



About The Foundation Schools

The Foundation Schools serve the needs of children and young adults ages 5-21 in Montgomery County, Maryland. The non-public schools welcome students in grades kindergarten through 12th grade who are identified as eligible for special education with a disability, including emotional disability and autism.



Challenges

Before Ukeru, the Foundation Schools practiced restraint and seclusion as a means of behavior management. However, the schools had a high rate of injuries to students, a number of worker's compensation claims and increased incidents of property damage due to the use of these techniques. They knew students were experiencing re-traumatization, but didn't understand how to change the culture.

"Ukeru has encouraged staff to slow down and take the time to consider other options before going to physical interventions."

TAMIKO LOBAUGH
*Principal, The
Foundation School of
Montgomery County*

Working with Ukeru

In the initial roll-out, the Foundation team had **specific discussions about what we were trying to accomplish and why.** They informed staff about the training and allowed them to discuss their concerns and hesitations about the training. Staff were already trauma minded, but Ukeru gave them additional insight on how to be trauma-informed and tailor interventions when necessary. The staff came to see that Ukeru provided an additional level of comfort when dealing with some dangerous situations, **giving them a way to protect themselves without being hands-on.** It took some time to establish new habits, including carrying the pads with them around the schools. They set up weekly workshops to reinforce use of and practice of skills, as well as debriefing sessions.

Just as the staff was getting into their rhythm, the schools closed due to COVID. However, now that staff and students are back, the full effect of Ukeru is starting to sink in.

Now, the culture has definitely changed to where staff routinely have their pads as they move throughout the building. **Students are seen with them on a regular basis, using them for play, to expend energy, or just to "be like staff."** The staff often comment that they feel thankful that they now have new ways to protect themselves, while providing students with time/space they need to deescalate.

"Ukeru has given staff an additional level of comfort when dealing with some dangerous situations. Now they have a way to protect themselves without being hands-on."

TAMIKO LOBAUGH
*Principal, The
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Results

- Despite shutting down to in-person instruction soon after training, one of the Foundation Schools is already seeing a reduction of restraint and seclusion by over 50% since being back from COVID.
- Teachers say they feel safer.
- The Foundation Schools have received positive feedback from school system representatives and parents.
- Students have widely accepted the Ukeru pads and feel comfortable having them in the classroom.

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*Principal, The Foundation School of
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50%

Less
restraints



Students
comfortable
with pads



Positive
feedback from
parents



Staff feel safer