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Press Release

Bully Prevention Specialist reaches out to Area Students

Urges them to walk in other people's shoes....

It's been a problem in schools for generations, but now bullying seems to be a problem growing with renewed intensity. While many school districts have put rules and safeguards in place to stop it, an Omaha-based program is going the extra mile – heading straight to the source of the problem.

Omaha, NE October 10, , 2011: Omaha based author and R5 Productions presenter, Mike Donahue, is reaching out to young people and their parents at:

The latest statistics show more than 160,000 students stay home from school every day in the United States because they feel afraid, bullied, or threatened in school.

Bullying can wreak havoc in a school environment- sometimes it's subtle, like a comment in the school hallway. Other times it's overt, such as repeated harassment and physical threats or violence. No matter how it's manifested, bullying is done with the intention of undermining an individual's emotional confidence, self-esteem or social status.

As of late the national headlines have been filled with news about what happens when bullying goes too far...the results are devastating. We know more than Twenty percent of students are scared throughout much of the school day (Garrity, Jens, Porter, Sager, & Short-Camilli, 1997). And, 30% of all child suicides can be directly related to bullying (Hawker & Boulton, 2000). Not to mention, bullying causes some students to harm themselves, cutting themselves, as an example.

Those are just a few reasons why R5 Productions and Mike Donahue say the best defense is a great offense- tackling the problem head on before it result is disastrous.

"I was on both sides of that coin growing up. I was the victim of bullying and also the bully. And that's why I launched R5, " says Mike Donahue, "I know how these kids are feeling – I've walked in their shoes and felt their anxiety and pain first hand today. That's why today I am dedicated to help young people feel powerful by making right choices in their lives."

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R5 Productions travels to more than 200 schools every year reaching more than 200,000 students in 29 states. Founder Mike Donahue says he has dedicated a part of his life to help young people feel powerful without putting others down.

In addition, Donahue is the author of three books: *Reinventing My Normal*, *Hidden Scars*, and *Talking to Brick Walls*. His fourth book, a guide to tackling bullying, written through his own story, is scheduled for release next year.

All books are dedicated to helping young people navigate through their teenage years. For more information or a list of R5 Productions resources visit www.r5online.com.

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