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Family

Children's Program and Book Demonstrate the Power of Compassionate Touch

PALM BEACH GARDENS, Fla. - Children who apply compassionate touch to playmates to help relieve pain strengthen self-esteem and positive behaviors, according to research conducted by The Upledger Foundation based in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.

The four month study of Compassionate Touch was carried out at schools in Ohio, Texas, Florida, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota and California. Conducted with 560 children in grades K-2, the program centers around a simple hands-on technique called "Direction of Energy" that allows children to help classmates who sustain minor injuries. The results show statistically significant increases in prosocial behaviors, and equally significant decreases in

aggressive and hostile behaviors.

"We're gratified by the outcome," says John E. Upledger, D.O., O.M.M., founder of The Upledger Foundation and its nonprofit healthcare charities. "It confirms my long-held belief that compassion is inversely related to violence. When children help others they feel better about themselves. That alone can do wonders to ease potential violence as little ones grow into teenagers and young adults."

Before and after each program, teachers assessed the children using the Social Skills Rating System (SSRS), a 57-item inventory of social skills, problem behaviors and academic competence designed for grades K-6. At the conclu-

sion of the study, students demonstrated statistically significant increases in social skills, including cooperation, assertion and self-control. They also exhibited statistically significant decreases in problem behaviors, such as externalizing and hyperactivity.

For the children followed for two years, the results continued to be significant. "They were also consistent from class to class, school to school and state to state," Dr. Upledger adds. "So the benefits clearly apply to children across the board."

While the formal research study has concluded, plans are in place to implement the program in schools across the country.

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I Can Show You I Care

Compassionate Touch for Children

Susan Cotta

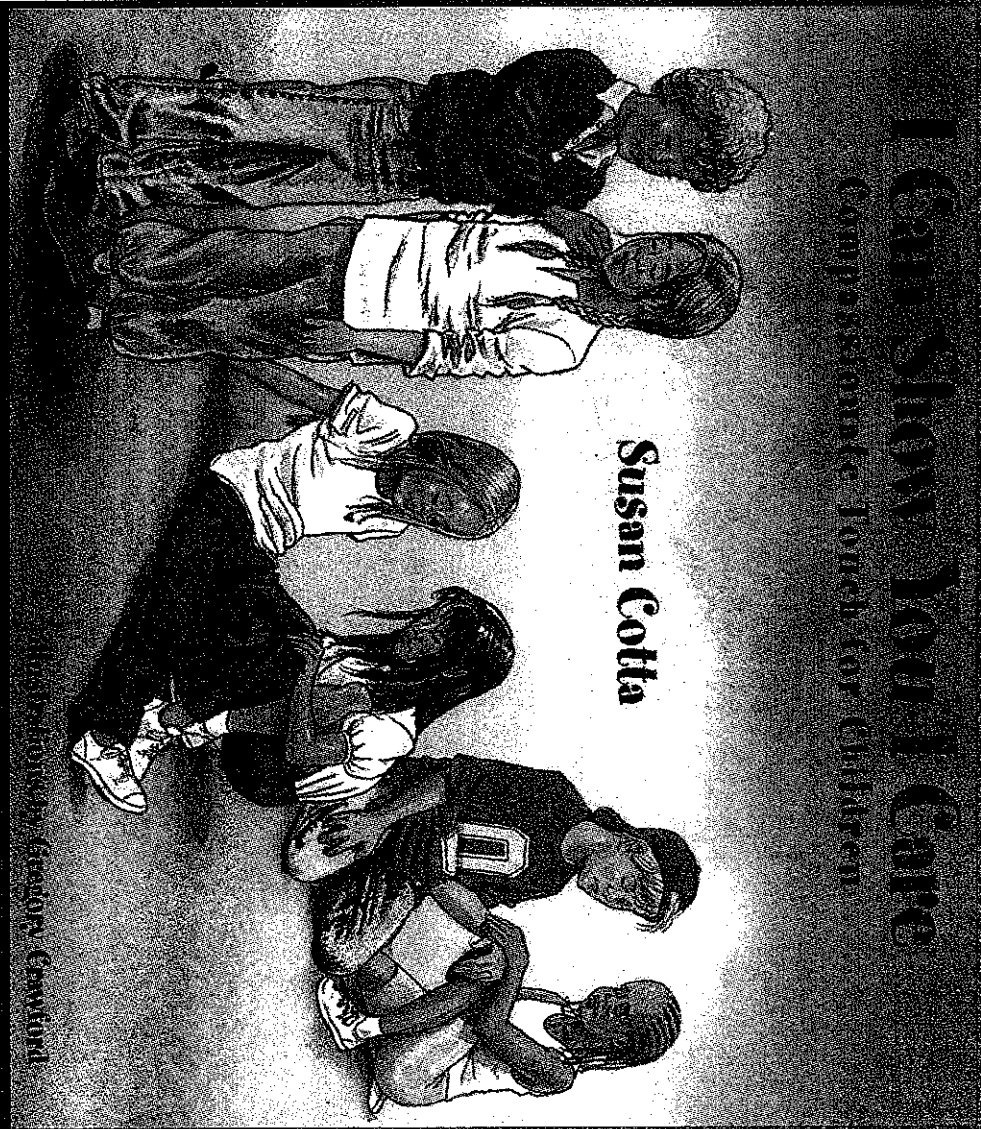


Illustration by Gordon Crawford