



Giving Challenge Donors Help Fund Major Anti-Bullying Initiative

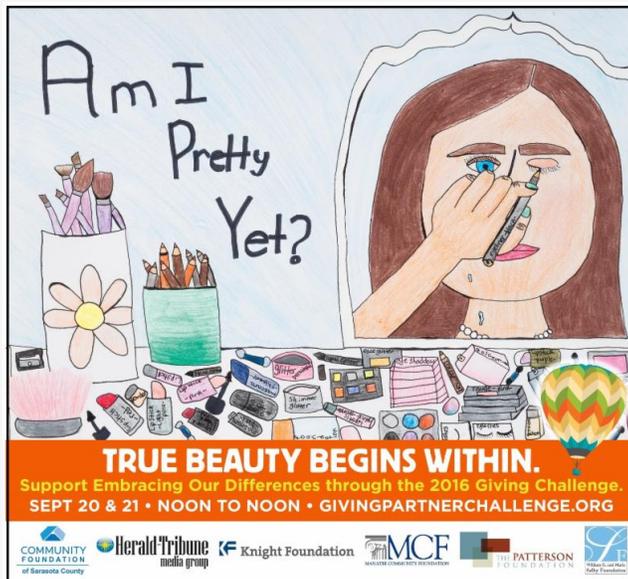
By: Brenna Wilhm on August 29, 2016

In the summer of 2015, Embracing Our Differences partnered with the Sarasota County school district to present "**Embrace Courage: Bullying Prevention in Schools,**" an inaugural three-day workshop designed to give teachers the skills and tools they need to take a stand against bullying. This initiative was so popular that Peni Riedinger, head of guidance counselors for the Sarasota County school district, reached out to EOD and asked us if we could conduct a second training session on bullying prevention for guidance counselors, psychologists and social workers.

The EOD team analyzed surveys and feedback from the inaugural workshop and recognized that it takes a cohesive team of guidance counselors, teachers and administrators to provide the support network schools need to implement programs. Working directly with Peni and others within the school system, we were able to implement a daylong session in January 2016. **Eighty-five** school guidance counselors, psychologists and social workers from Sarasota County schools signed up for the workshop. The workshop was a resounding success.

How were we able to facilitate this?

Through the generosity of our 2015 Giving Challenge donors, we were able to raise the funds necessary to make this vital initiative happen. More than **42,000 students** are now benefiting from the support of the 2015 Giving Challenge. Each and every person has the power to make a difference and our Giving Challenge donors really stepped up to **#BeTheOne** changing young lives!



Bottom line?

We're offering area educators access to the resources that are necessary to create a safe environment for their students. We understand that things don't change overnight; we're not going to end bullying, but we are going to do our part to heighten awareness about it.

Participant Comments from the Workshop:

"This was the absolutely best professional development workshop I've participated in."

"Bullying is a problem at my school. I will share this with administrators and teachers."

"This workshop has given me vital tools that allow me to be proactive with my students."

"The discussions helped me gain a better understanding of what is happening with our students today and what the appropriate way to respond is."



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