

5 NUMBERS

YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN OTTAWA

Frontline Reflections

Featured member: Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre, Bullying Awareness Week 2014

Bullying Awareness and Prevention week is an opportunity for the community to increase their awareness on the issue of bullying and victimization and what they can do to address it. Bullying is a form of abuse at the hands of peers that can take [different forms](#) at different ages. It is targeted and repeated. It involves power, aggression, intimidation and shame. (Prevet). Bullying is a serious complex issue that is largely preventable. This is not a school issue; this is a community issue, a social issue that requires community-wide strategies to support all those impacted by this issue. Research shows that bullying prevention and intervention messages are more effective if they come from many adults, not just educators, and if the message is consistent.



This year Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week was the week of November 16th to the 22nd. This Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre Community-wide event in collaboration with several elementary and secondary schools, the Ottawa public library and the Zone celebrated their efforts to date with respect to bullying prevention and interventions. Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre provided community partners involved with bullying prevention programming with: a Menu of activities; Bullying Facts sheet; Posters / Pledge; and Pencils with our key message.

This year some of the community activities included a flash mob, a poster and poem contest, along with displays set-up in our local schools and libraries. In addition to this, our events were covered on social media including a Facebook page. Our Community Educator facilitated workshops and activities on the topic throughout the week. Our goal was to reach as many teachers, parents, children and community members as possible. This year we were able to reach over 3700 community members.

Bullying is a serious problem that can have devastating effects for those who are victimized, for those who bully, and for those who witness. The good news is, we can dramatically reduce the level of peer to peer abuse with a comprehensive community- wide collaborative approach. This type of approach heightens the entire community's awareness and understanding of what bullying and victimization is. To address this, Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre is leading a city-wide working group with over 25 partners from child and youth serving agencies including school boards, police, community resource and health centers, mental health agencies, CHEO, City of Ottawa etc. The goal is to develop a more coordinated and comprehensive approach to bullying prevention and intervention throughout the City of Ottawa.

Overall, the most important message here is that bullying cannot be addressed in one week or by one stakeholder but rather it takes a community and it needs to be integrated into everything we do in order to help create an environment and a climate where bullying behavior is not tolerated, supported or minimized, where we all take responsibility and action. To donate funds to support more of these initiatives in our communities please follow the link below.

<https://www.canadahelps.org/dn/15600>.

Submitted by:



A member of the Ottawa Child and Youth Initiative