



Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Center for Community of Caring

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION | THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

COMMUNITY OF CARING® RESEARCH AND RESULTS

Community of Caring is the program that *caring* schools select. The Community of Caring program is an evidence-based, nationally-recognized character education program in over 1,200 schools nation-wide and in Canada. Community of Caring is a research-based program with proven results and has been designated as a “promising program” by the Department of Education and a “select program” by the Center for Advancement of Social and Emotional Learning. Ongoing evaluations indicate that Community of Caring fosters character and citizenship development (Higgins-D’Alessandro, Reyes, Choe, & Clavel, in preparation); improves school attendance and academic performance (Higgins-D’Alessandro, Reyes, Choe, & Clavel, in preparation); improves school climate and creates a caring school community (Voelker, 1994); fosters acceptance diversity and includes those with intellectual disabilities (Higgins-D’Alessandro, Barr, & Markman, 2003); creates safer school environments by preventing violence and bullying (Johns, 1999); prevents teen pregnancy with a youth development focus (Johns, 1994); reduces tobacco, drug and alcohol use (Balicki, 1991); and helps implement school reform (Gallagher, 2000).

STUDENT OUTCOMES



Students in Community of Caring schools that were fully implementing the program had:

- ◆ significantly higher grade point averages
- ◆ significant reductions in teen pregnancy
- ◆ significant reductions in at risk behaviors, such as the use of alcohol
- ◆ significantly greater attachment to school, including better student attendance and more completed homework

Students in Community of Caring schools reported **significantly** higher levels of:

- ◆ talking to their families more often about their school day
- ◆ acting with empathy and acceptance

In addition, these students reported that because they go to their school, they do NOT think of dropping out, skipping classes, smoking, drinking, or using drugs.

Students in schools with *higher levels of implementation* (6-7 components) report **significantly** higher rates of the following pro-social behaviors:

- ◆ higher levels of self respect and self care
- ◆ higher levels of taking responsibility for one’s own actions
- ◆ higher reported ability to take another person’s point of view
- ◆ higher bullying **reduction**

The **more** teachers reported using the 5 Community of Caring values, the **more** students reported:

- ◆ having better relationships with each other
- ◆ actively participating in classes
- ◆ engaging in pro-social activities
- ◆ greater ability to enumerate the 5 core values



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SCHOOL OUTCOMES



Schools also reap benefits from implementing Community of Caring. With its school-wide professional development and implementation, Community of Caring provides professional development for all school personnel including teachers, administrators, office staff, bus drivers, cafeteria workers and custodial staff. All adults in the school building are included in the comprehensive full day (or two-day) training along with our emphasis on on-going support thus ensuring that messages that children receive about caring, respect, responsibility, trust, and family are consistent and reinforced every day, all day long. By developing schools as caring, respectful, responsible, trustworthy and family-oriented communities, we put children, teachers and school staff at the center of education as the values are woven into every aspect of school life and the existing curriculum.

Schools report the following positive outcomes from implementing Community of Caring:

- ◆ creating a common language that promotes school unity
- ◆ building stronger connections between parents, schools and the community
- ◆ providing youth with a values perspective from which to view their behavioral choices

Additionally, administrators and school personnel from Community of Caring schools reported that their schools were significantly better in the following areas:

- ◆ more open and positive environment
- ◆ greater understanding and acceptance of all students
- ◆ more family involvement
- ◆ greater student leadership
- ◆ more effective collaboration among teachers and students

Please see our National and Local Evaluation Efforts information sheets for additional detail regarding specific empirical studies of Community of Caring. Evidence supporting the efficacy and effectiveness of Community of Caring is accumulating as its widespread use and the empirical support, from both internal and external studies, document. Community of Caring has clear preventive strengths! For more information, please contact the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Center for Community of Caring (801) 587-8990 or contact@communityofcaring.org. For updated research information, please visit our website: www.communityofcaring.org.