TAPROOT THEATRE
TOURING COMPANY

The Social NetWorth Teacher's Guide

The performance of *The Social NetWorth,* along with the materials in this guide, are intended to supplement (not replace) current education and guidance on cyberbullying and other related issues in the schools.

Discussion Etiquette

Due to the sensitive nature of issues arising from *The Social NetWorth,* it is important for teachers and other discussion leaders to follow, respect and teach the standard ground rules for group discussion.

- **Respect** what others say without passing judgment. It is all right to disagree with another's opinions, but respect must be maintained at all times.

- All things said within the group should remain **confidential**. An environment where hypothetical situations are not treated as confessions should be created and respected.

- Only those students who feel comfortable speaking should be asked to do so. Silence should be respected without judgment.

- Students should have the **freedom** to explore their opinions and to change them at whim. The process is to allow the students to find, rather than be instilled with, a set of values.

About *The Social Networth*

Cast of Characters:
- Jason: A Sophomore, known for his pranks.
- Cody: A Sophomore, longtime friends with Jason, wanting to make a name for himself
- Hayley: A Sophomore, founder of the Body Positivity Club
- Olivia: A Sophomore, used to be very active in 4H, good friends with Hayley and Jordan
- Jordan: A Sophomore, athlete, good friends with Jason

Play Summary:
When Hayley starts a Body Positivity Club on the Everwood High School campus, it is welcomed with open arms by many students. But when Cody finds out that Jason might want to join the club, Jason starts a secretive campaign to mock the club as a means of reputation protection. The girls of the Body Positivity Club, or Bo Po Clo, try to weather the online storm of bullying behavior, but when the trolling grows beyond the bounds of the internet, things spiral out of control. When Jordan realizes that the harassment is spearheaded by her friend, Jason has to own up to his mistakes, past and present, and the group has the difficult task of figuring out where they go from there.

Pre-performance discussion

In order to prepare your students for the performance, please remind them about theatre etiquette. This includes:

- Please don't talk during the performance. Talking is distracting to the performers and other audience members.
- Please try to keep non-verbal noise to a minimum. Unwrapping hard candy, popping gum and electronic noises steal focus from what is happening on stage.

- It's okay to laugh if something strikes you as funny. It's also okay to cry if something makes you sad. These are examples of appropriate responses. However, whistling at the actors, shouting comments and catcalling are considered inappropriate responses.
- Live theatre is different from film and television because it is based on a **relationship** between the actors and the audience. Therefore, each performance of the same play is very unique because it is heavily influenced by the responses and interest of the audience. The best thing an audience member can do is to listen and get involved in the story.

Pre-Performance Questions
1. What are some examples of cyberbullying behavior? Of harassment behavior?
2. Are harassment and cyberbullying problems at our school?
3. If you witness or hear about harassment or cyberbullying, what is your typical response? Why? What should it be?
4. Do you hear a lot of name-calling, gossip, or hurtful things at school?
5. Does school feel like a safe environment for people to just be themselves? If it does, what are the things that make it that way? If it doesn't, what do you perceive needs to change?

Post-Performance Questions
1. What parts of the play did you like the best? Why?
2. What kinds of Bullying and Harassment did you see in the play? Are there more kinds that you didn't see?
3. Could the situation that the students of Everwood were in have been avoided? How?
4. What do you think happens next in the lives of the characters from the play?
5. What is friendship? Who, in your life, has modeled true friendship to you?
6. What role should adults play in dealing with bullying and harassment?
7. If you had a problem at school what are the methods you would employ to handle the situations?
8. Do you think harassment and bullying are just part of being a teenager?
9. You have the power to choose how you treat people. What are some ways in which individuals are misusing that power in our world today?
10. If everyone you knew was asked how you treat others, what would you most like them to say?

Additional Resources

The following resources aid the prevention of bullying, harassment, violence, or suicide:

Committee for Children's Second Step Violence Prevention Program. www.cfchildren.org/programs/ssp/ms

Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. www.clemson.edu/olweus

Suicide Awareness Voices of Education. www.save.org

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. **1-800-273-TALK**

Crisis Clinic. www.crisisclinic.org
Teen Link – staffed by trained teen volunteers. www.crisisclinic.org/youth.htm **206.461.4922 or 1.866.TEENLINK**

For Teachers Only

Handling Bullying Reporting with Students
From Committee for Children's *Second Step* curriculum
www.cfchildren.org

Following performances of our shows, schools often experience an increase in bullying reporting as students become aware that bullying is not acceptable and help is available. Administrators, counselors, and teachers are all seen by students as adults who can help.

Every school has their own process for handling bullying and harassment reporting. The following guidelines are used by permission of Committee for Children. They are taken directly from the *Second Step* curriculum and are intended to supplement (not replace) existing curriculum and guidelines already used in your school.

Handling Bullying Reports

The Four-A Response Process
Because *Second Step* is a schoolwide program, it is essential that all staff know how to respond to bullying reports. Following is the process adults should use when a student reports bullying.

1. **Affirm the student's feelings.**
   Ideas:
      a. "You were right to report/get help."
      b. "I'm glad you asked for help with this."

2. **Ask questions.**
   Ideas:
      a. "Tell me more about what happened."
      b. "Has this happened before?"
      c. "Did anyone try to help you?"
      d. "Are you telling me this to get someone in trouble or to keep someone safe?"

3. **Assess the student's safety.**
   Determine what the student needs to feel safe.

4. **Act.**
   Coach the student or refer the student for coaching.

   Tell the student what will happen next.

Coaching Students Involved in Bullying Situations

Second Step Coaching Models
Once bullying has been reported, both the student who was bullied and the student who did the bullying must receive coaching—it is essential that no exceptions to this rule occur. *Second Step* recommends that all classroom teachers be prepared to coach students. The following sections detail the models teachers should use when coaching students.

Coaching the Student Who Was Bullied
Children rarely report the bullying they experience—in part because they believe that adults are unable or unlikely to stop the harassment. Adults can combat student's feelings of helplessness by (1) affirming student's actions in reporting (which demonstrates that adults will provide the needed support and consequences) and (2) checking back with students who report bullying to see whether the problem has stopped.

Second Step recommends the following five-step model when coaching a student who has been bullied.

1. **Affirm the student's feelings.**
   a. "You were right to report/get help."

2. **Ask questions.**
   Get information about the current situation and the history of the situation

3. **Identify what has and has not worked in the past.**

4. **Generate solutions for the future.**
   Ideas:
   a. Discuss how the student can avoid the student who has bullied him or her.
   b. Coach the student in using assertive refusal skills. (If relevant to the situation, remind the student that aggression is *never* an appropriate solution.)
   c. Identify others (parents, teachers, friends) who can support the student.

5. **Follow up.**
   Ideas:
   a. See how the plan is working.
   b. Contact parents as appropriate.
   c. Refer more serious or chronic cases to an administrator or counselor.

Coaching the Student Who Bullied

Your school's bullying policy should provide the necessary framework for applying consequences for student bullying. In addition to those consequences, students who bully and harass others need more targeted help addressing their problem behavior. Students are more likely to change problem behavior if adults help them select positive alternative behaviors and provide consistent feedback on their progress.

This coaching model (for use with students who bully) has five steps.
1. **Identify the problem and diffuse reporting responsibility.**
   Ideas:
   a. "I have been hearing that…"
   b. "Many students have reported that…"
2. **Ask questions and gather information.**
   Ideas:
   a. "I'd like to hear from you about what happened."
   b. "How would you feel if this happened to you?"
3. **Apply consequences.**
   Ideas:
   a. Review the school policy regarding bullying.
4. **Generate solutions for the future.**
   Ideas:
   a. "What are some ways to prevent this happening again?"
5. **Follow up.**
   Ideas:
   a. See how the plan is working.
   b. Contact parents as appropriate.
   c. Refer students for further discipline as appropriate.
   d. Refer more serious or chronic cases to an administrator or counselor.

Note: Be sure to coach the students who have been bullied separately from those who bullied them. Students who have been bullied or harassed are often frightened, and may deny that there is any problem when face-to-face with students who have repeatedly harassed them.