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How To Start Your Own White-Out To Erase Bullying

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WHAT IS A WHITE-OUT TO ERASE BULLYING?

At Watchung Regional High School, students decided to call their Not In Our School campaign a “White-Out” to erase the hate from bullying. The goal of the White-Out is to gain awareness on the issue of bullying and bring together a community, in its entirety, to support the worthy cause. After garnering support from their school superintendent, they approached two student leaders to create a logo and formed a student leadership group that partnered with an existing school Diversity Committee. Then students began a massive outreach effort to the four local towns, civic leaders, school superintendents, and community groups who fed into Watchung Regional High School. Students developed campaign materials and distributed posters, stickers, and a how-to guide to the 13 local elementary and middle schools that fed into their high school. Students also offered mini-workshops to help students at those schools plan activities. The Watchung High *Pathways Career Class* made posters and a huge banner for the pledge. Student leaders also contacted the press and politicians to join their efforts to enhance the powerful student statements, events, and activities. The purpose of this guide is to share how you can do a White-Out in your community.



HERE IS HOW TO DO IT YOURSELVES

Gather a group of hardworking students who will be able to take and give directions, who care about the cause, and are able to communicate well with peers and adults. Find a supportive Faculty Advisor. Determine a time where students, as well as a faculty supervisor, can meet on a regular basis.

Once you have your group together, familiarize students with the mission of this project to spread awareness on the issue of bullying and bring the whole community together. Then pick a date where all schools in the community are in session and when there are no other events scheduled.

Plan your activities and divide the tasks. To do that, break students into groups. Each group should have individual deadlines to meet, depending on the task.

Some examples of ways to form groups:

Create separate teams with the following tasks:

- contact local government officials (have town proclamations issued)
- handle advertising/posters/ribbons
- design and produce t-shirts/stickers/banners: orders, distribution (optional)
- organize a pre-White-Out event (optional)
- speak to state officials (support or speakers at the event)
- organize day of events (announcements on loudspeaker, speakers, assemblies, field trips, etc.)

Once groups are established they should have time during scheduled regular meetings to communicate with each other and an action plan. Each group will have individual deadlines, however all of the work should be completed and organized with a week to spare. Groups should check in with the faculty in charge and complete the below checklist to ensure a smooth running White-Out event. The following checklist below will give you step-by-step tasks for starting your White-Out to Erase Bullying.

WHITE-OUT TO ERASE BULLYING CHECKLIST

Start of the school year: September - October

- Select a group of students
- Select a faculty advisor
- Establish regular meeting times

First meeting with students

- Introduction to purpose of the group
- Everyone gets to know each other

Second meeting

- Determine the day of the Event
- Decide if you want to have a pre-event (dodge ball tournament, dinner, etc.)
- Brainstorm what activities you want the day of the event (assemblies, speakers, etc.)

Third meeting

- Break students into groups
- Make sure each group knows exactly what their jobs are and understand the deadlines that they must meet



Month 2: October/November Planning Meetings

Event(s)

- Brainstorm all possible events going on during that day
- Determine whom you will need to contact in order to arrange those events

Local Officials

- Create a list of local officials (mayor, town council, Board of Education, etc.) that you think would like to support your event
- Contact the local officials and schedule meetings
- Make a list of all the points the group would like to get across
- Determine what towns group members are responsible for or who feels most comfortable speaking

State Officials

- Create a list of all your state officials that may want to be a part of the event
- State Officials require more notice, so begin drafting and sending officials letters/e-mails
- Remember to talk to all of the other groups to make sure you tell the officials all of the correct information
- Ask them if they would like to attend and/or speak at the event (talk to your Day of Events group to see if they want this)

Month 2: October – November Planning Meetings cont.

Pre-White-Out Event (optional)

- Decide what kind of event you would like to have to get support and build momentum for the White-Out.
- Brainstorm the location
- Think about who will attend
- Make a list of everything you would need to hold this event (food, a gym, staff, money, toys, space, etc.)

Advertising / Posters / Ribbons

- Create a universal poster that will be used in schools, the community, and businesses. This must have the school name, event date, and the White-Out logo.
- Brainstorm the different businesses and public locations where posters can be hung
- Begin looking at local craft stores for white ribbons, start buying anytime it is on sale

T-Shirts / Banners / Stickers

- Create a t-shirt design (it can look the same as the posters; school name, date, logo, etc.)
- Research and get quotes from different t-shirt printing companies to find the lowest cost
- Determine a reasonable price to sell the t-shirts for (that way when asking for grants you know how much money the group needs)
- Design a banner for student and faculty signatures (it should have your school name and White-Out motto printed on it)
- Research and get quotes for printing the banner
- Design a sticker, determine a quantity, get sticker printing quotes (stickers are optional)



2 Months Before the Event: December - February

Event(s)

- Make sure the group talks to the principal about the plans and gets approval
- Talk to the state/local government official groups to see if they have any news
- Create a game plan and a schedule of the event day

Local Officials

- Make sure you have a date set for attending Town Council Meetings
- Finalize all people attending each meeting
- Determine who will be saying what at each meeting

State Officials

- If any state officials have expressed interest continue to keep them in the loop of new details

Pre-White-Out Event

- Secure the location, ensure they can manage the number of people attending

Advertising / Posters / Ribbons

- Order the posters, ensure they are delivered at least 3 weeks prior to the event date
- Continue buying white ribbon on sale

T-Shirts / Banners / Stickers

- Order the t-shirts
- Determine how you want people to buy t-shirts, i.e., order form or just buy them at a table
- If by order form, then create the order form and decide how the t-shirts will be delivered (pick it up at the school, taken to each house, etc.)
- Ensure t-shirts can be delivered in one month
- Order the banner
- Order stickers



1 Month Before the Event: February – March

Event(s)

- Make sure everyone is locked in place for the events of the day
- Continue to stay in contact with those speaking
- Organize what grades/ages will see who and when (if you're dividing up into multiple events)

Local Officials

- Those in charge of local officials should visit council meetings and have proclamations issued
- Make sure after your pitch, and a proclamation is issued, you specifically thank those involved

State Officials

- If anyone is attending the event verify their involvement

Pre-White-Out event

- Begin gathering all supplies necessary for your event (balloons, decorations, nets, balls, etc.)
- Make sure all details regarding location are worked out

Advertising / Posters / Ribbons

- Determine a time to meet with all of the teachers (faculty meeting) and schedule a brief 5-10 minute presentation
- Inform all of the teachers about the White-Out and encourage them to get their students involved/excited
- Talk to your Board of Education (decide if you need a grant or support from them)

T-Shirts / Banners / Stickers

- Make sure t-shirts have been printed and delivered
- Begin selling t-shirts
- Make sure banners and stickers are on their way



2 Weeks Before Event

Advertising / Posters / Ribbons

- Hang up posters for the event anywhere and everywhere (around school, town, businesses, libraries, etc.; consult the previous list)
- Make sure all the teachers have one in their classroom and/or on their door

T-Shirts / Banners / Stickers

- Give out pre-ordered t-shirts
- Begin selling t-shirts at a table (before school, during lunch, after school, other school events, etc.)

1 Week Before Event

Event(s)

- Remind everyone of the day
- Work with the advertising group to make sure everyone is aware of the day
- Confirm everyone is in line to come to the event

Pre-White-Out Event

- Make sure all details are arranged
- Make announcements regarding the event daily on the school loudspeaker
- Determine who will be able to set up early and run the different events involved

Advertising / Posters / Ribbons

- Go around town and hang ribbons *everywhere* (parks, lamp posts, school entries, trees, stores, etc.)

T-Shirts / Banners / Stickers

- Continue to give out t-shirts
- Have a table where students can sign the banner throughout the week (before school, during lunch, after school, other school events, etc.)
- Distribute stickers (teachers can give them to their classes, hand them out in the halls, etc.)

Day of Event

- HAVE FUN!
- GET EXCITED!
- Enjoy your event
- Speak to students
- Wear the t-shirts
- Greet the speakers
- Decorate for the event
- Spread the enthusiasm

Post Event

- Remember to thank all of those involved in assisting your event and making it the success that it was!