

March 29, 2011

On November 15 2011, Karen Kain School of the Arts had the privilege of having Sunnie McFadden-Curtis lead The Ripple Effect, an anti-bullying assembly. This was the kick off for our Anti-Bullying week and our focus on Safe and Caring Schools.

Sunnie wrote and produced The Ripple Effect. The Ripple Effect is a series of vignettes which address the issue of bullying and the far reaching negative effects it has. The vignettes our students presented were sensitive, provocative and age appropriate to our middle school and addressed issues very related to the everyday lives of our students.

Sunnie worked very closely, enthusiastically and professionally with our students to prepare them for their roles in The Ripple Effect. Students were most engaged and very willing gave up their lunches to work with Sunnie. It was clear to see that the students developed empathy for their characters and that the experience was most educational and very meaningful to them.

The Ripple Effect was an excellent opportunity for students to become immersed in the concept of the extreme and destructive effects of bullying. Students were exceedingly positive and excited by the experience. As one student mentioned “The Ripple Effect gave me a sense of what actually happens when someone was bullied. The situations were very life like and I learned that bullying is not fun and not cool.” Another student mentioned that participating in The Ripple Effect “Made me look back at what my friends did, which wasn’t so wonderful. I so enjoyed the play, we should take it on the road!”

As an administrator, I value the follow up survey which Sunnie conducted as we were able to collect critical data to use towards going forward with our Safe and Caring Schools plan. In particular, we were able to glean students’ experiences with bullying and established a sense of how safe they felt at our school. This meaningful and relevant information we folded into our continued work in building our Anti-Bullying plan.

The Ripple Effect was the perfect opportunity for students to make real those situations which they may not be able to articulate. Within the safe and relevant environment which Sunnie most thoughtfully and professionally created, students were truly able to internalize the impacts of bullying. But, most importantly, they were able to extend this understanding into examining their own behaviour thus making effective change within themselves.

KKSA was most fortunate to have worked with Sunnie and The Ripple Effect. We continue to benefit from the sensitive lessons presented and the concrete steps we have been able to take as a result of them. Thank you Sunnie for sharing your expertise and for the time you took to work with our students. Your passion and commitment have certainly been instrumental in informing us as we continue to build Safe and Caring environments for our students at KKSA.

Helene Pfeiffer
Principal,
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