EPISODE 2 – ANTHONY WAYNE HIGH SCHOOL WHITEHOUSE, OH

- *Bullying, prejudice and cliques are fixtures in schools across America.*
- *Challenge Day is a one-day program that aims to break down these barriers.*

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Anthony Wayne High School is a middle-class school of approximately 1300 students in the suburbs of Toledo, Ohio.

Featured Students and their self-proclaimed roles on campus:
Abby - "Mean Girl"
Brian – "Class Clown"
Emily – "Cheerleader"
Kyle – "Jock "
Aaron – "Tough Guy"

Cliques and the stereotypes people form about various groups on campus are a painful reality in every school.

- What are the cliques at your school? What stereotypes do you attribute to them?
- Have you or any of your friends ever been hurt by stereotypes or by being associated or labeled as a member of any of these groups?
- Do you relate to any of the students in this episode?

THEMES TO EXPLORE AND DISCUSS

1. Cyberbullying
2. The Cycle of Oppression
3. Negative Peer Pressure & Rumors

1. Cyberbullying

Notice

- **Brian** admits using the Internet to create a practical joke page saying that two people should date, and things got ugly. Have you or a friend ever been the victim of cyberbullying? If so, how did it feel and how did you or your friend deal with it?

- It seems that the motto for some students at Anthony Wayne has been "if you have something bad to say about someone, say it online." Do you do things online that you would never do in the real world? Why do you think so many young people are willing to write things on the Internet that they wouldn't say in person?

- Have you ever used the Internet to get back at someone who hurt you? How did you feel about it after the fact?

If you NOTICE that cyberbullying is a problem in your school or community and you CHOOSE to Be the Change – you can ACT by doing one or more of the following...

Act

- Don't be a part of the problem. Never send hurtful or negative comments via text or online. If the harm has already been done, and you are the one who has been doing the bullying, make things as right as possible – if you can, remove the posts and apologize for what you have done.

- If you are with someone who is about to post or send something hurtful, ask the person to think about what they're doing and the harm that it could cause.

- Use the Internet to build people up instead of putting them down. Try to share positive comments with people around you every day.

2. The Cycle of Oppression

Notice

- **Aaron** describes how he was picked on when he was younger, and admits that he started teasing others to make himself feel better. Have you or any of your friends ever been in **Aaron's** position? What did you do?

- Have you ever been a bystander while other people were being teased or hurt? Would you do things differently in the future?

- How can you be part of the solution? Is there anything you could do or say that might lend a hand to people who are being oppressed on a regular basis?

If you NOTICE that the cycle of oppression is a problem and you CHOOSE to Be the Change – you can ACT by doing one or more of the following…

Act

- Be there for people you know who have been hurt or teased. If their problems are too big for you to handle, help them find a counselor or trusted adult to talk to.

- Speak up. Don't stand by in silence when others are being hurt. Step in when you hear hurtful comments and jokes. Go out of your way to include people who are being left out. If someone is being teased or bullied, help them get away from the situation. If it isn't safe – get help!

- Create a list of all the people you know that you have hurt. Once your list is complete, do what you can to make things right. Sincerely apologize for your actions and most importantly, let these people know what they can count on from you in the future.

3. Negative Peer Pressure and Rumors

Notice

- Have you ever been hurt by negative rumors? If so, how did it feel, and what did you do? If you could do it all again, was there anything you would handle differently?

- How often do you find yourself spreading rumors or listening to gossip? Do you think people would describe you as a gossip?

- **Emily** is moved to tears talking about losing **Karlee**'s friendship due to negative rumors and comments. Have you ever lost a friendship or felt angry with a friend because of negative comments or rumors? If so, what happened and how did you deal with it?

If you NOTICE that rumors are a problem in your life and you CHOOSE to Be the Change – you can ACT by doing one or more of the following...

Act

- Don't allow yourself to get caught up in petty rumors and gossip, and avoid passing on the negativity. Even if a rumor is true, be true to your own values and make sure the rumor stops with you.

- Stop negative rumors. Use **Challenge Day's 4-Step Rumor Elimination Mode**l.

    1. Attempt to interrupt - Do your best to interrupt the rumor. Try saying something like, "I really don't want to hear rumors." If the person is too hurt or angry to stop, then:

    2. Listen with compassion – Help the person get the feelings out. No matter how tempting it might be, never buy into the hurt or separation.

    3. Challenge the person – Encourage the person to speak directly to the person they are talking about. If they agree:

    4. Check back - Ask the person to come back and tell you when they have spoken to the person they were talking about. This final step is key, so you know the communication is complete.

- Spread positive rumors. Most people are experts at spreading rumors, so use the rumor mill for good. If you hear great things about others, pass on the good news. When you think something nice, say it.

LEARN MORE AND SHARE

- If you're dealing with cyberbullying or online gossip and rumors, head to http://www.athinline.org for resources and ways to get help.

- To further discuss the issues in this episode, head to http://ifyoureallyknewme.mtv.com.