

# SEEDS OF CHANGE

Prevention

Intervention

Ongoing Support

## FROM BULLY TO BATTERER

There's a lot of attention, and rightly so, on bullying these days. No longer is teasing and name-calling being accepted as just "kids being kids." The negative effects of bullying can often be devastating, leading to physical injuries, emotional difficulties like anxiety and depression, problems concentrating in school and social development issues. But it doesn't stop there—some domestic violence advocates warn that bullies may carry their aggressive behavior into adult relationships.

"There's definitely a correlation between children who bully and adults who batter, however that is not to say that all children who bully will become batterers or that every adult batterer was a bully," says Yelitza Zamora, community engagement manager with [Harbor House of Central Florida](#), a domestic violence organization that offers anti-bullying prevention programs to schools in

the area. Zamora says childhood bullying, like any other aggressive behavior, boils down to having power and control, the exact same factors in which adult domestic violence is rooted. This can lead to not just physical violence as an adult, but emotional, verbal, financial or other types of abuse.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, young people who bully are at a [higher risk](#) for substance abuse, academic problems and violence-related problems later on in adolescence and adulthood.

"We believe violence is 100 percent preventable," says Zamora. "Our prevention programs are intended to stop violence before it happens but often times we find that intergenerational violence occurs in the family and the children have already been exposed to it."

The CDC agrees, reporting that youth are more likely to be a bully if they experience harsh parenting by caregivers or are exposed to accepting attitudes about violence. "Bullies may be experiencing violence at the home where their own power and control has been taken [away], so they seek to regain it in a school setting where they may mimic the same violent behavior they see at home," says Zamora, adding, "Not all bullies are ... insecure or troubled children. Sometimes bullies can be popular, confident, kids, who have a lot of influence in their school."

Harbor House offers anti-bullying prevention called Our Little Leaders of Courage, which is targeted at kids ages 3-11. (Article continued on page 3)

From [domesticshelters.org](#)

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Emergency Response Coordinator Spotlight	2
From Bullying to Batterer (continued from page 1)	3
Volunteer Spotlight	3
Community Partner Spotlight	4

## EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROGRAM COORDINATOR SPOTLIGHT



Hello Friends, Jenaleigh here from the Emergency Response Program here at Mutual Ground. I've been the program coordinator for about a year now and I am so proud of the work we are doing to support survivors in our community.

In my role here, I get to work with a fantastic team of dedicated individuals who volunteer as Victim Advocates. We work together to ensure that all survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault who present at our local emergency rooms have an advocate available to support them through the process. We do a lot of different things from hand-holding while someone goes through a rape kit, to supporting a victim in filing a report with law enforcement -- and everything in between.

Our role as advocates is to be there for a survivor every step of the way: informing them of their options, and supporting the survivor in whatever they choose. As advocates, we often get to be the first person to tell a survivor that we believe them and what happened to them is not their fault – sometimes a survivor may never hear that through their entire life. In that way, the work we do can be so impactful in a survivor's journey.

I've been doing this work for many years now – prior to coming to Mutual Ground, I worked for a sister program providing many of the same services in Iowa and Illinois. In the last year, I have relocated to the area with my fiancée, our cat, and a new baby kitten we rescued from a local shelter.

I am committed to the work we are doing together and I am so honored to work with such an incredible group of staff and volunteers here at Mutual Ground as well as the outpouring of support that we receive from our community and people like you. I truly believe that together, we can create a community free of domestic and sexual violence.

For more information on how to become a hospital advocate contact us at 630-897-0084 or visit our website at [www.mutualground.org](http://www.mutualground.org).

Hospital partners include:

- Rush Copley of Aurora
- Presence Mercy in Aurora
- Cadence Health Delnor Hospital in Geneva



**BULLYING TO BATTERERS (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)**



“The program encourages children to safely intervene in the presence of bullying, learn to identify leaders who can help and are taught to refer their friends and family to the proper authorities.” But Zamora says parents everywhere can get involved in helping to stop bullying by addressing the problem as soon as they see it happen.

“Even if the child isn’t a bully or being bullied, encouraging him/her to intervene when another child is being bullied can reduce and potentially eliminate bullying entirely. Children are more likely to stop their bullying behavior when another peer gets involved as opposed to an adult intervening. Teaching our kids to become safe bystanders can make a world of a difference.

**VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT**

Mutual Ground would like to highlight two volunteers in this quarter’s newsletter.

Meet Kris Mewmaw and Cindy Reinert. Both Kris and Cindy are teachers and members of St. Luke’s Lutheran Church in Montgomery.

They started a program for our children called “Crafty Creators” In addition to this wonderful program, they also volunteer for Santa’s Workshop, Miss Fannie’s Yard Sale, host various different drives for us, and the list goes on and on with all that they do for Mutual Ground.

They are always willing to help in a moment’s notice.

We are so grateful that Kris and Cindy found their second home at Mutual Ground. Thanks for all you do!





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**Please visit our website to see our updated wish list at [www.mutualground.org](http://www.mutualground.org)**

Mutual Ground Inc. was founded in 1975, with the goal of providing programs that focus on Prevention, Intervention, and Ongoing Support for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault and their families. Mutual Ground is now one of the largest and oldest domestic violence/sexual assault agencies in the state of Illinois. All services are victim-centered and focus on advocacy that empowers each individual to make her/his own decisions.

Located in Aurora, Illinois. Our service area is the Greater Aurora area, including all of Southern Kane and Kendall Counties.

## COMMUNITY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

Mutual Ground put out a call for help the first week in August as we were short on school supplies for our clients children. Immediately the Oswego Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors, Executive Director and BMO Harris, one of the Chamber members sprang into action and donated all these amazing school supplies for our children.

Within 24 hours we had emails, texts and phone calls, asking how they could help! By the weekend, we had received an email from BMO Harris, telling me all three of their branches were able to help. They ended up donating 30 backpacks from the Plano branch alone, amongst other supplies.

The Oswego Chamber Executive Director and the Ambassadors, dropped off

all these other amazing school supplies. When asked what we needed most, we told them: folders, glue sticks, markers, and notebooks. Both the Chamber Ambassadors, and BMO Harris, collected more than enough of these items so that our students, could get what they needed from their school supply list. We are so grateful to be community partners with The Oswego Chamber and BMO Harris .



**BMO Harris of Plano, Aurora and Montgomery**



**Oswego Chamber of Commerce**