

Mr. Lincoln's Way

Polacco, P., 2001

Project Prevent and Address Bullying (PPAB)

for students with disabilities

Northern Illinois University | School Psychology Program

COST: \$16.18 on Amazon

PUBLISHER: Philomel Books, New York, 2001

Description of content:

This is a book for elementary school children that highlights how an administrator can help a student realize the consequences of his bullying actions and work with him to change those thoughts and behaviors. The book starts off by describing a principal who has clearly spent a lot of time not only building a positive climate in his school, but also in his community. All the students really seem to like Mr. Lincoln except for a troubled child named Eugene. The educators and students do not want to put up with Eugene because of his attitude and bullying behaviors. Eugene has been known to harass other children, make a variety of racist comments toward his peers, and in some cases even directly insults Mr. Lincoln for being African American. Instead of taking the harsh approach that everyone else is taking, Mr. Lincoln decides to see Eugene as a troubled child and eventually discovers that Eugene has a deep love for birds. Mr. Lincoln uses this knowledge and develops a new bird program for Eugene to lead at the school. When Eugene relapses into his bullying behaviors, it is discovered that his biased thoughts stem from his father and that his father strongly disapproves of his being around others who are different from them. Mr. Lincoln uses the birds to provide an analogy for why an individual's background and skin colors do not matter and ends up helping Eugene become a conscious leader at his school and in his community.

Strengths:

- An easy read for most late elementary school children.
- Book addresses difficult topics to talk about in schools.
- Supports the use of individualized help for students instead of applying a "one size fits all" approach.
- Highlights the importance of rapport building and school as well as community climate.
- Identifies the student as someone participating in bullying behaviors, and not as a bully.
- Highlights an emerging area of research on empowering troubled students.
- Provides a quick glance at the perspective of the other people.
- Uses social-ecological approach.

Limitations:

- The book provides a basic narrative that fits very well in this situation but requires the reader to generalize it to other situations.
- Promotes an approach which takes a lot of individualized time and resources.

Audience:

- Elementary school children.



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