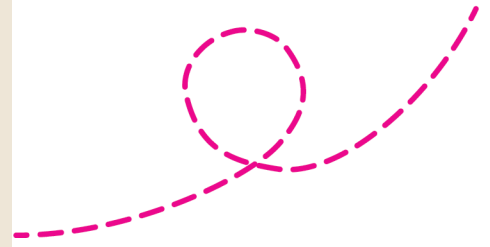


Investing a positive twist on anti-bullying

Margaret Geddes, Principal, George Greenaway in Surrey, stops to think about bullying and redrafts a positive message of kindness.



When I trained as a lifeguard we were taught not to yell “stop running on the deck” but to say “walk please,” same message but a positive approach rather than negative.

As soon as I heard about the incident in Nova Scotia where a student was teased and bullied for wearing a pink shirt and many of his classmates showed up the next day wearing pink shirts as show of support – I was inspired to have the students in my school

recognize this same gesture of wearing pink, as taking a stand against bullying.

At first we just wore whatever pink shirts we could find but then soon you could buy an *Anti-bullying Pink Shirt*. I wanted to be a part of this movement but I often did not like the logo on the faded pink shirt and the message to “*Stop Bullying.*” I wanted a positive message – one that could be embraced all year long, not just one day in February.

I thought the message on the shirt should be “*It’s Kool 2b kind*” and it should look like a text message. I wanted the shirts to be black with a pink message so that the message stood out. I spoke with my childhood friend,

Robyn Sussel who owns a design firm, Signals Design Group. She gave the assignment to one of her designers who had a flair for youth-oriented branding. During the design process there were many discussions and decisions and my original idea was tweaked. When the design proofs were sent to me I was immediately drawn to BKind with a cool, friendly bee. Everyone I surveyed liked this logo the best for our BKind campaign.

The design arrived just weeks before *Anti-Bullying Day*. I had some samples that took to principal meetings and other principals wanted to order the shirts in their schools too. Many more principals have already contacted me at the start of this year because they want to use the BKind shirts in their schools. The BKind message is powerful because while we are not all bullies, we all can be reminded of the importance of kindness. If everyone treats others with kindness – bullying would stop.

I even mailed a shirt to Ellen Degeneres because she always ends her show with, “*Be kind to one another.*” Such a simple message and yet so important!

