

Keep lines of communication open to stop bullying

SAFE, Inc. Parent University at Gribbin School well attended



Robin Mead, SAFE, Inc's Parent and Life Skills Coordinator, right, and SAFE's Coalition's Parent Committee Chair Laurent Caballero shared the presentation with parents and teachers.



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SAFE, Inc. led a Parent University presentation on Bullying Prevention at Gribbin Elementary School on January 16th as part of a joint Gribbin-Connolly PTA Meeting. Robin Mead, a licensed social worker and SAFE, Inc's Parent and Life Skills Coordinator and SAFE's Coalition's Parent Committee Chair Laurent Caballero shared the presentation with parents and teachers.

Mead began by discussing the Dignity for All Students Act (DASA), which was created to prohibit harassment of students by other students and district personnel. The law's five areas of regulation include: the creation of school policy and revising the code of conduct, providing for school employee training, the appointment and training of a Dignity Act coordinator, an annual reporting of information to state and notifying students and parents utilizing the district's website, mail, evening events, and open houses.

This was followed by a video, Bullying What Every Parent Needs to Know. The purpose of showing the video was to make parents and teachers aware of the current bullying trends and to share what other parents and teachers are doing to address this.

Mead and Caballero presented a power point presentation as well about the facts regarding bullying and answered questions from parents.

"The main concerns were how to handle ongoing instances of bullying. One parent said their child had been bullied for over a year" said Mead.

Caballero said she believed the bullying presentation was very valuable to teachers but especially to parents. "Some of the parents appeared to be in shock when they heard stories from other parents in the meeting about bullying," she said.

Mead and Caballero discussed the subtleties of bullying from "friends" and the emotional drain that takes its toll on kids who are bullied daily. They discussed the different types of bullying from the physical to the emotional and defined exactly what bullying is not. "My goal was to open up the discussion about bullying and to make parents aware of what they can do, and I encouraged them not to let it go and brush it off as kids will be kids," said Mead. "It's important to keep the lines of communication open."

Caballero agreed adding that she hopes to bring the workshop to everyone

in the community, especially to children and the staff at schools. "I think it would be very helpful to all of them," she said. "Children should hear the stories directly from those who have been there."

The Parent University Presentations are being led by SAFE's Coalition's Parent Committee to address the findings of the Bach-Harrison Prevention Needs Assessment Survey given by the Glen Cove School District to students in grades 6, 8, 10, & 12 in January 2012. The survey assessed the use of alcohol, marijuana, tobacco and other negative behaviors.

The next Parent University will be on Bullying Prevention at Connolly Elementary School on Tuesday, March 19 at 7:30 p.m. All parents and caregivers are welcome to attend to understand their role in preventing and responding to bullying.

For further

information on any SAFE, Inc. PRIDE Project Coalition and their initiatives contact Coalition Coordinator Aimee Abraham at (516) 676-2008. SAFE Inc. is a not for profit tax exempt substance abuse education and prevention agency located in Glen Cove. Visit our website at [HYPERLINK "http://www.safeglen-cove.org"](http://www.safeglen-cove.org) www.safeglen-cove.org and follow us on Facebook at [HYPERLINK "http://www.facebook.com/GlenCovePrideCoalition"](http://www.facebook.com/GlenCovePrideCoalition) www.facebook.com/GlenCovePrideCoalition



Robin Mead, LSW, leading a presentation at the Gribbin-Connolly PTA meeting on Bullying What Every Parent Needs to Know for SAFE, Inc.