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Jones County Schools hosts bullying prevention event for elementary pupils

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[Chris Lavender](#)

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CHRIS LAVENDER/FREEDOM ENC

Jones County Schools hosted an assembly this week at the Jones County Civic Center where motivational speaker and [reportbullying.com](#) president Jim Jordan of Toronto, Canada, discussed the important role bystanders play in reporting bullying incidents to authorities.

TRENTON — Trenton Elementary School fifth-grade student Marlisha Brown learned this week that she doesn't have to be a bully to get ahead in life.

Brown said some her classmates at school aren't always kind and respectful and call each other names.

"There is no minor bullying," Brown said. "It's all bad and shouldn't be done anywhere because it can cause emotional harm."

Brown joined several hundred Jones County Schools students this week to listen to motivational speaker and [reportbullying.com](#) President Jim Jordan speak about how to identify bullying and report it to school officials.

Based in Toronto, Canada, Jordan has traveled throughout North America the past seven years to help school districts find better solutions on how to handle bullying. Jordan's approach is not to solely focus on bullies and their victims but to also include bystanders as part of the solution.

"Bullying is a community problem, not a bullying problem," Jordan said. "Some of the bullying behaviors can be taught at home and brought to schools."

Jordan said attempts to scare bullies into quitting their negative behavior that gets them positive results has failed and victims are usually too scared themselves to speak up. Bystanders are encouraged to report bullying when they see it happen through Jordan's reportbullying.com model.

"Bullying happens away from people in authority," Jordan said.

Jordan said bullying at schools usually occurs on buses, hallways, bathrooms, cafeterias and online. Cyber-bullying also continues to be a problem for some communities.

Signs that a child is being bullied include not wanting to go to school, getting sick right before going to school, not sleeping, torn clothes, withdrawn or moody personality changes and substantial drop in grades.

Brown's grandmother, Nancy Bryant, attended an assembly for parents Wednesday night at the Jones County Civic Center to learn more about how to identify the signs of bullying.

"I want to be able to protect my grandchildren from bullying," Bryant said.

According to Jordan, boys and girls bully differently in their social circles. Boys usually bully others outside of their circle of friends while girls bully within their circle of friends.

Boys use physical intimidation to bully while girls use social exclusion, stares and gossip to isolate those they want to bully.

"Girls can be downright nasty at times," Jordan said. "It's easier to catch boys doing it."

Reporting bullying will be easier now for Jones County School students because reportbullying.com has set up a survey and online bullying reporting system for the district's students. Students at all grade levels can report bullying to their school's principals and guidance counselors directly.

Jordan's visit was made possible through the school district and the Jones County Health Department. The event was funded with a portion of the health department's Juvenile Crime Prevention Council funds.

Students from Comfort, Trenton, Maysville and Pollocksville elementary schools in grades three to six attended assemblies to learn more about bullying prevention on Wednesday.

Mark Gupton, Jones County Schools special education and student services director, said the online bullying reporting system is free for the students to use.

"The students showed they are very enthusiastic about the program," Gupton said. "We offer character education and this goes along with what we are trying to do."

Jones County Schools adopted a policy in March 2009 prohibiting discrimination, harassment and bullying.

Chris Lavender can be reached at 252-559-1078 or clavender@freedomenc.com.

Where students are typically bullied at school

- ◆ Bathrooms
- ◆ Hallways
- ◆ Cafeteria
- ◆ Internet
- ◆ Buses

Source: reportbullying.com

Signs a child is being bullied

- ◆ Doesn't want to go to school
- ◆ Stays in house
- ◆ Not sleeping
- ◆ Torn clothes
- ◆ Grades drop substantially
- ◆ Moody or withdrawn personality

Source: reportbullying.com

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