



COURTESY PHOTO

Caryn Hacker-Buechel shares her book about bullying with students Jaques Joseph and David Garay at Mike Davis Elementary School.

Bullying doesn't have to be tolerated

BY CARYN HACKER-BUECHEL

Special to Florida Weekly

The behaviors and effects of bullying are highlighted and depicted weekly on the hit TV show "Glee," symbolized in the cold vibrant red of a slushy tossed in the face or cruel, icy words from a malicious coach. Although the approach is comical, the realities are more invasive and longer lasting than a one-hour television show, and the repercussions cannot be alleviated through song.

Name calling, teasing, rumor spreading, hitting, pushing and callous and unkind texts are the most common forms of bullying.

All mean behaviors cannot, however, be classified as bullying; an occasional misdirected and uncaring act is actually an aspect of normal development and human interaction.

Some degree of conflict helps us find personal boundaries and a sense of our own power. In a healthy environment, it can also help teach us the difference between aggression and kindness or violence and acquiescence.

SEE BULLY, A34 ►

\$7.43 million awarded

Wine festival founders present 2012 grants

SPECIAL TO FLORIDA WEEKLY

Trustees of the Naples Children & Education Foundation, founders of the Naples Winter Wine Festival, presented \$7.43 million in grant checks to charitable organizations that serve Collier County's underprivileged and at-risk children.

During a ceremony March 26 at The Old Collier Golf Club, 24 charities received grant checks totaling \$6.18 million to help fund programs and services over the next 12 months. Grants ranged in size from \$25,000 for St. Matt's Camps for Kids to \$1 million for Boys & Girls Club of Collier County. The grants will fund early learning programs, after-school and summer programs, physical and mental health services and counseling and services for foster children and other at-risk youth.

Four organizations received NCEF grants for the first time: Golisano Children's Museum of Naples for access and special programs (\$200,000); Legal Aid for Collier Kids (\$115,000); the Cal Ripken Senior Foundation (\$100,000) for baseball program support in conjunction with the East Naples Boys & Girls Club and Baltimore summer baseball camp; and Naples Botanical Garden (\$53,000) for a science-based summer school program. Guadalupe Center of Immokalee and Greater Marco Family YMCA received large grants (\$700,000 and \$265,000, respectively) to fund after-school and summer programs. Children's Advocacy Center of Collier County received \$484,000 to fund services for child victims of sexual and physical abuse, neglect or exposure to domestic violence.

In addition, grants totaling \$1.2 million were awarded for three multi-year, strategic initiatives: the Out of School Time program in Immokalee (\$300,000), H.U.G.S. (Health Under

Guided Systems) to address behavioral health issues (\$200,000) and Now You See It (\$750,000) to improve children's vision through screening and providing prescription eyeglasses. Now You See It was the 2012 wine festival's fund-a-need cause.

"During 18 months of planning the wine festival, everyone stayed focused on the children who would benefit," said Bob Clifford, NCEF trustee and 2012 festival co-chair with his wife Joan. "This is the culmination of the generosity of so many chefs, vintners, sponsors, volunteers and patrons," he added. "Together we are bringing magic into children's lives, and it is an honor for NCEF trustees to represent all our supporters as we present grant checks."

Mrs. Clifford, also an NCEF trustee and the newly appointed vice chair of the grant committee, said, "We are able to act quickly to close service gaps and step in with funding. It may sound cliché, yet it's true: the festival is all about the kids."

In addition to those already mentioned, the following round out the list of 2012 NCEF grant recipients: ABE Academy, \$300,000; Catholic Charities, \$119,000; Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida, \$62,000; Early Literacy and Learning Model Program, \$350,000; Friends of Foster Children of Southwest Florida, \$350,000; Fun Tim Early Childhood Academy, \$126,000; Immokalee Child Care Center, \$235,000; Immokalee Housing & Family Services, \$60,000; Naples Botanical Garden, \$53,000; Naples Equestrian Challenge, \$100,000; Redlands Christian Migrant Association, \$315,000; Shelter for Abused Women & Children, \$313,000; Southwest Florida Workforce Development Board, \$340,000; Tutor Corps, \$76,000; YMCA of the Palms, \$440,000; and Youth Haven, \$50,000.

Most social service agencies in Collier



County are dependent on funding from foundation grants, fundraisers and private donations in order to remain viable. For charities that apply for NCEF grants, there is a rigorous vetting process, and those receiving grants are monitored to ensure dollars are effectively administered. NCEF also requires that charities act collaboratively to fill gaps in service.

"We follow a prescriptive grant-making process in that we research needs and award grants based on organizations' abilities to fill those needs," said Bob Scott, NCEF trustee and board chair. "When charities work together, dollars go further and more children benefit."

Through the Naples Winter Wine Festival, NCEF has raised \$107 million since 2001, making it the most successful charity wine auction in the world. Proceeds have impacted more than 150,000 children through 37 charities, and major initiatives funded in collaboration with other private and public entities have included a pediatric dental clinic and an early learning center.

The 2013 Naples Winter Wine Festival will take place Jan. 25-27. For more information, call (888) 837-4919 or visit www.napleswinefestival.com. ■



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