



Goddard Schools' effort gives alternatives to bullying

Teaching children at early age is best way to fight it: officials

By **Cody Peck**
cpeck@sunnews.com

The subject of bullying among school-age children is one that gets a lot of attention these days.

This controversial issue has become a hot topic of conversation during the past decade, largely due to widespread reports of school shootings, suicides and other related tragedies that bullying has caused.

"We're seeing more and more of it in the news," said Sue Adair, director of education and quality assurance for Goddard Schools Inc., an organization that franchises 370 pre-kindergarten schools across the country.

Adair, who has been involved in education for 24 years, thinks the best way to combat the problem is to address it at an early age.

"We try to teach children about friendship, kindness and compassion," she said. "You teach the kids, give them confidence, and the likelihood of bullying behaviors will just go

down."

Locally, Angela Schmid owns and operates the Avon Goddard School. She agrees with Adair and works to instill these values in her students.

"The experts keep pointing back before elementary school," Schmid said.

The franchise uses "The Goddard Guide to Getting Along" educational program to introduce its students — ranging from 18 months to 5 years old — to the values of courtesy and respect. The education is built into engaging activities, making it a natural fit.

"It's a simple, but very direct program," Schmid said. "They are getting it. It's not lost on them."

On Feb. 5, Goddard Schools across the country, including the Avon school, will host a Goddard Community Games event that will demonstrate some of the activities used in the classroom. The event will feature playful

See **BULLYING, A8**



Kelly Pyros, far right, and pre-kindergarten students Jack, left, Avery and Jocelyn share a hug during a lesson on friendship and resolving conflicts at the Goddard School in Avon.

BULLYING

From A1

learning activities with a focus on fun and enrichment.

Schmid, a mother of two, hopes that it helps the community learn about the approach Goddard is taking in

response to the nation's bullying problem.

For more information about the Goddard Community Games, contact the Avon school at (440) 934-3300.

See more Avon news at cleveland.com/avon.

Contact Peck at
(216) 986-6063.