

AIM HIGHER 2008-2009

**A Student Assembly
about Respect and the Power of Words
for Middle and High Schools**

But Words Will Never Hurt Me... Or Will They?

Ryan Halligan. Victoria Lindsay. Lawrence King. These three teenagers—and many more—were victims of bullying or cyber bullying that ended in serious injury or death. Many other middle and high school students suffer through each day because they are bullied for their weight, their clothes, their cultural practices, their race or religion, their sexual orientation or gender expression, their level of academic or physical ability or physical attractiveness, and for many other reasons.

Bystander Empowerment

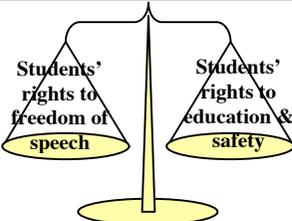


Who Do U Hang w/?
Social Stereotypes Limit Everyone
Emo, Goth, Jock, Nerd,
Mean Girl, Loner, BurnOut
Fear Leads to Prejudice
Understanding Leads to Respect

***If I Don't Speak Up,
Who Will?***

“Aim Higher” challenges students to think about respect for others across differences, and about how their words and actions affect others. Students learn how they can help make their school environment one in which difference is valued, in which students feel responsible for each others’ well-being, and in which all students feel safe, welcome, and respected.

The presentation includes artwork done by High School students who were inspired to create anti-bullying posters after participating in the “Aim Higher 2007-2008” student assembly.



For schools, addressing bullying and creating respect for diversity can be a balancing act. Regulation and discipline are necessary, but they are only part of the solution because discipline is incident-based, offender-focused, confidential, is limited by jurisdiction and authority, and can raise competing claims to rights e.g. expressive rights. Education for all students about bullying and diversity is also a necessary part of the solution. Education is preventive and pro-active, and can promote freedom of speech, address school climate issues, affect all students including bystanders, encourage positive behavior choices through an understanding that is not limited by jurisdiction, and prepares students for life in a diverse society. Preventive education is particularly important when jurisdictional issues are most salient, e.g., in the prevention of cyber bullying which often occurs off-campus.

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