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No More Bullying! Student comments

Letters sent to HRPT from sixth graders:

Thank you Lee. For showing me when your in 6th grade it does not matter when your small you can stand tall. This is note is coming from L. C. The girl with the purple shirt sitting in the front row I played the bully with you.

Dear Mateo,

Thank you for showing me to ignore bullies and "keep moving forward". I thank you Mateo for everything you have done for me.

Sincerely,

B. J.

Dear Actors,

I want to thank you for your support and helped me to let it all out with my emotions. Don't be afraid to tell your story about you being bullied. There's still a little more you need to know, but maybe next time I can tell you what happened but for now Thank You.

Love,

N.

Your student

Dear everyone,

I appreciate what you did. I've been holding in my emotions for over a year. I rarely cry. The only person who knew about my bullying was my sister. Thank you for all the help.

G.

Dear Actors,

Thank you. I didn't realize that all these people have been bullied as bad as they have. Now I know to help them and be nice to them. The show and the actors really touched my heart. Even though I left crying, I don't regret going in there.

Thank you,

L. D.

Written comments following NMB workshops and performances:

I LOVED participating in playback. I loved being able to express myself freely without being judged.

Playback theatre can help students be more confident with their memories.

I enjoyed this group very much. I liked being funny and serious with kids I knew and kids I now know.

I learned that bullying is everywhere you go and there is a way to stop it.

I learned that by re-enacting other people's stories it gives them an image about what they could have done to prevent the situation.

I learned not to be shy, and what to do in a bullying situation.

I learned that you should always try to do something when someone's being bullied.

I learned that even if you aren't the one being bullied you could still help.

I learned that even if a person is different they could be cool.

I think it's helped me realize what other people go through.

[Playback Theatre] can help by making everything safer and make people realize that bullying is bad.

I really liked how people can come together and work together.

[I learned] that a lot of times people were feeling different than [how] they acted. [Playback theatre] helps you understand people's feelings.

I learned that being yourself is not a crime.

It helped me stop being a bully.

I learned a lot. It helped me because my brother gets picked on a lot.

I know I'm not the only one getting bullied.

I think other students and I have learned [that] with more people on your side sometimes you can help.

We might stop bullying and stand up for what is right.

Comments from teachers and administrators:

Following a multiple-show series on bullying:

"With ingenuity, energy, and knowledge of the task at hand, you created an interactive learning environment where students felt safe enough to take risks in regard to a difficult social issue. You were very sensitive to the needs of our students, and I think your ability to 'read' them and to connect to the topic in an inviting way is commendable."

~Dr. Hasna Muhammad, Assistant Principal, Monroe-Woodbury Middle School, Monroe, NY

Following a school-wide series of shows on bullying and sexual harassment:

"...The scenarios were timely, quite relevant, and portrayed incidents that affect our pupils. What is unique about Hudson River Playback Theatre is its ability to elicit stories from the children and to immediately enact them. Equally meaningful are the strategies for resolving conflict. The troupe members elicit the strategies from the pupils and demonstrate how they could be used. Quite powerful!

[The school] was also privileged to have Playback Theatre make a presentation to parents. The parents were most appreciative of this opportunity."

~Dr. Edward Sullivan, Principal, Chancellor Livingston Elementary School, Rhinebeck, NY

After a day of performances for 2nd to 5th graders on bullying:

"We noticed how the process of telling stories and seeing them enacted promoted both empathy and empowerment. These performances enhanced the impact of the Olweus program."

~Barbara Schnell, Principal, Woodstock Elementary School, Woodstock, NY.

After a No More Bullying! Leadership program with 6th, 7th, and 8th graders:

"Many thanks for yet another successful year in which we bridged the challenging topic of bullying here at Highland Middle School. This is our fourth year of integrating Playback Theatre into our character education program and I believe that this year's No More Bullying Leadership Program was one of the most powerful projects implemented to date."

~Maggie Anderson, Assistant Principal, Highland Middle School, Highland, N.Y.

