

Rachel's Challenge

Introduction

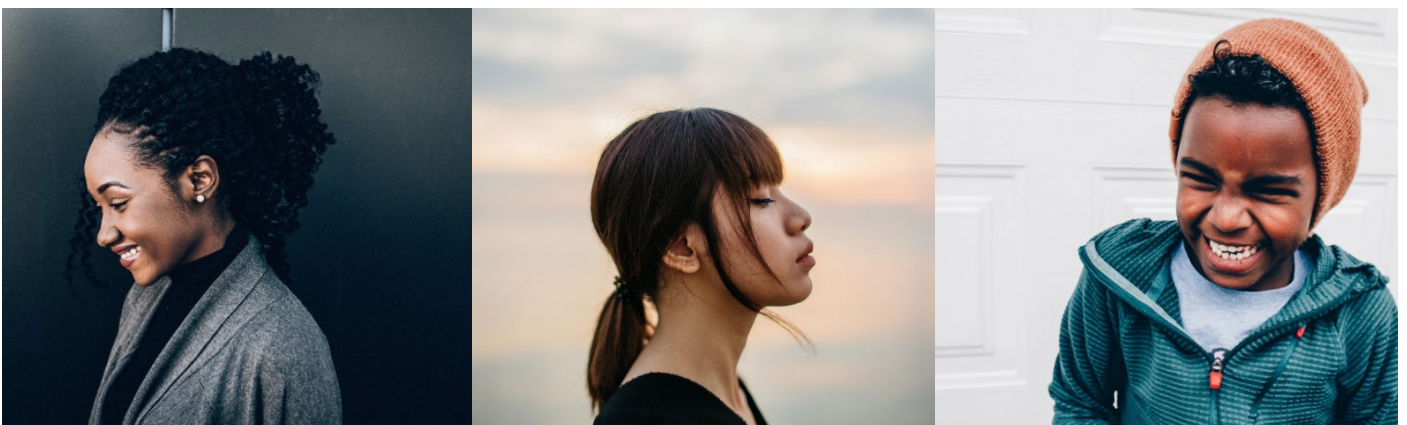
Introduction

One month after the Columbine High School tragedy Darrell Scott, who lost his daughter Rachel in the shooting, was asked to speak before a Congressional Subcommittee on School Violence.

Darrell's message focused on what he believed to be the true root issue: what we are, or more accurately are not, teaching our children in school. His assertion was that when we stop teaching character and respect, caring and integrity, kindness and compassion; when we are solely focused on performance and not the whole child; we are creating environments within which Columbine-like incidents can occur. The speech instantly became an internet sensation, striking a chord with millions of people. Soon Darrell was getting requests from all over the country to tell Rachel's story, which he quickly discovered is a powerful antidote to bullying and violence.

Less than a year later, Darrell and his wife Sandy started Rachel's Challenge. Their intent was to honor Rachel's life and help prevent other families from going through what the Columbine families had endured. Their focus was telling students how Rachel deliberately reached out to those who were different from her, new to school, picked on by others, or just lonely; and what a huge difference that made in their lives.

After her death many of the kids to whom Rachel reached out approached the Scott family with stories about the profound impact her simple acts of kindness had on their lives; even preventing one young man from taking his own life. They soon realized that Rachel's story is transformational for most who hear it. It is a true, simple, pure story that routinely elicits an intense personal response, awakens our innate need for connection with others, acts as a catalyst for instant personal change, and creates an overwhelming desire to act: to positively impact other people's lives.



Introduction

Today, Rachel's Challenge exists to inspire and equip every person to create a permanent positive culture change in their school, business, or community by starting their own chain reaction of kindness and compassion. We have a comprehensive set of age-appropriate programs for K-12, college, and business. The objectives of these programs are all the same: to continue Rachel's legacy of kindness and compassion and;

- Help schools and businesses to become safer, more connected places to live and learn.
- Stimulate real culture change by actively involving the entire community in the process.
- Change lives by providing culturally relevant social/emotional and mental health training.
- Increase achievement and ensure results by engaging the participants' heart, head and hands in self-care and helping others.

Rachel's Challenge provides evidence-based, evidence-driven programs. When implemented with fidelity, our partner schools achieve statistically significant gains in community engagement, faculty/student relationships, leadership potential, and school climate; along with reductions in bullying.

After Rachel's Challenge, schools report less harassment and isolation. They see bullying incidents go down and disciplinary referrals decrease. Eight school shootings that we know of have been averted. And students, parents and educators report more than 100 suicides prevented annually.

We are so grateful that you have decided to continue Rachel's legacy by helping us get the message to more students and adults. As Rachel wrote in an essay one month before her death, "I have this theory that if one person can go out of their way to show compassion, then it will start a chain reaction of the same. People will never know how far a little kindness can go."

Thank you for starting your own chain reaction.

