



A grant from the Port Coquitlam Community Foundation has laid the foundation for a province-wide anti-bullying program. The \$4,500 grant allowed I Am Someone, founded in 2012 to end the hurt from bullying through education, support and technology, to work with students in Port Coquitlam to figure out how to reach kids being bullied. Kids weren't going to the school counsellors, says Andrea Howorth, executive director of I Am Someone, and they weren't asking for help from older adults but they were googling bullying. Armed with this information, I Am Someone launched the Bullyingornot.ca website. Bullying is confusing and can be hard to recognize, Howorth says, so the website urges kids to text or call bc211 where there are trained professionals 24/7, 365 days of the year, ready to listen and help.

The PoCo Foundation grant also enabled I Am Someone to hold focus groups at several Port Coquitlam schools that led to a rebranding, with different messaging aimed at boys or girls. The slogans I am joking (aimed at boys) and She pushed me (aimed at girls) are being printed on decals, posters and stickers, and contain information on bc211. Initially, these will be distributed to rec centres, schools, bus shelters, shopping malls in the TriCities and I Am Someone has applied for other funding so as to get the message out across the province. Before we did the research, there were zero calls to bc211 from Port Coquitlam on bullying.



The monthly statistics show us that our message is reaching kids and the TEXT 211 is now being used, Howorth says. For information visit www.bullyingornot.ca