

Mitchell Shea by Sheila Fletcher



Born: June 2, 1994

Home: Toronto, ON

School: Duke of Connaught School

His Words:

"It's cool to be able to make a difference! I have learned that life is like a staircase. You have to take it one step at a time. If you miss a step, you just pick yourself up and keep on climbing."

Mitchell Shea at school

A Community Builder

Mitchell Shea is a student at Duke of Connaught School. In Grade 5, he became part of the Community Builders Youth Leadership program. The main goal of the program is to create caring school communities. Students learn how to step in to help someone who is being bullied, excluded, or targeted by others. They also learn how to listen to others and how to help resolve conflicts. A key goal is "to stop meanness without being mean back."

To get into the program, Mitchell had to write an essay telling why he wanted to take part. He thought it would be fun to learn how to work with people and to understand them better. First, he went to training sessions to learn the skills he needed to work with others. Then he gave workshops for students at his school.

Making a Positive Impact

Mitchell led a workshop that modelled strategies for debating. Students learned how to voice their opinions and how to listen effectively. Another workshop helped students understand that they can be valued and accepted for who they are.

Mitchell says, "From Community Builders, I have learned how to be an ally and how to stick up for someone, without hurting someone else. I've also learned how to mediate. Community Builders has helped increase my confidence in myself and in my life."

Four key principles of Community Builders:

- 1) People are good.
- 2) Everyone belongs.
- 3) People get hurt.
- 4) Listening and appreciating helps people remember their goodness.

Mitchell and his friends, Eva and Orsam, talk about being Community Builders. The program motto is "Caring is Cool."

