



# Area Students Take a Stand Against Bullying

November 30 2012 4:11 PM

Students at the Alton High School were loud and clear about their opinion of bullying this November. Choose Respect youth leaders—students participating in the Choose Respect program, which aims to educate teens on bullying prevention and dating violence—took a day to host an information table during lunch periods. The youth leaders handed out materials on bullying prevention and encouraged their peers to take a stand if they see others being bullying. Students were also able to sign a “Bullying Stops with Me” petition, marking their commitment to bullying and cyber bullying prevention. 210 Alton High students signed the petition.

The primary focus of this event was on cyber bullying education and prevention. Cyber bullying is defined as intimidating, harassing or threatening another person via email, instant messaging, cell phones, or social media sites like Facebook. According to the Cyber Bullying Research Center, about half of all young people have experienced some form of cyber bullying, and 10-20 percent experience it regularly. The Research Center has also concluded that victims of cyber bullying are more likely to have low self esteem and to consider suicide.

By utilizing the Choose Respect program, Alton CUSD #11 and its partners in this project, WellSpring Resources and Morning Star Baptist Church, hope to lower the these odds and percentages. Choose Respect is a State of Illinois program that utilizes community organizations and schools to raise awareness on dating violence and bullying among teens. Choose Respect youth leaders attend trainings and other events on the subject so that they can educate their peers on how to handle and prevent violent situations. For more information about Choose Respect, please contact Sandy Crawford at (618) 433-4907 or Anne Tyree at (618) 462-2331.

Alton CUSD #11 serves Alton, Illinois. The District consists of nine elementary and secondary learning institutions and serves over 6,000 students. Alton CUSD #11 prides itself on serving students from diverse backgrounds and learning levels, and enabling

these students to have the most successful futures possible through education. Visit [www.altonschools.org](http://www.altonschools.org) to learn more.

Morning Star Baptist church is located in Alton and is committed to strengthening youth through knowledge and faith.

Founded in 1959, WellSpring Resources is a total mental wellness resource serving Madison, Jersey, and Calhoun counties. With offices in Alton and Jerseyville WellSpring's compassionate professionals work with children, adults and families to inspire hope and personal growth. Last year, 4,600 people sought to change their lives for the better through WellSpring's behavioral health and substance abuse services. Visit [www.wellspringresources.co](http://www.wellspringresources.co) for more information.