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America lives in the heart of every man everywhere who wishes to find a region where he will be free to work out his destiny as he chooses. – Woodrow Wilson

Bullying in Utah

by Carla Kelly, Director
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Too many of our youth are immersed in a culture of violence and intolerance, and bullying is an effect of that ongoing exposure. Whatever the cause, BULLYING IS NOT OKAY.

Effects of Bullying

Researchers have estimated that 1.6 million children grades six through ten in the United States are bullied at least once a week. Bullying has long-term and devastating effects on both those who bully and those who are bullied. Victims of bullying live in constant fear, which results in untold absenteeism, loss of self-esteem, and a rise in truancy as students seek to avoid their tormentors. In some cases, victims of bullying develop actual physical illnesses as a result of the stress. In others, students skip school or invent excuses to stay home. A study by The National Institute of Child Health found that both the bully and the bullied are at a high risk of loneliness, lack of success in school and are more likely to become involved in gangs, drugs, alcohol, tobacco and sexual behaviors. Tragically, many victims of bullying form anti-social behaviors, and can then become the perpetrators of the acts of terror that were previously inflicted upon them. **Case studies of the shooting at Columbine High School and other U.S. Schools have suggested that bullying was a factor in many of the incidents.** And horrifyingly so, many bullied youth continue to commit suicide.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is an imbalance of power, with the more powerful child or group attacking those who are less powerful. Bullying is executed through physical, psychological or cyber terrorism that continues over time. Bullying can include taunting, making threats, name calling, social exclusion, extortion and intimidation. Physical bullying can include hitting, spitting, the taking of personal belongings, or sexual aggression. Bullying is accomplished in cyberspace with email, blogging, text messaging and cyber photos. Bullying begins in elementary school, peaks in grades six through eight and persists into high school. And, if youthful bullying is not curtailed, his/her bullying behaviors will continue in their adulthood.

What can be done?

Bullying can be prevented *through continuing education*. A recent study from The University of Denver Graduate School of Social Work shows that vigilant curriculum-based bullying prevention programs reduce incidents of bullying by 20 percent.

The key curriculum points:

- * Parents, teachers, administrators, school staff and local community members must be committed to *ongoing bullying prevention education* for themselves and the students.
- * Bullying is not "a normal part of growing up" and is a form of discrimination.
- * Education focusing on the values of empathy and compassion
- * To teach that bullying is a learned behavior, and as such, can be UNlearned.
- * To empower victims and bystanders to report any incident of bullying
- * Teaching the victim how to avoid the bully.
- * Teaching the bystanders how to help the victim.



* To provide information, support, compassion and education to the bully, the victim and their parents.

* Establishment and enforcement of clear rules against bullying to include every adult intervening in bullying behaviors.

* Schools must be given funds to provide bullying prevention education and tools. We, as parents, educators and community members must not be apathetic concerning bullying behaviors *anywhere*. Parents, *please*, insist that your school have *consistent* bullying prevention programs and tools. Your child is going to school and observing violence every day and does not know what to do. TALK to your kids, ask them what they have witnessed. Then believe them and take action. Bullying is a community problem. Someone wise once said to me that you can judge the health of any culture by observing how they provide for their youth.

The Human Rights Education Center of Utah is a non-profit organization that provides bullying prevention and character education to youth and their leaders. Carla Kelley is the Director of HREC.



The International Rescue Committee: *From Harm to Home* by Jonathan Codell, Acculturation PORTAL Coordinator, IRC

This year marks the 75th year the International Rescue Committee (IRC) has been dedicated to helping serve refugees and communities victimized by oppression worldwide. The IRC was founded in 1933 with a suggestion from Albert Einstein to assist Europeans fleeing Hitler's forces. Today the IRC is a world leader in relief, rehabilitation, protection, post-conflict development, resettlement services and advocacy for those uprooted or affected by violent conflict or oppression.

At work in 42 countries, the IRC delivers lifesaving aid in emergencies, rebuilds shattered communities, cares for war-traumatized children, rehabilitates healthcare, water and sanitation systems, reunites separated families, restores lost livelihoods, establishes schools, trains teachers, strengthens the capacity of local organizations and institutions, develops civil society and good governance initiatives and promotes human rights. For refugees afforded sanctuary by the United States government, IRC has 24 offices across the country providing a range of assistance aimed at helping new arrivals get settled, integrate, and acquire the skills to become self-sufficient.

The IRC Salt Lake City resettlement office began serving refugees in 1994, and has since assisted over 6,000 refugees as they resettle in the Salt Lake City region.

IRC Salt Lake City expects to resettle over 450 refugees this year. The resettlement process involves a constellation of federal, state and local resources in addition to private and non-governmental organizations.

As a resettlement agency in Salt Lake City, the IRC is responsible for the coordination of the first phase of the resettlement process. This phase starts with an IRC representative picking up refugees as they step off the plane in Salt Lake City, and continues on through their first six months in the country. During this six-month period, clients are provided in-depth case management, housing assistance, job development, healthcare management, education opportunities, and acculturation services.

The efforts of the host community here in Salt Lake City are key to the successful adjustment and establishment of self-sufficiency for this incoming population.

Acculturation by definition is bi-directional, that is, it describes a process in which both refugees and the host community adjust to one another and thereby create a new composite cultural community.

Thanks to the hospitality of Salt Lake City, the efforts of the IRC and all of the partners in the community, our country continues to represent a place of security, freedom and independence.

For information on IRC worldwide, IRC in Salt Lake City, and how you can get involved, please visit the IRC website at: www.theirc.org/SLC or contact:

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