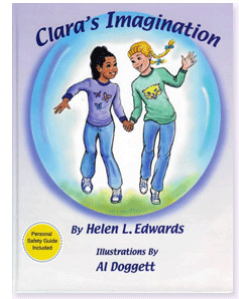Lesson Plan 5

Cyber Bullying (Part I)

GRADE LEVELS: 6-12

BASED ON THE BOOK:

Clara's Imagination by *Helen L. Edwards*
Appendix J.1. Internet Safety For Children And Teens

FOCUS: The focus of this lesson is on Cyber bullying and how empathy can play a role in eliminating the tolerance of bullying in any form

PURPOSE:

- To increase students' social and emotional learning.
- Students look within themselves to tap into how they connect with others on a feeling level.
- Students' ability to relate to others on an emotional, feeling level, will undoubtedly increase the likelihood of them being compelled, to take a stand against cyber bullying/bullying or injustice of any kind.

OBJECTIVES:

- ❖ Empathy plays a large part in how we relate and interact with others. Using the handout "**How Do I Rate On Empathy?**" will allow students the opportunity to examine and rate their own depth of empathy for others which will give them insight into their current capacity for empathy.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- ❑ The book Clara's Imagination by Helen L. Edwards
- ❑ Handouts**: "How Do You Rate On Empathy?"** and **"Group Discussion Questions Handout"** by Helen L. Edwards
- ❑ Paper or journal
- ❑ Pen and pencil

PRE-READING: Appendix J.1. The focus is on cyber bullying and Internet safety. Review the two handouts prior to teaching the lesson

TEACHER'S NOTE:

1. Research indicates that empathy can be learned. There is also additional research done with incarcerated prisoners that demonstrated prisoners that had anger management and empathy

training showed a decrease in aggressive behavior. The very nature of learning how to be empathic requires a skill set.

2. Students will recognize others have thoughts, feelings, points of view, that may be different from their own. Others may have different life experiences but respecting the fact that they do have the right to have their own thoughts and feelings, even if theirs differ from their own.

3. Finding common ground or places where people can connect and relate on some things is helpful toward fostering empathy. As well as identifying with some universal principles, a set of shared principles, or codes of conduct, or a way of being that one might deem as a fair and a just way to conduct one's self in life and society. All civilized societies do have universal principles and laws enacted in which they are governed by to keep the peace and civility.

4. Pass the handout to the class "**How Do I Rate On Empathy?**"

5. **Say –**
   - ❖ **Class there is no right or wrong answer on this handout.   It is to give you insight perhaps to ways you may or may not relate to others. I would like you to use the questions on the handouts to generate discussion about empathy. So first take time to read the questions and answer them for yourself. Then I want you to get into your groups** (it can be table groups or however you want to formulate them but no more than four in a group) **discuss each question from your viewpoint. Everyone has the right to their own feelings and viewpoints and if they differ from yours we respect their right to have their own thoughts and feelings.**

6. After the groups have had time to discuss every question on the handout 1-7, open the class up to whole class discussion regarding each question. Chart class feedback on flipchart or overhead. Summarize based on feedback generated out of the class discussion. We all have various levels of empathy depending on our personality, the degree to which we know the person, or are familiar, or can relate to the experience.

Lesson 5 Handout:

How Do I Rate On Empathy?

Circle the statement that best fits your belief.

1. When I hear about someone's pain, a tragedy or loss.
   A) It is easy for me to imagine how hurt they must be feeling.
   B) It is hard for me to imagine how hurt they must be feeling.
   C) It depends on how well I know them.

2. I do not mind making time to listen to other people's worries.
   A) I would rather not.
   B) I would make the time.
   C) Only if I like the person.

3. I feel bad if I hurt someone's feelings.
   A) Not if it was intentional.
   B) Sometimes
   C) I would rather not hurt someone's feelings.

4. I have little tolerance for shy or timid people.
   A) Very true
   B) Not true

5. It is not hard for me to read other people's feelings; I can easily pick up cues from their facial expressions and or from their body language.
   A) Occasionally
   B) Often
   C) Seldom

6. When problem solving a difference of opinion it is often difficult for you to see the other person's point of view?
   A) Occasionally
   B) Often
   C) Seldom

7. I enjoy making fun of other people more than I want to admit.
   A) Occasionally
   B) True, it's all in fun.
   C) I'd rather not.

TEACHER'S NOTE:

7. **Say** –
   - ❖ **What is cyber-bullying?** (Allow for the class to give feedback. You can write down what they are saying on a flipchart, or on an overhead. Once they have answered the question, thank them for their participation and feedback).
   - ❖ **Thank you for your contributions. You are right! Cyber bullying is any communication written via, computer, laptop, and cell phone, to access the Internet for the purpose of humiliating, intimidating, or embarrassing the targeted victim. Through e-mail, texting, IM or any digital message that is repeatedly directed at someone that involves a threat, rude, embarrassing comments, lewd, and disrespectful language. Using digital technology to send pictures or videos to others that would be seen as demeaning or belittling or inappropriate images or photos of the person that were meant to be private and forwarding to others.**

8. Pass out **"Group Discussion Questions Handout"**
9. Record group feedback on the flipchart.
10. **Say** –
    - ❖ **In your groups discuss your thoughts on the handout and feelings about the true life stories I am going to read to you. Decide who will record your group's feelings and thoughts and who from your group will report back to the class your group's discussion points.**
    - ❖ **Impersonating someone else online or creating a character as a cover to gain a person's trust, obtain personal information about them, only to use it to publicly humiliate them later on is another method of cyber bullying.**
    - ❖ **A real life tragic example of how impersonation over the Internet was used is in the case of 13-year old Megan Meier, who established an online relationship with someone she thought was a teenage boy named "Josh". Unfortunately, this was a cruel joke that led to Megan's death. It was discovered after her death, that three people were impersonating the boy "Josh". It involved a teenage girl that was her former friend, her former friend's mother, Lori Drew, and Lori's 18 year old employee. They established a fake MySpace account declaring they were "Josh". Supposedly, this was done to see what Megan was saying about Lori Drew's daughter. After Megan's trust was gained through her online relationship with "Josh" he then began turning on her, tormenting and taunting her by saying many, many cruel things to her, until one day he said "The world would be a better place without you!" Sometime after that statement, Megan was found hanging in her home. It was determined that Megan had committed suicide. Words and actions do hurt and they can kill!**

11. Pause for a moment to allow the class time to think about your last statement.
12. **Say** –
    - ❖ **Class, do you believe words can kill?** (It depends on someone's state of mind; they could drive vulnerable people, who may not feel like they have a support system, to do the

unthinkable. Acknowledge the class feedback, chart it on the flipchart and respond appropriately, before moving on to the next story).

13. After you have allowed the class time to discuss the first three questions in their groups, and charted their feedback on the flipchart, point out when they were showing empathy.

14. Talk about the need to be empathetic in a civilized society. How that fosters trust, understanding and maintaining a sense of connectedness to each other, our fellow man and woman.

15. Allow students additional time in their groups to elaborate on their understanding of how and why or why not they think empathy is a good skill to have as a citizen in our society and the value of it as it relates to the world. As they now begin to answer question four on the handout.

16. Repeat the same processes of having the group's report back their thoughts to the class and continue to chart them on the flipchart. Summarize the day's lesson based on the class discussions that came out of the groups.

Lesson 5 Handout:

Group Discussion Questions Handout

1. You do not know Megan but how do you feel about what she must have felt or have been feeling?

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_____

2. How do you think her family feels, her friends, and her classmates?

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3. Megan and Ryan were 13 years old; at 13 years old you are going through puberty. That is when your body has an increase in hormones; you are growing and becoming a young woman or man developmentally. There are a lot of physical and emotional changes for both girls and boys. How you look and comparing yourself to others becomes crucial. Peer acceptance, wanting to fit in is paramount at this stage of development. Might any of those factors played a role in Megan and Ryan's fragile state of mind?

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4. Is there value in having the skill to feel and show empathy? If so, why, if not, why not?

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