Implementing An All Abilities Alliance To Improve School Culture and Climate



All Abilities Alliance

Facilitating Empowerment of Youth with Disabilities

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Housekeeping

 If you have a question throughout the presentation please type them in the chat box





The Governor's Prevention Partnership

Our Mission

The Governor's Prevention Partnership equips, empowers, and connects organizations, communities and families to prevent substance abuse, underage drinking and violence among youth and promotes positive outcomes for all young people in Connecticut.

Our Vision

Young people across the State of Connecticut will be thriving in their families, schools, communities, and personal lives as a result of prevention strategies, interventions, and public policies that reduce risks and promote positive outcomes.

Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities

- All Abilities Alliance is a Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities Initiative
- The Governor's Prevention Partnership has been funded for the last four years to develop, pilot and expand the All Abilities Alliance model





Learning Objectives/Agenda

- Origins and Historical Context of The Alliance Project
 - All Abilities Alliance Model to provide context
- Demonstrate Variations of the Alliance Model
- All Abilities Alliance Structures
 - Supporting and Sustaining an Alliance



The Alliance In Context

- Part of a broader Improve School Climate
 Initiative
 - Address bullying generally and LGBTQ bullying
 - Area of growth to address bullying and disability
 - Consultant hired to research and explore funding opportunities



Logic Model

Logic Model: All-Abilities Alliance

Problem Statement: Nearly 50% of children in grades 4-12 reported being bullied by other students at school at least once during the previous month. Approximately 30% of students reported bullying and over 70% of students reported witnessing bullying.

Students with a disability are disproportionally the target of bullying at a rate of approximately 70%

All Abilities Alliance Inputs: Training and Technical Assistance for key stakeholders

All-Staff Training: Disability Bias Awareness

Parent Training: Strategies to Address Bullying/ Harassment through IEP or 504 Plan Administrator Training: Legal Obligations to Student with Disabilities

Ongoing Support for Student-led All Abilities Alliance Groups Team Training: Strategies to Address Bullying/ Harassment through IEP or 504 Plan

Short-term Outcome: Increase the capacity of school leaders and stakeholders to implement elements of effective prevention practice.

Establish a school climate/ bullying prevention task force

Increase capacity of school personnel to identify and address bullying Conduct ongoing data analysis to track bullying trends

Increase capacity of students to be effective bystander interveners

Establish and enforce school rules and policies in accordance with state and federal law

Infuse anti-bullying messages into curriculum and school culture

Long-term Outcomes: Improve measures of school climate for students with disabilities as measured by the Comprehensive School Climate Inventory

Respect for Diversity

Safety Rules & Norms

Social and Civic Learning

Connectedness/ Engagement

Physical Surroundings



Research Findings

- Need One: Train Administrators, Teams and Parents in School's Legal Obligations Surrounding Bullying
 - Improve School Climate 3 Part Training Series developed
 - Part 1 Disability Bias
 - Part 2 Overview of Legal Obligations through the IEP/504
 - Part 3 IEP/504 Plan
- Need Two: Create Meaningful Student Involvement
 - Anti-bullying assemblies and training unsuccessful
 - All Abilities Alliance Concept Created



All Abilities Alliance

- Alliance Members Are Students...
 - with and without disabilities led by an adult school advisor
 - with a passion for disability as a social justice issue
- Alliances Enable Students to...
 - learn about disability issues
 - advocate as a small group for change
 - educate the whole school through awareness activities and events



By-Products of Alliances

- Fostering Genuine Friendships
 - The key indicator in mitigating of bullying
- Reduced Disability-Based Bullying
- Improved School Climate



Alliances 2016-2017





Alliances 2017-2018

2015-2016	2017-2018 All Abilities Alliance Sites
Woodstock Academy Woodstock, Connecticut	Manchester Public Schools (MPS) Family Resource Center *Waddell Elementary School
King Phillip Middle School West Hartford, Connecticut Emmett O'Brien Technical School Ansonia, Connecticut CPAC New Haven, Connecticut *Keeney School Manchester, Connecticut *Highland Park School Manchester, Connecticut	*Verplank Elementary School (MPS) *Highland Park School (MPS) *Robertson School (MPS) *Buckley School (MPS) *Martin School (MPS) *Keeney Elementary (MPS) Martin Luther King School Hartford Public Schools Oliver Wolcott Technical High School Torrington Connecticut

Woodstock Academy





Alliance Accomplishments

- State representatives spoke at launch
- Presented to other Alliances
- Award winning video about autism acceptance
- Presented at Building a Great Life Conference
- Worked with Kids as Self-Advocates (KASA)
- Raised money for Alliance and disability related issues



Additional Alliance Accomplishments

- Facilitated Disability Awareness Weeks
- Hosted National speaker who is blind and a 9/11 survivor
- Advocated with administration to remove structural barriers in school
- Student Ambassadors pursued career paths in special education



The Future

- Working collaboratively with Councils, Centers for Independent Living, and other disability groups
 - Participating in Partners in Policy making
 - Testifying at public hearings and speaking at events





Alliance Launch & Sustainability



- Funding
- Materials
- Capacity Building Organization
- Participating Schools



Funding

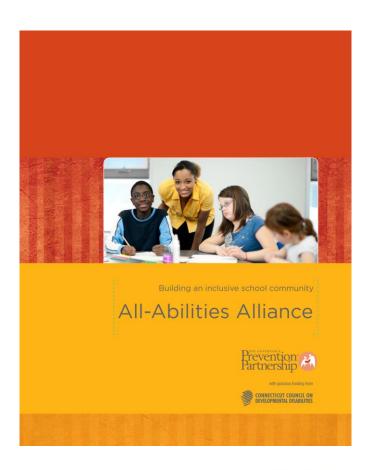
- Funding Supports
 - Councils can be a great funding source
 - Private sector funding





Materials

- All Abilities Alliance Handbook
 - Originally targeted High School
 - Adaptation for Middle and Elementary schools in process





Capacity Building Organization

- Potential Capacity Building Organizations
 - Centers for Independent Living
 - Disability Youth Advocacy Programs
 - Disability organizations unique to the region



The Role of Capacity Building Organizations

- Promote and protect integrity of the model
- Recruit schools to participate
- Engage Schools in Alliance MOUs
- Provide support and technical assistance to Advisors
 - Alliance Cohort calls
 - Site visits
 - Ensuring contract compliance



School Participation

- Signed MOU
- Confirm Adult Advisor
- Participate in bi-monthly cohort calls
- Participate in disability bias awareness training
- Agree to provide basic data
- Initiated in elementary, middle or high schools
- May opt to launch as a pilot program in a school or district

Why Schools Adopt The Alliance Model

- To Improve School Climate for students with disabilities
- Enhance Overall School Climate
- Mitigate bullying and harassment





How The Partnership Can Support Developing Alliances

- Materials
- Technical Assistance
- Training
 - Fee based opportunities
 - Ongoing monthly calls





Questions & Thank You



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