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Northwest rolled out its Green Dot bystander intervention program this week.

The Green Dot program focuses on reducing violence within any community. The program also works to preventing violence and strengthen intervention techniques. The week started with a celebration Monday and was followed by a photo booth Tuesday and a screening of “The Hunting Ground” Wednesday. Green Dot Launch Week will conclude with another photo booth Thursday and a training session Saturday. There will also be a Green Dot pledge drive throughout the entire week.

Danielle Koonce is the Green Dot Coordinator at Northwest. Koonce is spreading the word to raise awareness about the launch of the program.

“I think the launch will be successful due to the positive response from students and faculty,” Koonce said. “The program gives us a shared language, helping friends with safety and supporting others by doing more with Green Dot.”

Green Dot is funded by the state through the Department of Health and Senior Services. and its two goals are developing content and training. Developing content includes programs and strategies designed to help prevent violence and educate individuals about violence. Training helps demonstrate what to do when violence is happening and how a person can intervene. The Green Dot program also focuses on relationships, connections, knowledge and skills.

Participants of the program will first hear a persuasive speech that touches on inspiration, shared vision, individual acceptance, simplicity and critical mass. These core things integrated into the speech help the audience connect emotion and understanding of how the program helps prevent and deal with violence.

The second part of the program is training. The training teaches participants what to do intervene in possibly violent situations.

The third and final part of the program deals with promoting awareness about violence and about the Green Dot through social media.

Koonce's ultimate goal for the Green Dot program is success. She would like to see people adopt the Green Dot terminology and shift culture by setting new social norms here at Northwest.

"I want people to find different ways to step in when seeing violence and find different ways to intervene. Based on who people are and how they feel, they will intervene differently due to different perspectives," Koonce said.

Northwest decided to pursue Green Dot about a year ago. Maryville members of the statewide group Partners in Prevention decided that bystander intervention could benefit Northwest. The group did research on various programs and chose the Green Dot Evidence and research has shown that the program is effective in schools. Northwest will commemorate the launch of the Green Dot program during Green Dot Launch week, Feb. 15-20.

Brent Bledsoe is a freshman at Northwest. Bledsoe heard about Green Dot coming to Northwest through a friend.

"I think Green Dot is a really good thing for Northwest because it will bring positivity to the campus," Bledsoe said.

On the Northwest webpage, there is an option that allows people to share stories. The story page gives people the opportunity to tell about their green dot moments and hear about others'. Stories go to Koonce and no stories are shared without consent. All people will remain anonymous. The stories may be shared on social media to inspire and educate others.