



Madeira Board of Education, 7465 Loannes Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45243
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All Madeira City School District Students Start with Hello

At the end of September, all Madeira Schools, together with the Madeira Police Department, worked together to build a more connected and inclusive community to help end social isolation. They participated in *Start With Hello*.

Start With Hello is a prevention program that addresses the fact that in every school and community, there are young people who suffer silently because they feel left out, alone, or invisible – which in turn can lead to bullying, violence, or depression. Started by the national nonprofit organization Sandy Hook Promise, the program's goal is to prevent violence in schools by teaching students to ban social isolation.

Madeira first participated in *Start With Hello* during the 2018-2019 school year when Madeira Elementary School staff and City of Madeira employees united to help ensure the district's youngest students started the new school year being seen and accepted with fun and impactful activities. Madeira Middle School joined the program in the spring of 2024 with the school's Sources of Strength Peer Leaders working to help all students feel included. Students saw and heard positive messages in school and parents were asked to continue the conversations at home. Madeira High School (MHS) was added this fall making it the first time the district held a joint effort among all three buildings and the police department. At MHS Sources of Strength members partnered with Student Government to host activities that helped promote that every Mustang and Amazon matters.

The *Start With Hello* program teaches students three simple steps: 1. See Someone Alone, 2. Reach Out and Help, and 3. Start With Hello. Parents are encouraged to have conversations at home with their child(ren) regarding the power of saying "Hello" and how that simple word can build connection, community, and empathy among classmates. Students are also asked to identify a trusted adult in their school that they would be able to share concerns with if they see something.



Pictured on MES' Dreaming of Kindness Thursday during Start With Hello week is (l to r) Madeira Police Detective Richard Byram, School Psychologist Lori Timpone, Assistant Principal Sara Gehring, Principal Chandley Bacher, and Counselor Emory Bergdoll.