

Upstream Prevention for School Safety

Transforming a Tragedy

Rachel's Challenge

Rachel's Challenge was created by the family of Rachel Scott, the first person killed in the Columbine High School shooting.



www.rachelschallenge.org

Rachel's Challenge

The most extensive, multi-tier, evidence-based school program worldwide for creating positive school cultures, ending school violence in all its forms, and improving youth mental health.

Introductory Overview

Our Reach



Over 25 years

In the field



Over 35 million

Students, educators, and
parents trained



Over 25,000

Schools reached

Our Impact

9

Known school
shootings
averted

150+

Suicide aversion
letters received on
average each year

90%

Schools report up
to a 90%
reduction
in disciplinary
referrals YoY

282%

Students surveyed
reported a 282%
increase in feeling
'safe' at school after
Rachel's Challenge

Problem Statement:

Rachel's Challenge

Youth in Crisis

The U.S. Surgeon General has declared a State of Emergency in Youth Mental Health.

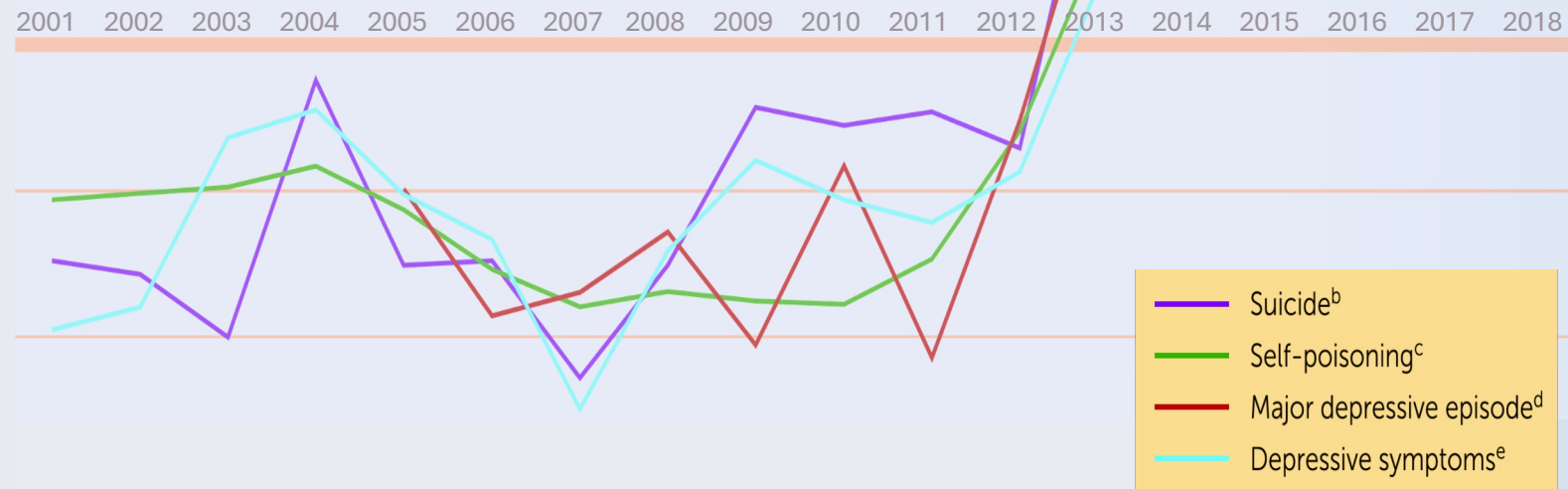
THERE IS A CURE

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THE NEED: Youth in Crisis

Pre-Pandemic Data

- Suicide rates skyrocketed **61.7%** from 2009–2018.
- Depression, anxiety, loneliness, self-harm, bullying, and violence among youth also exploded during this period.
- Growing evidence is correlating this change with the adoption of **smartphones** and **digital media**.



That was then.

The pandemic has accelerated this trend:
a crisis on top of crisis

THE NEED: Youth in Crisis

4 FACTS ABOUT

Teen SUICIDE and SELF-HARM in a POST-PANDEMIC world

31%

Increase in teen suicide attempts post-pandemic; this in addition to a **61.7%** increase over the previous 10 years

51%

Increase in ER visits by girls due to attempted suicide

50 seconds

Every 50 seconds an adolescent is admitted to the ER for attempted suicide

79 minutes

One young person **dies** from suicide every 79 minutes



THE NEED: Youth in Crisis

4 FACTS ABOUT

Youth MENTAL HEALTH in a POST-PANDEMIC world

1 in 4

Youth are experiencing clinically elevated **depression** levels

2x

Mental health issues in youth **doubled** globally during the pandemic

70%

Increase in **cyberbullying** during the pandemic

20.5%

Increase in **anxiety** in youth over pre-pandemic levels



THE NEED: Youth in Crisis

4 FACTS ABOUT School BULLYING and VIOLENCE

160k+

Teens skip school
each day due to
bullying

80%

Of students who
are bullied have
reduced academic
performance and
ability to learn

282k

Students are
physically attacked
in secondary
schools each month

75%

Of school shooting
incidents have been
linked to bullying
and harassment



Solution:

Rachel's Challenge

Addressing the Root Causes

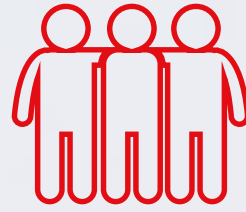
A complex problem with a simple solution

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Most school shootings are a suicide, first.

They've already made the decision. There is no escape plan.

THE SOLUTION: **Connection**



“**CONNECTEDNESS** is a protective factor for suicide prevention and promotes positive behaviors.

“Students who feel connected to their school are more likely to have academic achievement.

“Young people who feel connected are less likely to engage in negative high-risk behaviors.

*–Parkland School Shooting Report /
U.S. Center for Disease Control*



Students who feel **CONNECTED** are significantly less likely to hurt themselves or others and are more likely to achieve academically and socially.

When students feel connected:

4.5x

Report more hope for the future

27%

Are more engaged



18%

Better grades

31%

Higher academic performance overall

Isolation is the problem.

Rachel'sChallenge

Connection is the solution.

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Creating **CONNECTION** is Easier than you Think

"Rachel's Challenge is the simplest, most powerful intervention I have seen in my 40 years of education." – **Dr Robert Marzano**, leading education researcher

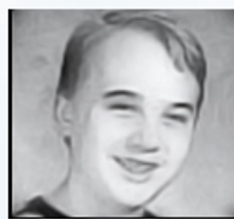
How do you create Connection?

- Shared experience
- Model behavior
- Ground up approach

COLUMBINE HIGH SCHOOL



**A TIME TO REMEMBER
A TIME TO HOPE**



Never Forgotten





-Rachel Coy

I Accept **Rachel's Challenge**

- 1. Look for the best in others**
- 2. Dream Big**
- 3. Choose Positive Influences**
- 4. Speak with Kindness**
- 5. Start your own Chain Reaction**

RC Implementation and Programs Snapshot

RC LIVE

Age-appropriate, K-12 on-site:

- Assembly presentations
- Interactive trainings
- Intensive character workshops
- FOR Club: Student-led, in-school activities

RC DIGITAL

RC Digital:

- On-demand, a-la-carte content
- Small, short, daily
- Interactive workbooks, discussion prompts
- Custom LMS for Ease of Use in classroom or at home





THE CHALLENGE PRESENTATION

Recommended for 7-12th grade

This 60-minute Challenge Presentation is the inspiring story of Rachel Scott whose example of kindness and acceptance was brought to light when she became the first victim of the Columbine High School tragedy. Conveyed through stories from Rachel's life and writings, the Challenge Presentation shows the profound positive impact we can have on those around us. It demonstrates to the listener the power of deliberately reaching out in word and action to others to start what Rachel called "a chain reaction of kindness and compassion."

Program Themes (Challenges):

- **Look for the best in others**
- **Dream big**
- **Choose positive influences**
- **Speak with kindness**
- **Start your own chain reaction**

Student Outcomes:

- Students develop motivation to consider where they are personally in relation to the five challenges
- Students understand the importance of becoming a listener and reflect on their relationship with – and impact on – the people around them
- Students develop a renewed hope that their lives have purpose through service to others
- Rachel's story gives participants permission to start their own chain reaction of kindness and compassion, which positively affects school climate



THE STORY PRESENTATION

Recommended for 5-6th grade

The 60-minute Story Presentation introduces younger middle school students to Rachel Scott's story and her challenge to deliberately reach out to others with kindness. Rachel's story is told through the eyes of her family. The Columbine tragedy is introduced at an intensity level appropriate for 5th and 6th graders. Her story shows the profound positive impact students can have on those around them by simply paying attention to the little things they do and say every day. Rachel's story encourages participants to consider their own behavior.

Program Themes (Challenges):

Dream big & believe in yourself
Be kind to others
Practice positive gossip
Show appreciation to those you love
Be the answer

Student Outcomes:

- Students have a renewed hope that their life matters and they have a purpose
- Participants are inspired to use their words in a positive way because they understand that words have the power to hurt and the power to heal
- Help students understand that they too can start a chain reaction of kindness & compassion
- The importance of appreciating others, and to express appreciation to the ones that they love
- Students are empowered with the knowledge that they can be the answer by making a personal difference at their school



THE ELEMENTARY PRESENTATION

Recommended for K-6th grade

The 40-minute Elementary Presentation introduces elementary students to Rachel Scott and her challenge to reach out to others with deliberate acts of kindness. The presentation is a fun, energetic, interactive assembly that mixes music, video and activities to tell her story. Students will learn about a young girl named Rachel; however, they will not hear nor see footage related to the Columbine tragedy or her death.

Program Themes (Challenges):

- Use kind words & do kind things
- Accept & include others
- Choose & be a positive influence
- Set goals & keep a journal
- Continue the chain reaction

Student Outcomes:

- Students understand that treating others with respect is fun and should not just be what they do—but who they are
- Students understand issues of bullying and destructive behavior and receive permission to be kind
- Students leave excited about treating others with respect and wanting to start their own chain reaction of kindness—both figuratively and literally with the paper chain of kindness exercise and activity



FRIENDS OF RACHEL (FOR) CLUB

Recommended for 6-12th grade

This 90 minute FOR Club training is designed to assist a select group of students (up to 100 pre-assigned/volunteered cross-section of the school) and adults (recommended: minimum of 1 adult to every 10 students) create a student-driven club within the school. The FOR Club's mission is to implement what was learned in the Rachel's Challenge assembly by fostering a service-oriented, permanent culture of kindness, compassion, connection and hope on their campus.

Program Themes:

- Assembly debrief and group sharing
- The structure and logistics of the FOR Club
- Examples of impactful and proven FOR Club projects and activities
- Guided brainstorm on potential FOR Club projects and activities
- Establishing first meeting goals and priorities

Student Outcomes:

- Creates a common bond and mission among the participants
- Provides practical ways to sustain the momentum created by the assembly throughout the school year and into the future
- Equips students with tools and activities designed to make the FOR Club their own and thereby foster an environment of respect and caring within the school and community
- Transforms the climate shift brought about by the assembly into a permanent, positive way of life for the students and the school



The Community Event

This 60-minute LIVE event mirrors the Challenge Presentation and brings together students, parents, educators, and community members in a shared mission of fostering kindness and connection. It gives all members of the school community the opportunity to experience the program firsthand and “accept the challenge”.

Program Themes (Challenges):

- Look for the best in others
- Dream big
- Choose positive influences
- Speak with kindness
- Start your own chain reaction

Program Objective:

Unite your school community in a shared commitment to be kind.

Rachel's Challenge Digital

[Login now](#)[All courses](#)

RACHEL'S CHALLENGE DIGITAL

Recommended for K-12th grade

Rachel's Challenge Digital consists of at least six full weeks of short, daily lessons that are quick and ready to implement with students right away. The accompanying interactive workbooks include easy-to-use tools, activities with reflection prompts, classroom discussions, and Mental Fitness and emotional development activities for remote or in classroom learning to encourage engagement with your students.

Rachel's Challenge Digital is:

Simple. Fast and easy to implement, you'll be able to put the program to use within minutes.

Flexible. Works in conjunction with your current Character Development initiatives or replaces them. Also works with our live programming.

Sustainable. Encourages lasting change.

Life-Saving. The connections you'll create with your students and that your students will create with each other will help you identify and help at-risk youth.

Rachel'sChallenge

Your courses

Access your programs below by selecting whether you are a Educator or a Student

Students

Students

Educators

Educators

RACHEL'S CHALLENGE DIGITAL

What you receive:

Elementary Educator Lesson Plan Playbooks | Student Videos & Digital Courses

This course consists of 6 video sessions and interactive daily lessons. Each video session has a corresponding student workbook aligned with Rachel's Challenges for elementary students. Educators are provided an educator lesson plan playbook with detailed instructions.

Session 1 - Rachel's Challenge Introduction
Session 2 - Be Kind
Session 3 - Accept & Include Others
Session 4 - Choose Positive Influences
Session 5 - Dream Big, Write Goals, Keep a Journal
Session 6 - Start a Chain Reaction

Middle/High School Educator Lesson Plan Playbook | Student Videos & Digital Courses

This course consists of 6 video sessions and interactive daily lessons. Each video session has a corresponding student workbook. Educators are provided an educator lesson plan playbook with detailed instructions.

The six videos in this course tell Rachel's story..
Session 1 - Rachel's Challenge Introduction
Session 2 - The Space in Between
Session 3 - Pay It Forward
Session 4 - Forgiveness
Session 5 - Acceptance
Session 6 - Next Steps



CHAIN REACTION

Recommended for 7-12th grade and adult

One of our most powerful programs, Chain Reaction is a six-hour, intensive, interactive training that consists of: 1) teaching and processing segments; 2) physical activities; and 3) full-group and small-group sharing. Chain Reaction includes a cross section of your school's population represented by 80-100 students and 20-25 adults. A minimum ratio of 1 adult to 4 students must be maintained throughout the program. It is designed to promote personal introspection, understanding of others, community building and empowerment.

Program Themes:

Our words have power...to hurt or heal

Appropriate touch

Take off your mask...be who you really are

You are not alone...we have shared experiences

Today is YOUR Chain Reaction moment

Student Outcomes:

- Participants understand their personal identity, power and uniqueness
- Participants learn that they are not personally defined by their circumstances and experiences
- Participants also come to understand that despite their personal uniqueness they share experiences with many others in the room
- Barriers among the participants are broken down by the realization that through these shared experiences they are not alone



ELEMENTARY CHAIN REACTION

Age adjusted for upper elementary 5-6th grade

The 4 hour Elementary Chain Reaction is an age-appropriate experience designed to help young students build trust, reflect on challenges, and connect through kindness and shared humanity.

Through interactive games, small-group conversations, and gentle emotional reflection, students are guided to safely explore empathy and connection. With the support of caring adults, they begin to break down social barriers, see one another in a new light, and understand they are not alone.

Program Themes:

Our Words Have Power—to Hurt or to Heal

Take Off Your Mask (figurative)

You Are Not Alone—We Share Experiences

Kindness Can Start a Chain Reaction

Everyone Deserves to Be Seen, Heard, and Valued

Student Outcomes:

- Students discover that their words and actions matter
- Students feel seen, heard, and emotionally supported
- Barriers among classmates are broken down through shared experiences
- Students gain a deeper understanding of empathy, identity, and personal power
- Adults are given insight into students who may need additional care or support

Case Study

Starting a CHAIN REACTION of KINDNESS



What's NEXT?

➤ Connect with us

Scan the QR code to get in touch with us!

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