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Thoresen Thai Agencies Public Company Limited (TTA) is a strategic investment holding company, listed on the SET, with an investment policy to achieve growth through a balanced portfolio that is diversified both locally and internationally. Its business portfolio includes shipping services, offshore services, agrochemical, and other investment - logistics, F&B.

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THORESEN THAI AGENCIES PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED (TTA)

Doing Good, Stop Bullying

Introduction

Bullying in schools is a problem in many countries around the world. Bullying is often followed by short-term and long-term undesirable psychosocial consequences. In the short-term, affected students are often fearful, anxious and unable to concentrate in class, leading to lower grades. Long-term effects include low self-esteem, lack of self-confidence and depression. In Thailand, one survey found 40% of students being bullied two to three times a month or even more frequently. Nearly 40% of teachers failed to help students who had been bullied by their schoolmates. (Dr. Sombat Tapanya, 2007)

To raise greater awareness and to develop a sustainable solution to this vital social problem, Thoresen Thai Agencies Public Company Limited (TTA) joined with the Raks Thai Foundation to launch the "Doing Good, Stop Bullying" project in primary schools. This project aims to reduce bullying behavior among students and promotes greater awareness amongst teachers and the community of bullying.

Framework and Strategy

Bullying is usually defined as being an aggressive, intentional act or behavior that is carried out by a group or an individual, repeatedly and overtime, against a victim who cannot easily defend him or herself. The bullying is mostly in the form of verbal attacks and insults about race or complexion. Many studies have reported that students start to bully at a young age. For this reason, the Doing Good, Stop Bullying project targets students in primary schools.

Adapting the successful YouthMax curriculum of leadership training expert John Maxwell to local conditions, a series of workshop have been conducted for teachers and students in participating schools, with the goal of promoting empathy, empowering students to be "a HERO" by raising one's self-esteem, and respect for peers and others in society.

The concept of "Prevent before Correction" defines the project's unique approach as this project helps students at early age to stop their bullying behavior before growing up to be bullies as adults.

Achievement and Impact

In the first two-year pilot project to reduce bullying, a total of 1,561 students from 41 schools participated the program. The measures included understanding of impact of bullying, announcing a school policy prohibiting students from bullying one another, and monitoring and reporting the incident to teachers. A number of children who had been bullies acknowledged their bad behavior and have now stopped bullying others. Children who had previously been victims have learnt to avoid being alone in risky situations and how to be more assertive when protecting themselves. The society level, the Facebook StopBullyingTH page and PR program generated greater awareness amongst teachers, parents and students, the media and related government agencies. Finally, at the national level, the Prime Minister of Thailand had already received a briefing about the project. Some discussions on this issue were held with the Office of the Basic Education Commission to integrate the Stop Bullying manual into their education program.

Future Direction

The widespread nature of bullying requires a consistent, sustainable response. The company is now planning to expand the project to schools nationwide as well as addressing the issue of cyber-bullying.

TTA will seek to continue to raise awareness of bullying and best practices in prevention throughout the community by expanding the project beyond school networks into social media channels. The Project will encourage every school to adopt "no bullying" policy, and press for prevention of bullying to become a national issue in order to receive more attention from related government agencies and the private sector with a view to enacting supporting legislation such as an Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights.

As a leading Asia investment company, TTA understands the critical importance of human resources for enterprises and for the benefits of the country. The "Doing Good, Stop Bullying" project will not only help reduce social problem but also help prepare children become high-quality and mindful citizens of the future.

