**Local organization makes school life better for children**

Bobby Jones was always one of the bigger, stronger boys in his class. Throughout elementary school, he intimidated his classmates and often used this to his advantage. After learning of his behavior at school, Bobby’s mother, Sally Jones, decided she needed to do something to improve his attitude: she requested nonprofit organization Make It Better to come speak to her son and his classmates.

Oklahoma State University graduate Maggie Fair founded Make It Better in 2011 in an effort to stop childhood bullying. Fair is sponsoring seminars in Oklahoma middle and high schools to spread awareness about childhood bullying.

“Bullying has become progressively worse since I was in school only a few years ago,” Fair said. “I really want to get through to these kids and help them realize hurting others’ feelings does absolutely no good for anyone.”

Sally contacted Fair after hearing about the beginning stages of the organization.

“I knew Maggie was trying to get the word out to local schools, and I wanted to help,” Sally said. “It hurt me to know that my child was hurting other children, and I needed someone to get through to him.”

Make It Better did a trial seminar at Bobby’s Oklahoma City middle school, Hefner Middle School, in October 2011 to see how students, parents and school faculty would react.

Hefner Middle School Principal Dena Rogers said she thought the seminar was a success.

“The kids seemed to be really listening and taking all the information in,” Rogers said. “I hope they took it to heart and learned a lot from it.”

After a successful trial run at Hefner Middle School, Make It Better invites parents and public school employees to attend its parent/teacher seminar on April 27 at 9 a.m. in the Performing Arts Center of Putnam City North High School, located at 11800 N. Rockwell Ave. in Oklahoma City.

“We want to spread the message to people who didn’t get a chance to see our seminar at Hefner,” Fair said. “I want to let as many people as possible know about our organization, our mission and how they can help make lives better for the upcoming generation.”

Sally Jones said since Make It Better’s presentation at her son’s school, she has noticed changes in his behavior even at home. She said the changes are subtle, but they are changes nonetheless.

“I didn’t expect his behavior to change overnight,” Jones said. “But in just a few months, I’ve noticed an improvement in his attitude. I’m no longer receiving phone calls from his school principal on a weekly basis, and he seems to be getting along a lot better with kids in our neighborhood.”

Fair said the goal of the first seminar and seminars to come is to teach kids early in life that bullying doesn’t benefit anyone involved.

“As we get older, we learn that putting people down really doesn’t help us as much as we originally might have thought,” Fair said. “I want to teach these kids that now so they can go about their lives in a positive way for themselves and their peers.”

For more information about Make It Better and hosting a seminar at your local school, contact Fair at 405-694-5533 or maggie.fair@okstate.edu.