

BRAVE INITIATIVE FOR SAFE SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

The reality of extreme incidents of violence in and around schools has propelled student and school safety to the forefront. Repeatedly, the stories behind these tragic events reveal a history of childhood trauma that went unaddressed. Rather than focus on reactive disciplinary and surveillance measures, **The Joyful Child Foundation offers pro-active solutions to empower students, teachers, parents, and communities to stop the cycle of violence.**

The U.S. Department of Justice has found that millions of children are exposed to violence each year, making them the **number one victims of all violent crime** compared to any other population group.¹ Childhood exposure to violence takes many forms, from witnessing domestic violence to neglect and direct physical abuse. Research has shown that repeated exposure has a profound effect on the developing brain and significantly increases a multitude of risk factors.²

The impact of childhood trauma is evidenced by behaviors in classrooms that detrimentally affect learning and school climate. Teachers find themselves on the frontlines and although they have the greatest opportunity and ability to effectively address these issues, they often have few tools to do so.³

Students and teachers deserve school climates that:

- Give students **realistic skills** for their own safety
- Support student **self-advocacy and resiliency**
- Encourage safe and proactive **interventions** among peers

The Joyful Child's BRAVE Initiative consists of 10 life-skills lessons that empower teachers to provide **age-appropriate personal safety skills for students in grades K-6.**



1 Listenbee, R., Torre, J., Boyle, G., Cooper, S., Deer, S., Durfee, D., Taguba, A. (2012). Report of the Attorney General's national task force on children exposed to violence. Retrieved from <https://www.justice.gov/defendingchildhood/cev-rpt-full.pdf>.

2 ACE Study, Kaiser and CDC, 2009. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/index.html>; Finkelhor, D., Turner, H., Shattuck, A., Hamby, S., & Kracke, K. (2015). Children's Exposure to Violence, Crime, and Abuse: An Update. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

3 Perry, B.D. Traumatized children: How childhood trauma influences brain development. In: The Journal of the California Alliance for the Mentally Ill 11:1, 48-51, 2000.

The JOYFUL CHILD'S BRAVE INITIATIVE

The Joyful Child developed the comprehensive, 10-lesson elementary school Be Brave - Be Safe Curriculum (a.k.a. **BRAVE**) in collaboration with **credentialed teachers** and peer-review by **prevention specialists**. Each 1-hour, evidence-based safety lesson includes life-skills content for students to practice and apply the principles learned.

Grade Level Application

Grades K-2 and 3-6 BRAVE lesson activities advance with age-appropriate practice drills, role-plays and verbal/physical defense strategies to empower students with realistic options and skills to make brave, safe, and healthy choices.

Teacher Flexibility

Teachers appreciate the ease of teaching BRAVE:

- After the introductory lesson, teachers can teach the remaining lessons in any order that complements school activities and learning opportunities.
- Teachers can teach all **BRAVE** Topics over the course of 2 weeks, or divide them into **15-20 minute lessons** throughout the school year.
- **PowerPoints for each lesson by grade** make lesson-planning easier for teachers.



10 BRAVE Curriculum Topics

- Introduction to Personal Safety
- Technology Safety
- Home Safety
- Questionable Behaviors
- Safety to/from Home
- Safety at School
- Safety with Friends
- Safety in Public
- Listening to My Body
- Situations of Conflict
- Defense Strategies

"BRAVE is the most comprehensive and realistic life-skills curricula I have ever seen. Students need this education." - Brave Teacher Training Survey Response, 2016

Common Core, P.E., & Health Alignment

The **BRAVE** Curriculum supplements current Physical Education and Health Curricula, and meets many Common Core Standards.

