

# Prevention With a Local Flavor

By Gabe Nae'ole

**M**any youth in Hawai'i grow up in challenging environments and must deal with difficult situations like substance abuse and violence. PREL's Ho'ōikaika Kino curriculum was created for use in 4th–6th grade classrooms to help children deal with these kinds of situations.

Ho'ōikaika Kino means “to strengthen the body,” and we have chosen this name to emphasize the importance of strengthening the whole body. The curriculum does that for Native Hawaiian children by focusing on how thoughts and feelings lead to words and actions. Built on the *‘ōlelo no‘eau* (Hawaiian proverb) that *he hale ke kino no ka mana‘o*, or “the body is a house for thoughts,” (Pukui, *‘Ōlelo No‘eau: Hawaiian Proverbs & Poetical Sayings*, 1983 [Bishop Museum Press], p. 65), Ho'ōikaika Kino reinforces emotional literacy, communication, and decision making skills. Strengthening these skill areas increases a child's ability to make healthy choices, which in turn strengthens the body.

The curriculum integrates research-based prevention practices and literacy strategies in 25 activities that help teachers address the Hawai'i Content and Performance Standards III in both language arts and health. With so many demands on classroom time, integration across subject areas is essential.

PREL chose classrooms as the context for delivering these materials because research shows that positive interpersonal attachments with teachers and peers in the classroom can have a protective influence on children (see Morrison, Robertson, Laurie, & Kelly, “Protective Factors Related to Antisocial Behavior Trajectories,” *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 2002). Each unit offers classroom,



small-group, pair, and individual activities so students can practice and apply their new skills in a variety of contexts.

Student surveys about substance abuse and involvement in violent behaviors show a marked increase when students enter middle school. In keeping with the prevention philosophy of addressing problems before they emerge, Ho'ōikaika Kino is aimed at grades 4–6 to precede the problem behaviors and to be reinforced at the critical 6th grade transition point.

If you'd like to use Ho'ōikaika Kino in your classroom, please contact Miki Cachola-Solomon at [cacholam@prel.org](mailto:cacholam@prel.org) for more information, or view the materials online at [www.nahoahoola.org/swfl/index.html](http://www.nahoahoola.org/swfl/index.html).

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