Dignity for All (DFA): Bullying Prevention Program

Last year, almost 160,000 students skipped school each day to avoid being bullied. Over three million students are bullied each year and face long-term mental and physical health problems as a result, including major depressive disorder.

Dignity for All (DFA) is an innovative digital learning tool to prevent bullying and discrimination in school communities and develop remediation skills among students, teachers and parents to help repair the harm caused by bullying incidents.

DFA is rooted in recent findings in neurobiology and attachment theory to help teachers, students, administrators, and parents understand and identify bullying dynamics, and transform school communities into empathic learning environments where students and teachers treat one another with kindness and respect.

DFA incorporates peer panels to allow students to share their stories and think critically and constructively about school climate. Students form restorative circles to understand perspectives of those involved in bullying and learn peer-to-peer strategies for intervention and remediation.

DFA has been implemented in two schools in NYC and a residential treatment facility in Nashville, TN. A pre-pilot 2018 study conducted in a middle school in Brooklyn, NY found improved skills in empathic listening and restorative enquiry as well as a decrease in incidents of bullying over a period of six weeks. A randomized control study is currently underway in two NYC schools.

Dignity for All (DFA): Bullying Prevention After-School Program

The goal of the Dignity for All (DFA): Bullying Prevention After-School Program is to deliver the core components of DFA. The objective is to ensure that we can impart knowledge, change attitudes, create respectful learning environments, and train students in peer-to-peer intervention and de-escalation strategies.

We have included the components required to empower you and your students to achieve the following critical goals. During this program, students will:

1. Acquire knowledge about bullying behavior, school climate, and restorative practices;
2. Begin to experience a change in attitude to create more empathic relationships at home and in school; and
3. Learn peer-to-peer de-escalation strategies.

Program Components:

On the Reel uses relatable animated videos to expose students to storylines and characters facing real-life issues

Behind the Scenes is designed to help students build empathy and develop peer-to-peer understanding to provide support in bullying situations

Break It Down allows students to evaluate what they have learned through written and discussion-based character analyses

Write to the Point allows students to reflect privately through a series of journaling prompts

Just the Facts provides close-reading strategies and informational texts

We Got Game includes a broad range of engaging, interactive exercises in a gaming format

Program Details

Five Weeks | Eleven (11) 40-Minute Lessons

Step One | Three Lessons

1.   **First Answer: Pre-Learning Assessment**

2.   **Break the Ice: Perceptions of Bullying**
- Students explore their personal beliefs and attitudes regarding bullying behavior
- Students set goals for learning
- Teachers assess student learning / understanding through discussion
- Students create a Wall of Ideas bulletin board, an activity for students to discuss and distinguish specific behaviors that inform the definition of bullying according to Urban Tech's ACID test

3.   **Student Panel**
- Students volunteer to lead a panel discussion, in which the student body discusses their experiences with bullying and practices to develop a safe and supportive learning community

Step Two | Two Lessons

1.   **Learning from Peers**
- Students identify patterns and types of bullying behaviors
- Students learn how school climate contributes to bullying behavior
- Students learn the terms 'target', 'compassion', 'bystander', and 'upstander'
- Students analyze Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech

2.   **Learning by Doing**
- Students learn peer-to-peer de-escalation strategies
- Students practice these de-escalation strategies in intensive role-playing workshops

- Students describe/differentiate bullying behavior from other aggressive behavior

Step Three | Two Lessons

1.   **Experiences with the Cycle of Bullying**
- Students identify how the bullying cycle is perpetuated
- Students examine their school's climate
- Students identify and discuss the roles of the bystander and the upstander
- Students reflect on the social impact of bullying

2.   **Break the Bullying Cycle**
- Students learn why a safe and supportive school environment is important
- Students learn how the supportive role of the active upstander can help break the bullying cycle
- Students learn to become upstanders

Step Four | One Lesson

1.   **Attitudes Toward Bullying**
- Students redefine the roles of the bullying cycle
- Students examine the impact of indifference in the bullying cycle
- Students learn to recognize threatening situations and help their peers create strategies for relieving stress caused by bullying
- Students become aware of and learn to express their own attitudes toward bullying

Step Five | Two Lessons

1.   **Calling Out Cyberbullying**
- Students recognize why cyberbullying is different from other aggressive acts

- Students become aware of the harmful effects of cyber violence
- Students examine safety policies associated with major social media sites
- Students use the ACID test to identify cyberbullying as bullying

2. **Did You Know?**
Students learn additional vocabulary related to cyberbullying

Wrap-Up | One Lesson

1. **Final Answer: Post-Learning Assessment**

The DFA curriculum was developed by Cassandra Bransford, PhD, trauma practitioner, author, and researcher, and Jennifer Bransford-White, a social and emotional learning (SEL) curriculum specialist, with over 20 years of experience developing SEL programs in NYC.

Informed by research findings from leading trauma specialists and researchers (Siegel, 2007; Perry, 2016; van der Kolk, 2014), DFA was launched in 2017 by the National Urban Technology Center, Inc., a NYC non-profit that has been providing culturally sensitive social and emotional learning programs to underserved communities for over 25 years.
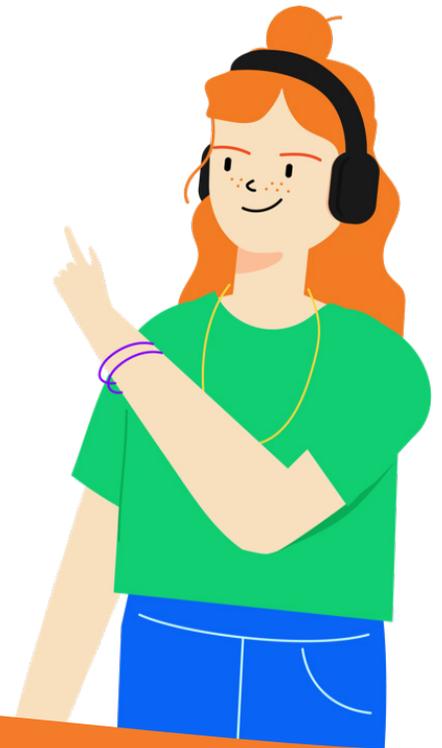
Pricing Plans

Contact us for pricing!