

ANNUAL REPORT

2019-2020



Robinson
Community
Learning
Center



TCS
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Take Ten

Take Ten is a violence prevention/conflict resolution curriculum with a school-based program that focuses on teaching skills to handle conflict in a peaceful way. Take Ten provides participants with the tools to “Talk it Out, Walk it Out, or Wait it Out” as alternatives to violence, and builds their capacity to make better, more positive choices. The Take Ten curriculum was developed at the University of Notre Dame and the program is based at the Robinson Community Learning Center. Take Ten has been serving the South Bend community for more than 20 years.

Vision Statement

Youth, when faced with conflict, will use the skills acquired from Take Ten to successfully resolve conflict nonviolently.

Take Ten Team

Ellen Kyes, Take Ten Director
Jennifer Knapp Beudert, Robinson Community Learning Center Manager
Marley Guy, Take Ten Deputy Director/
AmeriCorps Member
Denise Penrod, Take Ten Deputy Director/
AmeriCorps Member

Hale Crumley, AmeriCorps Member
Samuel Kennedy, AmeriCorps Member
Madi Kuehl, AmeriCorps Member
Michael Williams, Holy Cross College Intern
Mason Love, Bethel University Intern

Founding Quote

“MANY WHO LIVE WITH VIOLENCE DAY IN AND DAY OUT ASSUME THAT IT IS AN INTRINSIC PART OF THE HUMAN CONDITION. BUT THIS IS NOT SO. VIOLENCE CAN BE PREVENTED.”

Nelson Mandela

TALK IT OUT. WALK IT OUT. WAIT IT OUT.

Greetings, Friends of Take Ten!

As we have been working on the Take Ten annual report for 2019-2020, the phrase that keeps coming into my mind is a quote from an ancient Greek philosopher, Heraclitus: "In life, the only constant is change." While that is always the case, 2019 and 2020 have been rife with change here in the South Bend community.

The South Bend schools are our primary partner in teaching conflict resolution skills to school-age youth, and those schools have been undergoing changes at almost every level and area in an effort to make significant, district-wide improvements. Some of the changes took root in 2018 and grew into fruition in 2019. Other changes continued to rapidly evolve in 2019. The Take Ten Team remained flexible and took the schools' changes in stride. When partner schools changed administrators or methods of instruction, or made adjustments to their start and dismissal times, we worked with the new situations and provided our volunteers at their buildings on days and times that met their new set of needs. We got this, right? Right!

Then 2020 came along. The year started as usual with Take Ten continuing at many partner schools and starting at a few new schools. February turned to March, Spring Break brought us some time off and we were excited to come back after break and enjoy the rest of the school year with "our kiddos." Then something life-changing came along - surely you heard about it - the coronavirus set all our plans on their heads. It felt as if the entire world had pushed the pause button.

Take Ten, like so many other enrichment programs, suddenly stopped serving in schools and non-profit agencies and transitioned to distance-learning. We began figuring out how to teach conflict resolution skills remotely. A few truths that we encountered along the way:

- Our volunteers REALLY missed teaching Take Ten and seeing "their" kids each week!
- We REALLY missed our volunteers and kiddos and teachers and administrators.
- Conflict tends to increase when people are cooped up together, so we became all the more relevant.
- Virtual meetings and events aren't perfect, but help in many ways.
- The stress of sudden change manifests itself quite differently in different people.
- Focusing on your values helps. Trading perspectives with others helps A LOT.
- We CAN find ways to work with each other, support each other, and be there for each other, whether six feet or six miles or six states away.
- Crisis mode is what you make it!

During the summer, we developed and began implementing new tracks in our curriculum (sports and online/social media issues). We are planning new ways to mentor the youth who are hardest to reach by creating opportunities for the formerly incarcerated at the same time through a new "Take Heart" initiative. We are developing increased diversity in our chapter lessons by incorporating a broader selection of literature. We are improving our teaching methods and creating videos of lessons for use in our new normal of online learning. We are growing, changing, and keeping the best of the old while learning to incorporate the new.

I wish you well. I wish you hope. I wish you the ability to learn the best Take Ten has to offer in lessons of peaceful coexistence and seeing the world from another's point of view. Stay tuned, for our best is always yet to come.

Take care and Take Ten,
Ellen

Ellen G. Kyes, J.D.
Take Ten Director



TAKE TEN IN
OUR SCHOOLS

SPOTLIGHT ON

RILEY HIGH SCHOOL

Riley High School, nicknamed “The Pride of the South Side,” serves the majority of the south side of South Bend and currently enrolls 1,055 students. Riley has participated in the Take Ten program for the past several years.

Over the course of the school year, Take Ten volunteers worked with several students from Riley High School’s after school program. Volunteers taught conflict resolution skills and invited students to engage with topics such as violence, justice, and communication through debates, discussion, and short skits. Looking back on the year, volunteers and students remember the bioethics debate as a personal favorite. This debate is popular in many high schools as it requires students to consider and defend their personal values in deciding which

one of seven patients will receive a life-saving liver transplant.

Riley generously allowed Take Ten volunteers and students to make use of their library, a large space that facilitated group discussions. Additionally, the faculty worked hard to support the Take Ten program. Charan Richards was the sponsor for the Take Ten program at Riley. Each week, she encouraged new students to participate in Take Ten, allowing the program to grow throughout the year.

As the group of students participating in the Take Ten program at Riley is relatively small, the volunteers were able to form

close relationships with the students. Rich Meyer, a freshman from Holy Cross College, was one of the volunteers at Riley. Reflecting on his experiences, he shared that he enjoyed teaching at Riley because gave him the opportunity to engage with perspectives different than his own and form relationships with the students and faculty. Take Ten is proud and grateful to be serving at Riley High School.

SPOTLIGHT ON

TAKE TEN SPONSOR

ELDA NAVARRO



Elda Navarro is the Children's Advocate at the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA). The mission of the YWCA is, "dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all." Elda began working at the YWCA in 2017 as a Children's Activity Aide in the child care room, but after completing her Bachelor's Degree in 2019 she began her role as Children's Advocate. As a Children's Advocate, Elda is also responsible for coordinating and sponsoring Take Ten for the YWCA in South Bend. Over the past several years, Take Ten has been providing weekly lessons to the school-age children at the YWCA. Elda Navarro has been present and deeply involved in each Take Ten session that has been hosted at the YWCA.

Elda comments this about the impact of Take Ten at the YWCA:

"I am thankful that the children at the YWCA, some who have been exposed to domestic violence and violence in other forms, are able to learn about ways to confront problems in a non-violent and healthy ways. Children are able to learn skills to communicate their feelings and resolve conflict. The children can unlearn some negative behaviors that they might've learned from their parents or other adults."

It is the hope that Take Ten continues to offer sessions to the children at the YWCA, and to have two separate sessions for both the younger and older students.

Elda is thankful for the Take Ten volunteers and

the positive impact they have on the children at the YWCA through their dedication and time spent building relationships with the kids.



AmeriCorps and Take Ten

AmeriCorps programs work to build and contribute to the vitalization of local communities and cities all around the United States. Full-time AmeriCorps members offer a year of service, receiving a modest living allowance and education award in return for service to their community and its constituents. The Robinson Community Learning Center utilizes a handful of AmeriCorps members each year to serve an average of 8,000 participants. Each year, Take Ten has a team of six AmeriCorps members. These members serve the program by developing curriculum, recruiting, observing and teaching Take Ten classes, and coordinating its volunteers. With the help of AmeriCorps members serving programs like Take Ten, we are able to reach even more students and make an even bigger difference, with hope of building a more peaceful community through nonviolent communication.

TAKE TEN AMERICORPS MEMBERS HAVE
PROVIDED MORE THAN 28,000 HOURS OF SERVICE
TO THE SOUTH BEND COMMUNITY SINCE 2011.

SPOTLIGHT ON MARLEY GUY



Marley Guy serves as one of the Deputy Directors for Take Ten and a full-time AmeriCorps member. She graduated from Albion College in 2018 with a double-major in English and Environmental Studies. Following graduation, Marley spent a year in the outdoor education field working with youth, which led her to apply for this position.

For Marley, working with her students was one of the best parts about Take Ten. She says this about teaching Take Ten: “Visiting those classrooms and seeing those kids was the highlight of my day, every day. The discussions we have, the activities we lead, enable us to make those connections and to foster real relationships. The most important thing that we want the kids to take away from this program is not merely new vocabulary or definitions of terms, but the understanding that they have so many people in their lives that care about them and want them to succeed.”

Marley is unsure what lies ahead after her AmeriCorps year, but she knows she wants it to involve teaching youth or restoring the environment, preferably both. She also knows the things she has learned through her time with Take Ten will carry on with her, and will help her be successful in her next steps.

SPOTLIGHT ON DENISE PENROD



Denise Penrod also serves as a full-time AmeriCorps member and Deputy Director for Take Ten. She studied Intercultural Studies and Economics at Bethel University, where she graduated in 2019. Her interests have always included community engagement and an appreciation for cultural diversity. She joined the Take Ten team in hopes of contributing to creating a more peaceful South Bend community, which she has grown to love in the past five years that she has lived here.

Throughout her service as an AmeriCorps member, Denise has inspired her students by bringing her best every day and encouraging others to do the same. Reflecting on her service, Denise stated, “One of my favorite things is when kids answered honestly how they would handle conflict instead of the answer they think we want to hear because it shows how much trust we’ve built with them and it’s real. We want to teach kids to be the most authentic versions of themselves and seeing it in action is priceless.”

Following her service, Denise plans to continue with community engagement by teaching English as a second language to newly arriving immigrants in the U.S. She is confident that the experiences and skills that she learned from teaching Take Ten will allow her to become a better instructor and person.

Take Ten Volunteers

Take Ten runs on its volunteers! During 2019-2020, more than 92 volunteers taught the Take Ten curriculum at 12 schools and 7 agencies to 1,574 children and adults! These volunteers came from the University of Notre Dame, Saint Mary's College, Holy Cross College, IUSB, Ivy Tech, and Bethel University, and many received college credit for the service.



SPOTLIGHT

ON ALENA

COLEMAN

Alena is a first-year Take Ten volunteer, serving both fall and spring semesters. She studies at the University of Notre Dame with a double major in English and Spanish and a minor in Education, Schooling and Society. Throughout the past year, Alena has served at three different site placements, including the Notre Dame Center for Civic Innovation (NDCCI), formerly known as the NDCAC), Lincoln Elementary and Nuner Elementary. Alena volunteered for the program because of her interest in social justice and youth development and feels she has learned much from her experience, stating:

“The semester as a whole was really

challenging. Some of my students already had existing conflicts, and it definitely wasn't the magical, ideal classroom in which everyone is always listening, enjoying the activity, and getting along. On the last day of my fall service, though, the challenge was leaving. I had seen the students grow in small, but profound, ways, and it was hard saying goodbye!”

As for future plans, Alena is entertaining the idea of graduate school to study, “either English, Education or both!” On the subject, Alena adds:

“While my plans were the same before I started volunteering with Take Ten, my

experience here has shown me that, whatever I do in life, it needs to be rooted in social justice. Take Ten's goal of promoting nonviolence really resonates with me, and now that I've seen it in action, there's no going back. I know that in the future I want to continue working toward the same end: a more just, equitable, and peaceful world.”

We are grateful for Alena's contribution to the Take Ten team and we are excited to see what the future holds for her!

TAKE TEN IN
THE COMMUNITY

SPOTLIGHT

ON EL CAMPITO



Take Ten Agency Sites
2019-2020

Agencies Serving Youth, Adults or Both:

El Campito

Notre Dame Center for Civic Innovation

Robinson Community Learning Center

YWCA

Center for the Homeless

Hope Ministries

YWCA

Indiana Department of Correction's South Bend

Community Re-Entry Center

United Way of St. Joseph County

In 1970, El Campito opened their doors on the west side of South Bend to aid migrant families struggling to start a new life. South Bend Residents, Ignacio and Concepcion Nino, offered childcare services in their home for working families on the west side.

Today, with the support of the community, El Campito has been able to move out of the Ninos' home to become one of the oldest non-profit child development centers in South Bend. They offer three programs: a learning center, an after school program, and a Parents as Teachers program. While these programs serve many functions, building community - creating an inclusive environment that embraces and

celebrates children from all cultures and backgrounds - is one of the foundational goals of all three.

El Campito is also an accredited bilingual child development center. They use the HighScope method in classrooms, an innovative, skills-based approach to early childhood education backed by research done over the last 50 years. The HighScope method builds on children's strengths, interests, and abilities to develop skills, such as independence, curiosity, and decision-making, necessary for success in adult life. They also use services provided through the support of many other organizations, including the United Way of St. Joseph County, the Federal Food Program, the Family Connection, and T.E.A.C.H. Scholarships for their staff.

Take Ten volunteer Rebacca Hammond had this to say when asked about her experience at El Campito:

"My favorite things about El Campito were the fact that we had a whole hour there and the lessons only took about 30-40 minutes, so with the extra time we had we got to play games and learn more about the kids as individuals outside of the lesson plans. With the variety of ages at El Campito, coming up with games that everyone would enjoy made us more creative, ...the wide range of ages as well made the Take Ten curriculum for all ages very helpful at El Campito."

The last comment she wanted to add was how enjoyable it was to come back after summer break, seeing all of the same kids, feeling that they were genuinely happy to see her, and that they remembered what they were taught the year before.

SPOTLIGHT ON

HCC FACULTY MEMBER

MARIA SCHOMMER



Professor Maria Schommer is the Director of Common Good Initiatives and the Assistant Director of Campus Ministry at Holy Cross College, where she has been since the Fall of 2016. Maria received her Bachelor's degree in Theology and her Master's of Divinity from Notre Dame, as well as a Master's of Theology from Duke University. Each year at Holy Cross College, she leads the Common Good Seminar, a course in which every student must participate in some form of community engagement. Several students choose to volunteer with Take Ten every year. "One of the goals of the seminar," says Maria, "is to create space where students learn practices that build, as Pope Francis says, a culture of encounter and dialogue around some of the most pressing questions that we face as a society."

This goal connects to the mission of Take Ten as well. It is part of Maria's intention that each semester her students are able to enter into the South Bend community and create relationships that build a more peaceful society through their experience with Take Ten.

Over the past four years, she has watched her students' involvement with Take Ten and has seen so much growth through these experiences. She says,

"I have seen my students learn that they are their brother's and sister's keeper. I have witnessed them uncover a vocation to teach and to walk alongside young people. I have seen them realize that though they may be nervous to step in front of a classroom full of students at first, they can do it! They can build a meaningful connection with young people in ways that are mutually impactful. I've seen my students realize what it can actually look like to be peacemakers in daily life."

Maria reflects on the practicality of Take Ten's mission by saying, "Sometimes peacemaking can sound like a lofty or abstract goal. Take Ten helps to draw things closer to the ground. How might we begin to be peacemakers? Let's accompany young people as they learn habits and practices to help them navigate daily life in ways that reduce violence. Let's learn and practice those same habits in our day to day interactions. This is inspiring to me. Peacemaking begins in small ways, in our own hearts, our own neighborhoods and schools, and the impact flows out from there."



Take Ten Evaluation

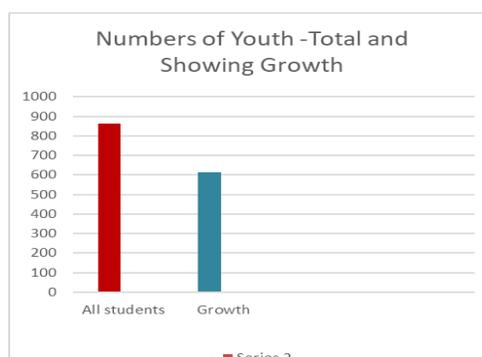
In 2016, new survey instruments were incorporated into the Take Ten annual evaluation. These tools enabled the overall Take Ten evaluation to better determine the impact of Take Ten in areas concerning school safety, the sense of agency among students to create change when facing conflict, and how students would behave in scenarios where violence is a possibility. This allowed new analyses of the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 school years. Evaluation revealed that students across grades 3-8 improved significantly in all three areas. It was anticipated that these trends would be apparent in the 2018-2019 evaluation.

The South Bend schools, however, were impacted by substantial changes on many fronts, beginning in August 2018. There were so many changes in the schools that Take Ten could not state that any changes in pre- post- survey data would be correlated to the program curriculum. Top-level administration placements were changed in many school buildings, the schools had different start and end times with different bell schedules. There were major curriculum changes, a new discipline policy, and teacher shifts across the school corporation. Consulting faculty for the Take Ten evaluation advised that typical program evaluation would be less reliable this year due to such broad and far-reaching modifications. Take Ten, instead, chose to evaluate measures related to growth in knowledge and to overall program participation.

Take Ten narrowed the focus of the evaluation to these two areas. Take Ten anticipated that 600 of the 800 youth, grades 3-8, that received Take Ten instruction would demonstrate gains in knowledge about violence and conflict resolution. In order to assess these issues Take Ten pulled items from several previous evaluations that touched on the crux of growth in knowledge about violence, safety, and their own agency in resolving conflict. Students were asked to agree/disagree with the following items on a five-point Likert scale:

- o A good way to prevent violence is to create a peaceful and safe environment.
- o Conflicts are a part of everyday life.
- o The way I act can impact conflicts in my life.
- o Take Ten can help my school be a safe place.
- o I always do the right thing.

These items were grouped together to assess growth in the areas mentioned above. Take Ten was taught to 862 youth in grades 3-8 for the 2018-2019 school year and their collective responses to these items showed us that goal was met. Graphically, we see the following:



A key part of implementing Take Ten every year is to teach the definitional foundation of the words “conflict” and “violence”. It is important for the participants to understand the inevitability of conflict in daily life; this helps demonstrate the need to learn conflict resolution skills at any age. Upon learning this definition, the definition of “violence” follows immediately so that participants understand that violence is not only commonplace, but is perpetrated by everyone because violence is, essentially, harm in any form and that we tend to harm others all too often. Including items related to these core definitions permitted Take Ten to see that the foundation was properly laid. Of the 862 children evaluated, 629 responded strongly to the first item concerning creating a nonviolent environment and 611 understood that conflicts are part of daily life.

Overall, the evaluation goals for the 2018-19 school was met and the additional goal of teaching Take Ten’s foundational term was met as well. Even in the midst of extensive changes throughout the South Bend schools, Take Ten was successful in bringing the message of nonviolence to area youth.

The other method of evaluation Take Ten uses every academic year relates to its volunteers. During the 2018-2019 year, 98 separate volunteers contributed 3,136 hours of service to these area youth at local schools and non-profit agencies. These enthusiastic people served 12 area schools and another seven community agencies, working with youth in all grades and with adults, some of whom are parents of the children served and some of whom are individuals who participated on their own. These volunteers, combined with Take Ten’s AmeriCorps members, contributed 6,862 hours of their time to teach Take Ten’s lessons to youth and to adults. When assessing their Take Ten experience, just over 98% of these volunteers reported, via a Qualtrics survey, that they believed participating in Take Ten had a positive impact on their collegiate experience and would have one on their life after college.





A College Student's Reflection on Take Ten

Christine Allen is one of several students who participated in the Take Ten seminar during the spring semester. Students in the seminar serve as Take Ten volunteers throughout the semester and meet with one another in weekly Peacemaking Circles as training. Christine is a senior at Notre Dame majoring in sociology with plans to attend law school. After law school, she aspires to become a criminal defense attorney. Christine chose to take the seminar because she believed that she could

use her own experiences with violence to work with students and “reach out to them with my life story and be able to connect with them, so they really understand the consequences of violence.”

During the semester, Christine taught classes at Riley High School and Lincoln Primary Center.

Reflecting on her experiences in the classroom, Christine shared that she formed strong relationships with her students and enjoyed planning creative lessons that would be engaging for everyone. Furthermore, she appreciated the circle format of the seminar and shared that she “could honestly use one of those circles with everything going on in life.” For anyone considering participating in the Take Ten seminar, Christine recommended it as a “fulfilling experience that...will help you grow as an individual.”

Through her experiences in Circle and teaching in the classroom, Christine has gained “a different perspective on patience and other core values” that she believes will be valuable in her future.

Christine Allen
University of Notre Dame Student
Participant in 2020 Take Ten Seminar

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