

# TAPROOT THEATRE



C O M P A N Y

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## **CYBER BULLYING GETS THE BOOT AT YAKIMA VALLEY SCHOOLS**

### **Seattle theatre's touring group sets the stage for prevention this March**

SEATTLE – February 26, 2009 – Yakima Valley students will learn the importance of treating each other with respect—in person and online—when Taproot Theatre's Road Company visits from Seattle with its new educational touring plays, *New Girl* and *Alexander and the Dragon*, March 16-27.

Addressing the widespread use of cell phones and social networking sites among children and teenagers, *New Girl* by Josh Hornbeck is aimed at preventing cyber bullying. This educational play for youth in sixth through 12<sup>th</sup> grades illustrates the serious consequences of sending or posting insulting or threatening messages. The impact of cyber bullying is explored through the lives of five high schoolers at Clements High—especially the new girl, Rachel, and an outcast, Edward, who becomes one of her first friends at school. *New Girl* traces the progression of insults and threats made to Edward as the school year gets off to a start, and the resulting downturn in his life. Edward gets the biggest blow of all when two bullies take Rachel under their wings and coerce her into joining their game.

*Alexander and the Dragon* by Bethany Wallace teaches younger students—grades K through six—how to recognize bullying and their responsibilities as bystanders. When "Sir" Alexander returns to fifth grade after a summer of battling make-believe foes, he fails to stand up for the new girl getting bullied on the school bus. He unknowingly allows Maddy (Princess Madeline) to be captured by a "dragon," and is stripped of his knighthood. He must conquer the fire-breathing dragon to rescue the princess and restore his honor.

The Road Company's current educational touring plays teach students about bullying and harassment prevention by utilizing principles from the leading curriculum on the topics: Committee for Children's "Steps to Respect" and "Second Step" programs.

### **About Taproot Theatre's Road Company**

Taproot Theatre's Road Company has been touring dynamic social-issue plays to students throughout the Pacific Northwest since 1985. The Road Company reaches over 90,000 students each year with productions that address relevant social issues and provide youth with safe steps to approach them. In addition to the touring productions, Taproot Theatre provides teachers' guides and resources to facilitate classroom discussion and increase the effectiveness of the message. The actors are also available for individual classroom visits.

To book a show, contact Josiah Wallace at 206.529.3669 or [touring@taproottheatre.org](mailto:touring@taproottheatre.org).

The Road Company is supported by ArtsFund, 4Culture, Washington State Arts Commission, The Charles Simonyi Fund for Arts & Sciences, Fred Meyer Fund and PONCHO. The media sponsor is ParentMap.

### **About Taproot Theatre**

Taproot Theatre Company is a professional, non-profit theatre company with a multi-faceted production program. Founded in 1976, Taproot Theatre serves the Pacific Northwest with Mainstage Productions, Touring Productions and Acting Studio. Taproot exists to create theatre that explores the beauty and questions of life while bringing hope to our search for meaning. Taproot Theatre Company is a member of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), Theatre Puget Sound (TPS), and the Greenwood-Phinney Chamber of Commerce.

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### **Included:**

- School touring schedule
- School touring plays

## SCHOOL TOURING SCHEDULE

*Bookings are subject to change.*

### **Monday, March 16**

10:30 a.m. – *Alexander and the Dragon* at Union Gap School, Union Gap

1:10 p.m. – *New Girl*, Union Gap School, Union Gap

### **Tuesday, March 17**

1:45 p.m. – *Alexander and the Dragon* at Garfield Elementary, Yakima

### **Wednesday, March 18**

9:15 a.m. – *Alexander and the Dragon* at M. L. King Jr., Elementary, Yakima

1:00 p.m. – *Alexander and the Dragon* at Discovery Lab, Yakima

### **Thursday, March 19**

8:55 a.m. – *Alexander and the Dragon* at Gilbert Elementary, Yakima

2:00 p.m. – *Alexander and the Dragon* at Barge Lincoln Elementary, Yakima

### **Wednesday, March 25**

9:00 a.m. – *Alexander and the Dragon* at Robertson Elementary, Yakima

### **Thursday, March 26**

9:15 a.m. – *Alexander and the Dragon* at Roosevelt Elementary, Yakima

### **Friday, March 27**

9:00 a.m. – *Alexander and the Dragon* at McKinley Elementary, Yakima

## SCHOOL TOURING PLAYS

### ***New Girl***

by Josh Hornbeck

For Grades 6-12

A play about the faces of harassment and the function of community.

Rachel is the new girl at Clements High. She wants to fit in and get along with everyone. But when two of the school's popular kids attempt to sabotage her friendships with two of the school's outcasts, Rachel learns that the way she treats others can have serious consequences.

From cyber-abuse through instant messages and online social networking sites to verbal abuse in the halls, *New Girl* looks at the consequences of our actions and the need to treat everyone with kindness and respect.

#### **Education Goals:**

- Examine various forms of bullying and harassment, both subtle and overt
- Learn importance of respect
- Explore the dangers of cliques
- Understand personal and social responsibility

### ***Alexander and the Dragon***

by Bethany Wallace

For Grades K-6

A play about bullying prevention.

Being a 5th grader is even harder than being a knight. When "Sir" Alexander returns to school after a summer of battling make-believe foes, he fails to stand up for the new girl getting bullied on the school bus. He unknowingly allows Maddy (Princess Madeline) to be captured by a "dragon," and is stripped of his knighthood. Will Alexander conquer the fire-breathing dragon and rescue the princess? Will his heroic quest restore his honor?

#### **Education Goals:**

##### **Bullying Prevention and Social Skills**

- Recognize, Refuse and Report
- Responsibility of a bystander
- Initiating a friendship
- Engaging others in conversation
- Forgiving others