



IPride Program Promotes Self-Esteem & Anti-Bullying Tools for Students

Laura E. Gray

Laura Gray is a proud mom of three sons, three dogs; a published author & certified personal trainer. A graduate of Bowling Green State University with a degree in Communications, she lives by the mantra “who can I help today?”

IPride is dedicated to the honor and memory of her dear mother Elaine.



Today’s students face incessant bullying due to the prevalence of technology and social media in our everyday lives. The most common types of bullying are verbal and social with each of these actions creating profound negative energy in an already increasingly stressful school environment.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), bullying affects 20% of high school students and cyberbullying affects 16% of high school students. Surveys compiled by the CDC also show that 33% of students ages 12-18 who reported bullying at school and 27% of students ages 12-18 who reported cyberbullying indicated that they were bullied at least once or twice a month. Middle schools reported the highest rate of bullying (25%), at least once a week. It is important to note that bullying is difficult to study and document because of underreporting and an overall fear of retaliation.

practice of mindfulness, which relieves stress and fosters the ability to be more conscious and present.

During IPride Write, students will learn to confidently and effectively express and articulate their ideas and will focus on listening and respecting diverse ways of thinking.

At the core of IPride Fit is embracing self-respect and improving self-esteem with regard to our bodies. In this unique approach, students will participate in stretching, yoga and learn basic exercises using canned goods as weights. These non-perishables are donated to a local food pantry upon class completion.

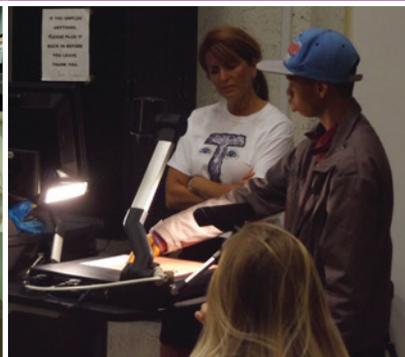


T e s t i m o n i a l s

“IPride’s founder, Laura Gray, spent the morning at Roxboro with our 2nd graders. Our kiddos spent time learning to relax, breathe, strike poses, and feel confident in who they are. Laura was terrific with the children—patient, funny, and positive. We look forward to having her come back next year!” ~ Melissa G. at Roxboro Elementary

“The IPride program was excellent this summer at the East Cleveland Boys & Girls Club. The kids really loved doing the different activities, especially the exercise portion. The kids are still talking about how much fun they had doing yoga. By using two different components, it allowed children to see all of the different options they have for expression. This program is something that I would like to see around for a long time!” ~ Danielle W. at East Cleveland Boys & Girls Club

“Thank YOU so much! The kids really enjoyed it and were talking about it when they got back to their classrooms.” ~ T. Armelli, Principal, All Saints School of St. John Vianney



Growing up in the greater Cleveland area, I have fond memories of school days, snow angels, and summer sunshine. I also recall, however, the numerous occasions a group of boys threw rocks at me while I walked home from school and the hurtful name calling with respect to my body. Based on these and other experiences from my childhood, and as an adult professional, a mother, and a mentor I saw the immense need our community had for a program like IPride.

IPride is a self-esteem building program for youth with an emphasis on mindfulness, creative thought, expression, and basic physical fitness. Self-esteem is defined as *confidence in one’s own worth or abilities*. Ironically, many of the bullies have extremely low self-esteem. The negative action they project onto others results in possible low self-esteem of their victims, hence creating an extremely vicious cycle. The goal of IPride is to break this pattern of behavior.

IPride is comprised of 2 sessions: IPride Write and IPride Fit. Each session begins with simple breathing techniques aligned with the



Laura Gray

Founder/Survivor/Executive Director

E-mail: lgray@ipride.net

For additional information on IPride please visit www.ipride.net.