CYBERALLY™ PROGRAM OVERVIEW

With today's increasing access to online technology, the Internet and other electronic media are a big part of most students' lives. While there are many positive uses of electronic media, unfortunately they have also become a vehicle for social cruelty and for spreading hatred and intolerance based on race, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and other parts of people's identities. Electronic media, such as cell phone text messaging, chat rooms and online instant messaging, are also being used to bully, intimidate, harass and humiliate people. Whether cyberbullying is related to race, religion or some other difference, such as physical appearance or personality, it can produce devastating consequences for those who are targeted.

For youth, standing up to cyberbullying can be very difficult for a number of reasons, including peer pressure, fear of repercussions from the perpetrators or uncertainty about how to respond. The Anti-Defamation League's A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE® Institute created the CyberALLY™ training program to help students better understand the problem of cyberbullying, and how to respond when they experience it or see it happen to others. This workshop will provide students with the knowledge and skills to feel empowered to become cyberallies in their community and to create safer and more respectful online environments.

CyberALLY™ is a half-day (3-hour) or full-day (6-hour) training for middle and high school students that increases awareness about the unique features and impact of cyberbullying, provides strategies for students to respond effectively to cyberbullying and fosters an increased culture of e-safety and respect for differences among youth. This interactive training program provides practical information and opportunities for skill-building that will support students in developing personal strategies for protecting themselves against cyberbullying as well as acting as cyberallies—preventing and taking action against cyberbullying and social cruelty in online forums.

Program Goals

■ To promote safety and inclusion in online forums as part of a broader strategy to create safe schools for all youth

■ To help create informed student populations who understand the importance of behaving responsibly and respectfully online and who are motivated to challenge cyberbullying in their schools and online communities

Program Objectives

■ To increase understanding and awareness about the impact of cyberbullying

■ To educate and empower students to recognize and effectively address cyberbullying

- To explore the connections between cyberbullying, bias-motivated behavior and online hate activities

- To provide students with the tools and skills needed to respond to cyberbullying and to be cyberallies to others

- To create safer and more respectful online environments for students