead Peace

A school/community/university collaboration to promote healthy development for young adolescents.

Goals:

- Improve school connectedness and academic success
- Improve community involvement
- Reduce risks for violence

**Cityview School
Jordan Park Community School
Nellie Stone Johnson School**

Three Minneapolis Public Schools located in the North Minneapolis neighborhoods. School staff involved in Lead Peace includes Teachers, Principals, Community /Parent Liaison and Americorp Promise Fellows.

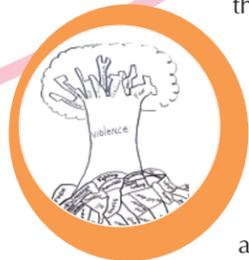
- Facilitators
- Leadership
- Resources
- Sustainability

Lead Peace Students are More Connected

Exploring students' beliefs that adults and peers in school care about them and their learning reflects their feeling of connectedness.

It is a powerful protective factor in adolescents' lives, buffering them from risky behaviors including involvement in violence.⁴⁻⁶

It is linked to academic achievement including higher grades and test scores, better school attendance, and length of stay.⁷⁻⁹



Core Elements of Lead Peace Programming

- Service learning programming during class time
- Non-traditional curriculum – experiential, responsive, on-going formative assessment
- Focus on leadership, social and interpersonal skills
- Sustained small group working relationships with peers and adults
- Youth/student driven
- Involvement and leadership of adults from school and community
- Application of social group work principles: democracy, mutual aid, empowerment
- Formal student and facilitator reflection process



Evaluation Methods

- Student surveys
- Interviews with students, facilitators and school principals
- Classroom observations
- Weekly facilitator reflection reports

What is Lead Peace?

Lead Peace is a group where people get together and share their thoughts about peace in their community.

Our Projects put out the word of peace.

We are trying to show that we are helping to lead peace in the world.

In our groups we get to know each other and we help one another be a leader.

We look at our community and school.

We look at what's not working and figure out ways to help.

We put our ideas together, organize our thoughts and plan out our project.

Often our projects help other younger kids.

We do this because if we can influence kids when they are young, they'll know what to do when they are older.

Lead Peace Student Video Script, 2009

projects

Feed My Starving Children

Students and adults hand packed meals formulated for starving children in Africa at this local non profit organization.



SuperAdolfo

Students studied 1980 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Adolfo Esquivel and created a storybook about him to read with third grade students.



Mary Jo Copeland Compassion Project

Students selected the founder of Sharing and Caring Hands and Mary's Place Shelter as their hero of compassion. They researched her life and work, visited the shelter and worked with the younger children there.



results



Lead Peace Students' Interpersonal Skills Increased

Having strong social and emotional skills helps students to avoid violence and succeed academically.

Skills were measured through survey questions like: "I care what happens to other people" and "I am able to respect others"



Lead Peace Students Report More Cooperative Behaviors

Cooperative behaviors are an alternative to bullying and violent behaviors. Investigated through questions like "I helped other students solve a problem," "I helped someone stay out of a fight" and "I cooperated with others."

Principals commented on the positive tone that Lead Peace students set and strongly credit these students' examples as contributing to an overall peaceful and respectful climate within the schools.

References

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