

Sydney Staudt
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Dear Meg Cabot,

Your book, *Teen Idol*, was actually published for a bit of an older audience, but it relates to me in everyday situations.

I have a friend, whom everyone likes, who has the power to overthrow a class bully, even though she doesn't realize it. I think she is too afraid of the consequences, because she has seen what this bully can do, and has done, to my friends and classmates.

When I read about Cara in the lunchroom, being the fat kid, something, I guess, just clicked. There is a fat kid in my class, too. She is constantly being picked on by bullies, not just behind her back but also right to her face and sometimes physically. I remember, it wasn't too long ago I was at a football game and I came over to some of my classmates, and they were playing Hide-and-Go-Seek Tag. Somehow the fat kid ended up being "it." One person came up to me and said "Gosh, this kid is so fat, even if she finds us, she'll never catch us." Then I overheard another kid saying, "Maybe we should just ditch her; that would be easier." I couldn't believe them, just like I couldn't believe that people would actually moo at Cara in your book. Who would do something like that? I see some students at my school that put down others to make themselves look better. I think some kids in Cara's lunchroom were trying to do exactly that. Also, like Cara, many people in my school try to fit in with the popular crowd by copying them and their styles, even if the look is not them.

In my school, we are learning about the Character Counts program, in which we learn about Caring, (Nobody cared about Cara, or how she felt.); Citizenship, (Nobody stood up for her.); Courage, (Nobody had the courage to do anything about it.); Respect, (The people mooing weren't being very respectful.); Responsibility, (I don't think they were being very responsible.); and Trustworthiness. (Cara's never going to trust them again.) And, as you have already noticed, nobody has been practicing any of those in MY school, either.

Your book made me look at my school in a different perspective. Cara truly is an inspiration to me.

Sincerely,
Sydney Staudt

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