NO ONE EATS ALONE TOOLKIT

SPREAD THE LOVE

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2015
NATIONAL NO ONE EATS ALONE DAY

Beyonddifferences.org
WELCOME TO NATIONAL NO ONE EATS ALONE DAY!
FEBRUARY 13, 2015

How to do NO ONE EATS ALONE at your school – with questions answered!!

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WELCOME

Dear Friends,

We are excited to share with you **NO ONE EATS ALONE**, our student-led lunchtime initiative. This material is designed to help you bring this program to your community’s middle schools as part of National No One Eats Alone Day 2015.

**NO ONE EATS ALONE**, Beyond Differences’ most popular program, is a stand-alone event that takes place during lunch at school. During your event, students make a difference on their own middle school campus by making sure that everyone is included at lunch and students sit with new friends and classmates.

Beyond Differences (beyonddifferences.org) is carrying a simple message to cities across this nation: We believe that a new day is dawning. A new day in which all kids feel included, valued and accepted by their peers. At Beyond Differences we are dedicated to helping teens and schools make social inclusion the new reality.

Beyond Differences was founded by the parents of Lili Smith who was born with a cranial facial syndrome and was socially isolated during her middle school years. After Lili died at the age of 15 due to medical complications from her syndrome, a group of teens from the local community banded together to bring change to their local schools. They had not realized that they had been leaving Lili out from all the fun social get-togethers. But upon hearing about Lili’s feelings of being left out, they were determined to never let anyone feel that way again!

That small group has grown into many hundreds of teens in communities all across America. These teens are bringing the word that a new day has come - that day starts with **NATIONAL NO ONE EATS ALONE DAY**.

There are two important things to know about having a **NO ONE EATS ALONE DAY** at your school:

1. The kids are in charge. We have found that when you empower teens to make these changes, they do so enthusiastically and, most importantly, the changes stick.

2. Make it local. Each school has its own traditions and its own charm. Let this show through.

We encourage you to take advantage of our materials online and in this toolkit by launching **NO ONE EATS ALONE** in your school. We welcome your questions and feedback at beyonddifferences@gmail.com.

Thank you,
Beyond Differences Team
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT BEYOND DIFFERENCES AND SOCIAL ISOLATION

Beyonddifferences.org

1. WHAT IS BEYOND DIFFERENCES?
Beyond Differences (beyonddifferences.org) is a non-profit organization dedicated to ending social isolation in middle schools across the country and creating a culture in which all kids feel included, valued and accepted by their peers. The organization is based on the tenet that students are in charge of their own campus culture of inclusion.

2. WHAT IS SOCIAL ISOLATION?
Social isolation is the feeling of being left out, lonely, or invisible.
There are students in schools all over the world who quietly suffer from loneliness and isolation throughout each day. This feeling of loneliness is often highlighted at lunchtime, when kids are left to fend for themselves socially.

3. HOW ARE SOCIAL ISOLATION AND BULLYING CONNECTED?
It is our experience that social isolation is often the precursor to bullying. School communities with a culture of inclusion will have far fewer instances of bullying and cruelty.

4. WHY SOCIAL ISOLATION? DON’T SCHOOLS HAVE BIGGER PROBLEMS LIKE BULLYING AND VIOLENCE?
We believe that much of the bullying and violence in our schools can be addressed by treating the underlying causes, rather than just the symptoms.
Social isolation is a problem in every school. We have talked to over 10,000 students in dozens of schools and afterschool programs, and we have found the problem of social isolation to be universal. We also acknowledge the relationship between social isolation and bullying and violence. By reducing social isolation, we believe we can help end much bullying and violence.

5. HOW ARE YOU DIFFERENT FROM OTHER PROGRAMS?
We are a teen-led, grassroots program. We believe meaningful change will only come when it is peer-driven. That’s why we are focusing on leadership development among teens with our Teen Board High School Program and Leadership Academy Training Program, designed for middle school students. Both middle schoolers and high school students have a critical role to play in their community to end social isolation. It is often the students who help their parents, teachers and community leaders see the importance of inclusive behavior both in person and online. Beyond Differences is attracting national attention precisely because this concept of inclusion is so simple and so relevant to young students! Everyone can be part of the movement.
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT

1. WHAT IS NO ONE EATS ALONE?

No One Eats Alone is a lunchtime school event that seeks to reverse the trends of social isolation by asking students to engage in a simple act of kindness at lunch – making sure that no one is eating alone and students are making an effort to eat with new classmates and peers.

2. WHY DO NO ONE EATS ALONE?

Because it will be the starting place for changing the culture of your middle school to one where all kids feel included, valued and accepted by their peers.

No One Eats Alone Day works because of three simple ideas:

- Students Can Improve Their Own Communities: No One Eats Alone allows students to make a tangible change in their own community by making sure that everyone is included at lunch.

- Inclusive Communities are Stronger Communities: Inclusive school communities create happier and more successful students while also empowering youth to be agents of change.

- Stopping Social Isolation Helps to Stop Bullying: Social isolation is oftentimes the precursor for bullying. School communities with a culture of inclusion have far fewer instances of bullying.

3. HOW MUCH MONEY WILL THIS INITIATIVE COST YOUR SCHOOL?

The program is provided free of cost. All of the resources needed come in our purple backpack which we will ship at no charge to your school. You can request a backpack online at http://nooneeatsalone.org All you need to add is your imagination, creativity and energy!
NO ONE EATS ALONE “RECIPE FOR SUCCESS”

7 STEPS TO PLAN AND EXECUTE A SUCCESSFUL NO ONE EATS ALONE AT YOUR SCHOOL!

1) Get Your Purple Backpack! Once you have decided to participate in National NOEA Day, go to the Beyond Differences website (beyonddifferences.org) and request a purple backpack. Our backpack -- which is your toolkit for a successful event -- will be shipped to you free of charge! All the supplies you need to run a fun and successful event are in the backpack. All you need to add are your imagination, creativity and energy!

2) Partner with your School Leadership! Be sure to ask one or more school staff—a teacher, principal or vice/assistant principal—to work with you as an advisor for the No One Eats Alone activity whether for a one-time lunch event like NOEA or when selecting from some of the other great programs and ideas Beyond Differences offers for the rest of the school year. When choosing an advisor for National NOEA Day:

- Be sure you’re working with someone who can authorize and confirm the date – Friday, February 13, 2015 -- to hold NOEA at your school.
- Show them the Toolkit! Ask if they can help get the materials ready and get the word out through the administration and the entire community.
- Pick the cafeteria, gymnasium, lunch area or another area large enough to hold the whole school or just the grades you are targeting for NOEA as your event location.
- Ask your teacher if they would like to utilize the strategies and curriculum ideas of NOEA in their classrooms leading up to and even after February 13, 2015.

3) Get Creative! Consider what kind of set-up you want to create. Will all grades eat together? Do you want to target only certain middle school grades? You can create a party but remember, this is a party with a mission!

- Discuss how you will encourage students to sit with new people.
- Choose what activities will occur on this day: games? music? team challenges? raffle prizes? tables with themes?
- Talk to school leaders and staff who can help you prepare the space; make sure to give them advance notice. Decorate!

4) Spread the Word! Start spreading the word! How will you encourage your community to become aware, interested and involved?

- Start advertising what No One Eats Alone means and when it’s happening.
- Make posters or flyers, and post them everywhere you can (hallways, lunch area, common spaces). Send home announcements in students’ backpacks or through parent newsletters.
- Distribute wristbands, bandanas, and stickers!
• Make announcements on the PA. (Use samples included in your booklet.)
• Use social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) to advertise your event.
• Create a buzz at your school leading into the event, letting your peers know that this is something BIG and AWESOME!

5) National NOEA Day is Here!
• Set up your event – game day is here!
• Place the conversation cards from the Toolkit around the lunch area -- whether cafeteria, gymnasium, or courtyard – and be sure there’s a full stack for every group of students to use.
• Decide how you want students to sit when they come in. Do you have enough student leaders to ensure your tables and/or groups of students are interacting with one another?
• You may also choose to pass out conversation cards to people who are volunteers but however you do this, be sure that the fun and conversation keep going!
• Help get others involved by moving around, using the conversation cards, and breaking down barriers!
• NOEA leaders are the role models for the event. If you want your peers moving around and meeting new people, then do the same.

6) Be the Change! Be the change you wish to see!
• What do you want your community to look, sound, and feel like?
• Recognize your role in your school, and use No One Eats Alone to bring people together.
• Give people the tools they need to get to know one another and break down the barriers around them. Ask why they are at the NOEA event in the first place.

7) Build Momentum! If you wish to continue to build momentum and pump people up throughout the school year, there’s no reason you can’t do NOEA multiple times during the school year!
• Just repeat the announcements, promotions (wristbands, bandanas) and distribution of materials! Beyond Differences can send you refills!
• Give teasers about what the next activity will be.
• Keep it fun with decorations like balloons, banners, etc.
• Play music!
• Continue to reinvest the community in other ways (e.g. different materials each day, raffles, or rewards for those who get up and share at the end of lunchtime).
• Ask Beyond Differences for coaching on how to use the curriculum and unit lesson plans as well as other tested and fun ideas on how to build a better sense of belonging for everyone in your school!
# NO ONE EATS ALONE TIP SHEET: HOW DO SCHOOLS DO IT?

## SOME FUN IDEAS TO GET YOU STARTED!

- **Make a music playlist and get it approved by an administrator for playing in your lunch area!**

- **Invite the jazz band or another group at your school to come play live music.**

- **Hand out raffle tickets when people come in and give out small prizes at the end of lunch!**

- **Number the raffle tickets to assign people their lunch table (and mark tables with numbers as well).**

- **Make posters or create flyers! Have a poster-making party at lunch and invite friends.**

- **Give some flyers to teachers who you’d like to get involved, and ask if they can put them up in their classroom and help spread the word.**

- **Bring food to share.**

- **Ask if you can order pizza and charge $1 or $2 a slice! With the money you make, you can host more Beyond Differences events.**

- **Make announcements on your PA.**

- **Create a mural or community art project.**

- **Post about the event on social media!**

- **Spread the word to student groups such as student council or leadership crew.**

- **Send email reminders through student, teacher, and parent email blasts!**

- **Have some outdoor games during the lunch period.**

- **Show the BE THE ONE video at lunch, or before/after lunch to get others invested: www.joinbetheone.com.**
NO ONE EATS ALONE “MENU OF ACTIVITIES”

ALL MY FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

One person starts off by saying “All my friends and neighbors ____________________” and finishing the sentence with a piece of information that is true for him/her.

Example: All my friends and neighbors love basketball or All my friends and neighbors have a pet.

Everyone who this applies to stands up.

The last one standing goes next!

WHICH WOULD YOU CHOOSE? IF YOU HAD TO...

★ Eat a spider or a cockroach?
★ Do the chicken dance in front of your whole class or your principal?
★ Have hair that was licorice flavored or have toenails made of skittles?
★ Lose your arms or your legs?
★ Live on land or in the ocean?
★ Be stuck on a deserted island or abandoned in a destroyed city?
★ Eat nothing but bananas or nothing but oranges for a whole day?
★ Wear shorts for your whole life or pants for your whole life?
★ Be an animal or a human?

NAME GAME!

1. Tell your partner/your table about how you got your name or about any nicknames you have and why.

2. Share a fun fact about yourself.

3. Tell your partner/your table what name you would choose if you could choose your own name.
WHAT IF…? FIND A NEW FRIEND AND SEE HOW MUCH YOU CAN LEARN ABOUT THEM THROUGH THESE QUESTIONS OR ADD YOUR OWN!

1. If you were an animal, what would you be and why?
2. If you had one wish, what would it be?
3. If you could live in any other country, where would you live?
4. If you could learn any skill, what would it be?
5. If someone made a movie of your life would it be a drama, comedy, romantic-comedy, action, or science fiction film? Who would play YOU?
6. If you had to eat one food for the rest of your life, what would it be?

CHARADES: CHOOSE SOMETHING FROM EACH CATEGORY TO ACT OUT (NO WORDS ALLOWED)... HAVE YOUR PARTNER GUESS WHAT YOU ARE!

★ animal ★ song ★ book ★ sport ★ career
★ food ★ movie ★ game ★ place ★ favorite holiday

ONE WORD STORY

The goal of this activity is for a group to create a story. Participants will form a circle and contribute just one word to the story. Identify one person to start the story with an introductory word. For example:

John Cheryl Wanda Devan Pablo
The stars glittered with butter....

Work together to make sentences that lead to a story!
SAMPLE ANNOUNCEMENT AND LETTER

SAMPLE Student Announcement

Hello and good morning ________________ Middle School. I have a very important announcement about an event called No One Eats Alone. As you may have heard in your homerooms, the Beyond Differences Leadership Team will be hosting a big event called No One Eats Alone at lunch (in the gymnasium/cafeteria/lunch yard) on Friday, February 13.

We are hosting this event because we want to put an end to social isolation at ________________ Middle School and make sure that everyone feels included from now on. All (fill in the grades or whole school) students come to ______ (location) and join us for a great time. We’ll listen to music, mix it up by playing games and meet new people! Everyone is included so come to the party! See you there!

SAMPLE Student Letter to Teacher

Dear (Teacher name),

I’m really excited about Beyond Differences and their work in ending social isolation in middle schools. I want to get our school involved and hope that you do too!

We’re asking cool and supportive teachers like you to join us at lunch and to participate in the National No One Eats Alone Day on Friday, February 13th. During No One Eats Alone Day, we will work together to make sure that no student is sitting or eating by themselves during lunch.

No One Eats Alone Day is only for this one day but if we are successful, maybe we can do it a few times during the rest of the school year. The more people helping us and participating the better!

If you could please get back to us about this ASAP, that would be awesome. Hope to hear from you soon!

Thanks so much,
(Student name)
NO ONE EATS ALONE PRESS PLANNING

It’s important to spread the word beyond the boundaries of your school about what you are doing so that more schools will follow your great example. The process is very simple:

1. Send out a press advisory to your local newspapers, and TV and radio stations telling them the time and place of your event.

2. On the morning of your event, send out a press release using the sample we have provided below.

During past NOEA days, participating schools have frequently been highlighted in the local media for their efforts. You can take a look at some of the past coverage here:

http://abc7news.com/archive/8841604/

hyde-middle-school-program-takes-anxiety-isolation-out
SAMPLE NO ONE EATS ALONE PRESS ADVISORY

Contact: xxxx
( xxx) xxx-xxxx
xxx@xxx.com

February 9, 2015 @ (time) a.m.

(County Name) SUPERINTENDENT (Name) AND BEYOND DIFFERENCES ANNOUNCE MAJOR INITIATIVE TO ADDRESS SOCIAL ISOLATION

What: Lunch can be the longest hour of the day for some kids who feel alone and invisible in their school. (Local Supervisor/County) and Beyond Differences launch National No One Eats Alone Day, a landmark event based on an initiative that is making a significant impact on tens of thousands of students across the country. The launch event will take place in the school cafeteria (or whatever specific location you are using) and will show the community how students can help each other combat social isolation through interactive games, activities and public awareness.

With social isolation and bullying now seen as chronic problems in our schools, this event seeks to reverse these trends by asking students to engage in a simple act of kindness at lunch – making sure that no one is eating alone.

Who: Superintendent (name)...List the names of key leaders who will be there

When: February 13, 2015 at time (fill in the start time for your event.)

Where: (Name of School) School (Address)
Parking available at xxx
[Link for map]

For more information: Visit beyonddifferences.org.
(Name of School) and Beyond Differences Kick Off National No One Eats Alone Day
— Unique Program Designed to Address Social Isolation
Before it leads to Bullying, Depression and Violence

(CITY, Abbrev. State) – Lunch can be the longest hour of the school day for some kids who feel alone and socially isolated at their school.

(Name of school) and Beyond Differences today announced the launch of No One Eats Alone Day at (location of school). With social isolation and bullying now seen as chronic problems in our schools, this initiative seeks to reverse these trends by asking students to engage in a simple act of kindness at lunch – making sure that no one is eating alone.

Beyond Differences is a non-profit organization dedicated to ending social isolation in middle schools across the country.

“Today we are holding No One Eats Alone Day here at (name of school),” said (name of principal or teacher). “I want to thank Beyond Differences and their partners for their tireless efforts to tackle an issue which has been ignored for too long.”

“We believe that No One Eats Alone Day will be a game changer for (City or County) children,” said Beyond Differences President Laura Talmus.

“A teenager being isolated at lunch signals the beginning of many problems which have come to plague our schools, with the most shocking examples being bullying and violence,” says Talmus. “We want to reverse these frightening trends by asking students to engage in a simple act of kindness at lunch – making sure that no one is eating alone. Beyond Differences is proud to lead the No One Eats Alone Initiative.”
TEACHER RESOURCES:
GUIDED ACTIVITIES FOR THE CLASSROOM

ACTIVITY #1: CREATE COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS

Foster an inclusive environment, and provide students the language to prevent or interrupt bullying and isolating others.

As a community, it is always important to support our members. Sharing agreements helps us to do this.

When we hear hurtful language:

We’ll speak up if we see someone being mean to someone else:

“We’ll say ______________________________________________________.”

When we see hurtful acts:

We’ll volunteer solutions - for example: invite another student to sit with our group at lunch or invite another student to walk with our group:

“We’ll do__________________ (invite, include, etc.) so that________________.”

When we speak:

We will use positive and supportive words to show that we care about our community:

I __________when you__________________! That’s ____________ (great, fabulous, awesome, etc.)! (For example, I like when you play guitar. That’s awesome!)

Overall, we will always strive to show:

What if it were you? How do you want to be treated?

“We’ll be ____________________________ (kind, generous, polite, etc.).”
ACTIVITY #2: SCENARIOS

Teacher reviews a scenario or incident where a student is excluded (may have students role play). This can also include a video clip from popular teen shows like “Gossip Girl” or “Glee,” showing students being excluded.

Teacher breaks students into pairs or trios and asks students to talk about the following questions. The students note responses on butcher paper, so that all students can see and respond. Students should be prepared to share with the larger group their partner’s responses.

Guided prompts:

1. What happened?
2. What were you thinking?
3. What do you think needs to happen to make the situation right?
4. How do you think _____________ felt isolating ________________?
5. If an agreement or action could be made, so that the student isn’t isolated again, what should it contain? (Example: I’ll make a point of inviting everyone to participate; next time I pick a partner, I’ll pick ____________________.)
6. Is there anyone else (name of a teacher, other students, or parents) who needs to help support the agreement or action?
TEACHER RESOURCES:
GUIDED ACTIVITIES FOR THE CLASSROOM

ACTIVITY #3: READING CARDS

Teacher provides a reading related to social isolation. You may choose your own or use one of our suggested readings: “All Summer in a Day” by Ray Bradbury; “Wonder” by R.J. Palacio (suggested chapters: “Ordinary” which starts on page 3); “Lunch” which starts on page 49; or “The Plague” which starts on page 119; or The New York Times article on the next page of this toolkit.

Students are asked to read the article in teacher-assigned groups. Teacher does “numbered heads,” counting off students (1-6) so that students are prepared to answer questions as teacher randomly calls on a number, 1-6 by group.

For each group, teacher provides reading cards face down. Students pull a card, read the question, and share their response with their team. Students may work with a partner to review the question and connect it back to the reading. Once students have read and answered their questions with their small group, the teacher calls out a number and that student shares their partner’s response to the question. The teacher is intentional about calling on all groups so that a variety of students speak.

Reading Card Prompts:

1. What is the author’s message to the reader?
2. How would you summarize the reading?
3. Is there anything that you found confusing?
4. What is the main point described?
5. How will you apply what you learned to your life?
6. What emotions did you feel? Why?
7. List facts that you recall from the reading.
8. What do you believe is important to the success of creating an inclusive community?
9. What events led to __________feeling isolated?
10. How does this story help us learn about being empathetic?
11. What would you tell __________to do differently? Why?
A SANDY HOOK PARENT FINDS HIS VOICE IN MOVING BEYOND ‘THE DARKEST HORROR OF IT ALL’

By FRANCIS X. CLINES
NEWTOWN, Conn.

When Mark Barden considers Adam Lanza, the young man who murdered Barden’s 7-year-old son, Daniel, and 25 others in the Sandy Hook school massacre, he is struck by what he calls “a sad parallel.” In his short life, Daniel made a habit of seeking out and befriending youngsters he spotted sitting alone, a virtue that his teachers praised at Sandy Hook Elementary.

“The young man who killed my son was the little boy that sat alone,” says Mr. Barden with rueful certainty. “Maybe if there was a little Daniel Barden that came along in his growing up, perhaps things could be different.”

This is as far as Mr. Barden goes in speculating on the shooter as he finds his family and community struggling through what feels to be a darkly upended life of great and sad unknowns. “We’re an unlikely group of unwilling colleagues in a fraternity we never wanted to be in,” he says, including the ever-growing national cohort of families left suffering in other shooting rampages in places like Aurora, Colo. “It’s never going to be normal the way we knew it. Our existence is completely different.”

The tragedy gave Mr. Barden, who is a musician, a voice he never wanted as a victimized parent now committed to buttonholing legislators for gun safety laws and speaking out as a member of a group — Sandy Hook Promise — that formed here in the wake of the shootings. It aims to wield grass-roots grief to create something positive and head off future tragedies — to move beyond what Mr. Barden calls “the darkest horror of it all” and apply common sense and simple kindness to a variety of endeavors, from social bonding to gun safety.

“There were lots of watery eyes in the halls of Congress,” Mr. Barden recalls of visits to sympathetic-sounding senators who, for all the tears, voted down President Obama’s gun safety proposals.

Some grieving residents have sought to confront the nay-voters at public meetings. Mr. Barden’s approach is not to “shame them” but to keep visiting Washington and urging lawmakers to take up the issue once more.

This may be chimerical as Capitol Hill senses the nation’s shift to fresher concerns and headlines. Senator Harry Reid, the majority leader, hopes to revive the issue later this year, but Mr. Barden concedes that he worries people will “kind of put this behind them and move on.”

He still bristles that Newtown parents were dismissed as White House “props” by Senator Rand Paul, usually a champion of citizen petitions, at least when the Tea Party exercises it. But lobbying in Washington is so driven by money and smooth professionals that grieving parents petitioning firsthand might have struck lawmakers as an unpleasant intrusion.

Mr. Barden is resolved not to quit intruding into the “sausage making.” “I don’t have the luxury of waiting for the next one,” he says, fearing a future gun massacre.

The Barden family still loves Newtown’s close-knit community and will stay here. “We cry every day,” Mr. Barden says of his wife, Jackie, a schoolteacher, and their children, 13-year-old James and 11-year-old Natalie. “I’m trying to explain to them that it’s all right for us to cry,” he says, sounding worn. “I don’t know what to expect. We’re all in therapy.”

For all the failure in Washington, the Bardens draw comfort from a busy family Web site — whatwoulddanieldo.com — that emphasizes society’s need for the kind and simple outreach that was Daniel’s specialty.
NO ONE EATS ALONE TESTIMONIALS

FROM STUDENTS WHO HAVE MADE NOEA HAPPEN AT THEIR MIDDLE SCHOOLS!

No One Eats Alone isn’t just a one day chance to be nice; it is a way to change how students interact with one another.
— Chloe Mowbray (former member of the Beyond Differences Teen Board)

No One Eats Alone was a big success at Davidson Middle School when it launched this past October. I was especially excited for the press conference with some of the local news stations, during which we explained No One Eats Alone and the purple backpacks, with all the materials you need to make it happen. Mike Watenpaugh, Superintendent of San Rafael City Schools, made a short speech showing his support for our programs. With the main part of the press conference over, the rest of the Davidson Leadership Academy Training Program team members and I started walking through the lunch area helping the sixth graders with icebreaker questions. The most rewarding moment was overhearing two girls walking by and saying “Hey look! Isn’t she sitting by herself?” and strolling over to say, “Hi!” and possibly make a new friend.
— Sonali Langlois (former Davidson Middle School student, now a Teen Board member)

The first time we tried No One Eats Alone, groups of kids gathered in our school gym to eat at the lunch tables. Some of our leadership team members advertised with our activity placemats at the lunch line, while others sat with kids at different tables and facilitated activities. Every day from then on when we did No One Eats Alone, the numbers of students at our tables got bigger, and soon, we could barely fit everyone at the lunch tables. No One Eats Alone was a huge success, not only for the Hall Middle School Leadership Academy Training Program members, but I think for many students at our school looking for some new friends.
— Kyra Mowbray (former Hall Middle School student, now a Teen Board member)

On the last NOEA day, Friday, we played music, and people had a great time. People who I don’t know that well have approached me since, and told me that No One Eats Alone was a fun thing and that they want us to do it again.
— Emma Wall (former Brandeis Hillel Day School student, now a Teen Board member)

I was sitting out at lunch and happened to see a kid that was at his own table. After I started talking to him, I realized that we had common interests. We quickly became friends. Many people think that social isolation doesn’t happen at our school because there aren’t that many people in our school, but I know that there is, and Beyond Differences has helped us to prevent it through No One Eats Alone.
— Daniel Hoffner (former member of the Beyond Differences Teen Board)

I was the DJ at Hall’s No One Eats Alone week. Even though I wasn’t on stage overseeing the event, from the DJ stand I noticed quite a bit more about people than I normally do. I saw many faces that I didn’t see often, and I saw people going out of their cliques to socialize with others. I was really happy to see that we ARE making a difference.
— Carl Simpson-Heil (former Hall Middle School student, now a Teen Board member)
During No One Eats Alone, a 5th grader was being very quiet and shy. I started trying to bring him into the conversation. He ended up telling me how he always ate alone and preferred to “hide in the shadows.” Now I see he is coming out of the shadows; he is happier and more people talk to him. It is an indescribably good feeling to know you made an impact on someone’s life.

— Caitlin Donnelly (former Hall Middle School student)

When we were all creating wonderful posters for No One Eats Alone, everybody came together. People who didn’t even know each other made posters together. I thought this was wonderful. Everybody came together because they cared about no one eating alone.

— Amelia Shunk (Teen Board member)
BEYOND DIFFERENCES RESOURCES AND CONTACTS

Beyond Differences website: ........................................ beyonddifferences.org

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