



Project Wisdom makes all the difference in the world to establishing a positive climate at your school. I have been using Project Wisdom for 7 years now and find that it has a tremendous impact on the climate of the school. It is a great program.

- Frank, High School Principal, CA

Executive Summary

Since 1992, Project Wisdom has been providing schools with character education materials that help students make wiser choices. Character education is an intentional effort to help students understand, care about, and act upon core ethical values. Students with good character are caring, just, and responsible. They have developed an internal motivation to do their best and to contribute to the world around them. Good character education improves social and emotional competencies as well as academic performance.

There are three key components to this nationally-recognized program. Each component supports the other. The first component is a library of daily messages that are narrated over the PA or in-house television system and require less than one minute each day to broadcast. Every student and every staff member hear a few words of wisdom that promote a more positive and effective school climate. The second component is a searchable, online database of easy-to-implement lesson plans. These plans build character and social-emotional competencies while addressing important and relevant issues such as bullying, cheating, and academic achievement. The third component is weekly professional support delivered online to every registered user. This includes a *Just For You* message written specifically for educators to foster professionalism, promote caring and ethical leadership, boost morale, and improve classroom management.

As part of our commitment to understanding the effectiveness of our program, we continue to engage in a scientifically based, rigorous evaluation process. In 2013, with the assistance of our independent program evaluator Dr. Beth Manke, we deployed the latest in a series of web-based surveys. Dr. Manke is a professor in the Department of Human Development at California State University, Long Beach, and has over 19 years of evaluation experience with organizations serving children and families (see Appendix A: About Dr. Beth Manke).

The 2013 web-based survey tapped a variety of issues, including type of school (e.g., elementary, middle, high), role of respondents (e.g., principal, teacher, counselor), number of students, length of time using the program, and the impact of Project Wisdom on school climate and student adjustment (e.g., discipline infractions and socio-emotional development). In total, there were 29 questions on the survey, most designed to be rated on a five-point scale (1 = not at all, 2 = a little bit, 3 = somewhat, 4 = quite a bit, 5 = very much).

Licensed schools for which Project Wisdom had been provided an email address were invited to participate. Schools using the program during the 2012-2013 academic year completed a total of 1,082 surveys. Thirty-five percent were classroom teachers, followed by principals (28%) and counselors (19%). In addition to data gathered via the surveys, this evaluation includes comments submitted by the respondents. Four hundred ninety of the respondents added what were overwhelmingly positive comments. Samples of those are included in the full evaluation available on www.ProjectWisdom.com.

Key Findings from Evaluation

Results suggest that Project Wisdom:

- Decreases incidents of student teasing and/or bullying.
- Decreases discipline referrals to the office.
- Affects the school climate in a positive way.
- Has a positive impact on teacher morale.
- Increases students' self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and responsible decision making.
- Stimulates student conversation about character issues.