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## **TLC introduces Miss Kendra's List program to local schools**

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**CLAREMONT** — For nearly two years, TLC Family Resource Center has been screening the film “Resilience: The Biology of Stress and the Science of Hope.” The film helps to explain the concepts of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), such as any type of abuse, divorce, and homelessness.

One of the beauties of the movie is that it doesn't stop by identifying the problem and the far-reaching impacts of having a high ACEs score. The producers highlight evidence-based programs that can help children cope and be resilient. One of those programs is the ALIVE Program which was started by The Post-Traumatic Stress Center in New Haven, CT. The program is currently being used throughout the New Haven and Minneapolis school districts as part of the ALIVE Program.

The program was designed to be used with classes from kindergarten to fifth grade and uses simple, direct language to remind people of the basics of child safety. ALIVE also offers a variation of this for middle school and high school students. At the start, elementary school students are introduced to “The Legend of Miss Kendra” that explains how a woman named Miss Kendra was coping with loss and generated a list to define what the basics of child safety are.

There are classroom activities created to work with each grade level which includes reading the list out loud, discussion of the list, writing and reading letters from Miss Kendra. The students are encouraged to write to Miss Kendra and share things happening in their lives. The program is free to the students.

Bringing the program to Sullivan County was an important step for TLC to meet the needs of the community around ACEs.

“I have seen the film 'Resilience' many times now. In the film, we are introduced to Miss Kendra and her empowering list for children. Each time I see the film, I am struck by the hope that it represents in the face of Adverse Childhood Experiences,” said Maggie Monroe-Cassel, director of TLC Family Resource Center. “Hope will drive us to do something for our children. For TLC, Miss Kendra’s List is another step in our efforts to reduce the effects of trauma on lives of children.”

Stacey Hammerlind, Family and Community Coordinator/Family in Transition Coordinator for SAU No. 43, and Melony Williams, clinical supervisor at TLC, attended training for Miss Kendra’s List and will be working together. They will be introducing the program to the Newport kindergarten classes this month.

“Children today have to deal with a lot of grown up issues — economic stress, the regional housing shortage, the opioid epidemic. No matter how much parents try to protect their children from the stress in their lives, kids are incredibly perceptive and don't miss much. They bring these worries with them to school and it can make it really hard for them to concentrate on school,” said Hammerlind.

“Miss Kendra is a wonderful program that gives children the words and a safe place to share their worries, shake them off for a little bit, and just enjoy the rest of the school day a little lighter. It also teaches them that they are not alone and that their classmates and adults in school have their worries too. It teaches compassion and empathy,” she continued.

Williams is looking forward to sharing the program with the students in Newport.

“I feel that working with the kindergarten students in Newport, alongside their teachers and paraprofessional staff, will give these children the opportunity to learn about how children need to be kept safe, to understand their worries, to express them to caring adults and to hopefully be able to set them aside so that their minds and hearts are more open and ready to learn about academics as well as to form healthy social connections,” she said.

“It is exciting to think about the positive effects that could happen through the partnership between TLC, the Richards Elementary Staff and the parents while we roll out the Miss Kendra curriculum in NH,” Williams continued.

There are plans to bring the program to the Claremont School District in the future. There will also be additional screenings in our area for “Resilience” in November and December for those who may not have seen it yet.

You can read more about Miss Kendra at [traumainformedschools.org/miss-kendras-list-and-child-safety-classroom-activities](https://traumainformedschools.org/miss-kendras-list-and-child-safety-classroom-activities). To talk about bringing Miss Kendra’s List to your school district, please contact Williams at 603-542-1848 ext. 303.