

THE MACOMB DAILY

Warren Rotarian launches program to help Children!

By Linda May, For the Macomb Daily Posted: 10/10/14, 11:56 AM

Warren Rotary Club member Rudy Lawson uses items familiar to children, like soccer balls, to reinforce anti-bullying messages. He has taken his program to Wayne Westland, Livonia, and the Van Dyke Public Schools thus far and intends to approach Rotary Clubs throughout America and serve school districts everywhere where there is a need, and where he is Welcomed!

Rudy Lawson's program, Friends Against bullying,(F.A.B.) / Rotary 4 Way Test For Anti- bullying is his invention for helping children deal with difficult situations.

Lawson, a member of the Warren Rotary Club, goes by the names and titles "Mr. Rudy," "EDU-tainer," and multi-sensory consultant.



He works through a nonprofit called the Creative Arts and Humanities Fund. The fund uses goals and objectives based on concept that, if each person learns differently, then a way needs to be found to teach the way each person learns. Lawson gives presentations on multi-sensory education and positive mental techniques, and motivational seminars in school districts and throughout the United States and Canada and has made this educational program available to the Warren and Van Dyke Public Schools, currently helped along by the Warren Rotary Club.

The seminars involve auditory, visual, musical, linguistic, kinesthetic, thematic, movement and participation elements. He uses Rotary International's "The Four-Way Test," which states that "Of the things we think, say or do: Is it the truth? Is it fair to all concerned? Will it build goodwill and better friendships? Will it be beneficial to all concerned?"

“The Warren Rotary makes the program possible,” club president-elect Jan Loch said. “We made Rudy an honorary member after hearing his program at the district conference and after he presented to us. What he does is exciting – gets everyone up and moving – as he teaches his ‘I Am Smart, I Am Special’ song to teach kids just that, and how to be a friend. He has also incorporated our Rotary Four-Way Test. Will it be beneficial to all, or will it hurt? He has a soccer ball with the Four-Way Test on it.”

Literacy – a particular interest of Rotary – is creatively and musically presented to reinforce reading preparation and learning to read.

Lawson describes his presentations as “upbeat, creative and fun” and as reinforcement of what children learn at school and home. Inherent in the program is building character, shaping values, instilling confidence, resilience and hope.

“It began as a seed in 1997 when I was asked to attend a Rotary International conference,” Lawson said. “I sat on a panel to help formulate an action plan that Rotary hoped would be a movement toward a better understanding of Rotary and how they could be more visible in urban communities and help bring a sense of urban peace.”

Rotary’s 1.2 million business professionals and community leaders volunteer their time, talent and resources to address community needs. Many of their programs are paid for through The Rotary Foundation which supports some of Lawson’s efforts in schools in Wayne County.

“This leads to me traveling throughout the United States and Canada as a representative of this cause and provides me the perfect vehicle for presenting seminars in school districts, conferences, and communities all over,” Lawson said. “The seminar that they wanted me to share was the ‘I Am Smart’ program.”

“Our anti-bullying campaign is gaining momentum. Our hope is that it sparks interest and might put something of positive news in the face of the harm occurring from bullying for youth, parents, teachers, schools and neighborhoods. With preschool through high school student’s suicides, violence, and unrest spawning in families from this epidemic, it is very destructive, challenging, and extremely urgent that every community make every positive effort to advocate on behalf of youth and their families” he said.

Lawson would like to see young people have different heroes beyond rappers, celebrities, and professional athletes and have tools for positive change and deterrents to bullying.

He believes that Rotary's motto, "Service Above Self" and its Four-Way Test of ethics can become tools for students, teachers, parents, and communities. Don Riddell is governor of District 6380, which includes 52 Rotary clubs in Macomb, Washtenaw, Livingston and Oakland Counties, and Kent County, Ontario.

"I have seen many of our Rotarians tackle the ever-increasing incidents of bullying in their schools and in their communities," Riddell said. "Virtually every community can sadly tell a tale of this type of abuse and the results, sometimes even leading to a tragic suicide. The big question is: How do you get through to these young students?"

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