

“Stomp Out Stigma: Make School Safe for Everyone”

His eyes were filled with tears and all I could think was my hero just fell apart.

I grew up with a bipolar brother and I have seen things some people could never understand. My brother always acted strong for me though, but even the best fall down sometimes. I remember him coming home from school one day and going straight to his room. After about an hour I went to his room, crawled into his lap and listened as he told me how he could handle being made fun of for being bipolar but that day they talked down on our family for being Muslim. I was only 7 so it did not make sense to me.

I am older now though and I understand; it's 9 years later and people are still torturing us with words.

They say “words can't hurt you”, but until those words are thrown around about them they may never understand.

As students, friends, teachers, or just as humans let's strive to rid schools of stigma.

Stigma is the disapproval of social characteristics that differ from the “cultural norm”. But then again what gave anyone the authority to decide that people with mental illnesses, physical disabilities, different religions, etc. should not be acknowledged as normal?

It is up to us to stand up for those who cannot do so for themselves and to support those that can. The insecurities of those who follow the “cultural norm” lead them to belittle others, but at the end of the day everyone must realize perfection is impossible and disparaging others because of their uniqueness will not make us immaculate. We become so when we learn to love others, weaknesses and all.

Let's end the cruelty here.