

"Bullying in the Age of Social Media: What You Need to Know and What You Can Do"

By Corin Ramos, OC Ethnic Community Examiner

The recent suicides of young students, Tyler Clementi, 18, Phoebe Prince, 15, Seth Walsh, 13, Asher Brown, 13, and Billy Lucas, 15 have sparked national outrage against the kids believed to have bullied them "to death."

In Orange County, the OC Human Relations is doing their part to bring even more attention to this growing problem by hosting a panel on Tuesday, October 19 called, "Bullying in the Age of Social Media: What You Need to Know and What You Can Do."

This panel is an effort to shed light on how community members can help stop the spread of cyber-bullying, how individuals can help those who are being cyber-bullied, and what additional measures may be undertaken to stop this epidemic of violence.

"Cyber bullying is hate, terrorism, and must be stopped," said Alan Woo with the Asian Pacific Planning Council of Orange County. "It is not only an attack on an individual's right that is lawlessness at its roots, but it also erodes and undermines a civil society that Americans should not condone nor accept."

Alison Lehmann, Director, OC Human Relations BRIDGES Program and one of the panelists for Tuesday's event, said, "As our world changes, we are all exposed to more diversity. For many, this diversity is cherished as a strength. For some, accepting differences is a challenge and rather than embrace, they target these differences. Though we have made progress, recent bullying related suicides have shown us that not all young people feel safe and respected. Their differences - real or perceived - should not be a source of ridicule. It's time for adults to support all youth and be models of respect and civility."

Other panelists will address using social media as a tool for good, rather than a weapon.

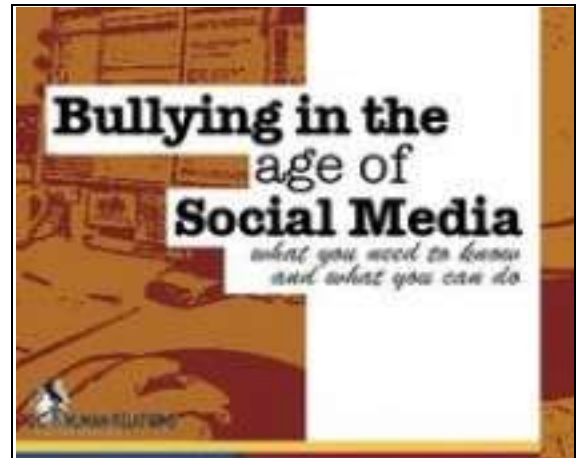
"Social media is becoming an integral part of our daily lives and with the horrific incidences of teen suicides across our nation, it's critically important to show these powerful tools can and ought to be a force for good. It's a highly effective tool to combat fear and hatred by providing much-needed information, outreach and support for our community's youths," said Ted Nguyen, a member of the Social Media Club of Orange County and winner of best social media program by the California Public Information Officers Association.

Other Panelists include:

- Nicholas, a 17-year-old Orange County resident, who has been bullied throughout school and is a victim of cyber-bullying. On October 6, he appeared on the Dr. Phil show called, "Bullied to Death."
- Rochelle Veturis, media and public relations director, LPA, Inc.
- Melissa Carr, Special Projects Director, Anti-Defamation League.
- Judy Iannaccone, director of communications and internal affairs, Rancho Santiago Community College District; and OC Human Relations board member, will moderate the panel.
- A representative of The Center Orange County will be on hand to provide the perspective of the LGBT community

About OC Human Relations

Since 1971, OC Human Relations has worked to build bridges of understanding to promote a vision of our community where all people are valued and included and our diversity is realized as a source of strength. Last year, the organization's message reached more than 47,000 school students, parents and educators; over 5,400 people received mediation services, and it offered over 7,000 cultural competency and leadership presentations and dialogs to community members and police. Follow OC Human Relations on Twitter @WeAreOneOC and on Facebook.



October 19 panel Photo: OC Human Relations

WHEN: Tuesday, October 19, 2010

7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

WHERE: OC Human Relations

1300 S. Grand Ave., Bldg. B

Santa Ana, CA 92705