

THE MENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION OF WEST MICHIGAN

be nice. CAMPAIGN FOR SCHOOLS

OUR MISSION: To spread awareness surrounding the issues of bullying and the importance of treating people with civility community-wide. By creating awareness, we will minimize and reduce the devastating effects of bullying such as depression and suicide. You can call it what you want: respectful, courteous, polite, mindful, caring, nurturing, graceful, civil. But it all adds up to being nice.

OUR VISION: That schools, the workplace and the greater community will exemplify the principles of **be nice.** and put an end to the physical and emotional trauma caused by bullying.

DESCRIPTION: Within schools, **be nice.** is a positive anti-bullying initiative designed to create awareness of the negative effects of bullying. Suicide, one devastating effect of bullying, is the 2nd leading cause of death among adolescents in Kent County and the 3rd leading cause of death among adolescents nationally. Bullying is a significant issue within our schools and communities both locally and nationally. The **be nice.** campaign strives to educate students about how simply "being nice" is an effective way to promote a safe and civil environment within the school and community.

For scheduling or be nice. orders, please contact us at:

Mental Health Foundation of West Michigan

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be nice.: It's Good for Your Mental Health

ABOUT THE **be nice.** CAMPAIGN

WHO: Any elementary, middle, high school or college campus that wants to end bullying and support the **be nice.** initiative within their school community.

WHERE: Within participating school and college campuses.

WHEN: Each school will choose a date for their **be nice.** day or week and tailor **be nice.** activities to the needs of their students, faculty, and community.

HOW: Schools may choose their unique level of participation in **be nice.** by contacting the Mental Health Foundation of West Michigan. *Please see next page for descriptions.*

WHY be nice.:

- Nearly 1 out of 4 kids, over 5.7 million, in the United States are directly impacted by bullying.
- Children and youth who are bullied are more likely than other children to be depressed, lonely, anxious, have low self-esteem, feel unwell, and think about suicide (Limber, 2002; Olweus, 1993).
- A victim of bullying is twice as likely to take his or her own life compared to someone who is not a victim (National Association of School Psychiatrists (NASP), 2011).
- To **be nice.** is more than just saying don't bully. The **be nice.** campaign is based upon a strengths-based perspective and uses a more positive approach to minimizing bullying in schools and community-wide.

We have learned over the years that ignoring bullies or just telling them to "Stop" are negative and ineffective approaches to stopping bully behaviors. By creating a day or celebrating the idea of **be nice.**, we can proactively encourage and recognize acts of kindness among students and their peers.

BUILD A **be nice.** EVENT FOR YOUR SCHOOL

Each school has the opportunity to build a **be nice.** event based on that school's needs.

ONE HOUR be nice. ASSEMBLY

\$250.00

One-hour assembly introducing the **be nice.** concept. Promotes awareness of the devastating effects of bullying on wellness and mental health. Assembly Includes:

- Short anti-bullying video
- Skits about bullying and how to respond to bullying performed by **be nice.** facilitators
- Fun activities that encourage student interaction
- Testimonials from individuals who have personal experiences with bullying

TWO HOUR be nice. ASSEMBLY

\$500.00

Two-hour **be nice.** assembly including components of the one hour assembly **PLUS:**

- Break out session with students led by **be nice.** facilitators
 - Students will participate in team building activities, discussions about acceptance, and guided development of daily activities they feel are relevant and engaging for a **be nice.** week in their school
 - Students may be chosen from each smaller group to develop a skit, rap, or dance about bullying to be presented at the end of the assembly
- Students will reconvene at the end of the breakout session to present ideas from each group for a week of **be nice.** in their school.
- Facilitators wrap up the session with an empowering message to students about "being nice" and ending bullying in their school and community.
- Facilitators and staff from the Mental Health Foundation will compile these ideas into a comprehensive and FUN **be nice.** spirit week for the participating school.

CREATE YOUR OWN be nice. DAY/WEEK

Host a day or whole week of **be nice.** activities. (*see attached sheet for ideas*) Can be combined with our one hour **be nice.** assembly

+ **ADD be nice. MERCHANDISE (SEE ENCLOSED ORDER FORM)**

- Purchase **be nice.** t-shirts, buttons, magnets, and/or bumper stickers to distribute to students, faculty, and community members to spread awareness of **be nice.**
- Merchandise can be purchased separately or as part of a **be nice.** assembly.

IDEAS FOR A **be nice.** SPIRIT DAY/WEEK

- Create a student **be nice.** Committee to continue the **be nice.** initiative throughout the school year and plan **be nice.** events
- Host a **be nice.** spirit week with a different **be nice.** challenge for each day
 - **be nice.** poster contest between home rooms
 - **be nice.** posters in the hallway
 - Mix it up Day! Students sit by someone new at lunch time
 - Have students decorate lockers with a **be nice.** theme
 - Play music during announcements that speaks to the principles of **be nice.**
 - Provide writing prompts to students that encourage thought about anti-bullying and the **be nice.** initiative
 - Make someone feel awesome day! Encourage students to give compliments, high fives and other kind gestures throughout the day. Recognize and award students for being nice
 - Engage students in a community service project
 - Dedicate one day of the week to team building among students
 - Create a **be nice.** mural or wall where students can anonymously leave encouraging messages to each other
 - Take pictures of students exemplifying **be nice.** and create a slide show to present to the student body
 - Talk with someone new day! Encourage students to mingle outside their normal groups and reach out to each other.
- Students create a play or drama around **be nice.** and anti-bullying to perform for their parents and school.
- Throw a **be nice.** themed dance, homecoming, or sports event
- Encourage a **be nice.** themed battle of the bands or talent show