



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT™  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



## Goals and Overview of ABC Program

1. Increase relationships and **developmental assets** for all children and adults.
2. Increase the number of **caring adults** that students interact with at school to enable them to feel increased levels of support and value.
3. Create a **common language and vocabulary** about respect in each school community.
4. **Use children's literature** to share concepts of caring, interpersonal competence, personal power, resiliency, empathy, integrity, equality and social justice, honesty, and responsibility.
5. **Increase student life skills** in decision making, planning, goal setting, building friendships, identification of feelings, taking care of health (physical and emotional), responding to bully behaviors, and peaceful conflict resolution.
6. Increase student achievement and learning engagement by **creating a more caring, positive school climate** where all students belong and feel safe.

**Program Overview:** The ABC Program has two strands: Transitional Kindergarten/Kindergarten and three years of elementary with curriculum that covers 1<sup>st</sup> grade through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. The first year of the elementary strand is called the Asset year, followed by the Building year, and lastly the Champion year.

Each year of the elementary strand has a pre-selected theme and a corresponding set of books and lessons that are read schoolwide by volunteers. Included in each lesson are letters to guardians and staff, schoolwide extensions, and additional resources.

In addition, the Preschool Program is available for younger students, ages 3-5, in both English and Spanish.

**History of ABC Program:** In 2004, Felecia Mulvany, a Cornerstone parent who wanted to help create a safe, caring climate at her son's elementary school had an idea to use children's literature to teach students the skills needed to deal with bully behavior, while learning positive interpersonal skills. An educational consultant, Jerri Kazmierczak, was hired to develop the first set of lesson plans and the program was implemented during its inaugural year in 5 schools. By the end of that first year, a total of 40 parents had become ABC volunteers.

**Where are we today?:** During last school year, 4,173 volunteers were reading in 176 school partners and reaching 62,147 students monthly. We continue to adjust and develop as the students, families, and communities we serve also change.

**Program Development:** Each ABC book has been chosen for a specific purpose and has been thoroughly researched regarding content, link to specific asset or asset category, applicability across grade levels, diversity of school populations in the Bay Area, as well as the ease of engaging students in meaningful discussions and activities.

Also considered with book selection and lesson plan development are the results of the Search Institute survey designed for upper grade elementary school students, *Me and My World*. This survey was given to 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students countywide in 2004, 2010, and again in 2016. The results regarding risk behaviors and developmental assets contributed to guiding us in the book selection.

The curriculum continues to be updated on a regular basis to keep current with the latest research from a variety of fields including resiliency, peer abuse, social emotional learning, digital citizenship, and 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning. The books and lessons spark conversation about current events, including discussions of race, gender, stereotyping, discrimination, prejudice, diversity, and cultural identity. The guidelines of the Common Core Standards have also been incorporated into the lesson plans.

**Program Details:** This year all schools and all students in ABC Program will be reading the Asset Strand. This strand focusses on ***Growing UPstanders***. *An UPstander is someone who stands up for others by using kindness and empathy to do the right thing.* Whether they are learning in classrooms, virtually, or at home, students will learn and internalize the following tools:

- Build relationships by bucket filling, not dipping, and using a lid to be kind to others. (Have You Filled a Bucket, Today?)
- Recognize and use personal power to choose how to react/respond to bucket dipping situations. (Simon's Hook)
- Invite and include all kids to join in and play. Learn to tell and make a report to a caring adult. (Recess Queen)
- Everyone counts and it only takes one person to make a difference. (One)
- We can all can spark a change for good. You have the choice in how to react to others when they are hurtful. (More Than Peach)
- Internalize and apply the values of CHRIP (courage, honesty, responsibility, integrity, and perseverance) in everyday life. (Empty Pot)
- Your voice has power- words spoken or written, art and any other expression. Say something with it! (Say Something)