



## **EPISODE 5 – COLUSA HIGH SCHOOL** **COLUSA, CA**

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

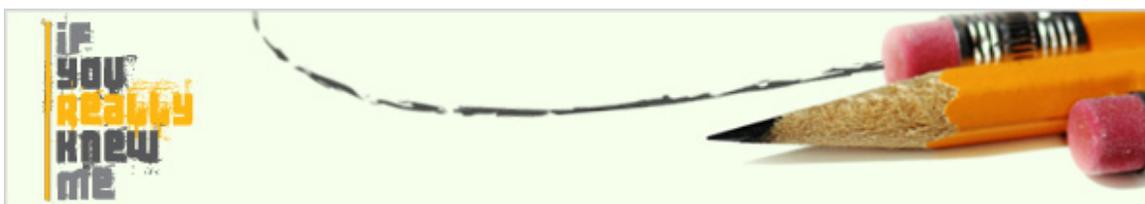
Colusa High School is a small school in a small farming town in the foothills of Northern California. Most students at this school have grown up together their entire lives.

Featured students and their roles on campus:

Lexi – “Prep”  
Breon – “Jock”  
Katrina – “Stoner”  
Lynae – “Loner”  
Josh – “Nerd”

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. Labels
2. Numbing the Pain
3. Teen Pregnancy

### 1. Labels

#### ***Notice***

- What labels have been placed on you? How often do you label others? Once a person is labeled, how difficult do you think it is to change people's impressions? How do you see labels affecting the ways people relate with one another?
- Do you agree with the staff and students at Colusa High School that labels are especially painful and harder to shake in smaller schools and communities? Why?
- Have you ever stereotyped or labeled a person one way and found out later that you were wrong about them? Do you have any friends today that you had problems with or judged in the past? If so, what was it that caused you to change your mind about this person?

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

#### ***Act***

- The next time you find yourself starting to label someone, stop and think about whether the label would leave the person feeling better or worse about themselves.
- Think about the ways in which the members of the different groups and cliques on campus are being labeled and stereotyped. Then, try to get to know people from each of these groups and find out what they're really like.
- Start a conversation about labels at your school. Talk to your friends about the labels that have been placed on them and the way that they label their classmates. Together, come up with ways to step outside your comfort zone and get to know people from groups other than your own.



## 2. Numbing the Pain

### **NOTICE**

- What, if anything, do you do, to make yourself feel numb? Do you ever stay overly busy, turn to drugs or alcohol, overeat or smoke to avoid feeling?
- In what ways do you see family members, friends or acquaintances making themselves feel numb? Do you ever worry about them? Do you ever share your concerns?
- What do you think happens to feelings that are not felt or expressed? Have you ever found yourself feeling depressed for no apparent reason? Do you ever find yourself lashing out at the people closest to you even though it really wasn't their fault? Has anyone ever done the same to you? If so, why do you think that is?

If you NOTICE that numbing the pain is a problem for you or those around you and you CHOOSE to Be the Change – you can ACT by doing one or more of the following...

### **Act**

- Think about how you and the people closest to you make yourselves feel numb. What are some positive ways that you can express your feelings? Try to learn how to express your feelings rather than bottling them up, and encourage your friends to do the same.
- If you notice that any of your habits are helping you to hide your feelings, let your friends know what behaviors you'd like to change and ask them to remind you if they see you falling back into old patterns.
- When you notice someone is hiding their true feelings, encourage them to share what's really going on, and be there for them no matter how they react.

## 3. Teen Pregnancy

### **Notice**

- Putting yourself in **Lynae's** shoes, why do you think it was so hard for her to share about her pregnancy? Who, if anyone, do you think you might feel safe enough to share this kind of news with?
- Have you or anyone close to you ever had an unwanted or unexpected pregnancy? If so, what was the situation? How did it feel? How was it



handled? If you were to relive the situation again, is there anything you might want to do differently this time around?

- Given the fact that abstinence counseling and birth control options are so readily accessible in today's society, why do you think so many teenagers still find themselves dealing with unwanted or unexpected pregnancies?

If you NOTICE that teen pregnancy has been or could be a problem and you CHOOSE to Be the Change – you can ACT by doing one or more of the following...

### ***Act***

- Think about what trusted friends and adults you have that you'd be comfortable having a discussion with on relationships, sexuality, and pregnancy.
- If you are or are considering becoming sexually active, make sure that you're ready to discuss protection and your comfort zone with your partner. Talk about it somewhere that is relaxed and comfortable, before things get intimate, and be up front about your feelings.
- If someone you know is pregnant, be there for them and help them find resources and counseling. No one, regardless of the situation or circumstance, should ever have to handle a pregnancy alone.

### **LEARN MORE AND SHARE**

- If you'd like to learn more about sex and teen pregnancy, check out <http://www.itsyoursexlife.com>.
- If you're having trouble dealing with your emotions, check out <http://www.halfofus.com>.
- To further discuss the issues in this episode, head to <http://ifyoureallyknewme.mtv.com>.

