



photo by chase montoya

Many people say they know how it feels to be bullied. Some say it may have been because of their appearance, how they do certain things, or something like how they talk. Bullying happens every day all over the world. That's why National Bullying Prevention Month is recognized in October to help students recognize and take a stand against bullying.

"I think National Bullying Month is to honor kids who have stood up to bullying," said Allie Johnson, seventh grade.

The Parents Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights, or PACER, started in 1977 as a non-profit organization to stop bullying. In 2006, PACER started a co-op with The NTA- National Teacher Association, National PTA-National Parent Teacher Association, The American Federation for Teachers, and National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education.

Bullying happens in many forms, especially with the modern technology today. Out of the 77 percent of bullied teens, 14 percent have an inappropriate reaction to the abuse. 19.6 percent of high school students in the US being bullied report at school and 14.8 percent reported being bullied online.

One of the main reasons for a student's inability to focus is because of bullying. Some bullied teenagers attempt to stay home or even run home from school each day to avoid additional abuse from students at school. Counselors informed students that many victims of bullying are bullied inside their own homes as well as in school. This often makes kids feel unwanted which is not what Lovejoy teaches their students. Bullying can happen anywhere at anytime such as in school, online, the neighborhood, or even clubs. Not being able to escape physical and mental persecution can be haunting to kids or teens to the point of self-destruction.

"I've only been bullied once before. The girl hit me, and bullied me for no reason. But I eventually stood up to her," said Tate Sigmon, eighth grade. PACER created a campaign to encourage everyone to take an active role to

prevent bullying whether it's standing up to a bully or just being a friend to the person who is getting bullied. This one-week event has evolved into a month long effort to help make a movement and change the way people are treated.

"I think national bullying month is to make a stand up, to bullies, and help victims, who have been bullied," said Guy Nowak, seventh grade.

"I've been bullied many times on my appearance or how I play Volleyball, but I always stand up to bullies," said Alex Perry, seventh grade.

Whether a person others know is a bully, the victim, or even a spectator, everyone has a different perspective on bullying, and no one can ever really stop it completely. However, things are being done to prevent it.

On Friday, September 11, WSMS attempted to encourage students to stop bullying with a special advisory during seventh period. Bullying exists in any school and students are trying to end it at Willow Springs.

Students commented on the presentations given in homerooms.

"Yes, I do think [the advisory on Friday] inspired me to deal with a bully because it gave me the opportunity to know when to walk away or to stop bullying and also to stand up for other kids," said George Bentley, eighth grade.

"It was effective because maybe people got a better understanding. It was mature for our age," said seventh-grader Elizabeth Wilson.

During the advisory, students got the chance to learn the causes of bullying such as excluding someone or leaving them alone at lunch. Bullying may be common in schools all around the world, but to principals, it's not exactly the correct behavior. Nearly every school has at least one bully, and most people claim that it's not something to feel proud of.

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Bullying can happen anywhere at anytime such as in school, online, the neighborhood, or even clubs. These can be very harmful to others' feelings. In the advisory, the school administration wanted to be sure we didn't have bullies or any in the future as well.

"The purpose of the advisory was to hopefully review and recap some of the things from our bullying presentations," said Kay Bordelon, counselor.

"One of the things we did was listen to some scenarios and decided whether we agree with the action, disagree, or undecided and hopefully get students talking about what they do in a bullying situation and how would they stand up for the target to stand up for what is right. It's hard to tell whether it works or not but we like planting seeds and helping students think about what language they use and actions that they have toward others on campus and hopefully that they're listening for that ugly language from others. They can say, 'Hey wait a minute, that didn't sound nice; don't talk like that.' So that's why we have lessons like that."

NJHS President, Lily McCutcheon and Darby Price created an anti-bullying account on Twitter over the summer. To find the account search @C2M_antibully on Twitter

-Tyler Brucher, Layla Healy, and Zowie Thornberg,
Staff Writers