



STRAKE JESUIT

College Preparatory

Office of Guidance and Counseling

April 20, 2009

Peggy Gillespie, Co-Director/Founder
Family Diversity Projects, Inc.
P.O. Box 1246
Amherst, MA 01002-1246

Dear Friends at the Family Diversity Project:

Students and administration at Strake Jesuit College Preparatory High School and Annunciation Orthodox School in Houston would like to extend their gratitude for the unique opportunity to view "Nothing to Hide". The exhibit was in place at each school for an entire day and was visited by numerous students.

At Strake, the exhibit was at display in a booth at school's fall festival day. Numerous students and their families walked through the booth, looked at the pictures and read the testimonials. The connection with the exhibit material was evident. Many parents thanked us for having something like this and indicated how timely it was. One student said that his cousin has autism. He shared with us openly and honestly the difficulties of having a person with mental disability in a family and talked about the importance of this sort of public education in helping families.

At the middle school, about 180 students in 7th and 8th grade and administration walked through the exhibit. The viewing was followed by a presentation by a mental health expert who talked about the exhibit, different kinds of mental disability, and their effect on families. The students had so many questions, that our question and answer session went significantly over the original allocated time. There were questions from "How do you treat depression?" to "Is there a resource place for those with mental problem and their families?" The interest and closeness of the subject matter to the students was apparent. Later on, we received comments and thank you note from parents; evidently the kids had talked about the exhibit at home with their parents.

We can not thank Peggy Gillespie and her team at Family Diversity Project enough for putting together such an invaluable resource. It's hard to know its effect until it's used. For us this exhibit was the best tool for opening dialogue about an unspoken but immensely important matter. Undoubtedly, "Nothing to Hide" has positively influenced our students and has helped the efforts to decrease stigma associated with mental illness.

Kindest Regards,

Raul Navarro
College & Guidance Counselor

8900 Bellaire Boulevard · Houston, Texas 77036 · 713.490.8154 · Fax 713.270.4489
www.strakejesuit.org