



## White Sox launch campaign against bullying

By Gary Barlow

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CHICAGO, IL -- Students at McLellan Elementary School in Chicago's Bridgeport neighborhood joined with Chicago White Sox star Brent Lillibridge and pledged to take a stand against bullying May 24 as the Sox launched a campaign to combat the problem.

"I always say the biggest thing with kids growing up is just being accepted," Lillibridge said. "It's really better for people to just come together. Our differences aren't really that big."

For about an hour Lillibridge talked with the students about why bullying in any form is wrong and urged them to speak up when they see someone else being bullied, tell an adult about the problem and befriend other kids who become victims of bullying.

"It's training on how to handle situations and understanding that they have the power," Lillibridge said. "It's getting them to respect each other. It starts at a very young age."

Each student took a pledge to "strike out bullying" and each received an individualized certificate, signed by Lillibridge, that included the pledge and a photo of Lillibridge, fellow White Sox star Alexei Ramirez and Sox manager Robin Ventura.

Lillibridge said he enjoyed the opportunity to talk about the issue with the kids.

"They were real excited about it," he said. "Each kid wants to be respected. ...Hopefully, it goes forward and the kids learn from it."

Lillibridge also joined the students in reading a book about bullying.

"I said, 'You guys are pledging to be respectful and love each other, to pledge to the values the White Sox are about and the nation is about,'" he said.

The White Sox effort is linked with the "Stop Bullying" campaign created by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under the Obama administration. That campaign, at [stopbullying.gov](http://stopbullying.gov), includes information on cyberbullying and bullying aimed at LGBT youths and others. It also links to resources on how to prevent and respond to bullying.

"The kids were real responsive and excited," Lillibridge said. "Hopefully, it continues and we see these kids grow up to do great things."

The White Sox plan to continue the anti-bullying campaign throughout the 2012 baseball season, distributing information on the issue via the White Sox Kids Club. Members of the team also filmed a video ad on bullying that's featured at [whitesox.com/stopbullying](http://whitesox.com/stopbullying)