



What is bullying?

Bullying behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems. In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- An Imbalance of Power: Kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- Repetition: Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

“

This is why The Evolve Project was formed to raise awareness
and empower the anti-bullying movement.”

-Cleta Paige-Cain

The letters below are from actual children, principals, teachers, or other administrators who wrote to The Evolve Project after the workshop presentations were completed. Please browse the letters before learning more about our program

LEARN MORE

To Whom It May Concern:

After several years as school resource officer, I have seen *a lot* of assemblies, particularly anti-bullying presentations, and many of them seem the same. The Evolve Project, however, stood out in a crowded field.

First, the quality of the music and dance were far better than the other presentations I have witnessed and the talent of the artists was outstanding. Second, the songs and dance routines were actually integrated into the presentation and supported the message, rather than simply being an entertainment that went along with the presentations, as so often is the case.

Furthermore, the speaker not only had a pointed message that was spot-on for our youth, but she presented it in an engaging fashion, deftly managing the crowd and keeping the students' attention throughout the presentation. I would highly recommend The Evolve Project to any school that would like an entertaining, engaging and powerful anti-bullying presentation.

Officer C. Huffmaster
Metro Nashville Police Dept.
East School Resource Unit
Jere Baxter MP



Brian Strahine, School Counselor
3529 West End Avenue
Nashville, TN 37205
westendms.mnps.org
615.298.8425

January 11, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

On January 8, 2016 The Evolve Project came to West End Middle Prep. Words cannot express what a powerful program this was for our entire community! Their message spoke directly into the lives of our students. With a mix of dancing, singing, and sharing personal stories of triumph, we were all on the ends of our seats waiting to see what would come next. I have been and educator for 15 years, and have never attended such an engaging, uplifting, and inspiring presentation. My favorite part of the entire program was watching such talented human beings share their gifts with us. So many of our students have such low self-worth and the performers on stage showed that building up others is much more meaningful than breaking others down.

With gratitude,

Brian Strahine, Ed.S.

School Counselor

The West End Learning Community

Inquirers • Knowledgeable • Thinkers • Caring • Risk-takers • Communicators • Principled • Open-minded • Balanced • Reflective

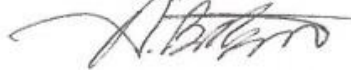
To whom it may concern,

It is my pleasure to recommend The Evolve Project to any school or organization who works with or cares about kids. I am a public school teacher in Davidson County, Nashville and our middle school student body was blessed to attend an assembly hosted by The Evolve Project during the 2011-2012 school year. Prior to the assembly, the students seemed unexcited to receive another anti-bullying message. However, moments into the performance, every student was fully engaged in hearing the powerful and important message conveyed by The Evolve Project due to their fresh and exciting delivery.

To say that this organization delivers a highly relevant message in a professional and effective way is an understatement. The Evolve Project presenters had the full attention of our student body and our staff from beginning to end. A variety of incredibly talented performers who also passionately presented "real" messages about how bullying has personally effected them gave meaning to a topic that needs addressing now more than ever. The assembly was not only entertaining but educational and inspiring as well. Our students seemed excited about being their best person and holding others accountable for doing the same upon resuming their school day.

Over the days following The Evolve Project's anti-bullying assembly, students were observed standing up for each other, notifying teachers when their peers exhibited bullying behavior, and repeating the positive phrases and lyrics heard during the assembly. The entire student body benefited from hearing the message and really seemed to take the ideas to heart... ideas that can save student's lives. In hopes that more students can also benefit from the message, please consider getting involved with The Evolve Project by scheduling a presentation for your school or organization.

Sincerely,



Heather Bellgardt

Davidson County Public School Teacher



September 24, 2013

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

On September 16, 2013, Target, Inc. sponsored "The Evolve Project" anti-bullying workshop/ program for the student body of Antioch Middle School. Executive Director Cleta Paige-Cain came with her equipment, staff and performers. She delivered a highly professional, well-designed program. The program had a powerful introduction so that students were given an understanding of the goals and objectives of the program.

From the comments I have received from staff and students, the first impressions were made when the students saw the sound system, the screen, and the live musician on the keyboard. We all knew something powerful was about to happen and it more certainly did. The presentation was designed to hold the attention of our students. Mrs. Paige-Cain served as the narrator; and along with a PowerPoint, she very articulately explained bullying, how it occurs, places where it happens, the roles that people play in the bullying circle, the damage that bullying can do to a person's self-esteem, and what students should do when they are bullied or when they see others being bullied. She also spent some time talking about the dangers of cyber-bullying. Students were told how to report bullying incidents and to whom they should report these incidents.

In addition to the PowerPoint, it appeared as though Mrs. Paige-Cain knew exactly when students were ready for the next segment. Interwoven throughout the presentation were performers, singers or the dancers. The dancers were professionally trained with every performance choreographed; they performed the dances that our students enjoy and do themselves. The gentleman and the lady who sang had beautiful voices. The songs were popular songs with some of the words changed to fit the anti-bullying theme of the program. Mrs. Paige-Cain even mentioned that the male singer had been bullied, and that she had been bullied when she weighed 300 pounds.

It seemed as though the video was one of the most thought-provoking parts of the program. The video included a father whose son committed suicide because he was bullied. The pictures of other students who had committed suicide were shown; they, too, had been bullied.

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Marshall Mariners

Thurgood Marshall Middle School
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools

5832 Pettus Road
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Office of the Assistant Principal

Cindy Tarkington

cynthia.tarkington@mnps.org

April 29, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

Thurgood Marshall Middle School recently had the opportunity to host The Evolve Project, who presented an anti-bullying presentation to our entire student body. The program was very interactive with singers and dancers. They definitely had all eight hundred students engaged for the entire assembly...which is no easy task! The anti-bullying message was student-friendly with real world people who had been bullied, showing how it affected them and their families. During the stories and videos, there were tears in the audience as the students listened to the families who lost children to suicide. The presentation was very professional. It was a pleasure to work with them. They encouraged our students to go to their Facebook page and like The Evolve Project and give them feedback. They even followed up with the administration on one of our female students that had gone to the website and posted information about being bullied and previous thoughts of suicide. I appreciated having that information. After the presentation, they emailed a School Climate Student Questionnaire and Post Survey to administer to our student body to see how safe they feel and the climate of the school. We will use this information to make decisions about the school, its climate, and culture. In the days that followed the presentation, I saw several of our teachers talking about the presentation on social media sites stating that it was by far the best assembly they had ever attended. I agree with my faculty. The Evolve Project is a must for every school that would like to address bullying in a positive but realistic manner.

Sincerely,

Cindy Tarkington, Assistant Principal

THELMA M. HARPER
SENATOR
19TH SENATORIAL DISTRICT



Senate Chamber
State of Tennessee
NASHVILLE

MEMBER OF COMMITTEES:
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
TENNESSEE BLACK CAUCUS
OF STATE LEGISLATORS

May 2, 2013

Dear To Whom It May Concern:

I write this letter in support of The Evolve Project. We believe that this anti-bullying program will provide our youth with the necessary tools to become productive citizens.

I had the pleasure of observing this organization and was thoroughly impressed. I feel that programs such as these are vital to the development of our youth and community at large.

It is our certainty that The Evolve Project will play a vital role in educational development. It is my desire to see this program thrive. If our office can be of any further assistance please feel free to contact us at anytime. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thelma Harper".

Thelma M. Harper
State Senator, 19th Senatorial District
State of Tennessee



METROPOLITAN
Nashville
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

William Henry Oliver Middle School
6211 Nolensville Road • Nashville, TN 37211
615/332-3011 • Fax 615/332-3019

May 12, 2014

Ms. Cleta Paige-Crain,

The mark of a good program presentation is one where you have continued results, after the fact. The Evolve Project sent a clear, positive message to our student body and faculty, and we continue to reference back to the program. Your incorporation of song, dancing, and other performing artists to convey your anti-bullying and positive self-esteem message instilled in our children to be active participants. We do not want our students to be bystanders where they see bullying occurring in our school, home and/or community.

The "Living Bully Free and Loving Me" objectives and program content of tolerance, self-esteem, and non-hostile strategies were appropriate for all our grade levels. Oliver Middle School maintains a pledge to respect the feelings, property, and rights of others, and to make sure we have a safe and healthy school. We want our children to be resourceful, come to class, prepared to listen, do their work and learn in a nurturing environment. The Evolve Project is 100% on target with our goals and philosophy. We wish you continued success in the implementation of your program.

Sincerely,

Adelaide Nicholson, ED.D
Assistant Principal
W.H. Oliver Middle School

April 29, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to write this letter of recommendation for *The Evolve Anti-bullying Project* founded by Ms. Clela Paige-Cain. Last semester, *The Evolve Project* gave a powerful presentation to the students at Smithson Craighead Academy Middle School (SCA) located in Madison, Tennessee. SCA is a charter school serving grades 5-8 which focuses on single-gender education. I am pleased to say, *The Evolve Project* was a huge success! In my personal opinion, the project is more than just an anti-bullying presentation; it is also powerful in transforming the lives of young learners who often struggle with self-esteem.


In our culture, the daily struggles many young people experience with bullying, especially as they matriculate through middle and high school, are becoming more apparent—even alarming. At Smithson Craighead Middle, our guidance counselor, Ms. Carmen Tucker, sponsored several anti-bullying campaigns such as a method for students to report incidents of bullying (the Bully Box), character education seminars, and securing funds to bring programs such as *The Evolve Project* to our school.

The Evolve Project was absolutely wonderful. Its approach is student-centered, exciting, and engaging. Their message of inspiration, self-reflection, and self-acceptance is a great lesson for all students. Also, the high-energy, musical selections, dancers, and audience participation, held everyone's attention, thus all received a powerful and necessary message about caring for others, decision-making, and knowing when to take a stand in the face of adverse situations. *The Evolve Project* has a powerful message, one worthy of every young person's ears and hearts.

Again, I am pleased and excited to write this letter of recommendation on behalf such a worthy program. As a school administrator, one of my goals is to ensure all students have safe and positive school experiences. *The Evolve Project* was indeed an important element in helping SCA to evolve into the kind of school where all students feel a sense of safety whether it be physical, mental, or emotional safety.

The Evolve Project offers a different approach to combating an old problem—bullying.

Best regards,



DeAundra Jenkins-Holder, Ed.D.
Executive Assistant to the Vice-President of Institutional Advancement at Fisk University
Former Executive Principal at Smithson Craighead Academy Middle School
615.689.8700



Marshall Mariners

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615-941-7515 Ext 1910

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Principal

Roderick Webb

roderick.webb@mnps.org

May 3, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

On Friday April 5, 2013, the students of Thurgood Marshall Middle School, had the pleasure of being engaged, informed, entertained, and empowered all in one presentation. Under the direction of Ms. Clela Paige-Cain, the Evolve Project presented the workshop "Living Bully Free and Loving Me."

The presentation not only captured and held the attention of middle school students, but went so far as to move them emotionally. Some of our students literally broke into tears during parts of the workshop. The anecdotes were relevant and allowed the students an opportunity to see the potential consequences beyond their actions.

The program convicted those guilty of bullying of just how harmful their actions could be. It also empowered those who have been bullied to confide in someone for help. Many faculty members were complimentary of the presentation's message. We feel the program was beneficial to our students here at Thurgood Marshall Middle School.

Sincerely,

Mr. Roderick Webb

May 5, 2013

On behalf of The Evolve Project

Cleta D. Paige-Cain

Executive Director of Child Care Alliance

Creator of The Evolve Project

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Amy Austin and I am the Spiritual Life Director at Donelson Christian Academy in Nashville, Tennessee. This year I met Cleta Paige and was introduced to her passion, The Evolve Project. Mrs. Paige has actively pursued involvement in education and counseling. She has over 21 years of experience. It took one conversation to see that not only did Mrs. Cleta Paige have the passion to help prevent one of the prevalent barriers to education, bullying, but she had the personal story, professional knowledge, and relational talents to connect with students and parents on the issue of bullying. Mrs. Paige's voice is one to be heard and to not be forgotten.

We were privileged to see the "Living Bully Free and Loving Me." presentation in one of our Chapel venues. We enjoyed music, dancing, and Mrs. Cleta Paige speaking. As I sat watching and listening, I was amazed by the engagement of the crowd. The message was clear and yet challenging because we all have a role in stopping bullying and working towards better self-esteem. The students enjoyed listening to a person and topic that were real and raw. I cannot imagine the impact Mrs. Cleta Paige has on students and parents as she speaks truth, challenge, and hope.

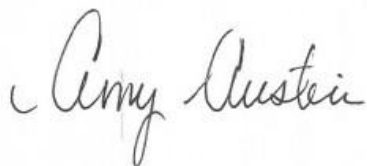
I would recommend to any and all who have influence on students and parents to consider sponsoring The Evolve Project. There will be no regret but rather your own recommendation to others as to how this is a movement that NEEDS to be carried out as far as it can go.

Sincerely,

Amy Austin

300 Danyacrest Dr.

Nashville, TN 37214

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amy Austin". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name and address.



TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

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September 24, 2013

"The Evolve Project" put on an outstanding anti-bullying program. I don't know of any aspect of the program I would like to see them change. As a follow-up to the program Mrs. Paige-Cain sent a follow-up anti-bullying activity for teachers to use. Students completed a survey before the program and a post survey about a week later. We really appreciate Target, Inc. for sponsoring this program for our students.

Sincerely

Mildred P. Smith

Mildred P. Smith, Ed.S.
Guidance Counselor