



Eugene
Public Works

Kaleidoscope

A REFLECTION OF DIVERSITY IN PUBLIC WORKS

SPRING 2015

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The Dangers of Cyberbullying and How to Help Stop It

Casey Boatman

Public Service Announcements grace our television sets about it. Billboards about cyberbullying line city streets and too many news stories about lives ending from suicide fill the 24-hour news cycle. Unfortunately, the cruel jokes, mean and threatening emails, text messages and instant messages will likely continue.

According to a recent Customs Today report, 92 percent of teens go online daily while 24 percent of them remain online constantly. The study refers to the prevalence of smartphones as a key factor in youth internet use. Of the 1,060 teens surveyed, aged 13 to 17, 73 percent of the participants had smart phones.

So, What is Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place via electronic technology. It is most prevalent among teens but recent cases of cyberbullying on college campuses highlight the dangers of such bullying, even among young adults. Mean-spirited text messages, hurtful posts on social media sites, or embarrassing photos or videos shared about an individual are all examples of cyberbullying. Other examples of cyberbullying include creating websites or pages that make fun of another person, hacking into another's email and



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Diversity in Public Works

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sending out emails appearing to be composed by the victim and blocking or other tactics that exclude others from online groups for no good reason.

The Cyberbullying Research Center publishes a small sample of thousands of anecdotal stories and comments they have received from children and adolescents who have experienced cyberbullying:

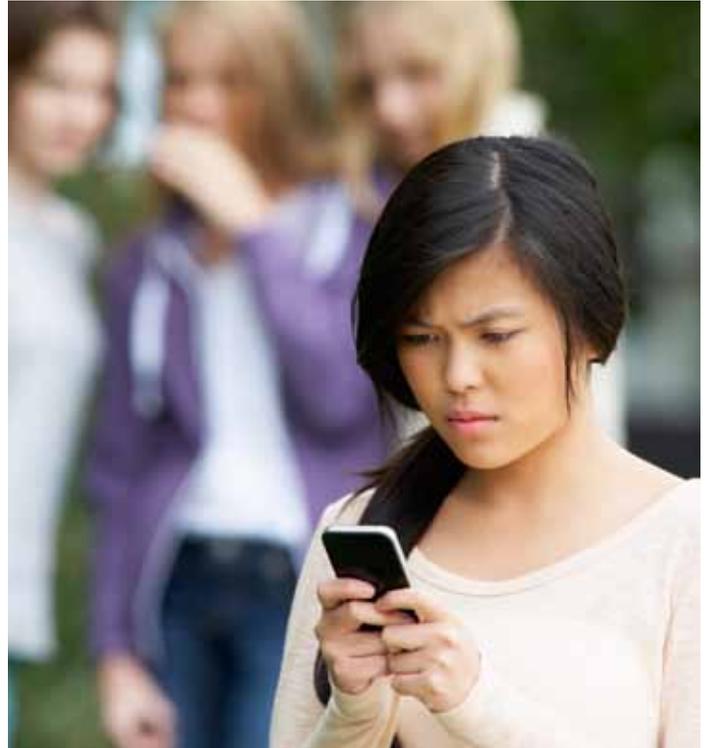
"There's a game called habbo.com. Now there's a certain room in there called [chromide club] where the kids go to make fun of people. It's bad because they get your Facebook and make fun of the way u look. They spam your Facebook throughout the game and it hurts people's feelings." - 13 year-old girl from USA

"I stopped being friends with this girl who was just a bad influence on me, and she got a couple of her friends to hate me. On MSN they had a group chat room, and it was the two girls, and they were threatening to bully me at school, and I got scared about it. (The first girl) said if I came to school she would beat me up during recess, so during that day I hid in the bathroom at lunch" - 12 year-old girl from AL

*"I broke up with this guy because I wanted to keep our relationship secret. So after a week he all of a sudden started texting me and saying how me and my brother were brats and how I was a B****. He said some pretty nasty things. I asked him why he said it and he said it was because I broke his heart and he was getting revenge from that. Me and my friends often get bullied it's one thing if it's at school but to bring it home was another. We have to stick up for each other. I thought school was supposed to be safe." - 16 year-old girl from USA*

Why Are Youth at Risk?

Though in most cases victims of bullying know their perpetrators, the nature of online cyberbullying is that it can happen 24 hours a day and children often experience the bullying when they are alone in their own home, a place considered safe in most instances. Cyberbullying is often perpetrated by individuals who feel that they can get away with 'anonymous' postings and are likely to say things to their victims



that they might not say in person. A 2013 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey revealed that 15 percent of high school students claim to have been bullied at least once in the past year.

According to stopbullying.gov, kids who are cyberbullied are likely to use alcohol and drugs, skip school, have a low self-esteem, have more health problems, get bad grades and experience bullying in person.

LGBT youth, youth with disabilities and socially isolated youth are often more vulnerable to cyberbullying, especially if they are perceived to be different from their peers, overweight or too skinny, wear glasses or unusual clothing, appear to be weak or unable to defend themselves, are depressed or anxious or even antagonize others for attention.

Youth are also at risk because online technologies used by youth often emerge quickly and adults often do not fully understand what technology children are using and for what purpose.

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Diversity in the classroom

Eric Johnson



Building self-confidence, learning to respect others, and developing positive relationships is as important as the curricula being taught.

Over the past year I have been volunteering weekly at a local elementary school. Though the majority of my time is spent working individually with students on reading, I also observe them as a group in their classroom setting. Interacting with their peers and teacher, this particular group of 27 students seems to enjoy the time they spend together.

Just like adults in the workplace, students are brought together into an environment made up of a diverse group of individuals. For most of the kids, this is the first time they've been away from home for several hours daily, interacting with people they didn't know just a few months earlier. Building self-confidence, learning to respect others, and developing positive relationships is as important as the curricula being taught. The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that each individual is unique, and recognizing our individual differences adds value to the community and school. Whether those differences are race, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, physical abilities, language, or other ideologies, diversity in our school systems is as important as it is in the workplace.

What I learned from my experience in this classroom is that for the most part, the concept of diversity comes naturally to this group of six and seven-year-olds. The students are very accepting, respectful, and tolerant of one another. Even with new students enrolling mid-year, students quickly embrace and accept them into their class. Though it's important that concepts of diversity be taught at a young age, it seems from my perspective that the basic concept of diversity and recognizing and valuing each other's unique qualities and backgrounds comes fairly easy to this group of students.

Tell us about your volunteer work! Please send your story and photos to Julie Schafer at PWM/POS (x4966) for inclusion in a future edition of Kaleidoscope.

DIVE IN: Diversity, Inclusion, Value, Educate, Improve, and Now



In the May 2015 edition of the APWA Reporter magazine, AbdulRasak Yahaya encourages public works organizations to DIVE IN to the water of diversity and inclusion.

Diversity – The variety of differences and experiences that makes each of us valuable to the team.

Inclusion – Creating an environment that invites participation and encourages mutual respect and sensitivity for everyone.

Value – Find common values that bring people together rather than isolate and exclude.

Educate – Encourage sharing of different cultures and values with the approach of seeking to understand and not forcing to accept.

Improve – Forming and strengthening relationships is a constant improvement process.

Now – Moving towards solutions now is in many situations the best course of action.

It is our duty as an organization to change the working assumptions in the communities we serve to form ideals that will be catalysts for transcending accomplishment and success related to diversity.

Cultural Diversity is a Gift!

The great thing about APWA is that we have the ability to see diversity and inclusion as a powerful tool that strengthens our organization and empowers our communities in which we serve. Use these steps to allow yourself and organization to become empowering.

How do I participate?

1. Share information with others
2. Actively participate to stay involved
3. Introduce yourself to others
4. Listen and share
5. Be open-minded about new ideas
6. Face-to-face conversation
7. Find a common purpose or interest

How do I get other to participate?

1. Chip away at barriers
2. Find common ground with coworkers
3. Encourage others to share new ideas
4. Engage employees with conversation
5. Ask for feedback in the problem-solving or decision-making process

Benefits of Diversity and Inclusion for you?

1. Build meaningful friendships
2. Increased appreciation and acceptance of individual differences
3. Increased understanding and acceptance of diversity
4. Respect for all people
5. Creates a less stressful environment
6. Increased Knowledge and status by involving others
7. Greater resources for everyone

Excerpt reprinted by permission. AbdulRasak Yahaya, Engineer I at City of Gardner, KS, can be reached at (913) 856-0920 or ayahaya@gardnerkansas.gov.



Public Works Diversity Committee Earns National Award for Action Plan

The Eugene Public Works Diversity Committee has earned a national award for its equity and human rights action plan. The award is presented annually by the American Public Works Association to recognize individuals and organizations that have made outstanding contributions to diversity.

The Public Works Diversity Committee has integrated diversity and equity through a number of practical actions and activities:

- * Learning to Connect/Connecting to Learn workshops, which are designed to strengthen internal and external working relationships, encourage diversity discussions in the work place and provide new connections and ideas for problem-solving, team building and communication.
- * An inclusive environment self-assessment of the Public Work Department, which led to work actions such as adding more visitor parking spots, making forms available in other languages, painting the main building, and adding an automatic opener button for the entrance door to improve accessibility at the Roosevelt Yard.
- * Publishing the Kaleidoscope newsletter (available online), which contains articles reflecting diversity in Public Works.
- * Encouraging employee growth through Seeds of Diversity, a monthly email series of diversity topics to promote discussions during crew, supervisor and manager meetings.

The award will be formally presented to the Public Works Diversity Committee at the APWA International Congress in Phoenix in August.

PWDC MISSION STATEMENT

The City of Eugene Public Works Department is committed to fostering understanding, communication and respect among all members in the department.

We believe in a department that is accepting of everyone so that we capitalize on the strengths emanating from our differences.

By drawing on our individual strengths, we believe we can create an optimum and respectful workplace, one that can attract and retain a diverse workforce, allowing us to serve the community from which we come more effectively.

We believe that an inclusive diversity program is pivotal to reaching our professional potential, both individually and collectively.

GOAL

The goal of the PW Diversity Committee is to promote a workplace free of harassment and discrimination. We recognize and respect diverse viewpoints, cultures, and life experiences.



“We are all familiar with traditional types of bullying, but with the advent of the Internet and social media, it is possible to encounter bullying in new forms. It is important to become familiar with what you can do to stop the behavior. The National Crime Prevention Council has some great information for people interested in learning more about this.” — Melinda McLaughlin, APR, Public Information Director- Eugene Police Department.

What Can You Do to Help Stop Cyberbullying?

Talk to your children. Ask questions about school, friends, teachers and cyberbullying itself. By having a dialogue with them about this behavior, your children will have the confidence to safely stand up to it and to feel comfortable reporting it to the appropriate adult.

Know what your children are doing online. Establish rules about the use of technology. As a parent, you should know about your children’s online activities. You can install parental control filtering software or other monitoring programs that keep track of your child’s online activity, restrict usage and know your child’s passwords in case of emergency. It is equally important to be familiar with the devices that your children are using. Don’t be afraid to ask them to show you how their phone works if you are not familiar with it.

...the nature of online cyberbullying is that it can happen 24 hours a day and children often experience the bullying when they are alone in their own home, a place considered safe in most instances.

Listen to what your children have to say. By opening communication and engaging with your children, you will better understand their concerns and frustrations and can more easily pick up on cyberbullying activities. When was the last time you asked your child who they ate lunch with today?

Encourage your kids to do what they love to do. Involving them in special activities and hobbies that interest them will keep them offline, boost their confidence and help them make more friends.

Finally, lead by example. By treating others with respect and dignity, you are being a good role model for today’s youth. By celebrating the differences in others in your own life, you are building a foundation of acceptance in a new generation.

Diversity Survey Results

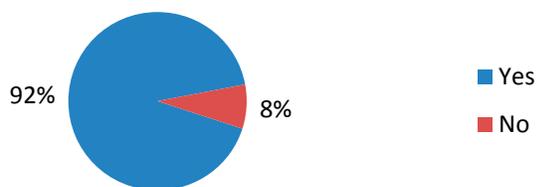
Survey Says...

In April, 222 public works employees responded to a survey from the Diversity Committee asking for help in designing a new and relevant training. The responses were very important and will provide direction to the committee as they evaluate options for future training opportunities.

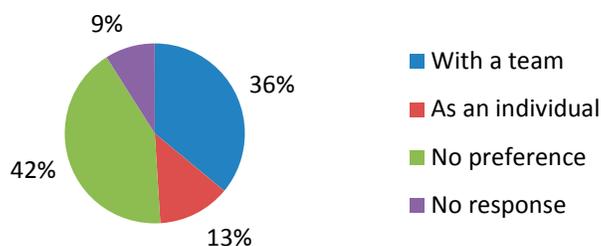
Respondents were entered into a drawing for one of six Dutch Bros. gift cards* by submitting their contact information. Recipients of the cards were:

- John Clark**, Parks and Open Space
- Patrick Cox**, Engineering
- Josiah Sheehan**, Parks and Open Space
- Roger Smith**, Parks and Open Space
- Michele Wilcox**, Engineering
- Troy Wendt**, Maintenance

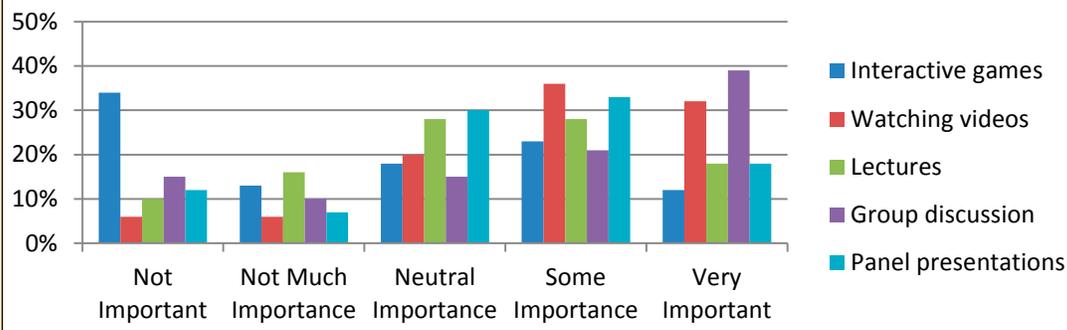
Do you know there is an annual diversity training requirement at the City?



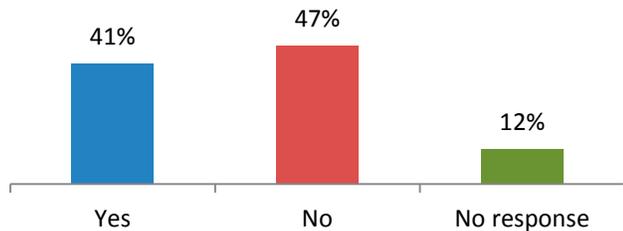
Do you prefer to attend diversity trainings with a team or individually?



What would you like to see in diversity training? How important is each item?



Have you attended the 'Learning to Connect/Connecting to Learn' training?



For questions, additional information, or to obtain a copy of the results of the survey, please contact Julie Schafer at Julie.J.Schafer@ci.eugene.or.us or (541) 682-4966 or any member of the Public Works Diversity Committee.

*Gift cards were purchased with non-City funds.

Public Works Day 2015

Thank you to all who worked behind the scenes, staffed the event, or participated in some way in making Public Works Day 2015 the BEST event in the history of Eugene Public Works Day. Many of you worked long, hard hours to make the day fun for over 2,500 people of all ages. To those of you who kept our city working while others could make this event happen, thank you too!

Take a look at our photo album on the City of Eugene's [Facebook](#) page; thank you to all of you who took and shared photos of the event. Please share the link with friends and family, "Like our page!"



Kaleidoscope is about all of us! If you have an adventure, story, book, movie, or other topic that relates to your understanding of culture and the diverse world we live in, write a few paragraphs about it and send it in so we can include it in our next issue.

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