

YOUTH


VOICE

PROJECT

STUDENT INSIGHTS INTO BULLYING AND PEER MISTREATMENT

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Two eyes work better than one.



Reduce
mistreatment
by peers

Reduce the
harm that
mistreatment
can do

Results from the Youth Voice Project- Charisse Nixon, Ph.D. & Stan Davis

Quick snapshot

- Youth in grades 5-12 in **31 US schools**
- **N = 13,177 students**
- **Ethnicity: 50% white**
Gender: 49% female
- **AT RISK KIDS – *Frequently* victimized students (approximately 25%) N = 2929**
- **About half of these students report that they were moderately, severely, or very severely affected.**



The focus of our research:



WHAT LEADS TO MORE POSITIVE OUTCOMES?

youthvoiceproject.com

Self strategies

“Don’t act like a victim” - most used; least effective

Told them to stop

Told them how I felt

Pretended it didn’t bother me

Walked away

“Seek support”- less often used, more effective

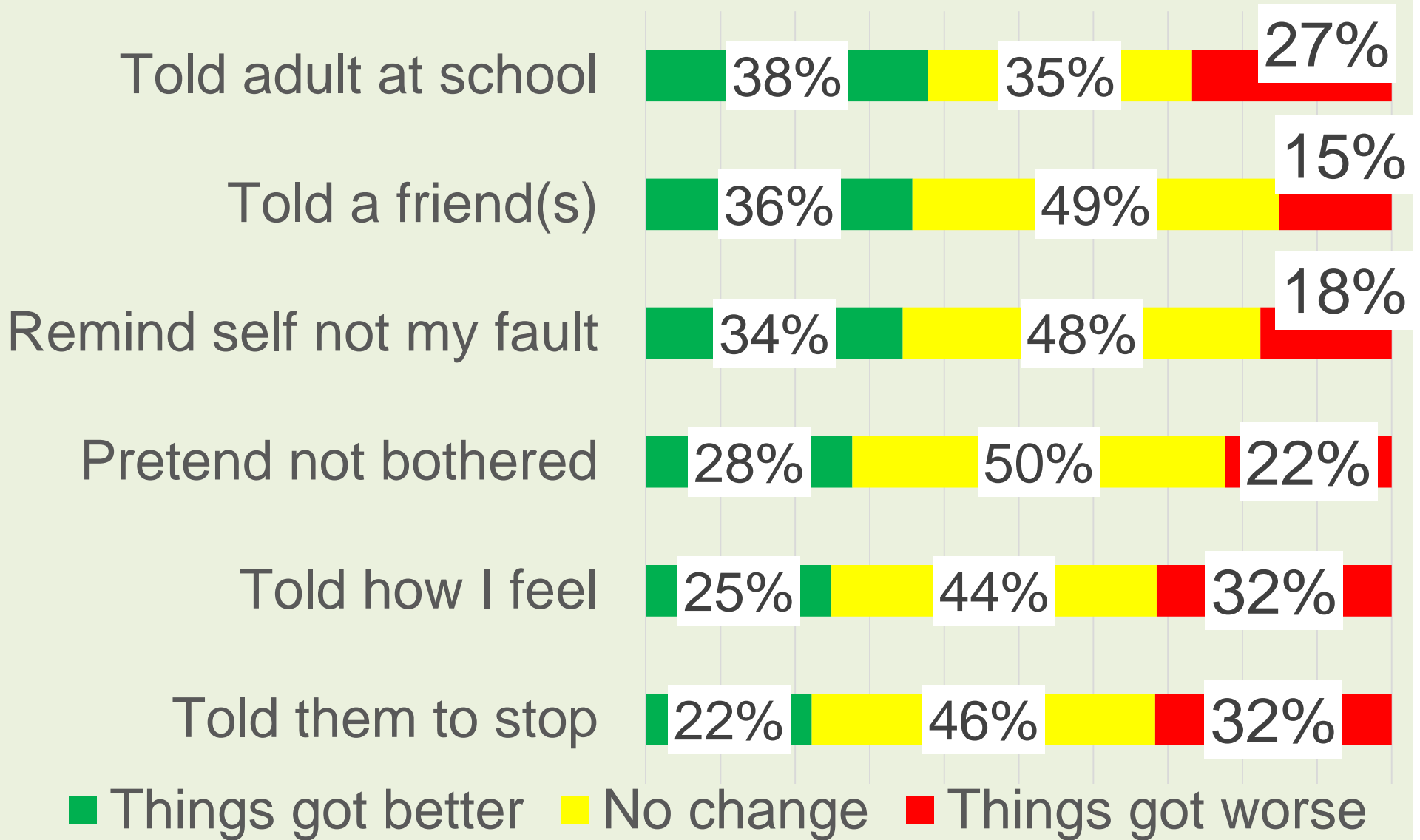
Told adult at school (only 33% of youth did this)

Told friend; Told adult at home

“Don’t think like a victim”- less often used, quite effective above grade 5.

Told myself the behavior was their fault, not caused by anything about me.

Self actions YVP



Peer strategies

Confrontation by bystanding peers

- **least effective** of positive strategies

Peers told mistreaters to stop angrily or calmly

Included me and spent time with me at school

- **most helpful actions overall**

Walked or spent time with me at school

Talked to me at school to encourage me

Gave me advice (hope)

Helped me get away; made a distraction

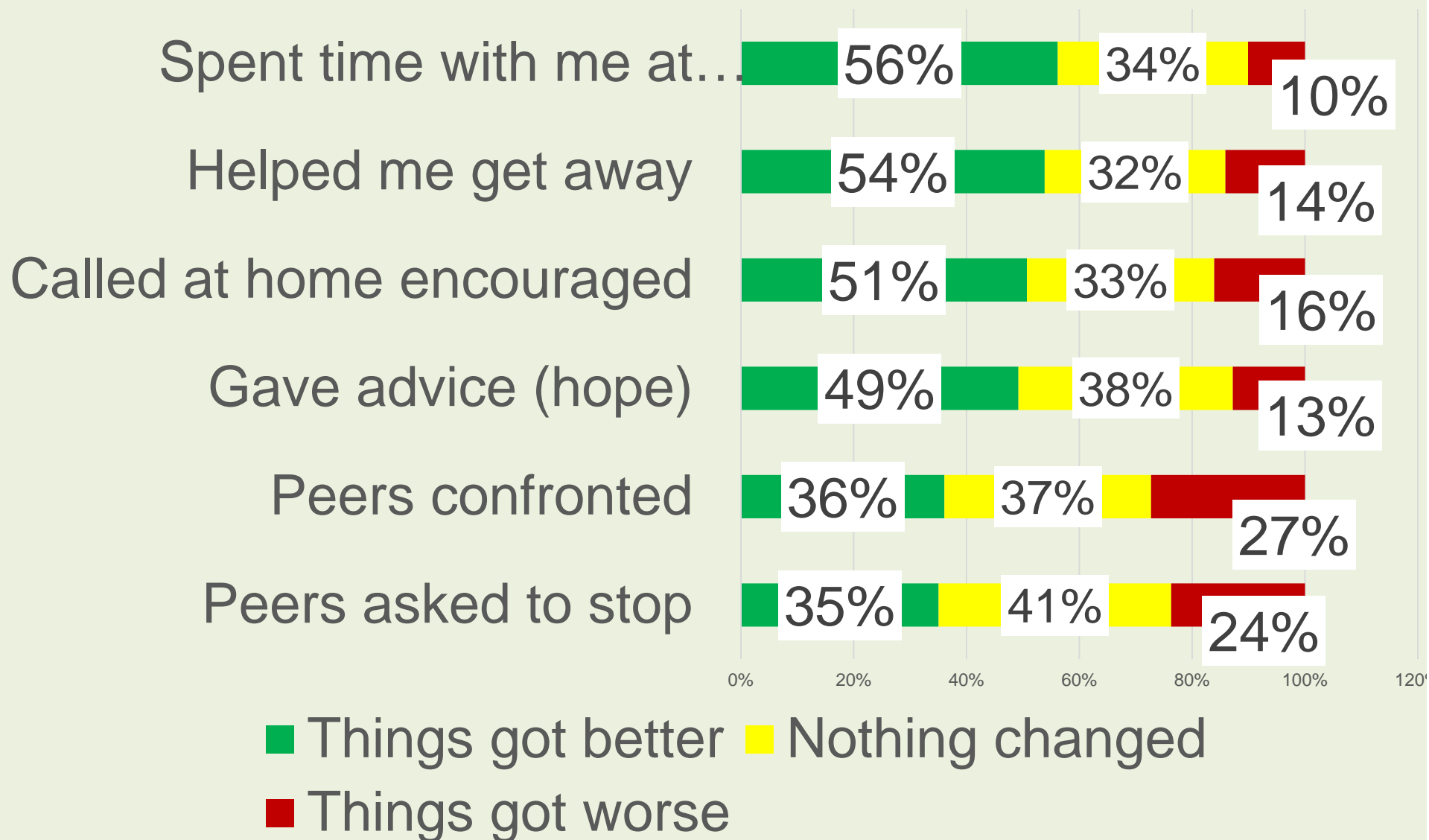
Helped me tell adults

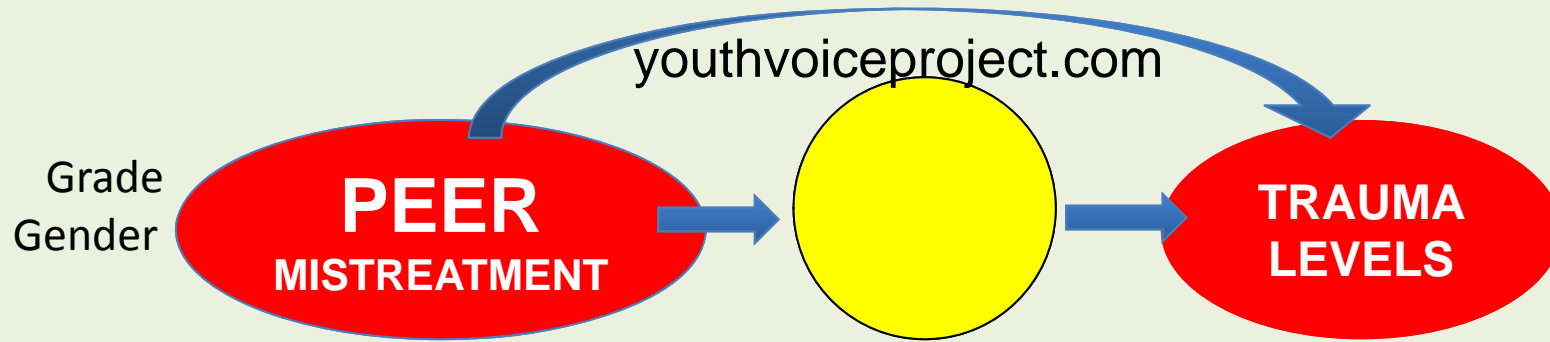
Encouraged me **Strong positive effects**

Talked to me at school to encourage me

Called me at home to encourage me

Effects of peer actions





- ❖ Feel part of the school → Lower trauma grades 5-12
- ❖ Feel valued and respected → Lower trauma
- ❖ Feel close to adult at school → grades 9-12

Adult strategies

“You should have...” least likely to have positive effects

Told me it wouldn't happen if I acted differently

Told me to stop tattling

(most harmful adult action)

“Connection, support and reframing”- most helpful

Listened to me

Encouraged me

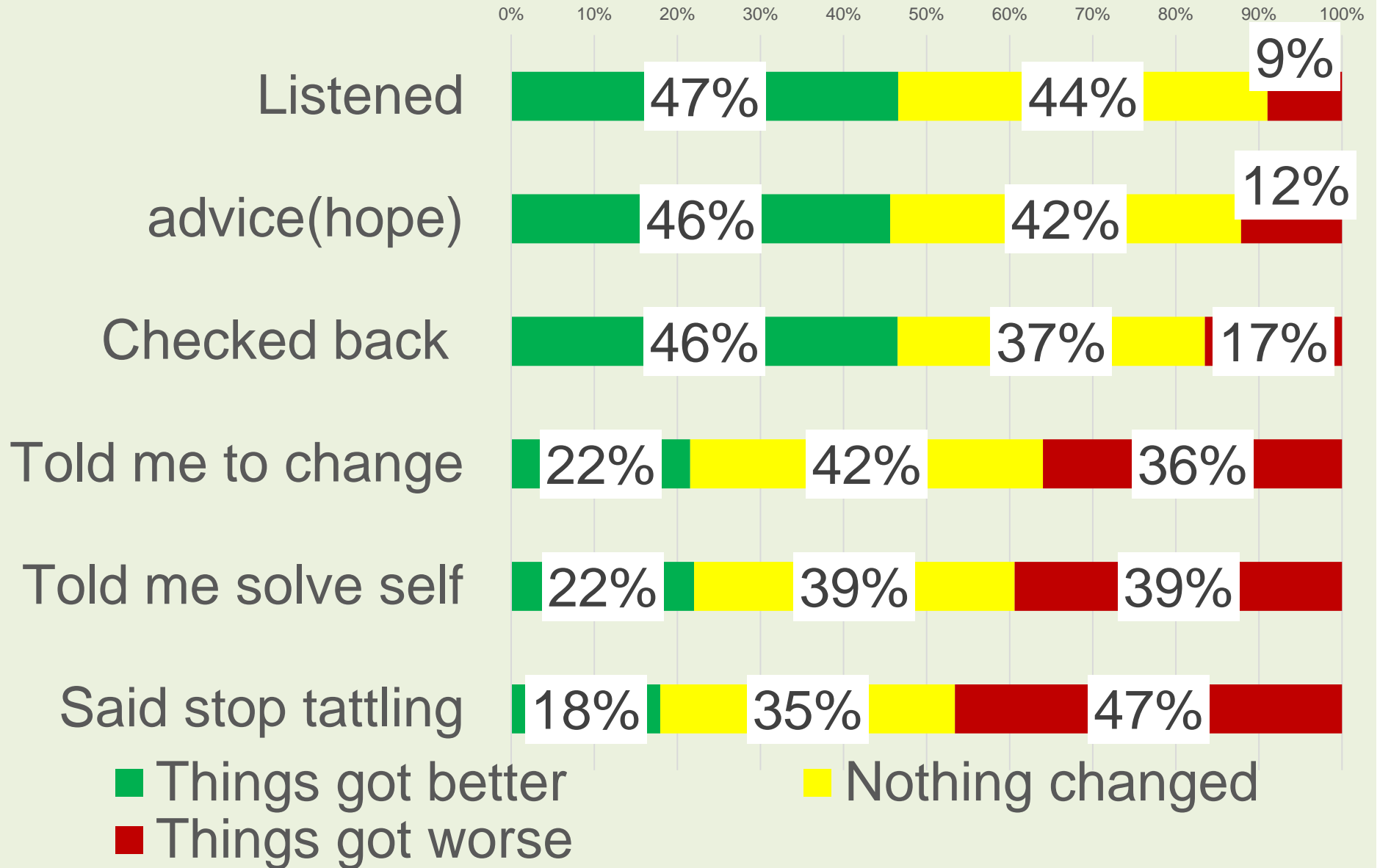
Checked back with me over time to make sure I was OK

“Direct intervention”- Effects varied widely from school to school. **It matters how we do these.**

Supervision

Punishment/consequences

ADULT ACTIONS YVP



Recommendations

- Gather data about belonging, feeling valued, and connection with adults. Affirm and continue successful practices and add strategies as needed.
- Reduce or eliminate “stand up for yourself,” “pretend it doesn’t bother you,” and – especially – “don’t tattle” messages in bullying prevention.
- Build resiliency for all through connectedness and cognitive skill-development.
- Empower and encourage peers to include and support rather than focusing on confrontation by peers.
- Examine the effectiveness of “telling adults” and use youth input to improve outcomes of this action. Improve effectiveness of actions to reduce negative behavior.