

The Ariel's Legacy C.U.E. Campaign, 2016-2017

Pilot Program Study Results

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Pediatric and Adolescent Bipolar Disorder

- Suicide is the second highest cause of death among teens today.
- Over 30% of Bipolar youths have made a suicide attempt.
- Over three million children in North America suffer from Bipolar Disorder and another 6% of children are severely impaired by Bipolar Disorder symptoms.
- Over 60% of children and adolescents suffering from Bipolar Disorder also suffer from ADHD, 50% also suffer from anxiety disorders, 20% also suffer from conduct disorder and autism spectrum disorder.
- Although often extremely bright and creative, Bipolar youth show worse performance on cognitive tests of attention, memory, processing speed, verbal learning and problem solving, thus requiring tutoring and special education.
- 34% of adolescents with Bipolar Disorder suffer an alcohol, drug abuse or addiction problem and 14% suffer from problems with both alcohol and drugs.
- For every year of illness left unidentified and untreated, Bipolar youth have a 10% lower likelihood of effective treatment.
- Bipolar Disorder affects children and adolescents more severely than adults.
- 65% of adults with Bipolar Disorder report that their symptoms started in childhood or adolescence. These adults with early onset have more severe disease with more suicide and substance abuse problems.
- Children with Bipolar Disorder grow up to be adults with Bipolar Disorder.

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THE ARIEL'S LEGACY C.U.E. CAMPAIGN 2016-2017

Pilot Program Study Results

Mental illness touches everyone. Despite the stigma often associated with mental illness, it's a rare person who doesn't know someone with – or have a relative with – a brain disorder.

— Dr. Janet Wozniak, M.D., Ariel's Legacy Scientific Advisory Board Member

1 INTRODUCTION

The goal of the C.U.E. Campaign (Care, Understanding and Empathy), launched by Ariel's Legacy in the United States and Canada, is to enhance awareness and compassion, fight stigma in schools, and increase volunteerism, leadership, and schools' collective spirit. We hope for a better understanding, on the part of students and professionals in the schools, on the topic of both mental health, generally, and Bipolar Disorder, specifically. This is accomplished through a peer-to-peer Campaign approach, using packages of innovative information for students, teachers and counsellors.

The main dynamic implemented promotes group work and bonding among students, and aims at attitudinal changes (targeting knowledge, emotion, and action, the three main components of collective and individual attitudes). Operationally, the tools used emphasize (1) the use of the Student Manual for the Campaign, that describes the steps to be followed by students, following a micro-business approach that promotes applied useful learning, and (2) the sale of decks of playing cards, specifically created by Ariel's Legacy with information on each card about youth brain illnesses in general and bipolar disorder in particular, and other fundraising and awareness activities, connecting action to civic-duty, to underline how one can show compassion by caring, giving support and friendship to students living with brain illnesses.

2 METHODOLOGY AND CHALLENGES

The C.U.E. Campaign focuses on promoting awareness of Bipolar Disorder in youth, in an initially limited number of schools in New York City, USA and Toronto, Canada. The eight schools recruited in this first pilot phase (that launched in late 2015 and throughout 2016) include two schools in New York and six schools in Toronto. Eight schools are a non-representative sample of the overall school systems of these two cities, therefore response rates are not significant statistically. Still, the essence of a pilot program study, targeting awareness, is to test the robustness and efficacy of the materials used in the implementation of the Pilot Program by measuring two moments: (1) prior to the launching of the Campaign (pre-questionnaire), and (2) the later impact or changes produced by/after the Campaign (post-questionnaire).

By following this pilot approach, we found that the clear majority of questions in the pre-and post-questionnaires shows a consistently clear interpretation and variation effect throughout all the schools engaged. The results of this pilot validate the reliability, and rigorous formulation of the questions/items presented in the pre- and post-questionnaires, and ultimately, the increase of the overall awareness, which is one of the pillars of attitudinal change.

For the future implementation of the C.U.E. Campaign, we are working to recruit more schools in both the US and Canada, and are already establishing connections in Spain, to start the cultural adaptation needed to implement the Campaign in Spanish schools.

2.1 FACTORS INFLUENCING POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE RESULTS

2.1.1 POSITIVE FACTORS

- ❖ The Campaign relies on self-selected student leaders, who tend to be more aware than the average student. Those students initiate forming a group of like-minded students in their school and going out to sell the Campaign packages. The motivation of these students contributed to the success of the sales among their peers.
- ❖ The schools were generally in middle-class areas, not under-privileged, and we are aware that in poorer areas, the sales may not have worked as well. A connected future line of action might be to set up prior fundraisers and/or credit systems that might encourage donations for underwriting the Campaign costs for future under-privileged students involved in the C.U.E. Campaign.

2.1.2 CHALLENGES

- ❖ In the schools where the pilot programs occurred in May, 2016, before final exams, we found less commitment and focus on the side of the students.
- ❖ The lag times between the pre- and post-questionnaires varied for the different schools and could have influenced the impact (lesser emotional connection and memory for the longer gaps) in the responses obtained in the post-questionnaires.
- ❖ In schools like CHAT in Toronto, the levels of awareness shown in the pre-questionnaires were already very high, therefore the increase rate was not as significant as in some other schools.

2.2 LEARNINGS FROM THE SCHOOLS/CONTEXTS

Each school required a careful process of first contacts, emails and phone call exchanges and authorizations, explaining the Campaign opportunity, engaging faculty and Student Committees, supporting the students' preparations for the Campaign (marketing strategies, videos, posters, other presentations, etc.). The easy-to-read Student Manual, in a business model basic format, clearly describes the steps to be followed by the students (in particular, for the Student Leader of each Campaign), and it was very appreciated as a guiding tool.

3 RESULTS

Overall, the pilot program studies described here show that the C.U.E. Campaign was a success. We believe that this Campaign, initially focused on awareness, might save lives by addressing the passiveness and lack of knowledge regarding mental health problems, among children and adolescents. Our work is embedded in promoting support and friendship to the students who are the most vulnerable in classrooms, because of their brain illnesses and the daily life challenges related to them. These students might experience bullying or other kinds of stigma/discrimination.

3.1 NUMBERS

From a basic quantitative analysis, despite the fact of the non-representativeness of the pilot sample, there is an average of over 2 points rise for the students in the New York schools (these students were in middle school), which means that there is an overall increase in emotional and knowledge awareness and drive towards action. There is an average increase of 1.7 for the students in Toronto (these students were in high school). Note, that for formal awareness studies that use scales of 7 or more points (the C.U.E. Campaign has a scale of 10 points), increases of 1 point tend to be significant, since the answers of the pre-questionnaires already start at the high rank of the scale (usually over 6-7). The overall patterns for the distribution of the increases show no differences between the students in New York and Toronto, but there are some small differences to be noted regarding:

Responses to the different Questions:

The questions that show less positive increase in the pre- and post-questionnaire are:

Question #10 (mental illness is not contagious) *Probably because a very high awareness of this fact is already shown in the pre-questionnaires; and*

Question #7 (awareness of mental health websites and helpline phone numbers) *Probably because several students found themselves unable to memorize those; and*

Question #9 (any talk of suicide requires the advice of a trusted adult) *Probably because this is obvious to most teenagers from previous knowledge.*

3.2 NARRATIVES: RESULTS OF QUALITATIVE ANSWERS

A hundred percent of the students responded affirmatively to the sentence:

“I have become more aware of issues related to mental health in general and Bipolar Disorder specifically - both in my school and in my community”.

The qualitative answers to Question #12 in the post-questionnaires:

“What is the most important thing you will remember from this C.U.E. Campaign?”, and *“Other comments”* show extremely positive impacts in the students.

Appendix B has a complete list of all student answers to Question #12, but the following is a list of some representative quotes from participating students:

- *The most important thing I will remember from the C.U.E. Campaign is the feeling that we may have helped a person inflicted with mental disease.*
- *The fact that I know that I'm helping someone*
- *That awareness is important because some people don't know a lot about mental illness.*
- *I feel I did something important*
- *Human kindness is more powerful than we think. I learnt so much from working on this program and heard great feedback from friends and classmates. Hope to continue the program for many years to come.*
- *I learned I can make a difference.*
- *I feel empowered. I will be kinder to someone who doesn't have friends.*
- *That you never really know how the person feels and should be as sensitive as you can be.*
- *This program really broadens my understanding and I'm very glad I got to be a part of it.*
- *How much those with Bipolar suffer.*
- *That we gave out packages with cards that contain information that can potentially save a life.*
- *I had fun and I enjoyed participating.*
- *How the group worked so well together as a team.*
- *Seeing the interest in the students' faces as they learned more about bipolar disorder. Seeing them become more involved with helping students with bipolar disorder.*
- *The high number of students who were eager to support this cause.*
- *That mental health issues don't discriminate and that we can all be affected.*
- *It is crucial for us to be caring and accepting of others.*

4 IMPACT ON TEACHERS AND PROFESSIONALS

By providing a mental health awareness program, we are helping teachers and professionals to do their job well. In the Student Manual, the teachers' found that we were also giving students a "business tool" (instructions to run a successful sales Campaign). We assisted the teachers in the school because the Campaign was self-directed learning for the students and did not impact teachers' time. The whole concept of peer-to-peer awareness as opposed to teacher-to-student awareness is highly valuable, and the efficacy is partly indicated by the fact that we lighten the load on teachers while, at the same time, giving them important information in an easily accessible form.

Thank you very much for giving us the opportunity to be part of the Ariel's Legacy Campaign. I feel it was an exceptionally enriching experience for both students and staff. The materials were first-rate, and really assisted teachers to accomplish mental health awareness in our school community.

— Ms. Klompas, Head of Guidance, CHAT High School, Toronto

The method of delivery for the information of the C.U.E. Campaign is both innovative and engaging and promotes the transformation of two groups: teachers/professionals and the students. The basic process of the C.U.E. Campaign has three stages:

1. Initially engaging with teachers and professionals in the school system, to ensure their support in the Campaign rollout.
2. The teachers' support in engaging top student leaders in the school, who ultimately lead and implement the plan for launching the C.U.E. Campaign in their school. They design the specifics on how to deliver the Campaign materials and how to implement the Campaign logistics.
3. The Student Manual and materials provided are the core professional tools the students work with. There is enough flexibility to decide on the custom modes of participation and engagement strategies to be used in each school.

The students and I at I.S. 254 had an incredible, enriching experience participating in [the C.U.E. Campaign for] Ariel's Legacy... By participating in this program, students empathized with people struggling with this disorder and became passionate about spreading mental health awareness throughout the school and plan to take the program with them to their new schools next year. The passion has been ingrained in our students' minds and hearts.

— Ms. Perez, Head of Guidance, I.S. 254, Bronx

Each school's context is different and it is the top student leaders who are "the true experts" in each scenario. The context is made up of the individual students' realities of their school environment, the interactions among them and with their teachers, and the overall educational circumstances given at each school. For example, if schools where students are unable to pay for a C.U.E. Campaign package, there may be creative ways where they would be able to earn the package. This could include "earning it" by completing helpful tasks in the school to accumulate "points" to earn their package.

From a psychological and pedagogical perspective, the Student Manual and the Campaign materials provided by Ariel's Legacy to the students, teachers and professionals, truly help to engage the students and convey a message of empowerment, participation and support to the class, in the sense that it is student-run. It develops peer-to-peer awareness, and allows the students to choose the specific ways in which they want the C.U.E. Campaign to be promoted. At the same time, it encourages the involvement of the teachers and other school professionals in the C.U.E. Campaign.

This Campaign truly helps the teachers and guidance counsellors in the school system to do their job more effectively by equipping them with a program of modern resources and tools which deliver important content on mental health to students and the entire school body. Overall, it becomes clear that peer-to-peer campaigns and all advocacy efforts based on the age and physical proximity of the students (young people experiencing brain illness and student peers who share with them the core daily routines in education based on schools' activities) are significant in two major ways: the ethics of caring that they help to promote and the assimilation of the qualified information (in the C.U.E. Campaign packages) that constitutes the central knowledge of this Campaign.

Despite the questioning of the validity and reliability of the information processes involved in these campaigns, overall results conclude that the credibility that peers transmit overcomes other challenges and promotes the assimilation of the information shared/provided throughout the Campaign's dynamics.

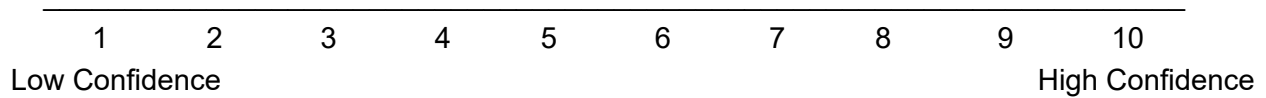
5 MOVING FORWARD

The next step of the C.U.E. Campaign is now focused on securing more schools in the US and Canada to participate in the C.U.E. Campaign, and in addition, implementing the Campaign in Spain (there are preparations for the Campaign to be implemented there by the beginning of the school year, 2017/2018). A new member of the Scientific Advisory Board of Ariel's Legacy, Dr. Cesar Soutullo, responsible for the Psychiatric Unit of Children and Adolescents at the University of Navarra Clinic, is a wonderful resource and will be working with Dr. Arancha Garcia del Soto (a member of the Ariel's Legacy Board of Directors, who is based in Spain), under the advice of Ariel's Legacy Co-Founder, Lynn Tesher, and President of Ariel's Legacy Canada, Penny Shore. The plan for Spain is to target a more representative sample of schools (with different socio-economic backgrounds, including both private and public schools, approximately ten in Madrid and four in three provinces of the North). We will attempt to learn from the experience garnered from the first pilot program (shared exam calendars and different timings for the interim between the pre-and the post questionnaires). We will also make the necessary adjustments to accommodate cultural differences.

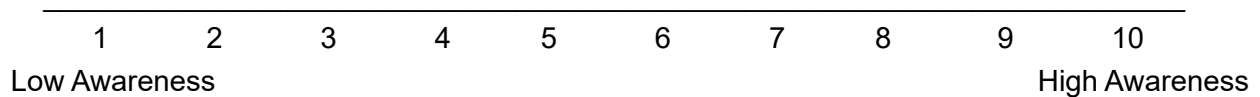


Information in the C.U.E. Campaign packages, 2016-2017

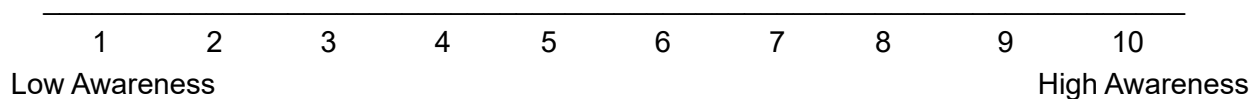
6) I feel confident about suggesting, to someone I know who seems to be at risk, that they should talk to a trusted adult:



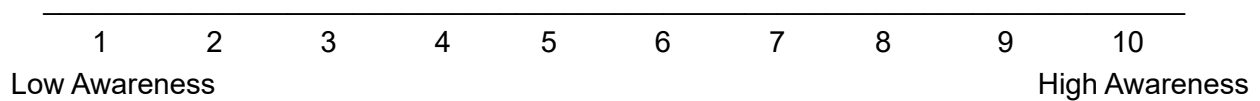
7) My awareness of the mental health websites and helpline phone numbers for students at risk is:



8) I am aware that mental illness (also known as brain illness) is a medical condition, and the earlier that one gets help, the better the chance there is for a more successful outcome:



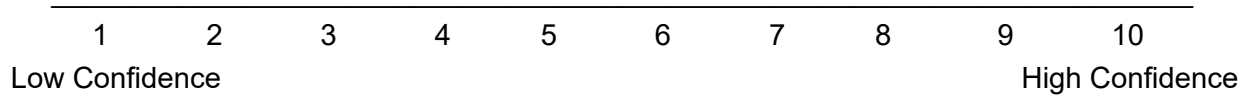
9) I am aware that any talk of suicide from a fellow student always requires the advice of a trusted adult:



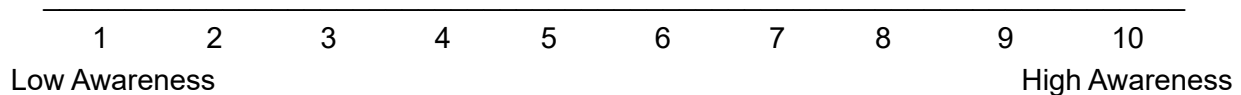
10) I am aware that no one asks to be born with a mental illness (brain illness); there is no choice – and it is not contagious:



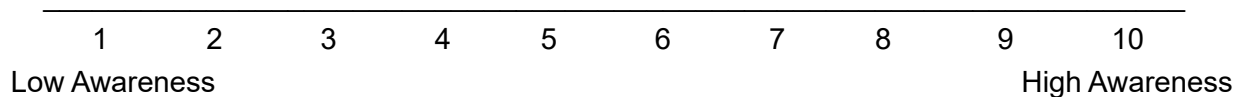
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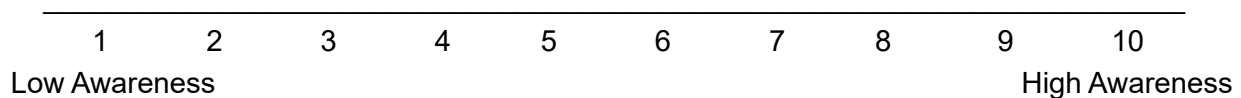
7) My awareness of the mental health websites and helpline phone numbers for students at risk is:



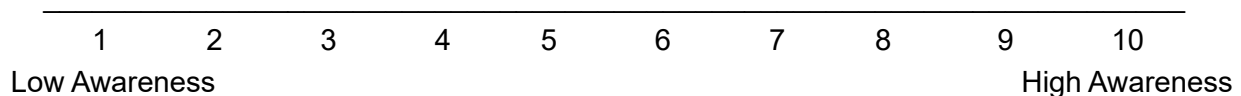
8) I am aware that mental illness (also known as brain illness) is a medical condition, and the earlier that one gets help, the better the chance there is for a more successful outcome:



9) I am aware that any talk of suicide from a fellow student always requires the advice of a trusted adult:



10) I am aware that no one asks to be born with a mental illness (brain illness); there is no choice – and it is not contagious:



11) Please answer the following questions by making a check mark:

- a) By participating in the C.U.E. Campaign, I have become more aware of issues related to mental health in general and Bipolar Disorder specifically – both in my school, and in my community.

Yes No I don't know

- b) I understand that every dollar raised from the C.U.E. Campaign will go towards research on Bipolar Disorder in youths or a specific program for youths.

Yes No I don't know

12)

- a) What is the most important thing you will remember from this C.U.E. Campaign?

- b) Other comments:

Your feedback in answering these important questions will contribute to the continual improvement of the C.U.E. Campaign.
Thank you for volunteering for such a worthy cause!

APPENDIX B

QUALITATIVE ANSWERS, POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

Q#12: “What is the most important thing you will remember from the C.U.E. Campaign?”

Quotes from I.S. 254 Middle School (NY) C.U.E. Campaign Participants:

- *The most important thing I will remember from this C.U.E. Campaign is the feeling that we may have helped a person inflicted with mental illness.*
- *The most important thing I will remember from this C.U.E. Campaign was the fact that I know I’m helping someone.*
- *The most important thing I will remember from this C.U.E. Campaign is that awareness is important because some people don’t know a lot about mental illness.*

Quotes from Yeshiva University High School for Girls (NY) C.U.E. Campaign Participants:

- *I learned so much from working on this program and heard great feedback from friends and classmates. Hope to continue the program for many years to come.*
- *I learned I can make a difference*
- *I will remember to distinguish the difference between people and mental illness and I will notice how hard it is to talk about mental illnesses and try and make people with these illnesses more comfortable and well.*
- *I will be kinder to someone who doesn’t have friends.*
- *That you never really know how the person feels and should be as sensitive as you can be. This program really broadened my understanding and I’m very glad I got to be part of it!*

Quotes from CHAT High School (Toronto) C.U.E. Campaign Participants:

- *I will remember that mental health issues don’t discriminate and that we can all be affected in the same way. It is crucial for us to be caring and accepting of others. We need to take care of each other.*
- *The C.U.E. Campaign, like many other mental health programs, has educated me about bipolar disorder in greater depth and has motivated me to research about it during my own time. With all the awareness programs, they eliminate the misconception that these disorders are real and not a choice. I hope CHAT will continue to bring mental health programs that its students can become involved in and learn from.*
- *Meeting Ariel’s parents.*
- *The most important thing I will remember is that the term “bipolar” is too loosely used, and that people with this mental illness are really struggling.*
- *Helping make a difference gives you personal satisfaction.*
- *I will remember meeting Ariel’s parents and the effect of bipolar disorder on many families.*

Quotes from Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute (Toronto) C.U.E. Campaign Participants:

- *That many people are impacted and we need to help them. It was nice to see how students reacted when hearing about Bipolar disorders and how it impacted them.*
- *I am more aware of the bipolar disorder.*
- *How many people were actually willing to help and those who shared their story.*
- *Seeing the interest in the students faces as they learned more about bipolar disorder. Seeing them become more involved with helping students with bipolar disorder. We should help people with more mental illnesses and educate them on them.*
- *The most important thing I will remember from this is that everyone is different and should be considered as someone and not different.*
- *The most important thing I will remember is the high number of students who were eager to support our cause.*
- *That bipolar disorder is a real medial issue people must deal with.*
- *Understanding that Bipolar Disorder is found easily at my school. Really enjoyed this campaign.*
- *I will remember how much time and effort was put into planning and carrying out this campaign how we have helped spread awareness and decrease the stigma.*

Quotes from B'nei Akiva Girls High School (Toronto) C.U.E. Campaign Participants:

- *That we gave out packages with cards that contain information that can potentially save a life.*
- *That it is not someone's fault if they were born with a mental illness, specifically bipolar. I feel a lot more educated about bipolar disorder.*

Quotes from Toronto Prep School (Toronto) C.U.E. Campaign Participants:

- *How much those with bipolar suffer.*
- *That mental illness is really hard for people... you should be nice to them.*
- *The most important thing I will remember from the campaign was researching information prior to wellness week.*
- *The younger [a person] gets help, the better it becomes in the long term.*
- *The most important thing is raising awareness and informing everyone about Bipolar disorder.*
- *That mental illnesses are something people can't see and it's terrible that such young people are taking their lives because of it.*
- *I will remember that it is an important issue.*
- *That it is the most underfunded mental illness and that people are the least aware of it.*

Quotes from Blyth High School (Toronto) C.U.E. Campaign Participants:

- *The support of my fellow students in making this was a success.*
- *Bipolar disorder affects more people than we think and we need to be more conscious of the people around us. I had fun and enjoyed participating!*
- *I will remember that we are doing this for a good cause and that all proceeds will go to the C.U.E. Campaign. And how people were willing to donate money for nothing in return.*
- *Bringing awareness to a specific issue.*
- *I now know the seriousness of specific mental illness that individuals have. I also am able to help individuals by telling them of beneficial knowledge I have obtained from this campaign.*
- *How the group worked so well together as a team. How the school overall donated to the cause and participated with enthusiasm in the event.*

APPENDIX C

SCHOOL CAMPAIGN EXPERIENCE

I.S. 254 Middle School, Bronx, NY:

I.S. 254 Middle School is a mid-size public school (student body: 500). The Principal was warm and welcoming, and understood the C.U.E. Campaign immediately. He suggested that the school's Guidance Counsellor be the Teacher Advisor for the Campaign and she and the Student Committee were very enthusiastic and prepared a 25 minute PowerPoint presentation that they delivered to 24 classes in the school to advertise the Campaign. The Guidance Counsellor said that the girls had learned so much while preparing the presentation, not just about mental health, but also about themselves and how to responsibly prepare and present a discussion. The four girls who made up the committee did a great deal of research to promote the Campaign in their school and created a 25 minute power point presentation which they made to each class. Although the girls were all aware of different forms of mental health issues, they expressed a real sense of being moved, empowered and inspired to do more. The questionnaire results were very positive.



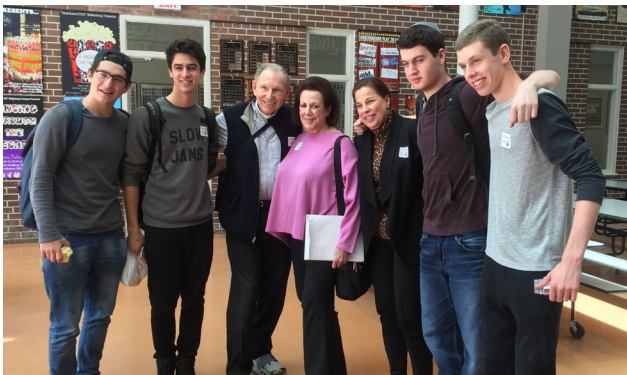
Yeshiva University for Girls High School, Hollis, NY:

Yeshiva University for Girls High School is a mid-size parochial school (student body: 300). The Guidance Counsellor and the faculty in charge of charity programs liked the program and put together a Student Committee of girls from grades 9, 10 and 11. The Committee was excited to run the C.U.E. Campaign in their school. The Committee decided not to use the C.U.E. Campaign packages as a part of their Campaign and instead focus on the important issue of Care, Understanding and Empathy by using extensive video presentations and multiple discussion groups. Some of the girls on the committee at first questioned why this was an important project for them. At the conclusion of the Campaign those same girls were quite emotional and thankful for being involved. Their responses to the questionnaires showed real growth of understanding and compassion and the results were very positive.



CHAT High School, Toronto, ON:

CHAT is a large private school (student body: 587). The Principal, Vice-Principal and Head of Guidance were enthusiastically involved from the first introductory orientation meeting through to the completion of the C.U.E. Campaign. The Student Committee was very ambitious and really wanted the Campaign to succeed. Critical thinking and a critique of the program was not their focus. They really wanted to share the Campaign with all students at the school and put a lot of effort into making the Campaign's presence known through various efforts, such as going through the halls and speaking to students, and a video presentation that played on screens throughout the school. The Committee was very positive and wanted to show that they had learned something from the Campaign. Everyone had a significant positive increase in their post-questionnaire.



Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute, Toronto, ON:

Marc Garneau is a large public school (student body: 1,800). Because of the large population of the school, it was more difficult to get as much recognition within the school for the program, despite the enthusiasm of the faculty and the Student Committee after the introductory orientation meeting. The Student Committee was very inventive in getting the student body aware of what the Campaign was about, by creating unique posters and by developing a pledge that all those who donated signed. At the same time, they were realistic about the interest that the student body would have for the Campaign. The school Principal had to deal with the Toronto District School Board regulations and therefore there may have been a more critical environment, though in general, there was a positive slant to the post-questionnaires.



Bnei Akiva Girls High School, Toronto, ON:

Bnei Akiva Girls is a small parochial private school (student body: 100). The atmosphere at Bnei Akiva Girls was different than some of the other schools, due to its small population. It seemed as if all the students knew each other, which made it easier for them to communicate to the student body about Ariel's Legacy and the C.U.E. Campaign. Enthusiasm for the program was high at Bnei Akiva Girls after the introductory orientation meeting, where the Student Committee was encouraged to run as much of the Campaign, as possible, on their own. The Committee stickered everyone in the school with Ariel's Legacy stickers and held an assembly for the school about the C.U.E. Campaign. There was a definite positive slant to the post-questionnaires in comparison to the pre-questionnaires.



Bnei Akiva Boys High School, Toronto, ON:

Bnei Akiva Boys is a small parochial private school (student body: 100). Like Bnei Akiva Girls, the students at Bnei Akiva Boys all knew each other, therefore it was easier to discuss the Campaign with other students. The Student Committee was very excited to run their Campaign after their initial orientation meeting and spoke at a school assembly to explain the C.U.E. Campaign to everyone. They were very successful in their Campaign and sold all of the packages that they had requested. However, since only one person filled out the pre- and post-questionnaire – not great compliance – it's harder to gauge the effect of the Campaign, but the one survey that was returned was positive.



Toronto Prep School, Toronto, ON:

Toronto Prep is a small private school (student body: 295). All the students are taught to get involved and use critical-thinking in all parts of school and everyday life. Both faculty and the Student Committee were very enthusiastic about the Campaign after the initial orientation meeting and believed that everyone at the school would get involved and learn about Ariel's Legacy and the C.U.E Campaign. The Student Committee put posters up around the school to advertise the Campaign and PA announcements were made. However, we think that the Student Committee thought it was their job to critique the program because of their unique training in critical thinking, which may be why their post-questionnaires skew on the negative side.



Blyth High School, Toronto, ON:

Blyth is a small private school (student body: 100). There was a lot of enthusiasm from students to be a part of the C.U.E. Campaign during the introductory orientation meeting, though once the Campaign was active, fewer students were as interested and the Student Committee had a more challenging job of selling to the student body than they had anticipated. They decided to combine their Campaign with an ice cream sundae bar, which did drive more traffic to their table. The questionnaires are a mixed bag, some showing positive response, others showing a negative response. Because of the nature of the Blyth schools, students are encouraged to question and use critical thinking in all aspects of school life, so this may have impacted the results.



APPENDIX D

C.U.E. CAMPAIGN STUDENT MANUAL
(Attached separately)