

No Putdowns

No Putdowns, originally based in Syracuse, New York, was developed as a response to rising school violence and racial and ethnic intolerance. It has three goals:

1. to create a school and home environment that recognizes the destructive effects of putdowns
2. to reject the use of putdowns in all interpersonal interactions
3. to replace putdowns with healthy communication skills

The 10-week curriculum (for grades K-2, 3-5 and 6-8), developed by classroom teachers, uses videos, posters, contests, role-playing, and other activities to achieve these goals. The curriculum is reinforced throughout the school year.

One participating parent commented: "I see a noticeable difference in how much my child enjoys school." Other parents report that family members now catch each other ("Mom, that's a put-down!") when they slip.

Besides violence prevention, this comprehensive curriculum addresses character development, substance abuse prevention and life-skill building. Each grade level has fifty developmentally appropriate activities. Upon completion of the core set of lessons, students will be able to recognize and understand the effects of putdowns on themselves and others, demonstrate strategies for calming down, recognize and express appreciation, encouragement, and compliments and much more. A program guide for staff support is also included.