

Bullying: Through Their Eyes

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The use of photography actively engages youth and provides them with the opportunity to consider their surroundings and the impact of the environment on their lives. Further, it allows youth to express their experiences, feelings, and preferences in an empowering, non-threatening manner. Creative strategies that incorporate elements of photography may prove particularly useful for engaging adolescents, especially those who do not immediately or naturally identify themselves as “creative.” Photographs can carry or evoke information, affect, and reflection, which allows participants to reflect on aspects of their lives that they typically do not consider and may be used to facilitate discussion of sensitive topics.

In partnership with Pennsylvania Council of the Arts, School District of Lancaster, and local artists, Millersville University Department of Social Work faculty collaborated to implement their photography project: Through Their Eyes in order to allow youth to examine bullying through the eyes of the bully, bystander, and person being bullied. This examination encompassed:

- Utilizing disposable cameras to photograph what bullying looked like to them from the three perspectives (bully, bystander, or person being bullied)
- Documenting their thoughts and feelings associated with the photographs taken through narrative writing exercises
- Creating storybooks to display images and accompanying narratives associated with perceptions of bullying
- Performing dramatic presentation of photos through short skits
- Dialoguing with peers and community members regarding ways to affect change based on data collected through photos and personal narratives



Photographs can serve as an externalized medium for the expression of youth’s personal issues and can have a positive effect on their health. Various sensitive topics can be explored.

For more information on funding for programs like this, please contact the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts at 717-787-6883 or by visiting their web site at www.pacouncilonthearts.org