

Dear xxx,

My mom told me today that there may not be any AHA Peace Builders at La Colina next year. She said it's something the school district is still deciding on. I just wanted to tell you about how important AHA has been for me and how it benefits our school.

First let me introduce myself, my name is xxx. I just finished my 7th grade year at La Colina and so far I am really enjoying it. AHA Peace Builders is a big part of why my 7th grade year was so great. It helped me support my friends and myself in tough situations, it has helped me with personal problems, it is enjoyable and non repetitive, and it has taught me so much about stereotypes and many prominent issues in the present day.

As you know, there have been a lot of altercations this school year. This has negatively affected the whole school community, and AHA works hard to help us students learn how to resolve this issue. The way that they do this is by giving us valuable tools to resolve conflict and then giving us an opportunity to practice it. One of the tools we recently learned was the acronym EAR, which stands for Empathize, Acknowledge, and Repair. They also talk a lot on having empathy which helps us to understand how our peers are feeling. One way this helped me this year was with my friend Giovanni. He often finds himself in the middle of conflict and a target for bullies mainly because it is so easy to get a reaction out of him.

My father is verbally and emotionally abusive. My mom, my siblings, and I moved out of his house five years ago but I still have to deal with him sometimes. AHA gave me a safe and confidential space to talk about my experience around him. They have supported and helped me cope with my situation which really helps my mental health.

AHA is enjoyable and non repetitive. It happens once a week and each time is a new experience. We start off sharing roses and thorns, transition to a team building game, and then talk about the subject for that day. The staff for AHA are very welcoming, kind, supportive, and empathetic, always making each meetup insightful and interesting to be a part of. AHA always has a big emphasis on confidentiality in the group, making it easy to be yourself when you are there.

Finally, AHA Peace Builders is very informative about many prominent present day issues like stereotypes and mental health. The subjects that we are taught about usually are presented with around four steps. The first step is giving a short and quick definition of the subject. The second step is asking us about our experiences with the subject. The third step is giving us an example of it. The fourth and final step is brainstorming and communicating solutions for the subject.

In conclusion, AHA Peace Builders is a very enjoyable and beneficial program for the school community. And I believe that the district should keep the program at La Colina because it could help educate many kids on how to resolve a bad situation and help kids learn about things that they wouldn't normally hear about in public. I hope that AHA Peace Builders will stay in La Colina.

Sincerely,

xxx