

Sexual Violence Prevention Education Programming: Impacting Youth in Kansas

Issue: The Ulysses School District targets bully behaviors early with hopes of avoiding additional problems in the future. Research has shown that “the antecedents of peer-to-peer sexual harassment in schools may be found in ‘bullying’ behaviors children learn, practice or experience beginning at a very young age...Left unchecked and unchallenged, bullying may in fact serve as a fertile practice ground for sexual harassment.” (Stein, 1993, 1995, 1999)

Results of a pre-survey administered to 350 third through fifth grade students in the Ulysses School District indicate:

- 73% of the students stated that they has been teased in a mean way
- 48.8% stated that they teased or made fun of a kid in a mean way
- 53.3% of the students reported that they saw another kid get hurt in a fight at school
- 80.2% of the students see other kids get picked on or bullied at school

Intervention: Due to the findings of the survey and reported bullying behaviors, USD 214 began implementing the *Steps to Respect: A Bullying Prevention* curriculum targeted to 350 third through sixth grade students. The Steps to Respect program takes a whole-school approach to bullying, bringing staff, students, and families into the picture. To further enhance this bullying initiative, a media campaign was developed to implement community-wide. USD 215 utilized students in grades sixth through eighth to develop, film and produce a PSA that brings awareness to the issue of bullying and communicates that everyone should respond when they see bullying behavior.

Impact: Currently, the feedback from students, faculty and staff in USD 214 have been positive regarding the Steps to Respect Curriculum. One teacher reported “ We love the way that this curriculum makes them practice their skills.” Post Survey data on the program will be available at the end of the 2008-2009 academic year. Additionally, the PSA has been aired across Grant County. The feedback from the PSA has been favorable and enhances the Steps to Respect program by helping kids work on making their relationships healthier. Plans to analyze the media initiative will be in the form of a pre/post survey at the end of the 2008-2009 academic year.

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