

KIDS ON THE MOVE FOR SUCCESS

Tuff Tactics

The Program:

Tuff Tactics proposes to teach children social-emotional skills in Compassion, Confidence, and Control before a crisis occurs. These are the qualities Antoinette Tuff used to reach the gunman at Ronald E. McNair Discovery Learning Academy.

The program is targeted to students in Pre K – Grade 12. The 12 session course, with 30-45 minute lessons, can be conducted within a school, after school setting, or community program. All participants complete an assessment before and after completion of the program to evaluate skill development growth. Critical to the program design are activities that encourage literacy, play, and social emotional learning.

The Need:

According to a recent NBC report on Guns in America (Elizabeth Chuck, April 2019): “millions of schoolchildren in America ... have done active shooter and lockdown drills.” In The Impact of Gun Violence on Children and Teens (May 29, 2019), “American children aged 5 to 14 are 21 times more likely to be killed with guns.” Finally, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) Leading Causes of Death, 2017), reports that “Firearms are the leading cause of death for Black children and teens in America”.

“Tuff Tactics” is a program conceived by Antoinette Tuff. On August 19, 2013, she was a school bookkeeper, severely depressed that her husband of 33 years had recently left, and faced with the daunting challenges of raising a son with multiple disabilities as a single mom. The next day, her life changed forever. Antoinette, an accidental hostage negotiator, used her experiences with challenging life issues to successfully convince an armed gunman who entered the Ronald E. McNair Discovery Learning Academy to give her his AK-47. This is the only school active shooter situation in the US that ended without death or injury to school students, faculty, parents or shooter himself. Experienced hostage negotiators, law enforcement and community leaders praised her intuitive, yet textbook, hostage negotiations on August 20, 2013.

Never did she think that she would become a hero saving more than 1,000 lives, a best-selling author, an international celebrity or a guest of Michelle Obama’s at the State of the Union Address.

Outcomes:

By the end of the course, children should:

- Show an increased understanding of kindness, caring, and a willingness to help others (Compassion)
- Develop a sense of trust or faith in themselves and others. (Confidence)
- Show power to manage and restrain behavior and words (Control)