



NEWS

Fall 2003

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caring

respect

responsibility

trust

family

A Message from the Founder and Honorary Chairman



Dear Colleagues:

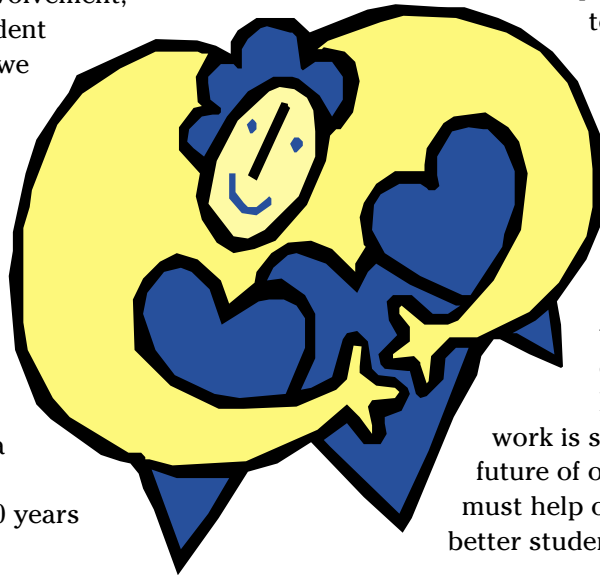
Community of Caring was founded 21 years ago, in 1982, with the goal of preventing teen pregnancy, thus preventing intellectual disabilities, while supporting young people with mental retardation to make more responsible decisions and create better futures for themselves. Today it is a K-12, whole school, comprehensive, research-based character education program having a unique focus on disabilities. As such, Community of Caring is not a curriculum, or an add-on to the curriculum. Instead, it is a holistic process that includes parents, families, teachers, lunch-room workers and other school staff, students, administrators and community members in building a strong school community rooted in caring, respect and responsibility, to support students to grow academically and ethically. In fact, Community of Caring has an excellent track record of helping children and young people become accomplished and contributing citizens—through family and community involvement, values across the curriculum, student forums and service, and because we provide a strong network of support to schools through ongoing staff development, technical assistance and evaluation opportunities. This past year we have made significant progress with Community of Caring. We've been working hard and are now in 38 states, with almost 1,000 schools across the nation, and we serve almost a million students—and with your support, we know that our next 20 years will be even more productive!

We believe that research is the critical key to a continued vibrant future for Community of Caring, and we are committed to thoroughly assessing our program and the results our schools are getting, and using that information to continue improving our program—and providing that information and opportunities to schools to participate in evaluation, so schools can improve their programs as well. Toward that end, early research in our program confirmed that students in Community of Caring schools get higher grade point averages than

students in non-Community of Caring schools, and have less teen pregnancy and use of alcohol. This past year our ongoing evaluation has told us that students in Community of Caring schools have better attendance in school, and are more respectful to one another, including to students with disabilities. We have also found that:

- students respect and care for each other, even when not friends
- teachers respect, care, and have interest in students
- students feel they have better educational opportunities
- there are stronger norms against vandalism, fighting, cheating, and verbal abuses

We believe that the good results we are getting will help ensure the future of this pioneering, ground-breaking teen pregnancy and character education program. We hope you will support us in continuing to develop and provide K-12, whole school character education having a unique focus on disabilities, so that NO CHILD is ever left behind. Our goal is to serve more than “one thousand schools, one million students.” Community of Caring provides educational opportunities that help students in this country contribute at the highest levels possible, and that type of work is sorely needed to help ensure the future of our wonderful country. Education must help our young people be not only better students, but better people as well.



My very warmest regards to all of you, for the wonderful work you are doing to help all of our children achieve and succeed.

Sincerely,

Eunice Kennedy Shriver

A Message from the Executive Director



Dear Colleagues:

Many exciting things are happening at Community of Caring! We have many new schools joining our national network of schools and our national evaluation effort, where we are finding out some important things about the profound impact

Community of Caring has on schools that implement the model with depth and integrity. In our recent ongoing evaluation conducted by Dr. Ann Higgins-D'Alessandro of Fordham University, we are finding out that elementary, middle, and high schools that emphasize at least five Community of Caring core elements and activities have significantly better student outcomes than those that emphasize only a few, according to teachers. In other words, those schools which begin their Community of Caring programs with our start-up staff development, ("How to Create a Community of Caring School,") and are fully implementing five or more components and Community of Caring activities, such as student forums, buddy partnerships, cross-age friendship groups, teaching values in and across the curriculum, service learning activities, parent and community involvement, and ongoing staff development, are experiencing a variety of positive student outcomes. Thus, initial results of Dr. Higgins-D'Alessandro's ongoing evaluation show that the level of implementation is significantly positively associated with better student outcomes in a number of areas, including:

- character
- attendance
- perspective-taking*
- autonomy

(*Perspective-taking is a cognitive skill necessary for good problem solving and crucial when combined with empathy, for prosocial behavior.)

Emphasizing five to eight core elements and activities is significantly associated with four outcomes in the area of student character as judged by teachers:

- trusting each other
- helping peers who are not their friends
- being friendly to other groups and to students school-wide
- being responsible for others

It is also significantly related to teachers' views that Community of Caring has increased attendance and decreased dropout rates in their schools.

Students' perspective-taking abilities, as assessed by teachers, are also significantly related to the implementation of five or more core elements and activities, i.e.:

- listening to others' ideas better
- taking each other's points of view

- stopping to think before speaking or acting

Also significantly related to five or more core elements and activities being implemented is students' sense of autonomy:

- speaking up and having a say in their classrooms and schools
- in voting on some of the rules

These are just a few of the positive outcomes we're finding in our schools, and we want to remind all of our Community of Caring schools that you are encouraged to participate in this ongoing evaluation effort. If you aren't participating yet, it's not too late to get involved this year. Just give our evaluator, Dr. Ann Higgins D'Alessandro, a heads up, and let her know that you're interested. She can be reached at MDALESSANDRO@fordham.edu or by phone at (718) 817-3887.

We believe also that Community of Caring helps schools implement the important goals laid out in *No Child Left Behind*, because it supports schools to meet high standards and implement best practices, creating a caring learning community that helps students thrive and do their very best academically, and ethically. I was struck recently with a powerful example of just how important this is. I had a visit from a young friend with an intellectual disability. He was mourning over the loss of a long-time girlfriend, and distressed at the cruelty she displayed during their breakup. (For example, she told him that she was "dumping him because her new boyfriend was much smarter than he was.") As I listened to him, I realized that this breakup represented much more than the usual romantic upheavals we all experience in life. This breakup represented the loss of opportunity for friendship, and the legitimate fear that it wouldn't be easy to replace it. As I listened to my young friend, I realized once again what a beacon of light Community of Caring can provide for all of our students, including students with disabilities. For them, it represents the opportunity for friendship, to live a decent life filled with the experiences of care and connection that we all yearn for. It is in this context of acceptance that we are free to thrive, to accomplish and contribute all that we are capable of contributing. But the bottom line is that the possibilities begin with the chance to belong to a community of caring.

Best wishes everyone, for a sun spackled autumn, filled with thanksgiving and bountiful opportunities for caring!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kristin Fink". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and personal.

Kristin Fink

2003 Community of Caring National Conference:

The 2003 Community of Caring National Conference took place at the Doubletree Hotel Crystal City in Arlington, VA, just minutes away from the U.S. Capitol Building in Washington, DC. The theme of this year's conference was "Community of Caring: Building Character. Building Friendships. Building Our Nation," and participants from around the country and Canada joined together to network, make new friends and learn about all aspects of Community of Caring and character building.

The conference offered presentations on diverse subjects, all within close proximity to many of the monuments and memorials honoring historical examples of character. The conference began with an inspirational opening session that included welcomes from Linda McKay of the U.S. Department of Education and an inspirational keynote address on social and economic forces and the impact of media, culture and violence in schools by Dr. Pedro Noguera, the Judith K. Dimon Chair Professor of Communities at the Graduate School of Education at Harvard University.

Conference attendees learned from the personal experiences of community and values of *8 Habits of the Heart* author Clifton Taulbert; they learned strategies for teaching character education and the importance of teaching good habits from Dr. Kevin Ryan of the Center for Ethics and Character at Boston University, and about the confluence of character education and sports from Dr. Sharon Kay Stoll of the Center for Ethics* at the University of Idaho. Additional speakers included Esther Schaffer, executive director and CEO of the

Character Education Partnership, deputy under secretary William Modzeleski of the Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, Dr. Edward Lee Vargas, Community of

Caring board member and superintendent of Hacienda-La Puente Unified School District, and Ron Axelrod, staff development coordinator for Community of Caring.

And, like never before, students and youth contributed to the conference! This conference marked the first time Community of Caring has held a youth leadership strand in conjunction with the regular conference. In addition, participants were treated to a heart-warming concert by Vitamin L, a student-singing group, following lunch on the

first day of the conference, and then later got to show off their dancing skills while being entertained by Colours, a highly-talented student singing and dancing group from Maryland, during the conference reception overlooking the capital. In addition, a group of students from Upper Merion Area Middle School, King of Prussia, PA, presented on the value and importance of Community of Caring in the life of their school. Principal

Karen Rohrbach and grant writer Michelle Franc elaborated on what they did for their school wide Community of Caring kick-off, and raised a giant flag they had made with the handprints of all the children at the school. Students Marissa Rohrbach, Rob France and Samantha Lippert-Kendall read essays that they had written about values.

In addition to the main speakers, participants were able to choose from a wide assortment of breakout sessions, both for the pre-conference sessions and during the main conference, on subjects that included teen pregnancy prevention, violence prevention, values across the curriculum, service learning, student forums, including students with mental retardation, student leadership, and many more! Presenters came from around the country to share their expertise working in schools and the classroom. Undoubtedly, between the wonderful meals, the many sessions, and the reception, important friendships and connections were established or strengthened in Arlington, VA.

On the creative side, Community of Caring teachers and administrators had opportunities to display examples of Community of Caring in their schools. Decorations and displays were exhibited by Community of Caring schools from across the country, including schools from Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, California, and Utah.

The national office extends many thanks to our planning committee and to all of the volunteers who helped everything go so smoothly.



Community of Caring staff, trainers and conference attendees take time out for a group picture



Conference attendees Karen and Marissa Rohrbach greet Carl Finn as Uncle Sam at the reception.



Conference attendees enjoying a breakout session

Friendship, Learning and So Much More

2003 COMMUNITY OF CARING AWARDS IN RECOGNITION OF THEIR SERVICE TO COMMUNITY

National Leadership Award:

Barbara Luther, lead teacher, Eleanor Roosevelt High School, Greenbelt, MD; Rima Vesilind, principal, Woodley Hills Elementary, Fairfax, VA

Outstanding Community of Caring School Award:

Upper Merion Area Middle School, King of Prussia, PA

Outstanding School Team Award:

Wayne Walters, principal; Jason Rivers and Andre McGee, lead teachers, Frick International Studies Academy, Pittsburgh, PA

Outstanding District Coordinator Award:

Margaret Brown, Director of Safe Schools, Pittsburgh, PA Public Schools

Outstanding Site Facilitator Award:

Jean Taylor, site facilitator, Cape Hatteras School, Buxton, NC; Mary Skinner, site facilitator, Vann Elementary School, Pittsburgh, PA

Outstanding Administrator Award:

Debra Mastropaolo, principal, Nottingham High School, Syracuse, NY; John Goldhardt, principal, Snow Canyon Middle School, St. George, UT; Karen Rohrbach, principal,

Upper Merion Area Middle School, King of Prussia, PA

Outstanding Citizenship and Leadership Award:

Lidia Flores, Long Beach, CA

Outstanding Advocate Award:

Timothy Rusnak, director, Center for Character Education, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, PA

Outstanding Parent Award:

Jane Willie, Salt Lake City, UT

Outstanding Student Award:

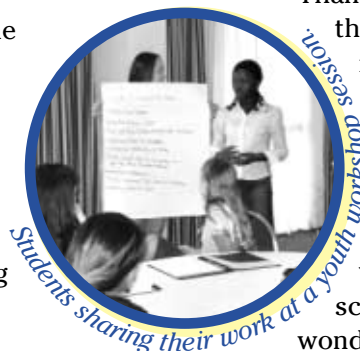
Lauren Willie, East High School, Salt Lake City, UT

KATIE DEMERS and AMY WALIGORA are both seniors at Manchester High School West in Manchester, NH. They have attended the Community of Caring National Conference the last two years and this year participated in the first annual Youth Leadership Conference as part of the 2003 Community of Caring National Conference. They shared their experience at the conference with us:

For the past two years, we have had the opportunity to travel with our school to the Community of Caring National Conference. It has been one of the best opportunities we have ever been given. At Manchester High School West in Manchester, NH, we run a student group that organizes different Community of Caring projects throughout the school. Attending the conference has given us the ideas and motivation to help make our programs work. Only a month after attending the conference, our Community of Caring program sponsored one of the most successful Freshmen Orientation events we have ever run at our school. We feel this is only the beginning of an exciting year ahead.

This year, a student portion was added to the Community of Caring National Conference. As participants in this program, we were able to share our experiences and gain new perspectives on our programs from students from around the country. We learned a great

deal from the service activities on which we worked and from the group forum discussions we had throughout the duration of the conference. Our school community has been involved with Community of Caring for a long while, but the conference gave us a new perspective on our own school. It allowed us to reevaluate our school environment in a broader context, which helped us to realize where we needed to concentrate our efforts. We also benefited from speaking with people who hadn't experienced Community of Caring before by learning of how they perceived the program and what their individual goals were for their own schools. We hope our years spent with the program were of a similar benefit to our peers at the conference.



Thanks to the conference, we came back to school this fall with a revitalized spirit and enthusiasm for Community of Caring and are ready to begin another great year. Experiencing the Community of Caring National Conference allowed us to step away from school and look at our community objectively. It helped us to learn from students and teachers alike what they would like to see done in their own schools. Finally, and most of all, we had a wonderful time meeting, discussing, and working with all the other conference attendees and gained a lot from their insight. Community of Caring has given our school so much and we hope that by having more students attend from all over the country in the years to come, other communities will benefit as we have.

Sanger, CA: Building Character. Building Partnerships. Building a Caring Community.

The past year has marked a truly exciting time for Community of Caring in Sanger, CA. The Community of Caring vision of building a caring community has spread throughout the entire school district and has been embraced by local government, law enforcement and business. The entire community of Sanger is onboard and committed. These exciting developments really took off when Sanger Unified School District was awarded a Partnerships in Character Education Grant from the U.S. Department of Education. Sanger Unified's Character Education Subcommittee decided that Community of Caring's flexible and comprehensive approach was exactly what it was looking for during their strategic planning process. The school district was already familiar with Community of Caring because two schools in the district, Jefferson Elementary and Washington Academic Middle School were already Community of Caring schools. Those schools had received Community of Caring staff development through funding from a teen pregnancy prevention grant from the California Department of Education that Sanger Unified participated in from 1996-2002. Sherry Satterberg, who is the current Community of Caring coordinator in Sanger Unified School District, was a lead teacher at Jefferson Elementary School for seven years. Already knowledgeable about Community of

Caring and excited to implement it in more schools, the character education subcommittee decided to use the funds from the U.S. Department of Education to expand the program throughout the entire school district and set about doing it.

A group of educators from Sanger participated in the 2003 Community of Caring National conference in July. Shortly after that in August of 2003, the district scheduled four separate "How to Create a Community of Caring School" staff development workshops in order to accommodate all 14 schools in the district. They began implementation at each school site at the beginning of the 2003-04 school year.

Lead teachers at the 14 schools began working to integrate Community of Caring throughout each of their schools. Teachers report that students are already becoming familiar with the values through assemblies, family nights and daily school life.

The city of Sanger has followed the schools' lead in dedicating themselves to becoming a more inclusive, stronger, more caring community. Local City Council member Mike Montelongo, who was involved with the Community of Caring programs

at Jefferson Elementary and Washington Academic Middle and was part of the character education subcommittee, helped the city of Sanger to adopt a resolution to "support the Community of Caring program and encourage the entire community to integrate the five core values of caring, respect, responsibility, trust and family into every aspect of their daily lives." The town ordered large banners from the Community of Caring national office to hang at the entrances to the city. Every city building will soon have Community of Caring's five core values posted inside. The local *Sanger Herald* newspaper has published a number of articles about Sanger's efforts, raising visibility throughout the community. In an editorial, Dawn Pearson wrote that, "City officials and residents are becoming less apathetic and taking responsibility for their community. City officials are printing phone numbers with residents to call with concerns."

Sanger Unified School District administrators provided valuable support for the Community of Caring program by involving themselves in the effort and "talking it up" throughout the community. Assistant superintendent Marc Johnson shared news about Sanger's local Community of Caring efforts at a Chamber of Commerce monthly luncheon and had a conversation with the chief of police. Police Chief Tom Klose identified with the Community of Caring mission and



Animate Your World

By Darleen Atteberry and Anne Winchester



decided to have Community of Caring on every police vehicle in Sanger. Ten new cars with Community of Caring decals are already finished. The Sanger Chamber of Commerce and chair Larry Jorgensen crafted a vision statement stating that, "Sanger will be a better more exciting place to live through citizen participation, caring and sharing" and have tied their mission to Community of Caring. Says Sherry Satterberg, "I'm thrilled to see us be able to take the program district wide and into the community. We are very fortunate that our community is embracing the Community of Caring philosophy. It's a program for the whole community."

Community of Caring has already had an impact in Sanger's schools and greater community through the synergistic efforts of school, administration, business, law enforcement and community leaders and it continues to grow in powerful ways. As assistant superintendent Johnson said, "Our efforts here are paying off. It has been kind of like throwing a rock into the center of a very still pond and then watching the ripples grow. It is exciting to envision the impact in our community down the road. Thanks for helping us throw the rock!"

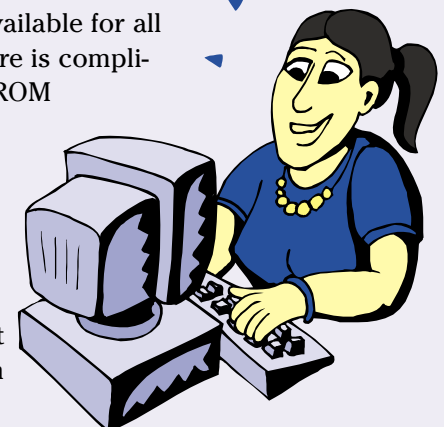
At the 2003 Community of Caring National Conference, Cartoon Network introduced computer software called *Animate Your World: Shaping Character*. The software is designed for fourth through eighth grade students. The purpose of the software is to provide teaching strategies to assist students in exploring and exhibiting ethical values as the basis of good character. It is a great resource to help integrate the five core values into a Community of Caring school.

Animate Your World: Shaping Character focuses on three character behaviors: Respect for Self, Respect for Others and Responsibility to Community. The software uses animation technology to make lessons come alive in classrooms. *Animate Your World: Shaping Character* can be integrated into language arts, social studies, art and technology classrooms as well as into guidance counseling.

Teachers can use the Educator's Guide for ideas about how to integrate the software into a wide variety of lessons. Then, using the software, teachers can review character traits and behaviors with students. There are videos, animated information, text files and sample animations on the disk. Once the software is explained, students plan, design and produce their own animation, incorporating the character education lesson from their classwork. Students use a variety of reading, writing and speaking skills as they create a story, develop characters, compile storyboards and record their voices. Whether selecting music and ambient sounds to create moods within their animations or determining each character's movements, students are continuously thinking and problem solving as they produce a cartoon that teaches a lesson about character.

Cartoon Network's *Animate Your World: Shaping Character* was developed by educators, animators and character education experts. It is correlated to national curriculum standards and the Educator's Guide is complete with rubrics for assessing students' understanding of character traits as well as their ability to tell a story through animation. "*Animate Your World: Shaping Character* is a perfect example of integrated curriculum—seamlessly weaving character and academic goals together while teaching content and skills. And it's fun!" says Kristin Fink, executive director of Community of Caring.

Animate Your World: Shaping Character is available for all Community of Caring teachers. The software is complimentary and the Educator's Guide and CD-ROM Instructions are on the CD-ROM. If you did not get a copy of the software at the 2003 Conference, visit the Cartoon Network special website: <http://www.animateyourworld.com> to request a copy. Be sure to include your school's mailing address in your request and tell them you heard about *Animate Your World: Shaping Character* from Community of Caring!



Highlights from Around the Country

DRUID HILLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL MARTINSVILLE, VA

Since implementing Community of Caring at Druid Hills, Counselor Nancy Clark has seen a decline in negative behaviors. Community of Caring's five core values of caring, respect, responsibility, trust and family are familiar to the young children and easy for them to focus on and recall. Since many individuals are visual learners, Clark uses Community of Caring's hand logo to great effect. Each finger on the hand is related to a characteristic of one of the values and each finger represents one of the five values. She has taught both students and staff how to use sign language for each value.

Children are encouraged to put the values into action. The entire school environment supports children in the development of the five values and everyone reinforces and supports their expression. Children that are observed demonstrating one of the values are encouraged to share what they have done for the entire student body, faculty and parents. The child's picture is taken and displayed prominently along with other students and the displays are changed monthly.

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CALGARY, ALBERTA, CANADA

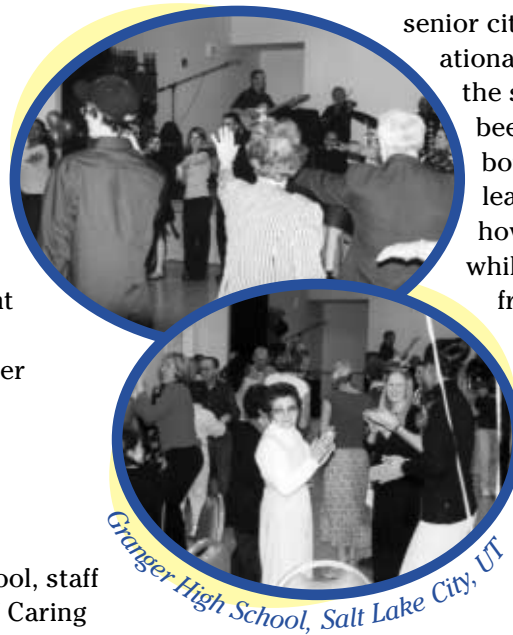
In their first year as a Community of Caring school, staff at St. Thomas Aquinas have used Community of Caring to make connections. Many excellent activities in the past were "stand-alone" activities. Now by explicitly drawing the connection between these activities – why they chose to do them, what they hope to achieve by them, etc., the activities have become richer and more meaningful for students, staff and parents.

The Artist in Residency program was linked to Community of Caring. Lynn Adam, a gifted storyteller, worked with each class over a two-week period to develop a class story. Each class took one of the core values as a basis for the story. The stories were all shared at a "Tell-abration," where parents participated. Additional activities included a school-wide Friendship lunch linked to the value of caring, and Big Friendly Group (Community of Caring K-6 cross-age group known as BFGs) activities centered on celebrating the holidays and different traditions.

GRANGER HIGH SCHOOL WEST VALLEY CITY, UT

Students at Granger High School have made great friendships with seniors in their community and organized a "Senior Ball" to celebrate and show their appreciation. The event included students from the school and senior citizens from the community. Students fixed dinner for the event and decorated the hallway and each table in the recreation room. A live swing band performed and helped make the event a wonderful success. This project was part of Granger High School's work with the Harmon Home, a local

senior citizen center. The intergenerational friendships built between the students and seniors have been a fantastic experience for both groups as students have learned a great deal about how rewarding service can be, while making friends, learning from others with unique experiences and strengthening the bonds throughout their community.



Teacher Tip

Parent-Teacher Community Building Idea

This activity comes from Roseanne Markham, a teacher at Evergreen Junior High School in Salt Lake City, UT. This activity is great for back to school events, parent-teacher nights or for any event that parents visit the school. Place a display in the main hallway of digital or Polaroid pictures of teachers and staff along with a paragraph that they wrote describing why they went into education. You may also want to include a poster marking how many total years of experience in education there are within the school.

SKYLINE HIGH SCHOOL SALT LAKE CITY, UT

Skyline students have been engaged in “Head, Heart and Hands Assemblies” at Skyline and its seven feeder schools for the past four years. The assemblies celebrate students who use their head, heart and hands to benefit others through their service work. Recipients are nominated by teachers and are then recognized before the student body and given a plaque. Student leaders at Skyline High School plan, prepare and conduct the assemblies. They coordinate with feeder schools, plan the theme of the assembly, contact participating schools, find musical groups to perform and solicit other student talent to perform. The Skyline student leaders also write and prepare videos about the Community of Caring values using students from the elementary and junior high schools.

The assemblies are a wonderful time for everyone. The student planners gain valuable leadership skills and provide a great example for younger students. The elementary and junior high students get a chance to be recognized for their caring and kindness and have a great time performing and learning from the older students.



Community of Caring Schools Pilot Tool Kit Strategies for Creating Friendships

Cresson Elementary, Cripple Creek, CO; Nottingham High School, Syracuse, NY; Park View High School, Sterling, VA; South Fork High School, Miranda, CA

Community of Caring is currently underway with year three of the *Including More Children in a Community of Caring* project. *Including More Children in a Community of Caring* is funded by the Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD). Many of today’s schools have inclusive academic practices, but parents tell us that there is a void in the lives of their children with disabilities. It is oftentimes very difficult for children with disabilities to make friends and develop meaningful relationships with other children. Through this project, Community of Caring continues to collect resources and strategies that promote social inclusion for children with disabilities. Four Community of Caring Schools are piloting a new Tool Kit designed to promote social inclusion and create meaningful friendships: Cresson Elementary in Cripple Creek, CO; Nottingham High School in Syracuse, NY; Park View High School in Sterling, VA; South Fork High School in Miranda, CA. Each site has received on-site Community of Caring staff development emphasizing strategies used to create friendships in the school setting. These strategies are included in a special section of the Community of Caring Tool Kit and are entitled *Creating Opportunities for Friendship*. The

Community of Caring website and future newsletters will feature projects that each site is engaged in. Sites have already begun a variety of activities promoting social inclusions strategies. Service learning projects, peer mentoring, experiential learning and mixers are just a few of the activities these schools have planned for this school year.

This very exciting project involves collaborating with national organizations such as TASH and The Arc of the United States. Their efforts have expanded the scope of this project to inform the public and create a greater awareness of the need for friendships. Dr. Michael Hardman, chairman of the Department of Special Education, University of Utah, has provided informative staff development, guidance, and contributed a wealth of information for the Tool Kit. An ADD Advisory Committee represents community members, parents, and practitioners. This committee ensures that all voices are heard on this project. Community of Caring is grateful to everyone involved and looks forward to publishing the Tool Kit at the end of this pilot year.



For further information about this project, please contact:
Penny Keith
Community of Caring Education Coordinator
pkeith@communityofcaring.org

Community of Caring Comes to Heron Creek Middle

SCOTT WILSON is the principal at Heron Creek Middle School in North Port, FL. Heron Creek had a Community of Caring onsite staff development workshop on March 21, 2003. This is the first of a series of articles that he has agreed to share with us from an administrator's perspective about the development of Community of Caring in a new school.

Sarasota County is growing rapidly. Heron Creek Middle School is located in North Port, Florida - the State's fastest growing community. For two years, middle school students were housed on a high school campus until a new middle school could be built to accommodate the rapid growth of the community. As we began planning to open a new school, we decided to focus on two primary missions: developing a school climate and culture that would be conducive to middle level educational needs and reversing some of the unhealthy culture that developed during the two years that students spent on the high school campus.

My situation was one that principals dream of - opening a new school, hiring an entirely new staff, working with architects and contractors to ensure that every element of the new school be based on best practices and a true middle school philosophy. My experience has taught me that an equal amount of time needed to be spent planning the fabric of the school's climate as was spent selecting carpet, paint and furnishings.

Community of Caring provided exactly what our new school needed - a cohesive program to provide

students with a participatory avenue for the creation of a positive school culture. The power of Community of Caring for me is in its ability to create a unifying vision and a common language. When Heron Creek Middle School opened in August with over 1,600 students, we had already trained our staff, communicated expectations to students and, through the media, shared the Community of Caring program with our community.

This year Heron Creek Middle School opened its brand new doors to 1,600 excited students in North Port, Florida. Excitement and anticipation filled the air as principal Scott Wilson, and Community of Caring lead teacher Shelley Sims put the finishing touches on student schedules. New staff members began preparing to become a Community of Caring last March during their first Community of Caring on-site staff development workshop. Since that March training, staff members have met the challenge of opening a new school with enthusiasm and hard work.

As part of the school-opening celebration, students wrote essays describing what it means to them to be a "Patriot", the Heron Creek Middle School Mascot. Several students then read their essays during the award ceremony. The essays described a patriot as someone who displays characteristics of unselfishness, volunteerism, sacrifice, and making a difference in the lives of others. The school created "A Hall of Patriots" and Community of Caring founder Eunice Kennedy Shriver was the first recipient of the award.

Community of Caring is the umbrella that unites all of the student-centered activities on our campus. Because so many of our students have moved to Florida from other communities, it is critical that we consciously work to develop a shared sense of place.

To create awareness of the program, we invited Eunice Kennedy Shriver to visit our new school. We inducted Mrs. Shriver into our "Hall of Patriots" during her visit. A fundamental

On September 17, 2003, Mrs. Shriver, Kristin Fink, executive director of Community of Caring, and Penny Keith, education coordinator, traveled to Heron Creek Middle School. Mrs. Shriver accepted the award and the key to the city of North Port. Teachers Mark Grossenbacher and Brent Shepler organized a day full of activities. School and community dignitaries greeted Mrs. Shriver. Principal Wilson spoke at the morning assembly about patriotism and presented Mrs. Shriver with the Patriot Award and plaque. Mrs. Shriver toured the campus and met throughout the day with students, staff and Sarasota District personnel. During the visit with the students, Mrs. Shriver asked students how Community of Caring had made a difference in their lives. One student replied, "You can be having the worst day, but you can go into that Community of Caring classroom and the teacher smiles at you and cares...well it just turns the day around." Before leaving, Mrs. Shriver challenged students to do more each and every day of their lives. She said, "Be a friend. Everyone has some gift to give."

Eunice Kennedy Shriver with teacher Christi Mc Dowell's special needs classroom. The picture was taken in front of a White House model that the students put together prior to Mrs. Shriver's arrival.

School in North Port, FL

necessity of a Community of Caring program is to focus on celebration. We have continuously celebrated the positive impact of our Community of Caring program at Heron Creek Middle School.

Under the Community of Caring umbrella, we have developed weekly advisory groups for all students, a peer leader program, a peer mentoring program in our low functioning special needs classrooms, and begun to plan for our first teen forum. We

have much work ahead, but know that our school culture will develop in a managed direction thanks to the foundation based on Community of Caring ideals.

We are proud to be the first Community of Caring school in central Florida. The staff's commitment to meeting student's holistic learning needs grows as the school continues to receive recognition as a model for other Florida schools to follow.

Curriculum Idea

How to Kick Off the Year with a Community of Caring Assembly or Re-energize the Troops.

Here are some possible strategies for kicking off your school year with a Community of Caring assembly or for an assembly during the school year. Depending upon the number of people and the amount of time you have, you might do one of these activities or a combination of them that suit your needs. We suggest starting by having large posters of the values visible in front of the audience as a reference point or focus of the program.

1. Invite a local politician, chief of police, teacher or principal to talk about one or more of the values and why they are important in their life.

2. Have individual students who are well-respected talk about one of the values and how the value has been important in their lives.

3. Find examples in literature that deal with one of the values. *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck and *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee are two good examples of books where characters are forced to confront values issues. Drama students can read the selections or act them out.

4. Locate movie clips where characters deal with Community of Caring values issues. Show the clip and have a narrator talk about the values.

5. Create open-ended skits that reflect people either living or not living up to the Community of Caring values. If your assembly group is a manageable size, divide audience into groups to discuss how they would end the skit. Finally, talk about why the individual values are important.

6. Create a multi-media slide show with pictures of people at your school and background music. Choose songs with lyrics that deal with positive values.

7. It is important for children to reflect on the activities. After the assembly, have students returning to their classrooms hold a mini teen forum discussing the issues raised in the assembly using questions that focus on the Community of Caring values, which are pre-formulated by faculty and/or the coordinating committee.

National Character Education Awards

For the seventh year, the Character Education Partnership (CEP), a national clearinghouse and advocacy group for character education, will recognize approximately 10 schools and school districts (K-12) in the United States as models of effective character education. In the past, four Community of Caring schools, Eleanor Roosevelt High School in Greenbelt, MD, Woodley Hills Elementary School in Alexandria, VA, Mound Fort Middle School in Ogden, UT and Buck Lodge Middle School in Prince Georges County, MD have received this prestigious award.

The main set of criteria by which all applications will be judged are the Eleven Principles of Effective Character Education, which are highly compatible with Community of Caring's framework and can be found on CEP's web site, www.character.org. Winners will receive national recognition as well as a National Schools of Character Flag and a \$2,000 award.

Citations also will be awarded for "promising practices" in character education. Schools awarded citations will receive a certificate, and a description of the promising practice will appear in the national Schools of Character publication, National Schools of Character: Practices to Adopt and Adapt. Completed applications for the National Schools of Character Awards must be post-marked no later than December 8, 2003, while applications for "promising practice" citations must be post-marked no later than February 3, 2004. For applications, criteria, and further information please contact CEP at 1025 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 1011, Washington, DC 20036, (800) 988-8081 or (202) 296-7743, ext. 10. You may also download an application at www.character.org.

Staff Development Options

BECOMING A COMMUNITY OF CARING SCHOOL WORKSHOP:

Two Facilitators, Two-Day Workshop \$6,500

Includes:

- Up to 100 Participants
- Basic Workshop
- Development of Action Plan
- Student Forum
- Values In and Across the Curriculum

One Facilitator, Two-Day Workshop \$4,500

Includes:

- Up to 100 Participants
- Basic Workshop
- Development of Action Plan
- Values In and Across the Curriculum

Two Facilitators, One-Day Workshop \$4,500

Includes:

- Up to 100 Participants
- Basic Workshop

One Facilitator, One-Day Workshop \$3,000

Includes:

- No More than 60 Participants
- Basic Workshop

ADDITIONAL ONE-DAY FOLLOW-UP WORKSHOPS \$3,000

Choose TWO Topics from the Following Areas:

- Student Forums
- Values In and Across the Curriculum
- Service Learning
- Family Involvement
- Getting Your Staff on Board
- Re-Energizing Your Staff in Community of Caring



A research-based K-12 Character Education program that works!

As part of our commitment to continue bringing more resources and staff development opportunities to Community of Caring schools, we have collaborated with Educational Impact to produce the first character education online program in the country. The program features committed and talented lead teachers and coordinators from schools around the country sharing and showing how Community of Caring works in their school.



- Teachers and principals describe the coordinating structures needed to ensure success.

- Site facilitators discuss how to generate faculty enthusiasm and develop a Coordinating Committee.
- School Coordinating Committees describe their oversight function and preparation of a Comprehensive Action Plan.
- Community of Caring Online will both jumpstart the Community of Caring process in your school and re-energize long standing Community of Caring programs!

Schools and districts interested in providing online staff development opportunities in Community of Caring should call (800) 859-2793 for more information, or visit www.communityofcaring.org.

MERCHANDISE

We are proud to introduce a number of exciting new items to our merchandise line. We have beautiful short sleeve polo shirts in white and long sleeve denim shirts, both with the Community of Caring logo embroidered on the left breast. We also have brand new Community of Caring mouse pads, CD cases, stress relievers shaped like light bulbs, and Community of Caring "quillows." This unique item is a sturdy blue flannel blanket that folds neatly into a pillow. The complete line of available materials and merchandise is located on the form on pages 14-15.

Understanding Your Sexuality and Your Choices is available to everyone; however, our other manuals are available exclusively to Community of Caring schools as a supplement to staff development workshops. For more information on how to become a Community of Caring school, contact us at (202) 393-1251.

The Community of Caring name and logo are trademarked. Please honor that trademark by ordering all merchandise through the national office. If you have any questions about policies related to the logo, contact the national office. As always, if there is an item you do not see on the merchandise form, please give us a call. We will do everything in our power to accommodate customized items. In most cases, we can produce the product at a lower price than would be available to an individual school trying to produce the item independently.

We would like to welcome schools in the following areas to our Community of Caring family

Sanger, CA

Syracuse, NY

Eureka, CA

Alexandria, VA

Bowden, Alberta, Canada

Didsbury, Alberta, Canada

Woodbridge, NJ

Williamstown, NJ

Remember that all domestic orders have shipping and handling fees of \$5.00 or 5% of the total order, whichever is greater. Please note that rush or international orders will now have shipping and handling charges of \$20 or 20% of the total, whichever is greater.

On the order form, you will notice that we ask you to allow 2-3 weeks for delivery of the merchandise. It is best to order products as far in advance as possible, particularly if you are ordering in quantities of 75-100, or more. However, your orders will always be filled as promptly as possible.

call for stories

We are currently looking for news from Community of Caring schools across the country for the winter 2004 newsletter. The theme will be: Community Involvement.

Submissions are accepted on a rolling basis
You do not have to write the article. Just send us the facts and highlights. We will do the rest!

Share with us your:

Examples of how your Community of Caring school is involved in your community.

Send them to:

Community of Caring
1325 G Street NW, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20005

Attn: Communications Department

e-mail: contact@communityofcaring.org
fax: 202-715-1146 phone: 202-393-1251



Merchandise Order Form

Bill to: _____ Ship to: _____

 Attn: _____ Attn: _____
 Phone: _____ Must be received by: _____

*Community of Caring merchandise is available exclusively to Community of Caring schools.
 If you would like to become a Community of Caring school, contact us at (202) 393-1251.*

Product	Quantity/Size	Price**	Total
Grey T-shirt w/small full color logo on front	__M __L __XL __XXL	\$10.00 \$12.00	
Blue T-shirt w/small gold logo on front	__M __L __XL __XXL	\$10.00 \$12.00	
White T-shirt with slogan: "Children Need All Our Hands to Succeed," small full color logo on front	__M __L __XL __XXL	\$10.00 \$12.00	
White T-shirt with slogan: "Creating Community Where You Are," small full color logo on front	__M __L __XL __XXL	\$10.00 \$12.00	
White T-Shirt with slogan, "Where Caring, Respect, Responsibility, Trust and Family are Taught and Lived," small full color logo on front	__M __L __XL __XXL	\$10.00 \$12.00	
Water Bottles, blue with COC logo and yellow top		\$3.00	
Lanyards, blue with gold lettering and key chain		\$4.00	
Click Stick Pens, yellow with blue lettering		\$1.00	
Message Pens, metallic blue, revolving five values		\$3.00	
Coffee Mugs, yellow with blue lettering		\$5.00	
Balloons, yellow, blue or white with one logo	__Y __B __W	3 for \$1.00	
Key Chains, full color logo on one side, "Creating Community Where You Are" on other side		\$2.00 or 3 for \$5.00	
Umbrellas, white and blue alternating panels, logo on one panel		\$12.00	
Video, "Five Words That Can Change Your Life"	English____ Spanish____	\$5.00	
Wristwatch, black leather band with logo on face	Women's____ Men's____	\$20.00	
Lapel Pin, full color logo		\$3.00	
Handkerchief, yellow with COC logo		\$3.00	
"Quillow" Blue flannel blanket folds into a pillow, embroidered logo		\$30.00	
Polo Shirt in brilliant white, with small full color embroidered logo	__S __M __L __XL	\$22.00 \$27.00	
Denim Shirt, with small full color embroidered logo Long sleeve	__S __M __L __XL	\$25.00 \$27.00	
Mousepad w/ logo and five values		\$6.00	
Subtotal:			

NEW
NEW
NEW
NEW

Product	Quantity	Price**	Total
Pencils, Blue with yellow logo		3/\$1.00	
Totebag, Black with blue highlights		\$7.00	
Pad Board, Blue with COC logo in yellow		\$5.00	
Poster. "A Community of Caring School, where caring, respect, responsibility, trust and family are taught and lived."	12.5 x 19 English _____ Spanish _____	\$5.00	
	25 x 19 English _____ Spanish _____	\$7.00	
	Magnets 2 x 3.5 (English only)	3 for \$1.00	
Value Cards Sets Double sided, English/Spanish	Small (5.5 x 8.5) _____	\$5.00	
	Large (11 x 17) _____	\$9.00	
CD Case, blue with logo		\$5.00	
Stress Reliever lightbulb w/ logo		\$3.00	
How to Create a Community of Caring School*		\$15.00	
How to Create a Community of Caring Elementary School*		\$15.00	
Knowing About AIDS is Valuable Protection* An instructional guide for middle, junior, and senior high school level teachers, with some activities for students		\$6.00	
Implementing Community Service Projects* A guide for teachers and administrators		\$4.60	
Planning and Implementing a Teen Forum* A guide for teachers and administrators		\$3.40	
Encouraging Family Involvement* A guide for teachers and administrators		\$4.60	
Understanding Your Sexuality and Your Choices Lesson Plans and exercises for middle and junior high school teachers		\$14.00	
*Community of Caring books, except for <i>Understanding Your Sexuality and Your Choices</i> , are available exclusively to Community of Caring schools. If you would like to become a Community of Caring school, contact us at (202) 393-1251.	Subtotal from page 14		
	5% of the total or \$5.00, whichever is greater	Shipping:	
	Grand Total:		
Customized T-Shirts: small full color logo on front, school or district name with slogan "Where Caring, Respect, Responsibility, Trust and Family are Taught and Lived," on back in blue.		Please call the national office for more information or to place an order for customized T-shirts.	

**Please allow 2-3 weeks for delivery, based on product availability. Prices and product line may be adjusted or discontinued without notice.
Shipping charges of 5% of the total or \$5.00, whichever is greater, will be added.
Rush & international orders subject to shipping charges of \$20 or 20%, whichever is greater.

Mail or Fax to:
Community of Caring, 1325 G Street, NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20005
Fax: (202) 715-1146 Phone: (202) 393-1251
ATTN: Merchandising Department



1325 G Street, NW Suite 500
Washington, DC 20005
www.communityofcaring.org

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Our logo signifies positive human growth and outreach by depicting both a hand reaching out and a sunrise. The five rays of light or fingers represent the five core values of the program.

1325 G STREET, NW, SUITE 500
WASHINGTON, DC 20005

PHONE: (202) 393-1251
FAX: (202) 715-1146
www.communityofcaring.org
contact@communityofcaring.org

**Community of Caring:
Where caring, respect,
responsibility, trust, and
family are taught and lived!**

Fall 2003

**Community of Caring
was founded by
Eunice Kennedy Shriver and
developed by
a group of
philosophers,
educators,
health specialists,
legal professionals,
ethicists,
policy makers
and psychologists.**