Lesson Plan After the Presentation

Class Objectives:

If you would like to conduct a discussion with your students after an anti-bullying presentation, here is a sample lesson plan. Please keep in mind that it’s less important that the students agree with the speaker than the discussion you have models the themes of the presentation: every person’s opinion, perspective, and feelings are equally valid, recognizing the challenge of speaking out when going against the majority opinion, and how easily our ethical decisions to get involved in other people’s social conflicts is often dependent on our feelings (both negative or positive) for the individuals.

Key concepts to remember:

* Bullying is using power or strength to make someone feel worthless. Usually defined as being one way and repeated.
* Drama is an exciting, unexpected, emotional series of events. Students usually define it as a conflict where both people are actively involved and not serious or hurtful. This is often a way for students to minimize the damage of what’s happening and rationalize not bringing it to adults’ attention—even when the consequences could be severe.
* Dignity: To be worthy. Everyone is inherently worthy.
* Respect: To look back and someone’s actions and admire them. Respect is earned.
* Snitching is done when the person wants to get the other person in trouble and make the problem more public.
* Reporting is done when you want to solve a problem that is bigger than you can handle on your own. The motivation is to right a wrong.

To begin, ask the students the following questions:

1. Why was the presentation realistic? If so, which parts and why?
2. Why was the presentation unrealistic? Is so, which parts and why?
3. Do people (students, teachers, parents) with higher social status have more power to have their opinions heard and be taken seriously—especially if they are in conflict in any way with a person in the community who has less social power?

As the facilitator, please notice who is speaking and who isn’t. Is there a student who feels comfortable dominating the conversation and speaking for others? If this occurs stop the discussion and tell the students that you will continue the discussion another way.

Give each student a piece of paper and a pen and ask them sit by themselves wherever they want in the room (except near a close friend). Ask them to write, anonymously and with no concern for spelling or grammar, their answer to any or all of the questions you asked above. Give them 5 to 10 minutes to answer, and then collect the papers. Next, have all the students sit in a circle and look at the floor, not touching each other. Read their responses aloud, and then ask the students what it felt like to hear their peers’ answers.

**There are four goals for this exercise:**

* To demonstrate the connection between what was said in the presentation and what just occurred in the classroom.
* To break the class dynamic in which some students silence other students.
* To give students firsthand experience of what happens when some students speak for others and promote the idea that each person’s truth is equally valid.
* To empower those students to voice their opinion who didn’t feel comfortable speaking out initially.

**Action Steps:**

What are one or two concrete things we can do right now to make easier for every person in this community to believe that their opinion and experience is valued?

**Additional Question:**

If a stranger walked into your school for the first time, what would they learn about what the school values from the moment the person walked through the entranceway and then walked down the hallways? What pictures are on the walls? What trophies are displayed? What signs are posted?

What message do these things send to the stranger? What message does it send to students? Teachers? Parents? If you wanted to change that, how would you do it in a way that models the values that have been discussed in this class?

**Wrap Up:**

What are the two most important take-aways for you from this class?