

MEDIATION & WELLNESS PROGRAM

PROGRAM PURPOSE: The Mediation & Wellness Program (MWP) is a peer-led effort that operates in two Boston Public High Schools—Community Academy and the Jeremiah Burke High. This social and emotional skills learning program, launched in 2015, seeks to improve school performance by reducing violence, name-calling, cyber and personal bullying/sexting. The program also provides leadership, planning and goal-setting skills training and connects troubled teens to needed services.

THE NEEDS WE ADDRESS: Data show that 35.1% of the population we serve live in poverty, 60% of youth served have experienced or witnessed violence, and cyber and personal bullying has nearly doubled (from 18% to 34%) from 2007-2016 (Patchin & Hinduja, 2016).

CURRENT RESULTS: Spurred by the murder of one of our program participants, the program expanded in 2017- 2018 to reach a total of 470 students. With one full-time and one part-time program staff members, 370 youth were exposed to the program through school-wide assemblies or classroom presentations. An additional 103 youth participated weekly in small groups or individual sessions focused on a variety of trauma and grieving issues. Those same 100 students were also given training on how to study and plan for college and how to adopt new wellness lifestyles. 10 students received 8 weeks of training as peer-leaders and mediators who, at the request of other students or school administrators, have engaged in the mediation of conflicts. 15 youth attended college tours in partnership with College for Every Student and 7 of these students were offered support in applying to Roxbury Community College.



The Burke
Mediation and
Wellness Program

GOALS:

1. To decrease school conflict, violence and the subsequent fights, suspensions, and other school disruptions, and
2. To increase the number of students equipped to support a more peaceful and academically productive environment.

FUTURE TARGETS:

1. Train 10+ student mediators annually.
2. Expand to a third high school
3. Partner with other organizations to help 30 youth enter college or career training.



For additional information on either program or other programs supported by the Institute for Social Justice, please go to our websites:

INSTITUTE: <https://www.bethel-institute.org/30thanniversary>

BETHEL AME CHURCH: <http://www.bethelame.org/anniversary/>