

Press Release15.09.08

Bullied and bullies find help through peer mentoring

As the new academic year begins, 150 schools across England are set to take part in the National Peer Mentoring Anti Bullying Pilot.

Primary, secondary and special schools have been selected to be part of a two-year pilot that will look at how **peer mentoring can contribute to tackling bullying in schools.**

On 25th September, The Mentoring and Befriending Foundation who are managing the DCSF funded pilot, will launch the programme with the first of four regional training events for the participating schools.

Following the training day, **more than 6,000 Peer Mentors** will be recruited to work with fellow students, helping them to understand the impact of their actions and words on others and encouraging them to become active citizens in the school community.

“...Our school’s award- winning Peer Mentoring Anti-Bullying programme highlights time and again that for some young people, to be peer accountable has a far greater impact on their behaviour than the disapproval of an adult in authority...” *Ailsa Bunch, Behaviour Manager, Morecambe High School.*

The Anti-Bullying Peer Mentors will be a strong and visible presence in the schools promoting their message of support through workshops, assemblies, role-plays, student-written resources, display boards, open-days, drop-in centres and creative marketing campaigns as well as playing a central role in whole-school training days (for staff, pupils and parents)

While many schools in England already have effective peer mentoring and anti-bullying programmes in place, the pilot will support the introduction of peer

mentoring models into the wider anti-bullying plan of each school whilst also establishing links to enhance initiatives such as SEAL and the Healthy Schools Programme.

The initiatives introduced in schools over the coming months will shape some major campaigns to run both nationally and regionally during Anti Bullying Week (17th-21st November 2008).

Steve Matthews, of the Mentoring and Befriending Foundation comments:

“We know from media coverage that the effects of bullying can take many different forms and can sometimes be tragic. We believe that peer mentoring by improving pupil relationships can have a significant impact on bullying in schools. Programmes can be very effective in turning an unhappy playground into a happy one and the positive outcome of peer mentoring felt by both peer mentors as well as by their mentees”

Notes to Editors

Please contact us if you would like images, logos or more details of case studies and projects taking place across the country.

The Mentoring and Befriending Foundation (MBF) is the national strategic body for mentoring and befriending, offering support to practitioners and organisations throughout the country. It works in partnership with other voluntary sector infrastructure bodies, offering training and guidance in best practice. MBF operates and awards The Approved Provider Standard which is recognized as the national benchmark for quality and good practice. APS is endorsed by the Cabinet Office and the DCSF. To find out more about The MBF's training and networking events please visit www.mandbf.org.uk

**For further information about the Anti Bullying Peer Mentoring Pilot,
please contact Press Officer Cath Mercer**

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