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Around the Schools

Alexian Brothers Parish Services

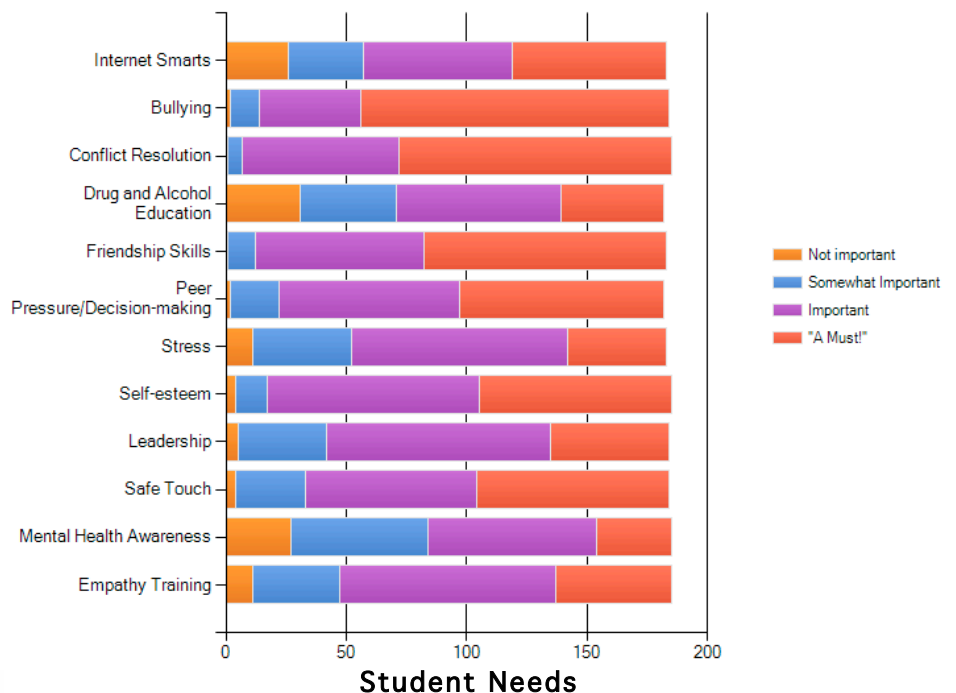
Winter Edition 1

Welcome...

to the first issue of *Around the Schools*, our newsletter to (and about) our school partners! We have much to share with you, from special events to unique programs at your schools to community resources and mental health information. We look forward to your feedback!

SurveyMonkey Says...

"Thank you principals and teachers for filling out the needs assessment at the beginning of the year. The response was very impressive and your feedback has helped every single school counselor and social worker plan programming for this school year. As you can see, each response elicited usable data. The thrust of this survey was asking teachers what your students and parents need to hear. The data indicates a desire from teachers that they'd like parents to build up and equip their children to use technology more effectively and partner with teachers in "bully intervention." The teachers also see a strong need in the students' abilities to navigate conflict and appropriately respond to bullying (see chart). PSSS has crunched and processed this data and is intentionally trying to develop programs to meet these needs. Thank you again for this feedback, and please continue to partner with us. We want to continually assess the felt needs of the community we serve."



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A Different Approach to Bullying Prevention



COMPASSION

We manifest God's presence in the world by a concerned approach and competent care of those we serve.

Several members of the PSSS staff worked throughout the summer to create a more relevant and engaging curriculum to address bullying in schools. Not only will it address your bullying concerns as a school community, we have created this curriculum to meet all Social and Emotional Standards that the Illinois State Legislator has mandated for all public schools in the state.

Culture of Compassion is a different type of bullying program. In fact, we don't even use the word bully! Instead, we have followed the research and what good psychology tells us of the human condition and community living. Research indicates that most "anti-bully" programming is falling woefully short in decreasing incidences of bullying. Results are negligible at best and in some cases, bullying was reported to increase. Good psychology tells us that people treat themselves and their community better when the individual is engaged in their own community. Members of the community dictate what the culture of the community will be. Students that care about their school community will invest in making their school culture better. *Culture of Compassion* exists to diminish bullying incidences by increasing the student's ownership of the culture of their school.

Our curriculum is flexible and can be customized to meet the specific needs of your school. Also included are a parent night presentation and a faculty presentation. Please contact Trevor Simpson at trevor.simpson@alexian.net or Cheryl Hazek at cheryl.hazek@alexian.net if you are interested in hearing more about this program.

Race to Nowhere Follow-up

On Wednesday, October 26, more than 300 parents, teachers, principals and mental health professionals gathered in St. Charles to view the thought-provoking documentary entitled *Race to Nowhere*, hosted by Alexian Brothers Parish Services. An excellent panel – psychologist Dr. Patrick McGrath, principal Dr. Mary Kelly, Fr. Jim Murphy, educator George Kazlusky and students Charlotte Ronson and Rachel Gross – provided insight and understanding into this sobering film. The topic: the high price our kids pay for the pressure to perform or “succeed” in today's over-scheduled culture/schools.

If you were there, you surely were impacted. Check out the *Race to Nowhere* website at www.racetonowhere.org for more showings in your area.

Look out for the follow-up group discussion entitled:

“Turning Parenting from a Race to Nowhere to a Race to Somewhere”.

PURPOSEFUL PARTNERSHIP:

NEEDS + RESOURCES = PROGRAM

Institutions often grow old, tired and stale as they struggle to adjust to the growing changes of the world around them. They tend to neglect assessing accurately how the needs of the people they serve change. Or, they don't recognize how their resources have changed. Therefore, they continue to program without adjusting.

Unlike institutions, organisms adjust. They grow and evolve and ideally, become more efficient. Organisms grow because they consistently assess the needs of the people they serve as well as the resources available.

PSSS brings this theory to life in how we partner with schools. Each school is different. Each has different needs, different resources. Therefore, each school program looks different.

The practice of serving as an organism rather than an institution will serve our school communities more effectively as we provide proactive and relevant programs that meet students and parents where they are at.

As you can see from the numbers on the box below, Parochial School Support Services has been actively engaged in the academic, social and emotional needs of the students at your school this fall! Thank you for the privilege to walk with your parents, faculty, administration and students.

Since 1999, our School Social Workers, School Counselors and Resource Teachers have been committed to providing each school with relevant, thoughtful and powerful classroom presentations. Further, we intentionally meet the needs of individual students who may be struggling through a wide variety of social and emotional issues. We work as advocates for all of the stakeholders involved in your school. It is our hope that parents, teachers and students will recognize that additional layers of support exist with us.

We are a diverse crew at PSSS that is equally dedicated to the ministry of serving students and families in schools. Consult with your PSSS worker to see where they envision your program going! We look forward to partnering with you in the year ahead! -- Trevor Simpson, ABPS School-Based Manager

BY THE NUMBERS FROM October 2011

18 Different Schools, 31 Days of Service

Individual Student Meetings	411
Teacher Assist Team Meetings	55
Family Meetings	158
Faculty Consultations	302
Principal Consultations	148
Classroom Presentations	173
Student Meeting Attendance	3960

Resources

*Alexian Brothers Parish Services has numerous speakers who are available to talk on a variety of topics of interest to parents, students and staff. Kathy Gudonis recently spoke on **Birth Order** at Church of the Holy Spirit in Schaumburg. Rita Rippentrop spoke on **stress** at Immaculate Conception Women's group, Michelle Berkos spoke on **Ending the Homework Hassle** at Holy Family in Bensenville, and Michele Schwarz on **anxiety** with Stephens Ministry from Our Saviour's Lutheran Church in Arlington Heights. Give us a call for ideas!*

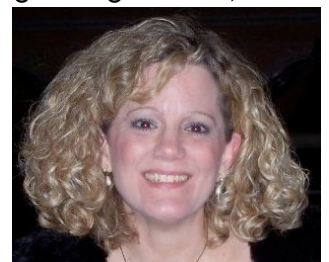


Staff Spotlight...

Cindy Belliveau is a LCSW (Licensed Clinical Social Worker) who earned both her Bachelor of Psychology and Master of Social Work Degrees from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

While in Champaign Cindy began working in Child Welfare, and she worked with children who were in residential and family foster care settings for 10 years. She then began working as a therapist in community settings with individuals and families. Cindy joined the Alexian Brothers Parish Services Program as a resource therapist in 2003. This is Cindy's fourth year as a School Social Worker with Parish Services, and she is currently working at Sacred Heart School in Lombard, St. Isaac Jogues School in Hinsdale, and St. Andrew School in Romeoville. She also coordinates our Rainbows support group program for children.

Cindy has been married for 14 years and has two beautiful daughters. She enjoys scrapbooking, bike riding, swimming, traveling and spending time with her wonderful husband and girls. Cindy's favorite part of being a School Social Worker is meeting with students to help them through tough times, and consulting with parents and teachers to help support and assist the students.



Did you know???

- ABPS facilitates the **Rainbows** support program for children dealing with loss through divorce at three of our partner sites: St. Petronille in Glen Ellyn, St. Anne's in Barrington and Holy Family in Inverness.
- ABPS has an **art therapist** on staff. Ask about Mary Dew and her special groups.
- ABPS plans and facilitates **retreats**. For staff, for students, for parents.
- ABPS has a full staff of **counselors** who see clients individually in church settings around the suburbs.
- Alexian Brothers has one of the foremost **School Refusal/School Anxiety** programs in the country.

Check It Out!

www.CommonSenseMedia.org

www.StopBullying.gov

www.CyberSmartCurriculum.org

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HIS WORD...

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." -Jeremiah 29:11