

FUTURECORPS

Lowell School Students Get Tough With Bullies



Students at the Lowell School create posters to help get their "anti-bully" message out. *Top right:* Project coordinators Julia Malayera, Jennifer Surdovel and Joan Marrison.

At age 10, Tyra Gibbins already knows how it feels to be bullied. When kids used to pick on her at her old school, Tyra said she "felt really sad; I used to go home crying."

But everything changed when she enrolled at the Lowell School in Bayside, a supportive environment for children with special individual needs. She is just one of many students at Lowell participating in a school-wide poster contest promoting an anti-bullying message. "Bullies are not fun because sometimes they get into big trouble," she said.

"My mom says that bullies pick on people to get a kick out of it," said Dylan Cullen.

"They want things their way," said Megan Hopkins, 10.

Kimberly Camacho, 13, had some advice for the younger children. "If someone is bullying you, you should talk to them and see what's wrong, and if it keeps going on, you should tell someone."

"Be the better person," said Nia Medford.

"Walk it off; ignore them," added Will Ventura.

Seventh and eighth graders are hoping to prevent bullying and help kids make new friends with their Mix-it-Up Lunch, that will benefit youngsters who feel left out of school activities. Their anti-bullying initiative and

luncheon is part of Newsday's FutureCorps, a project involving students throughout Long Island and Queens in community service.

"It brings kids together that don't know how to go talk to other kids," said Lauren Fuchs.

"Everybody talks to each other and they're all from different groups," added Chris Heracleous.

"Maybe kids won't bully others if they have friends," said Philip Forte.

The initiative inspired Nicholas Sanford to write a poem: "Bullies are sometimes filled with aggression, and might cause people depression. I'm not joking; the cycle must be broken."

