

# GIVING OPPORTUNITY

## How you can help

### CHOOSE PEACE/STOP VIOLENCE

A county-wide initiative focusing on bullying and violence prevention, social justice awareness and youth leadership development.



Choose Peace/Stop Violence, commonly referred to as "Choose Peace," is a comprehensive social norms initiative aimed to educate, engage and empower youth to take action for the purpose of preventing bullying, youth violence, fostering social justice awareness, creating safe and violence-free environments and improving school climate using the Positive Community Norms and Social Norms model. The initiative promotes peace, positive change, social emotional learning competencies. In addition, it fosters resilience and how to manage life challenges in order to achieve academic success.

The core pillar of Choose Peace is the Agents of Change groups. The Agents of Change (AOC) groups are formed under the leadership of students and supervised by a school-based facilitator. AOC members follow an activities curriculum during the school year that aligns with Broward County Public Schools prevention/awareness days. Members develop pro-social, organizational, communication and leadership skills through community service, participation as elected officers and leading school-wide activities and awareness campaigns. AOC groups are advocates in raising awareness about violence, bullying behavior, social justice and promoting a positive school culture.

#### Why CHOOSE PEACE?



In response to several incidents of youth-on-youth violence that took place in Broward County in 2009, the community came together and created the Choose Peace initiative. The initiative was followed by a "Planting the Seeds of Peace" campaign to promote peaceful schools. Overtime, Choose Peace evolved and implemented a school-based program, Agents of Change, targeting schools that experience increased violence and bullying-related incidents. Since its

inception, Agents of Change has contributed to the transformation of more peaceful and safer school environments. In fact, during the 2018-2019 school year, 15 AOC schools were compared to 15 compatible schools without the program. The data reflected that schools without Choose Peace experienced an increase of 67% for middle schools and 58% for high schools in violence and bullying-related incidents.

#### THEIR OWN WORDS...

*"There's more peace at our school when we all come together for the projects."*

*"It is very helpful, especially if you are a student that feels lonely, and that needs someone to reach out to."*

*"It has helped new students who are coming from other schools or a different country feel safe and welcome, many new students may have a hard time coping with a new environment and may get bullied because of that but the Choose Peace/Stop Violence Agents of Change at my school helps to motivate those students and make them welcome and secure"*

*"The Choose Peace Agents of Change group has made students aware of the factors contributing to the harmful words or acts they say to one another. Now students at my school are more respectful to our teachers and peers due to this group."*

*"I've learned different techniques with Choose Peace such as coping mechanisms, how to speak about awareness and many others."*



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### How We Are Changing Lives

- There was a 16.5% decrease in bullying and violence-related incidents in all 15 *Agents of Change* schools from the 2018-2019 school year to the 2019-2020 school year.
- During the 2020-2021 school year, 400+ *Agents of Change* students impacted 24,000 of their peers through their prevention/awareness campaign efforts.
- On a yearly basis, over 5,000 educational materials on bullying, cyber-bullying and youth violence prevention for parents and families are distributed at schools and community events.
- To date, 58 Peace Poles have been planted in schools and community organizations through our Broward Peace Pole Project.
- Over 200 schools and community organizations participate in Choose Peace Week annually.

### HOW YOU CAN HELP

Additional dollars are needed to expand the *Agents of Change* to schools and out-of-school programs throughout Broward County.

#### Amount Resource (per school/organization)

<b>\$75</b>	<i>Choose Peace School Banner</i>
<b>\$150</b>	<i>Peace Pole</i>
<b>\$200</b>	<i>Incentives/Prizes</i>
<b>\$300</b>	<i>Peace Poster Printing</i>
<b>\$500</b>	<i>School-Based Facilitator Stipend (10 months)</i>
<b>\$600</b>	<i>Agents of Change Student Summit</i>
<b>\$700</b>	<i>Program Curriculum</i>
<b>\$800</b>	<i>Supplies for School-Wide Awareness Campaigns &amp; Activities</i>
<b>\$1,200</b>	<i>Promotional Materials</i>

### Join Others in Supporting Choose Peace/Stop Violence (Funders):

*School Board of Broward County*  
*Children's Services Council of Broward County*

### Community Priorities

**United Way of Broward County fights for the Health, Education and Financial Prosperity of EVERY person in our community.**

**HEALTH:** Ensuring people have the opportunity to achieve optimal health

**EDUCATION:** Helping people achieve their greatest potential through learning and leadership programs

**FINANCIAL PROSPERITY:** Empowering people to earn, keep and grow assets