

ADL in the Classroom



Fighting hate.
Changing lives.

'What ADL is doing is so important. I believe we should make ADL run out of work so we can end the bullying, the injustice and the hate.'

Jesula Jeannot

No Place for Hate® Participant



A girl's journey from one trauma to another.

Jesula Jeannot was 12 in 2010 when a massive earthquake hit her homeland of Haiti and she lost everything. Her best friend was killed before her eyes. Her father, whom she had never met, then invited her to come and live with him in the U.S. Although this meant leaving her mother behind, she decided to go.

She started sixth grade in her new home, a girl with a weird accent and unfashionable clothes. And she was teased mercilessly. Formerly a good student, she became a painfully shy child who refused to speak in class—even in math, her best subject.

And after a day of being bullied at school, she came home to a father she barely knew and couldn't confide in.

By ninth grade, Jesula had just about given up her dreams for the future. But that's when ADL's No Place for Hate® initiative reached her school. And it turned her life around.



There's no room for hate and bullying in these schools.

No Place for Hate® helps schools build inclusive and safe communities in which respect is the goal and all students can thrive. With ADL's help, schools put long-term solutions in place for creating and maintaining a positive climate where students, faculty, administration and family members feel empowered to take a stand against hate and bullying. By earning the No Place for Hate designation, schools send a clear message: all students have a place to belong.

No Place for Hate schools engage in at least three anti-bias activities each year that involve the full student body. At Jesula's school, she became part of the team that planned those activities, and she says No Place for Hate transformed her school into a place where kids are too busy and active to bully each other. "We distract everyone. We steal the power. We have fun with everyone in the school so they don't have time to pick on someone."

Another No Place for Hate tactic that Jesula and her team have adopted involves performing random acts of kindness. "If we see a kid sitting at a table alone, we go and talk to them. We embrace everybody, because I personally don't want anybody to feel like they might be alone—like they made me feel."



Traveling to Washington with like-minded young leaders.

Jesula applied to ADL's National Youth Leadership Mission last year and earned the opportunity to go to Washington, D.C., with a delegation of student leaders.

This annual trip includes a visit to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Delegates spend two-and-a-half days studying the consequences of hatred and discrimination, and they return home committed to making a difference in their schools and communities.

Today, the girl who was afraid to reply to her math teacher speaks in front of thousands of people. She gained the confidence to choose advanced classes, and she's now dreaming about college.

"I spent most of my middle school years thinking that I'm worthless," Jesula said, "thinking that my words don't matter. But having someone give me that power? Oh my God, that's powerful."

"Hatred is not something we're born with," she said. "We can unlearn it with a teaching moment, with an act of kindness."



ADL No Place for Hate student participants.