



Fire Department  
Bureau of Instruction and Training

**Douglas A. Holton**  
Chief

**Brian D. Glassel**  
Assistant Chief

**Michael L. Jones**  
Deputy Chief

## **Introduction -**

Project Staying Alive is a new home grown program developed right here in Milwaukee in 2006. The program is designed to educate sixth grade children in our community on proper anger management, conflict resolution and problem solving skills, which in turn could help reduce the number of violent injuries within the city of Milwaukee.

Why is the Milwaukee Fire Department teaching this program? Almost eighty percent of a Milwaukee firefighter's workload is treating medical emergencies. They respond, treat and transport all of Milwaukee's violent injuries, including life threatening stabbings and gun shot wounds. The Milwaukee Fire Department has highly trained members and one of the best EMS systems in the nation for treating and transporting patients with life threatening injuries. By having these same highly trained firefighters and paramedics teaching Project Staying Alive to sixth grade students, they are able to implement their on the job experiences and stories into the program to make a lasting impression on the students.

The Milwaukee Fire Department is nationally recognized for their outstanding prevention programs. This program has been modeled after the highly successful Survive Alive program, which is another reason why Milwaukee firefighters are best suited to teach Project Staying Alive. In Survive Alive, firefighters teach all second and fifth grade students in fire education and prevention. By teaching and interacting with these students, the firefighters gain respect and rapport with them that carries over to sixth grade when those same students are taught anger management and violence prevention through Project Staying Alive. This program consists of five two hour classes taught by Milwaukee Fire Department members, Project Ujima staff and the student's teacher, all taking place in the classroom.

## **Methodology -**

Due to multiple grant sources, Project Staying Alive is available to all sixth grade students in Milwaukee. The goal is to train 1,000 sixth-graders in anger-management skills by the end of the 2008-2009 school year, followed by 2,000 more students next school year, with the long term goal of reaching every sixth grade student in Milwaukee

The five session Project Staying Alive course is broken down as follows: Class #1 and Class #3 are taught by the student's teacher. The teachers must attend a two hour Project Staying Alive introduction and training session taught by Milwaukee Fire Department instructors and Project Ujima staff prior to teaching class #1. In the introduction and training session the teachers learn about the goals, focus and objectives of the program as well as their overall responsibilities. The teachers also receive all the materials needed to conduct Class #1 and Class #3.

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Milwaukee Fire Department instructors teach Class #2 and Class #4. These two classes are 90 – 120 minutes each and taught in the student's classroom by three instructors per class.. The students are tested in Class #2 and Class #4 where they answer questions from the power point presentations by using the Turning Technologies Audience Response cards. These cards allow data to be collected and reports developed instantly to show the student results and improvements and to capture measurable objectives in Class #2 and Class #4. The classes also have numerous small group sessions, various interactive activities and role playing scenarios, all designed to change the overall attitudes, perceptions and opinions about guns, anger, violence and violent injury.

Class #5 is a sixty minute follow up and feedback session where two Milwaukee Fire Department instructors return to the classroom to interact with the students. In this session the instructors provide a review of the program, go over the class results and scores, conduct a class survey, perform some anger management role playing scenarios and have a question and answer session. Each student then receives a Project Staying Alive T-shirt for completing the course.

By collecting and comparing the data from both Class #2 and Class #4 we are able to identify the percentage of correct answers for both classes and the amount of overall improvement in the students knowledge and attitudes about guns, anger, violence and violent injury. When comparing all the schools that have completed the program we show an overall improvement of 46.24% from Class #2 to Class #4. We feel that these students, now educated in anger management, conflict resolution, gun violence and violent injuries will be better prepared to identify, address and prevent situations that could escalate into a violent event.

### **Summary –**

The Milwaukee Fire Department is committed to reducing violent injury within the City of Milwaukee. With the cooperation and assistance of numerous agencies, partners and schools within Milwaukee, we are confident that the Project Staying Alive program will be successful in educating sixth grade students in proper anger management techniques and problem solving skills that will help reduce the amount of violent injuries within the City of Milwaukee.

Development of this program has been supported by Milwaukee Public Schools Superintendent William Andrekopoulos, Milwaukee Fire Departments Chief Douglas Holton, The Office of Justice Administration, Project Ujima and oversight boards within both Children's Hospital Of Wisconsin and The Medical College Of Wisconsin.

