

Connect with Kids

Overview and Implementation Guide

For Richmond County School System

Richmond County Children of Hope

Welcome to your online resource!



Connect with Kids



What do our children need more than anything to succeed? Hope – for a future filled with possibility and the chance to achieve their goals and dreams. Without hope, we know that too many of our students see no reason *not* to take risks and no reason to create the connections and commitment that will keep them in school.

Richmond County School System is implementing programming to help empower our children to believe in their future. In partnership with CWK Network/*Connect with Kids*, News12 CBS WRDW-TV, and My 12 WRDW DT, the Richmond County School System is launching a community effort to be part of the solution: to provide resources to families, community leaders who work with our youth, educators, and students themselves to help those kids who just might be giving up on themselves.

Founded in 1998, CWK Network produces the Emmy® award winning *Connect with Kids* television series, featuring real kids sharing their true stories about today's youth issues. Most recently, *Connect with Kids* produced a television program entitled ***Children of Hope***, which tells the inspiring stories of teens and young adults who turned their lives around when counselors, teachers, parents and community programs helped them to see – and experience – the opportunities their future could hold. Portions of the television program were taped in Richmond County and include interviews with students, educators and our community leaders.



This Implementation Guide provides an overview of the *Connect with Kids* resources available to you online, as well as effective methods for putting the resources to use at home and with school and community youth groups. Your website resources include:

- Continuous video streaming of the half-hour television program **Children of Hope**, which can be used in a number of settings to stimulate discussions with youth, educators and parents.
- Continuous video streaming of public service announcements created to help increase awareness of this Richmond County School System initiative.
- Group discussion and Self-Reflection Questions that coincide with each segmented portion of the **Children of Hope** television program.
- Fact Sheet with the latest information and statistics on student attendance, violence, depression and hopelessness and what can be done to help children become hopeful and avoid risky behaviors.
- Parent Tip Sheet with expert advice and recommended resources to help parents help their children learn to develop a sense of hope, to dream of the possibilities and work to attain goals.
- Grade Level Lesson Plans that outline objectives, procedures and specific activities for use in classroom or community group settings, to help students think about their hopes, dreams and what they need to do to attain them.

Purpose of the Campaign Materials:

- **To create a common conversation about how having hope, dreams and goals for the future can powerfully affect our youth and the decisions they make today**
- **To facilitate a community dialogue about the emotional and academic challenges faced by our youth and the positive opportunities made available within our community to help them**
- **To provide you with tools to reach and teach youth and families**
- **To provide resources that reinforce what you are already doing to help youth identify and attain their goals and dreams**
- **To help raise awareness about existing programs and activities while mobilizing the community to take further action in an effort to “empower our youth to dream.”**

Using the Half-Hour Television Program

- Invite people from your organization and/or the community to a viewing party to watch ***Children of Hope*** together.
- When viewing the program in a group setting, be sure to take some time following each segment to discuss what you have viewed. Use the discussion and self-reflection questions and the Fact and Parent Tip Sheets to make the event a positive and educational experience.
- Assign young people in your organization the task of watching the program with their parents and using the Parent Tip Sheet to elicit meaningful dialogue.
- Allow youth to show the program to friends in their clubs or others whom they know (in classes, youth groups, church groups, etc.).
- Encourage schools in your community to use the video program and correlating resources in health classes, study halls or during advisement periods.
- Start a discussion group for teens, pre-teens and/or younger children with a focus on identifying their hopes and dreams. Watch the program and use the discussion and self-reflection questions, as well as the tip and fact sheets to help facilitate the sessions.

Using the *Children of Hope* Discussion and Self-Reflection Questions

- The resource guide provides thought-provoking questions to help parents, students and educators understand what contributes to a sense of hopelessness among youth and the strategies and activities people use to foster hope, define goals and make dreams a reality.
- Train parents and/or youth to become group discussion leaders, using the discussion and self-reflection questions as an agenda.
- Make copies of the discussion and self-reflection questions to use as a guide for group sessions. The discussion questions are for a group; the self-reflection questions are for individuals to reflect upon their own personal responses to issues raised in the video.
- Post the questions on the wall to help youth continue to reflect on their own hopes and aspirations, and what they can do to achieve them.
- Use the questions as part of a homework assignment for youth as they discuss these issues with their parents.
- Allow participants to anonymously submit their own self-reflection questions (with or without responses) as a starting point for group discussion. Offer a discussion or self-reflection question as an example.

Using the *Children of Hope* Fact Sheet

- Review the Fact Sheet prior to a group viewing of *Children of Hope*. After watching the video, ask participants to identify additional facts they learned or misconceptions they had prior to viewing the video.
- During a community meeting, have parents and children pair up and quiz each other on the facts. Have one group member report to the rest of the meeting something new that they learned.
- During a parent meeting or community group meeting, copy and distribute the Fact Sheet for adults to take home and use as a starting point for a conversation with their children.

Using the Parent Tip Sheet

- Make copies of the Parent Tip Sheet and distribute it during a parent meeting and/or video viewing. Have the group talk about specific ways they can implement the tips with their children.
- During a parent meeting, use the Tip Sheet as a starting place for discussion and have the group brainstorm additional tips and strategies they can use with their children.
- As a group, review the Tip Sheet prior to watching *Children of Hope* and have parents identify scenarios during the video where the Tip Sheet applies.
- Encourage parents to use the Tip Sheet as a springboard for further discussion with their kids after watching the show.

Using the Connect with Kids Website

www.connectwithkids.com/rcboe

- Instruct parents to go to the website for the latest information on the issues affecting children and families and to view the streaming video materials, including *Children of Hope* and Richmond County School System public service announcements, airing on News 12 CBS, WRDW-TV, to help increase awareness in our community.
- Download and print any additional materials you may need for your group sessions, meetings, family viewing sessions, etc.
- Use your organization's newsletters, emails and other communication channels to promote your efforts and the website.
- Direct educators, community leaders and parents to sign up for flyers notifying them in advance of other *Connect with Kids* shows airing on News 12 and My TV. They can easily do so by following the directions on the home page of the website and supplying their city and state to ensure they receive a schedule for their area only.
- Encourage parents and educators to join the *Connect with Kids* online parenting community, Parents & Company, where they can share experiences, insights and challenges.

We hope that the materials and resources will help you support the Richmond County School System/*Connect with Kids* initiative to empower our youth to achieve their goals and dreams.