

Countdown to 2020 ... I wasn't sure if the message stuck with them.



"I WASN'T SURE IF THE MESSAGE STUCK WITH THEM"

Did you know? Nine out of 10 youth experiencing homelessness have had at least one adverse childhood experience (ACE) in their young lives – an ACE is a history of trauma, abuse, or neglect. According to the CDC, a person with three or more ACEs are more likely to be homeless at a young age. The goal of our school based prevention program, CIRCLE 4 HOPE, is to help identify these leading causes of homelessness and interrupt it by working in relationship with local schools, community partners, and the students and families who are at risk. This year, CIRCLE 4 HOPE has reached more than 160 students.

A week or so ago, a teachable moment presented itself and I ran with it. The two girls were being quite disruptive so I pulled them aside and talked with them about friendship, and how when you are best friends, you should bring out the best in each other. I explained to them how they should encourage each other to be the best people they can be. I then challenged them to truly be “best” friends.

After they walked away, I wasn't sure if the message stuck with them. That is until last week when several students were being disruptive and instead of joining in as they usually did, the two girls sat quietly, working on their individual assignments. It was a dramatically different sight than I was used to seeing. It was a moment that showed there was potential for long-term impact. Can you imagine the difference it would make if these two held onto this definition of “best” friend? This was a turning point for both of them and brought tears to my eyes.

It was a dramatically different sight than the previous several weeks, capturing a very small moment in time but a moment with great potential for long-term, impact. Imagine what a difference it would make if these two young people grabbed onto this definition of “best friend” and held onto it? Both the sight of the two working together, and the realization that this could be a significant turning point for both of them, brought tears to my eyes.

This is what CIRCLE 4 HOPE is about – PREVENTION with real, life changing IMPACT.

– Jayne D., Prevention Specialist