

## Community Tampa Bay conducts first elementary Level youth conference at Sutherland

By Carolyn Britton

On November 2nd, 2006, Sutherland Elementary was most fortunate to have Ms. Jessica Estevez of Community Tampa Bay present a day-long program for the Principal's Multicultural Advisory Committee. The focus of the program was to deter name-calling by increasing communication and understanding among students of diverse backgrounds.

The day began with every student at Sutherland watching "Sticks and Stones," a video about name-calling that is designed to promote dialogue and respect among students from a variety of cultures, religions, and races at the elementary level. Student representatives from all classes (k-5) then gathered in the media center to engage in well-planned activities to further expand opportunities for learning about the harm name-calling can do.



Ms. Estevez included many fun activities and opportunities for the students to work together and discuss differences openly. Quickly avenues of communication opened up among students from diverse backgrounds and grade levels through these activities. The students eagerly provided their input throughout the day. By the end of the program, it was apparent that increased learning and awareness about the damage name-calling can do had taken place. Over the next week several teachers reported to the PMAC liaisons that their student representatives had effectively shared with their classes what they had learned.

Ms. Estevez presented a wonderful, high-energy program that will benefit all Sutherland students, and help make our campus a place in which every person is treated with dignity and respect, regardless of race, faith, ethnicity, gender, or age. The Sutherland faculty and staff supported this event by assisting with the planning, promotion, flexibility, and feedback. Volunteers were an important part of the day. Some came with Ms. Estevez, some were Sutherland parents who helped during the event, and some parents worked with community businesses to provide snacks and lunch for the participants. A big thank you goes to all, especially to Hungry Howie's for providing all the pizza for lunch.

Sutherland was most fortunate that our event was filmed by Channel 14 and should be airing in December. Tune in and see this marvelous program presented by a passionate and powerful leader who is empowering kids to make a positive change in their world one person at a time. Thank you, Ms. Estevez, for an inspiring day!



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TAMPA BAY TODAY TO  
SCHEDULE YOUR YOUTH  
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568-9333

"The mission of Community Tampa Bay, formerly known as NCCJ, is to promote dialogue and respect among all cultures, religions and races."

"Peer relationships are an important part of the social context of the classroom and should be an important instructional consideration."

James Banks

"If a school works together as a team, the results will be well worth the time and effort."

Cindy Flora