

The UNITY Mission Model for Positive School Climate

In 2008 the Institute for Advancing Unity partnered with The Healthy Community Consortium (HC2) in Petaluma, California to create and help implement a Unity Mission Model for three school campuses. The project was an overwhelming success, providing a model for other schools to implement. Learn more about the UNITY Mission Model in the summary below, or [download the full report](#).^[1]

The Problem: School Climate and Bullying

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that, 30% of sixth to tenth graders in the United States were either a bully, a target of bullying, or both (CDC, 2009). In California, nearly 37% of middle and high school students were bullied or physically assaulted at school, and about 75% of these experiences were bias-related (Heck et al., 2005). Targeting youth is also an important step to preventing biased behavior and attitudes from escalating to hate crimes. National FBI statistics reveal that 31% percent of violent hate crime offenders and 46% of property offenders were under age 18 (NCJRS, 2009).

Solution: The UNITY Mission Model

The Institute for Advancing Unity is an education organization whose mission is to create transformational experiences where people learn about the consequences of prejudice and violence, practice tools that foster harmony, and make choices that empower themselves and others to build unity. The UNITY tenets provide the foundation for creating a school climate where bullying is unacceptable, understanding and inclusiveness are cultural norms, and students feel empowered to be champions of these norms. We have created a pedagogical model for positive change in school climate based on the steps embodied by our mission. This process, employed sequentially and adapted to each community, results in a positive environmental change for the entire school. This change is sustained by a curriculum for ongoing activities that promote unity.

The Results: Petaluma, CA Case Study

In 2008 the Institute for Advancing Unity partnered with The Healthy Community Consortium (HC2) in Petaluma, California to create and help implement a Unity Mission Model for three school campuses. More than 900 students and 300 adult volunteers have participated in the initiative and the preliminary results at each school are significant.

- Student expulsions and disciplinary actions are down by over 65%. Harassment and bullying are down 47%, with sexual harassment down 28%.
- Violent crimes are down as much as 100%. Repeat truancy and tardiness reports are down, with excessive tardiness down 47%.
- Staff time spent on disciplinary action is significantly reduced.
- Student suspensions related to violence and harassment are down 68% despite the loss of the

School Resource Officer in January of 2009.

- Teachers are referring students to assistance programs for counseling support, additional academic support, tutoring and mentoring.
- The climate of conflict has become a climate of unity.

Learn More

[Download the full version](#) ^[1] of this report. Then [witness a Challenge Day](#) ^[2] on our YouTube channel.

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Links:

[1] <http://championsofunity.org/files/u1/UNITYMissionModelReport9-10.pdf>

[2] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fGI7BYY8_5Y