

## Effective Schoolwide Implementation

The effective implementation of Lions Quest requires a long-term commitment. This process does not always follow in a linear, step-by-step fashion because different schools may initiate the process differently, depending on the needs, level of support, and resources available. Usually small groups begin and build momentum with the motto, “Start small—think big.” In general, program implementation involves the following steps:

**Step One:** Planning for Implementation

**Step Two:** Implementing the Program

**Step Three:** Evaluating the Process and the Results

**Step Four:** Adapting and Improving the Program

**Step Five:** Institutionalizing the Program

### Step One: Planning for Implementation

Planning is crucial to successful implementation. During the planning stage, a core planning team builds support for the program, answers questions and concerns, and selects an implementation model. (See pages 32–34 for a description of implementation models.) As in any effective curricular effort, the more planning up front, the better the result.

Begin by forming a planning team. A core team of three to eight people should supervise the planning stage. This team includes the trained staff who will lead or support the program, the principal, other staff and administrators, parents, and community representatives. Because the Lions Quest programs were designed to bring into collaboration the home, school, and community, planning must involve these three groups.

A facilitator, administrator, or parent should be designated as the team leader. As soon as the program is implemented and the planning team’s main responsibilities are completed, members of this team will probably become members of the School Climate Team or Committee. The School Climate Team or Committee will then work to support the facilitator, extend the benefits of Lions Quest into the school and community, and nurture the home-school-community partnership. (See pages 48–49 for a description of the School Climate Team or Committee.) The active involvement and support of the principal or another key administrator is important to the success of the programs. Ideally, the principal will directly oversee the program. An assistant administrator can also play this role, provided that he or she has sufficient authority to provide the necessary leadership.

### Building Initial Support

Communication is key to successful implementation. The following suggestions will help the planning team encourage full acceptance of the Lions Quest programs:

- Before the program is implemented, hold a community meeting to explain its content and goals. Invite planning team members—especially parents and other community representatives—to speak at these meetings.
- Meet separately with anyone who has special concerns. Share these concerns with appropriate school personnel. Make sure everyone has an opportunity to

## Primary Responsibilities

Following are the main responsibilities of the person overseeing a Lions Quest program:

- Select the planning team.
- Participate in a training workshop.
- Conduct orientation meetings.
- Establish the School Climate Team or Committee.
- Plan for and support the parent meetings outlined in the Families as Partners guide.
- Involve members of the community.
- Monitor the program and provide support.
- Evaluate the program’s impact.

review the curriculum. Respect any questions and comments, remembering that they are expressions of caring and commitment to quality education.

- Send a letter to parents whose children will be in the program. The first letter states the program's goals, describes materials that parents will receive, and lists the topics and times for the parent meetings. Be sure to share your own excitement about the program and invite parents to visit the classroom.
- Send a press release to local media announcing the program. Later, you can send additional announcements regarding parent meetings, speakers and events, and service-learning projects.

### **Step Two: Implementing the Program**

Effective classroom implementation is the heart of a successful Lions Quest program. The "Instructional Strategies" section of this guide offers guidelines and suggestions that will help facilitators establish and maintain the supportive environment that fosters the development of positive social skills.

### **Step Three: Evaluating the Process and the Results**

Evaluation is essential but it need not be complex. It involves gathering information and reporting it to interested people, such as parents, central administration, other facilitators and staff, and sponsoring groups. Evaluation might involve a before/after comparison of school records of student misbehavior, detentions or penalties, tardiness, and attendance at parent meetings. Direct quotes from facilitators, parents, and students or the documented success of a service-learning project are useful. Demonstrating positive results builds support not only for the program, but also for the school as a whole.

### **Step Four: Adapting and Improving the Program**

Adaptation may begin almost immediately as the facilitators and other staff determine what works best for the students. Adaptations must be clearly thought out, while maintaining both facilitator and student enthusiasm. The School Climate Team or Committee can help in the adaptation and improvement process. This may involve acclimating new facilitators to the program and informing incoming students and parents about goals and expectations.

### **Step Five: Institutionalizing the Program**

Many schools have integrated Lions Quest so completely that the entire school reflects the climate of the program. For example, Monte Cassino School in Oklahoma has developed a school philosophy that closely parallels that of Lions Quest. Parents are informed about it as soon as they enroll their children in school. Institutionalization means that commitment and "buy-in" for the program have been obtained at all levels, including the school board, staff, parents, and community members. All work together to bring about lasting positive change.