MARTHA WISE AWARD ENTRY
2016-2017

CHAPTER NAME ______ Junior Auxiliary of Brookhaven ______

POSTMARK ON OR BEFORE:
MARCH 15

CHAPTER ADDRESS _____ P.O. Box 169
Brookhaven, MS 39602

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POPULATION CATEGORY ______ Under 15.00 ______

NAME OF PROJECT ______ Kelso’s Choice ______

CATEGORY: (Check One) (A) ______ X ______ (B) ______

TOTAL HOURS OF SERVICE GIVEN BY MEMBERS: ______ 20 ______

ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP OF CHAPTER ______ 36 ______

NUMBER OF MEMBERS PARTICIPATING: ______ 12 ______

PURPOSE OF PROJECT: ______ To teach children conflict resolution and peace making skills ______

COST OF PROJECT ______ $650 ______

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED ______ 200 ______

DESCRIBE THE PROJECT IN NARRATIVE FORM INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION
(1000 WORDS OR LESS, DOUBLE SPACED; WRITTEN IN THE SEQUENCE AS LISTED BELOW): Send one digital photo per entry either email or on disc.

1. HOW YOUR CHAPTER DISCOVERED THE NEED FOR THIS PROJECT
2. PLANNING AND PREPARATION INVOLVED IN ORGANIZING THIS PROJECT
3. HOW AND WHEN PROJECT WAS BEGUN/AMOUNT OF TIME TO COMPLETE PROJECT
4. HOW MEMBERS WERE INVOLVED IN THIS PROJECT
5. WHAT THE PROJECT ACHIEVED/ DID IT MEET THE NEED
6. PLANS FOR FUTURE WORK WITH THIS PROJECT

IT IS UNNECESSARY TO SUBMIT ANY SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL. THE AWARD WILL BE JUDGED ON THE NARRATIVE.
We live in a world filled with conflict. Each day’s news features stories of political, social, and economic strife. This generation’s children are exposed to the harsh realities of life at a younger and younger age, so much so that we have potential powder kegs of unrest lurking just below the surface of many communities. As our nation’s young children are faced with this almost daily conflict, they often don’t know how to deal with it. They don’t have the social skills necessary to avoid fights, violence, and upheaval. In an effort to break this cycle and reach the children of our community, the Junior Auxiliary of Brookhaven chose to implement the conflict management skills program, *Kebo’s Choice*, in two local schools.

This national program, which teaches young children peace-making skills, began as a pilot program in Brookhaven in the spring of 2016 at one elementary and one middle school and has reached approximately 200 school students ranging in age from 5 to 12 years old. Of the 45 active members in our chapter, 12 members participated on the project for a combined total of 20 hours.

Materials were purchased to implement the program and J.A. members continue to work with teachers and school counselors to evaluate the results. *Kebo’s Choice* is an ongoing program with each school using the program to best fit their students’ needs. Our first school has chosen to introduce the program to their upper elementary students in a whole-group atmosphere as part of their character education curriculum, while the second school, which houses grades five and six, has taken the approach of using small-group settings.

Chapter members involved with this program participated in the initial evaluation of the program, have received regular updates from the schools, shadowed the delivery of the sessions, and continue to actively evaluate how to best implement the program across the county.

*Kebo’s Choice* may be implemented on a school-wide basis including teachers, classroom assistants, administrative staff, custodians, and even lunchroom cooks in the process. When all of the adults in a school ask students to follow the guidelines of the program, clear, consistent and firm expectations result – for everyone. It is a way to hold the entire school
community accountable, from students all the way up to the school’s principal. It helps create an atmosphere where conflict is resolved BEFORE it becomes an issue.

In addition to being used in school-wide programs, *Kelso’s Choice* is often presented to small groups of students or used during individual counseling either to reinforce the lessons taught in the classroom, or to provide problem-solving techniques. The material has been successfully adapted for use with diverse student groups, including students experiencing physical, behavioral, learning, emotional, or psychological challenges. The program has also been proven effective when teaching anger-management skills and impulsivity control.

Consisting of 23 lessons, with 16 additional reinforcement activities for review and reinforcement, the core program teaches students to discriminate between “big” problems that must be shared with an adult, and “small” problems that they may be able to resolve themselves. After mastering this distinction, each of the nine skills are taught to the students. For example, specific strategies for “MAKE A DEAL” are taught and practiced, including how to flip a coin, how to pick a number from one to ten, how to compromise and make a trade-off, etc.

The program encourages students to try two choices from “Kelso’s Wheel.” If “small” problems persist, they are told that adult intervention is warranted. The sequence of the lessons is flexible and allows for variations in the age and experience of the students. Activities include having younger students illustrate colored chalk circles of “Kelso’s Wheel” on the playground and having them create clay dioramas of animals who are solving their conflicts using the nine skills.

In other lessons, older students are role models who act out viable solutions to conflict situations suggested by younger students, or they create individualized conflict management “wheels” in which they identify actual situations in their lives that require conflict management skills.

“Total Body Response” or auditory, visual, and kinesthetic learning activities are provided, as are all levels of learning mastery. Throughout each lesson, two important messages
are presented: every student can make good choices, and every student can make the choice that fits him or her best.

Because of cultural or personality differences, it is not mandated that specific “small” problems must be handled in exactly the same way by all students. Instead, students are allowed to make individual choices … some students might use a more assertive approach (TELL THEM TO STOP), while others may select a less assertive choice (IGNORE).

During the chapter’s continuing evaluation and feedback period, it has been determined that the appropriate ages for this program is lower elementary students. In the future, should this program be delivered in upper elementary grades such as 5th grade, we would focus on small group settings.

*Kelso’s Choice* has positively impacted the community by building vital life skills for many of our community’s young people. The skills that the children have developed through this program will help them cope with and hopefully resolve future conflicts, even as those issues become more complex. Because of the positive benefits of this program, the Junior Auxiliary of Brookhaven will continue to sponsor it in our local schools and expand the number of schools served in the coming years. As part of the chapter’s evaluation process, adjustments will be made during future implementation.