

Courageous Conversations: Learning to Recognize and Confront Bias and Discrimination



Student Presenters: Jewel Justice, Nathan Roseboro, Stephany Henske, Jacob Walters, Kylie Mitchell

Educator Presenter: Karen O'Neil; koneil@lrhsd.org
Seneca High School, Tabernacle, NJ



Objectives

- Recognize inherent biases through the activities and self-reflection
- Equip yourself with tools to help confront and challenge bias and discrimination within your school
- Consider the need for anti-bias training in your own school

Background: ADL® No Place for Hate

- *No Place for Hate* School since 2013
- Anti-Defamation League- Mission is to fight all forms of hate and provide anti-bias training and education
- ADL® Peer Training Program- Use positive peer influence to create change in the school by having peer trainers lead workshops on recognizing and confronting bias and discrimination



Seneca High School

- Located in Tabernacle, NJ
- Four sending towns- Tabernacle, Southampton, Indian Mills, Chatsworth
- Enrollment: Approximately 1150 students
- Ethnic Breakdown:
 - 90% Caucasian
 - 3.7% Hispanic
 - 3.5% Black
 - 1.6% Asian

Why We Chose to Implement the ADL® Peer Training Program

- Student driven
- Post election division within the school community
- Proactive approach to enhance school climate
 - Give students a forum to dialogue
 - Begin to confront challenging topics within the school community

How We Implemented the Program

- Contacted the ADL to bring *The World of Difference Institute*® to Seneca
- 25 students and 2 staff members trained every other year
 - Year 1- Peer trainers conducted workshops in freshmen English classes (fall and spring)
 - Year 2- Added Sophomore U.S. History classes; staff members
 - Year 3- Added a follow-up to sophomore U.S. History classes; select athletic teams and clubs

Positive Effects of Peer Training Program on our School

- School climate and culture
- Football team training
- Curricular Connections- U.S. History, English



RESPECTO

Respectful, Receptive

Empathetic

Sympathetic

Positive

Engaged

Confidentiality

Trust

Ouch, Oops

Ice Breaker Activity

- Count off 1-2-1-2.
- 1's will form a large circle in center of room.
- 2's will form a second circle inside of the larger circle.
- We will be asking questions.
- First, 1's will respond to the question, then when time is called 2's will respond to the question.
- After each question, we will shift the circle so that you each have a new partner.

Question One

If you could travel to any place in the world, where would you choose to go? Why?

Question Two

What is one thing that most people would be surprised to learn about you?

Question Three

What is your favorite holiday and why?

Question Four

Share with your partner one stereotype that you don't like about your own racial, religious, or ethnic group.

Question Five

Describe a time when you felt like an outsider. How did you feel?

Question Six

If you could change one thing about society, what would it be?

Activity One: Here I Stand

- Listen to a series of statements while remaining silent.
- Respond by positioning yourself along an imaginary line depending on how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.
- No talking during the activity! Think, position, and observe instead.

Statement One

Anyone can become successful in the United States by working hard.

Statement Two

My generation is more respectful of differences than my parents' generation.

Statement Three

I have a racially diverse group of friends.

Statement Four

Everyone should have the right of free speech- even organized hate groups.

Statement Five

I feel comfortable working in groups where I am the only person of my race.

Statement Six

I would feel comfortable if I had a gay, lesbian, or bisexual parent.

Statement Seven

Men have many advantages in our society that women do not share.

Statement Eight

Women have many advantages in our society that men do not share.

Statement Nine

Sometimes stereotypes can be positive or helpful.

Statement Ten

I have prejudices.

Follow-Up Discussion Questions

- 1) Did you feel the need to explain why you stood where you did for some questions?
- 1) What questions were especially difficult for you to decide where to stand?

Activity Two: Star Patterns

Goal: To help us identify awareness of the role our own identity plays in how we see the world

Instructions:

- 1) Write your name in the center star.
- 2) In the five outside stars, write five groups with which you identify- go for quick responses, don't overthink this!
- 3) Draw a circle around one star that is your primary identity.

Follow-Up Discussion Questions

- 1) Did anyone notice any interesting patterns during the stand-ups?
- 2) How did it feel to be part of a larger group?
- 3) How did it feel when you were standing alone or almost alone?
- 4) Can you think of situations at your school when students might feel that they are “standing alone?”
- 5) What could a person do to help someone in that situation feel like they are not alone?

Activity Three: The Cards We're Dealt

Based on the identity on your card, discuss the following questions.

- 1) List some specific ways your life would change.
- 2) What is your favorite thing to do in your free time? Would your new identity affect your involvement in this activity?
- 3) How honest would you think you could be in sharing this new aspect of your identity with other people?
- 4) How do you think others will respond to you? How might other people's attitudes towards you change?
- 5) What will you need or expect from others that you may not have needed or expected before?

Summarizer

1. Did you learn anything about yourself from this?
2. Does your school currently have any programs in place similar to this?
3. Could you see a program like this working in your school?