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Capstone Project

Student Facilitation Guide

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Executive Summary

Bullying Prevention starts with you!

In 2016, Children’s Mercy and Sporting Kansas City began a ground-breaking, long-term partnership. Together, these two prominent Kansas City organizations are working to create positive change in the health and well-being of our community. Bullying has become an increasingly prevalent problem in Kansas City. Both kids who are bullied and kids who bully others can have long-term mental and physical health concerns. Children’s Mercy and Sporting KC are teaming up to help kids, teens and adults speak up against bullying. By using the iconic soccer red card—a widely recognized symbol of unacceptable behavior—Red Card KC calls attention to the problem of bullying and encourages positive behavior at schools, on playgrounds, and in the community.

As learned in the Red Card + MLS Actions Matter digital course, bullying is defined as actions that are unwanted, aggressive, and repeated (or have the potential to be repeated). Bullying can be physical, social, verbal, or cyber - and happens when there’s a power imbalance, whether that imbalance is real or perceived.

Major League Soccer (MLS) has set out to combat bullying, which has no place in schools or in communities at large. MLS and MLS WORKS, the League’s social responsibility platform, is dedicated to supporting the communities where we live and play our games, and to providing an environment where staff, players, partners and fans are treated with dignity and respect.

Through the topics of Relationships, Leadership, Resilience, Courage, and Community, the Red Card + MLS Actions Matter program provides concrete strategies on how to not only identify bullying, but to take the steps necessary to end it. The Red Card + MLS Actions Matter Capstone Project takes a tactical approach to bullying prevention by empowering you and your classmates to take the lead in creating the change you want to see in your school community. This Facilitation Guide is intended to help you plan, execute and troubleshoot your project.

You will come together to identify the target areas of concern, interpret how bullying has impacted you and your peers via an anonymous survey, strategize the best-suited way to implement lasting anti-bullying tactics, ultimately evaluating the effectiveness of your school-wide campaign and making adjustments where necessary in order to create the most sustained bullying prevention impact.

Together with Major League Soccer, your school can be a leader in ending the effects of bullying and preparing students to be the leaders of tomorrow.

Capstone Project Steps

The MLS Actions Matter Capstone Project involves the following steps:

STEP 1:

Gather a group of students to participate.

STEP 2:

Administer the anti-bullying survey.

STEP 3:

Interpret the results of the survey.

STEP 4:

Brainstorm ways to impact change.

STEP 5:

Implement anti-bullying strategies.

STEP 6:

Evaluate effectiveness and adjust strategies accordingly.

Project Guidance

Below is some guidance to get you started in creating a change in your school community:

STEP 1: Gather a group of students to participate.

- Think Diverse:** Diverse experiences mean more insight into how different groups are experiencing bullying and provide more creative ideas to stop it. Reach outside your own social group to find participants.
- Provide Details:** Tell classmates where and when meetings will occur, what the goal is, and what you need from them.
- Get Creative:** Reach out to classmates in person, online or through school campaigns.

STEP 2: Administer the anti-bullying survey.

- Reach Out to Everyone:** Think about all the different places your classmates interact, in person and online. Remember, the more people you reach, the more complete your information will be.

STEP 3: Interpret the results of the survey.

- Identify the Issues:** Be sure to focus on problem areas identified in the survey and design strategies to counter big issues.
- Data Isn't Everything:** Don't get so lost in the survey results that you lose sight of the big picture, which is reducing bullying for everyone.

STEP 4: Brainstorm ways to impact change.

- Listen to All Ideas:** Be inclusive and positive. Make sure everyone has a chance to share their ideas.
- Think Positive:** Instead of just focusing on ways to end bullying, also consider ways to build inclusion.
- Get Creative:** Set realistic goals, but remember that there are lots of ways to impact change. When you create fun and inventive ways for others to get involved, you may find more participation.
- Build a Team Consensus:** Work together to come up with strategies to impact change.

STEP 5: Implement anti-bullying strategies.

- Get Help:** Figure out how administration and community members can help you and then ask them for help. Remember to be specific about what you need and why.
- Divide and Conquer:** Divide up tasks, considering what people are interested in doing and how you can best utilize their unique talents.

STEP 6: Evaluate effectiveness and adjust strategies accordingly.

- **Be Honest but Kind:** Keep criticism constructive and focus on ways to improve, rather than failures.
- **Pass It On:** Invite incoming classes to join your group and share strategies, helping them build on what you've done in coming years.

Administering and Interpreting Results from the Anti-Bullying Survey

Administering the Anti-Bullying Survey

- You can access the anti-bullying survey [here](#).
 - » Sign in (or sign up) for survey monkey and then use the anti-bullying template to create a version specifically for your school community.
- Using the survey is free.
- The survey is anonymous.
- Create language to let your classmates know what you are doing and why. Be sure to inform them that their answers are confidential. Here's some sample language to get you started:

Your classmates want to create a school community where everyone feels safe and respected. To that end, we're using this survey [link out to your school's version] to find out about your experience. The survey is completely anonymous and confidential. The more students who respond, the better we can focus our efforts for change!

If you want to join our efforts to make our school community the best it can be, contact [include name of your group, if applicable, and contact information for point person in your group].

- Allow classmates to access the survey in paper versions or online, but make sure you keep all information (including who returns paper surveys) completely confidential.

Interpreting the Results of the Anti-Bullying Survey

- The more students who take the survey, the more accurate and complete your results will be.
- Focus your actions in particular around questions where you have both:
 - » A higher number of students answering something other than 0.
 - » More students responding that they've experienced negative actions multiple times a week.

Action Plan Checklist

Goals of the MLS Actions Matter Capstone Project

- Reduce instances of bullying in your school community.
 - » When bullying does happen, increase action to stop it.
 - » When bullying does happen, make sure classmates know how to get support and help.
- Increase inclusion, so every student feels connected, supported and respected.
 - » Give classmates opportunities to get involved in helping to create a school community that's positive for everyone.

Mission Statement

- Create a Mission Statement around your goals.
 - » Your Mission Statement should reflect the goals of the MLS Actions Matter Capstone project listed above.
 - » Your Mission Statement can also reflect specific needs of your school community, based on your Anti-Bullying Survey results.
- Share your Mission Statement with members and classmates.
 - » Use it to increase participation and build consensus.

Action Plan

- Create an Action Plan, identifying issues in your school community (based on discussion, results of your Anti-Bullying Survey and other classmate feedback) and methods for solving them.
- Be specific - connect your action items to problems identified by your Anti-Bullying Survey.
- Assign roles to each Action Item in your Action Plan.
 - » Ask for volunteers.
 - » Utilize classmates' strengths and unique skills.

Student Roles

- Target roles for both the Capstone Project as a whole, and for individual Action Items.
- Capstone Project roles might include:
 - » President
 - Writes agenda and runs meetings.
 - » Communications Director
 - Develops Mission Statement for group approval.
 - Creates materials (posters, information sheets, etc.) to support the group and projects.

- » Secretary
 - Keeps notes on meeting decisions and plans.
- Action Item roles should be broken out based on the needs of the project, but consider:
 - » What you need to do for the Action Item to succeed.
 - » Break the Action Item up into smaller pieces to complete.
 - Assign roles based on the smaller pieces, based on what people are interested in and what their skills are.
 - » Report back on progress for each of the pieces at the meetings.
 - Adjust roles/plans as needed (e.g., if someone needs help, you can add another person to the role; if an action item isn't generating results you want, you can come up with an additional/replacement plan).

Planning Organizer

Directions: Fill in the Planning Organizer by listing each of your Action Items; in the Steps column, list each individual step you need to accomplish to meet your Action Item; in the Roles column, list who will work on each step and what their role will entail.

Action Plan Item	Steps	Roles

Progress Rubric

Directions: Fill in the action items you've developed in the left column, then list your goals for each action item in the columns beside it. As you work on your action items, refer back to the rubric to make sure each action item is meeting your goals. If not, adjust your action items accordingly.

Action Item	Goal	Goal

Moving Beyond the School Community

Change can be infectious. If your MLS Actions Matter Capstone Project is making a difference in your school community, you may want to consider thinking beyond the walls of your school.

Consider what other communities you belong to:

- Your family
- Your neighborhood
- Your city
- Extracurricular groups and clubs

Consider how you can impact change in more places:

- In other communities you're part of, what issues do you see?
- In other communities you're part of, what would you like to change?
- How do your Action Plan items translate to other locations?
- What new Action Plan items can you think of to address issues in other communities?

Consider who can help you accomplish your goals in other communities:

- Who else is part of those communities?
- Who else wants to see a change?
- Who has the power and resources to help you accomplish your goals?
 - » How can you reach out to them for assistance?
 - » What plans and steps to get there can you show them?
 - » What specific things can they do to help you reach your goals?

Sample Materials

Recruitment Email

Hello classmates!

I'm [name], [role within the Capstone Project]. We're looking for more students to join our MLS Actions Matter Capstone Project in partnership with Major League Soccer!

Major League Soccer (MLS) is the top-flight men's professional soccer league in the United States and Canada, and they have provided the MLS Actions Matter program to our school. This new bullying prevention program helps prepare us - the leaders of tomorrow - for our future, by providing us with tools to influence behavior and create a positive environment in-school, on social media, and throughout our community.

You might know that 20% of high school students nationally self-report being bullied on school grounds, but did you know that bullying is a risk factor for suicide, drug abuse and school shootings? Bullying is a common experience, but it doesn't have to be our experience.

We can build the kind of strong, inclusive and supportive school community where everyone feels respected and valued. It all starts with the MLS Actions Matter Capstone Project.

What we're doing:

- Surveying classmates to see where bullying happens.
- Putting together an Action Plan to stop bullying and promote inclusion.
- With the help of the school, putting our plan into action!

We want your help! If you'd like to be a part of our initiative, share your ideas for building a better community, and help make the change you want to see, please join us at [details on Capstone Project meeting time, date and location].

Hope to see you there!

[Name]

Recruitment Copy for Social Media

We're kicking off our #MLSActionsMatter project! Join us to help create the change you want to see in your school community. Meeting: [date, time, location]

Help us make a lasting impact on our school community: Join our #MLSActionsMatter project and lead our school initiatives to end bullying. Contact [contact info] for more details!

Promo Poster

GET INVOLVED.
MAKE A CHANGE.



Become part of the **Red Card + MLS Actions Matter** with Sporting Kansas City and Children's Mercy and help lead the way in creating the school community you want to see: one that's inclusive, supportive, and free from bullying.

contact
for more information.



Promo Poster

WHAT DOES YOUR WORLD LOOK LIKE?



is it
positive?



are classmates
supportive?



is everyone
included?

If not, what do you wish
were **different?**

You can be part of
the **change.**

Become part of the **Red Card + MLS Actions Matter**
with Sporting Kansas City and Children's Mercy and
help lead the way in creating the school community
you want to see: one that's inclusive, supportive, and
free from bullying.

Contact
for more information.



Schoolwide Pledge

As a member of not only my school community, but also the larger surrounding community, I am excited to join Major League Soccer in treating others with dignity and respect, always. By taking what I have learned in the MLS Actions Matter program and applying it to everyday life, I will be a part of driving positive social change for all.

I believe that a unified school community - where all students support and respect one another - benefits everyone. I vow to do my part to create a positive community, by:

- Treating all members of the school community with respect.
- Valuing the individual, unique strengths of my classmates.
- Valuing my own individual, unique strengths.
- Being inclusive to all members of the school community.
- Taking action when I see someone who is left out or treated badly.

As an active, positive member of my school community - along with Major League Soccer and the Soccer For All initiative - I vow to respect others regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or socioeconomic status. I will help lead the way in creating a strong, respectful environment for everyone.

Signature

Upstander Social Media Board

Social media can be a place to create and strengthen connections - or it can be a place where people bring one another down. In order to highlight positive change, part of your Capstone Project might include a social media component, such as an Upstander Social Media Board, where classmates can share personal experiences of being lifted up and supporting others.

*Upstander: Someone who stands up, speaks up, or takes action in support of those being targeted for harm, such as bullying.

This board is intended for students to share personal stories of ways they took action as an upstander (or ways someone else supported them). Stories can be anonymous.

Negative posts have no place here and will be removed.

Upstander Video Challenge

Social media can be a place to create and strengthen connections - or it can be a place where people bring one another down. In order to highlight positive change, part of your Capstone Project might include an Upstander Video Challenge. This can be connected to or separate from an Upstander Social Media Board. The Upstander Video Challenge should challenge students to share personal experiences of being lifted up and supporting others. You can get creative with the Upstander Video Challenge, by offering incentives for sharing empowering stories of change. (You can also consult your school for support in offering incentives.)

*Upstander: Someone who stands up, speaks up, or takes action in support of those being targeted for harm, such as bullying.

Join us for an Upstander Video Challenge: In your own words, share personal stories of ways you took action as an upstander (or ways someone else supported you).



actions
matter

BULLYING PREVENTION