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'Bully' Gets a PG-13 Rating So We Highlight Young Action Takers

Unless you've been living in, I dunno Siberia, you've prolly heard about the documentary, "Bully." The film follows the story of five bullied students -- its blatant honesty and closeness really make it a compelling film. I'll admit it too: I cried more than Snooki at an international pickle festival. "Bully" exposes a lot of less discussed issues around bullying -- parents and teachers living in denial about their students being bullied, and that students are often afraid nothing will change even if they do speak up.

A few weeks ago, Justin Bieber, Demi Lovato, Ellen Degeneres and a ton of other celebs, joined forces with Change.org petition creator Katy Butler to change the film's rating from R to a more appropriate PG-13 rating so teenagers can actually see it. Over 500,000 signatures and a media storm later, the MPAA changed the rating to PG-13 which is perfect timing since the movie hits theaters nationwide today.

I was bullied all throughout elementary school and high school. I got called the 'f word,' on an almost daily basis. Even though it does get better, what about making it better now? Well, over 13 million students will be bullied this year. The good news: students are leading the charge. Thanks to our generation, peeps are standing up to say, 'Not in our town.' In honor of the film getting a PG-13 rating and hitting theaters across America, we decided to round up some really amazing student led action to stop bullying. Taking a look below!

+Make it Better Now

9 out of 10 LGBT students experience bullying or harassment. The Make it Better Project aims to give student leaders the tools to make their schools a safer place for LGBT students like Kelby from the film. Simply starting a [GSA \(Gay-Straight Alliance\)](#) ^[1] can help spark some conversations, and also give LGBT students at your school a safe place to meet friends and vent. Also, you don't have to be L, G, B, or T to start a GSA.

+Dissolving Stereotypes

Let's get real: we're all a little weird, and we're all different. At Gunn High School in Palo Alto,

CA, [students got together to dissolve their differences](#) [2]...literally. Students wrote down harmful stereotypes that they wished to see dissolve on rice paper, and then they dropped them into water. The slips of paper fell into the water and slowly dissolved together in a big ole tub of acceptance.

+Better Anti-Bullying Laws

Minnesota has one of the weakest anti-bullying laws. It's only 37 words long. I tweet longer statements every single day. So, [students held a rally at the capitol](#) [3], and people are listening. While lawmakers may have been less responsive than we would have liked, the [school districts are listening](#) [4]. The largest school district in Minnesota agreed to create more comprehensive anti-bullying regulations in schools specifically targeted to LGBT students. People are calling it a "national model." It's one small step, but it's a positive one in the right direction.

+Safe School Ambassadors

During the 2010-2011 school year, over 900 San Bernardino County school students were trained to become hate-halting ambassadors. [The schools taught these students](#) [5] how to be more than just bystanders. Now these students are trained to take action against bullying in a safe, nonviolent way. Teachers and faculty can't be everywhere, but you can be. To find out more on how to bring the Safe Schools Ambassador program to your school, [go to their site](#) [6].

+Angry Birds Draw The Line

Students across the world are playing Angry Birds and taking a stand against digital abuse, from changing their FB passwords to helping a friend who is getting bullied. Make a difference by drawing your line on [A THIN LINE](#) [7], MTV's campaign to stop digital abuse. Once you do that you can unlock a secret Golden Egg level in the Angry Birds Space game. Awesome, right?

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News Article

<http://act.mtv.com/posts/bully-gets-a-pg-13-rating-so-we-hig...> [8]

MTV Act

Edward Wardrip

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Links

[1] <http://www.makeitbetterproject.org/for-youth#School>

[2] <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7RgumwT-J-U&feature=youtu.be>

[3] <http://minnesota.publicradio.org/display/web/2012/02/11/bullying-rally-at-minn-capitol/?refid=0>

[4] http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/07/education/minnesota-district-reaches-pact-on-antigay-bullying.html?_r=3

[5] <http://www.championsofunity.org/news-events/newsletter/san-bernardino>

[6] <http://www.community-matters.org/donate/sponsor>

[7] <http://www.athinline.org/angrybirds>

[8] <http://act.mtv.com/posts/bully-gets-a-pg-13-rating-so-we-highlight-young-action-takers/>