PATHS® (Promoting Alternative THinking Strategies)

**Program Summary:** The PATHS (Promoting Alternative THinking Strategies) program is an evidence-based violence prevention program that gives children in grades K-6 the skills they need to promote social and emotional development and find positive, nonviolent solutions to social problems. The PATHS program focuses on teaching children how to express emotions, control their emotions as appropriate, develop effective conflict-resolution strategies, and increase social competency.

**Developer:** Carol A. Kusché, Ph.D. and Mark T. Greenberg, Ph.D.


**Contact:** Dorothy Morelli, 1-615-364-6606 or dorothygm@hotmail.com

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

1. **What population is PATHS designed to target?**  
The PATHS program is designed to help preschool and elementary-age children develop social emotional and problem solving skills and is published in two versions. A version targeted for specific grade level implementation was released in January 2011. The original basic PATHS program (for grades 1 through 6) is also still available and has five volumes.

2. **What risk and protective factors is PATHS designed to target?**  
During research studies, the PATHS program has been shown to improve protective factors such self control, understanding and recognition of emotions, ability to tolerate frustration, more efficient conflict-resolution strategies, and thinking and planning skills. The PATHS program has also been shown to directly impact behavioral and emotional difficulties. Replicated findings show decreases in externalizing symptoms (aggression, hyper-active disruptive behavior) and internalizing (anxiety/depressive symptoms), and improvement in peer relations and academic engagement in the classroom.

*Protective Factors Targeted for an Increase*

- School Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement
- School Rewards for Prosocial Involvement
- Social Skills
- Interaction with Prosocial Peers

*Risk Factors Targeted for a Decrease*

- Low School Commitment
- Poor Academic Performance
- Rebelliousness
- Friends’ Delinquent Behavior
- Favorable Attitudes toward Antisocial Behavior
3. What kind of outcomes can be expected from PATHS?

In rigorous clinical studies*, the PATHS program has been shown to:

- reduce teachers' reports of students exhibiting aggressive behavior by 32%
- increase teachers' reports of students exhibiting self-control by 36%
- increase reports of prosocial peer relations
- significantly improve students' ability to tolerate frustration
- increase students' scores on cognitive skills tests by 20%
- increase students' vocabulary for emotions by 68%
- increase students' ability to use effective conflict resolution strategies
- reduce depression and sadness among special-needs students.

Information and research articles demonstrating the impact of the PATHS program can be accessed at:

- PATHS Training LLC  
- Penn State University/Prevention Research Center-  
  [http://prevention.psu.edu/projects/PATHS.html](http://prevention.psu.edu/projects/PATHS.html)
- Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence -  
  [http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/modelprograms/PATHS.html](http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/modelprograms/PATHS.html)
- SAMHSA’s National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP) -  
- Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning-  

4. Who can deliver the PATHS program?

The PATHS program is designed to be taught by elementary school teachers and generalized throughout the school day with administrative support. The PATHS program concepts can be used by all staff in the school including principals, guidance counselors, and support staff. PATHS is also flexible and can be used in alternative settings, including non-school programs.

5. How is the PATHS program structured?

There are two versions of PATHS available.

**Grade level modules:** Newly published in January 2011, the grade level PATHS program is a complete kit for each grade level. A kit comes with an Introduction to an instructor’s guide, a curriculum manual, posters, parent materials, and other grade specific supplies.

- Preschool/Kindergarten-44 lessons
- Grade 1-52 lessons
- Grade 2-50 lessons
- Grade 3-42 lessons
- Grade 4-40 lessons
- Grade 5-Coming soon! To be published by the end of 2011
Original basic PATHS program: The original basic PATHS program is designed to be integrated as appropriate into the classroom curriculum and may be the best choice when using the program with special targeted populations. Six program manuals, containing over 100 interactive lessons, move children along a continuum of emotional competency. The original basic PATHS program allows for flexibility to tailor the progression of lessons to targeted populations. The PATHS program has core concepts that are taught in each grade at age appropriate levels as well as review and reinforcement as children move through the program.

Schools implementing PATHS create a PATHS community atmosphere by having Control Signal Posters (problem solving steps) posted throughout the school, having school principals/administrators reinforce PATHS concepts with students with disciplinary issues and provide their support to teachers with implementation, and having support staff and itinerant teachers trained to use the PATHS concepts as well. A site’s PATHS trainer consults to help each site develop a plan for strong implementation.

A free online preview of the PATHS program is available at:  

6. **What kind of training is needed for the PATHS program?**

Two models are recommended for PATHS program training. Each site should consult with their PATHS trainer to determine the best model for their site. Model one is two teacher training days at the beginning of PATHS implementation and a one day teacher booster/follow up session after 4-6 months of implementation. Model two is two teacher training days within a month to six weeks of each other at the beginning of PATHS implementation and a booster/follow up session after 4-6 months of implementation.

It is also important to plan training for school administrators, itinerant teachers, guidance counselors, and support staff. This training may be a one day or half day training depending on the needs of the individual site.

Training workshops are led by certified, experienced trainers who help participants gain in-depth knowledge of the program’s contents and intended goals. There are certified PATHS trainers in Pennsylvania; however, all training requests are coordinated by:

Dorothy Morelli  
PATHS Training LLC  
Telephone: (615) 364-6606  
E-mail: dorothygm@hotmail.com

7. **How much does training cost?**

Training costs $2000 for a one day training workshop for no more than 30 teachers plus travel expenses and per diem. Each site should request an estimated training cost from the PATHS Training Coordinator, Dorothy Morelli. (See contact information above)

8. **How do I purchase the PATHS program?**

PATHS program materials are available through Channing Bete, Inc. and can be viewed and purchased online at: [http://store.channingbete.com/onlinestore/search.html?vid=20050104000&da=J910P](http://store.channingbete.com/onlinestore/search.html?vid=20050104000&da=J910P) or by calling 1-800-477-4776. Each site should discuss their needs with Dorothy Morelli or their PATHS trainer before purchasing the PATHS program materials.
9. **What additional supplies are needed, beyond the PATHS program manuals?**


10. **What costs should I budget for?**

- **PATHS grade level program kit for each teacher:**
  - Preschool/Kindergarten-$799 (Includes instructor’s manual, curriculum manual, storybooks, puppets, our feelings chart, posters, “feeling faces” cards, stickers, coloring books, and a CD with family communication and support materials)
  - Grade 1-$599 (Includes instructor’s manual, curriculum manual, turtle puppet, our feelings chart, posters, “feeling faces” cards, stickers, “Remember To Do Turtle” window clings, and CD with family communication and support materials)
  - Grade 2-$449 (Includes instructor’s manual, curriculum manual, our feelings chart, “feeling faces” cards, posters, stickers, “Control Signals” window clings, and CD with family communication and support materials)
  - Grade 3-$399 (Includes instructor’s manual, curriculum manual, posters, stickers, “How Are You Feeling” window clings, and CD with family communication and support materials)
  - Grade 4-$449 (Includes instructor’s manual, curriculum manual, 4 novels, poster, “Step by Step, Problem Solved” window clings, and CD with family communication and support materials)
  - Grade 5-Coming soon! To be published by the end of 2011

  OR
  - PATHS Basic Kit for Grades 1-6- Please contact Channing Bete at 1-800-499-4776 for current pricing information. (Includes an instructor’s manual and 5 volumes of curriculum containing over 100 interactive lessons)

- **Initial training for all teachers.** Please contact Dorothy Morelli at (615) 364-6606 or dorothygm@hotmail.com for an estimated training cost for your site.

- **A follow up or booster training for all teachers annually.** Please contact Dorothy Morelli at (615) 364-6606 or dorothygm@hotmail.com for the current training rate.

- **Training for school administrators, itinerant teachers, guidance counselors, and support staff.** This can be scheduled in conjunction with the initial teacher training or for a separate time.

- **Ongoing Consultation with PATHS trainer.** $50/hour approximately two times per month.

- **Yearly copies of Feelings Faces Cards for grades K-2.** Feelings Faces Cards are given to students to help them recognize and be aware of how they are feeling at certain times of the school day. These copies are made on cardstock. Budget for this expense annually.

- **Rings for Feeling Faces Cards for grades K-2.** Rings for students to keep their feeling faces together. Budget for this expense annually.

- **Copies of Parent Letters Home & Home Activities.** With each PATHS lesson there is a parent letter and/or home activity that needs to be copied for each student. Plan to make these copies for each class implementing PATHS each year. Budget for this expense annually.
- **Extra posters.** It is important to have visual reminders for students of the PATHS concepts. Also, it is helpful for administrators, guidance counselors, and itinerant teachers to use the posters in their interactions with students.

- **Books from the Bibliography List.** (Optional, but strongly encouraged). PATHS integrates well in most schools’ language arts curriculum and it would be helpful for teachers to have access to books about feelings and problem solving. Refer to the Bibliography list for books that would be relevant to PATHS. Books could be housed in the school library or books could be purchased for individual teachers or grade levels.

- **PATHS Coach** (Optional, but strongly encouraged). A PATHS Coach is a support person locally hired by the site to help administrators, teachers, and support staff begin PATHS implementation. The coach can create resources to support implementation for teachers, model integrating PATHS into curriculum areas such as language arts, math, science, and social studies, and provide general support for data collection, and supply coordination.

- **Funding to hire a local evaluator at the site’s discretion (see question #12).**

- **Verification of implementation quality visit by developer or designee.** PCCD funded sites are required to have the implementation quality of their program verified by the developer or trainer in year two. An estimated cost for one visit with the grantee’s overall program coordinator for PATHS is approximately $2000 per day through PATHS LLC. In addition to travel costs that include airfare or mileage, hotel, airport parking, and per diem of $50.00. Each site should contact Dorothy Morelli at (615) 364-6606 or dorothygm@hotmail.com for an estimated cost of to fulfill this requirement.

Please be aware that a developer or designee may require visits to multiple sites to verify sufficient implementation quality. Potential grantees need to contact the developer or designee to get an estimate of the travel and time expenses for the verification of implementation quality visit for their specific site and include that cost in their budget for the second year of grant funding.

11. **What are some common barriers I might encounter with PATHS?**

   One common issue with PATHS program implementation is teacher buy-in and lack of administrative support both of which are crucial to successful PATHS implementation. It is important to pre-plan with the Director of Curriculum for your school district on how to address this issue. Demonstrating the connection between the PATHS program and the PA Department of Education’s Academic Standards and the ease of integrating the PATHS program into multiple academic areas helps to create buy in with both teachers and administrators. It is also important to emphasize how the PATHS program creates a positive classroom and school climate and therefore lessens the need for behavior management in the classroom and more time is available to be spent on learning.

   Getting all staff in a school engaged in PATHS implementation is another common barrier. Generalizing PATHS concepts throughout the school day is an integral part of the program and having all staff know and using the general PATHS concepts for identifying feelings, stopping to calm down and problem solving is important so that students are being given consistent messages.

   Other common barriers that need to be addressed in the planning stages are creating a system for collecting data, developing a system for fidelity observations, and engaging parents. Consulting with your PATHS trainer will help you address any specific concerns related to barriers to implementation for your site.
12. What evaluation tools should I use?
   Below is the list of evaluation tools recommended by the Penn State EPISCENTER to collect the outcomes needed to report to PCCD for the PATHS program:

   EPISCENTER PATHS Student Survey (Pre and Post)
   EPISCENTER PATHS Discipline Referral Tracking Form
   EPISCENTER PATHS Annual Teacher Survey
   EPISCENTER PATHS Fidelity Observation Tool
   EPISCENTER PATHS Fidelity Observation Tracking Tool

   You may obtain copies of these tools by contacting the EPISCENTER at 814-863-2568 or download them from the EPISCENTER’s website at http://www.episcenter.psu.edu.

   Sites are expected to monitor implementation quality and fidelity. Fidelity observations are to be conducted by an observer who has been trained in the PATHS program.

   The EPISCENTER provides funded sites with a spreadsheet for entering program outcome and process data and the ability to summarize and report that data to the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency. If more extensive analysis is desired sites may consider identifying an evaluator.

13. In what ways can I involve my local prevention board?
   - Local collaborative boards can play an important role in program development and sustainability. At start-up, present the research behind PATHS and share your local goals for the program.
   - Provide board members with a fact sheet and the program’s logic model.
   - Help them to understand ways in which they can contribute to the program’s local success.
   - Identify potential program champions or community gatekeepers that can help to build relationships that may lead to program support.
   - Provide frequent verbal reports on the program’s impact and at least annually provide a written summary of program outcomes.
   - Identify board members to become engaged in generating outcome reports and securing sustainability funds.