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Publication Date: August 29, 2017

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Spectrum News

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YouthAlert! teaching middle- and high-school students how to resolve conflicts without violence

08/29/2017 10:51 AM

YouthAlert! Founder Douglas Wain wrote a 2010 book titled "The War Against Violence Everywhere," and a year later wanted to put his words into action.

That marked the genesis of YouthAlert!, a school program designed to curb bullying and give teenagers the tools they need to resolve issues without resorting to violence.

"We started this nonprofit basically as a bunch of peace activists," Wain said during an interview with Pure Politics. "Our total goal, of course, is world peace, but we're trying to get world peace through youth peace first.

"So I would just say we're a bunch of what we call CPAs – crazy peace activists – and the best way we decided to go about getting peace is through youth and that's where all our programs are targeted."

YouthAlert! started in Kentucky, focusing primarily in middle and high schools in Louisville and Lexington, and has branched out into other cities across the country where youth violence is a prevalent issue, such as New York and Chicago.

In Kentucky, Wain says his program has reached 10,000 students in three years. Follow-up surveys conducted by YouthAlert! show that more than 96 percent of participants learned new ways to avoid conflict through the program.

In today's society, Wain says it's imperative to teach students how to handle cyberbullying on social media outlets like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

"We constantly have to teach them how to block, and I see them practicing while we do it," Wain said. "We don't want them to lose the Internet or lose their phone. We always tell them, 'Get help and don't change,' but they need the skills to learn how to block, and sometimes it's kind of complicated."

Watch the full interview with Wain here, including where he sees YouthAlert! going and how schools can better handle bullying:

YouthAlert! interview



Kevin Wheatley

Kevin Wheatley is a Video Journalist for Spectrum News and covers Kentucky politics and all the goings-on at the State Capitol. Kevin was born and raised in Frankfort so he grew up around politics and has always had the drive to follow the political process and hold lawmakers accountable. Before joining Spectrum News Kevin covered government and politics for The State Journal in Frankfort. You can watch Kevin's work weeknights at 7:00 and 11:30 on Pure Politics, available exclusively on Spectrum News, HD Channels 403 and 715. You can reach him at kevin.wheatley@charter.com or 502-792-1135.

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