



Bullying / Self-Esteem Workshop

By Animal Adventures

With the use of our premium exotic animals our professionals will teach the students:

- Why is bullying not acceptable?
- Why are we responsible for our own actions?
- How can we present ourselves to keep from being bullied?

We compare different animals and their gifts and talents given to them, and investigate the reasons people bully. Our motivators will look at how television and movies have given human characteristics to animals and animal characteristics to humans, which has caused a blurring of social norms and behavior. Our goal is to teach young people, in a gentle and polite way, to take responsibility for their actions and behavior.

Not Your Average Speaker



Ed Laquidara grew up in rural Wilmington, Massachusetts as the second youngest of seven with three brothers and three sisters. Unfortunately, what almost seems to be the norm, Ed grew up in a close but dysfunctional family. His mother, Helen, did the best that she could to hold the family together. His father, Jack, gave the family a roof over their heads, but was often very abusive. Ed, and his big mouth, would often bear the brunt of this abuse. As a young boy Ed was not surrounded by positive attitudes; **but without realizing it at the time, Ed was setting goals and reaching them.**

At age seven Ed started playing organized ice hockey in the goal tender position, dreaming and imagining playing hockey at the Boston Garden.

At age ten Ed's dream came true. Ed continued to play hockey and led his team to national and international championships. After taking a year off from competitive hockey, a severe eye injury at age 18 would end his career completely. Ed also excelled in soccer and was compared to Pele (marquee player of that era) in the local newspaper.

Ed started martial arts training at age 12 and would be glued to the TV. Watching the TV series "Kung Fu", Ed often daydreamed about going to the famous Shaolin Temple in China. In 1991, Ed represented the United States in the kung fu championships held in China. During his stay,

Ed not only got to visit the Shaolin Temple, but got to study and learn there. While in China, Ed competed in two major competitions against 36 other countries in many different events and was always in the top three. Ed and his training partner are the only Americans to be featured on the front page of China's premier Sunday newspaper.

Before reaching these goals, Ed's competitive nature and reckless use of drugs, influenced by the environment he grew up in, led him to drug and alcohol overdose. People around him hoped that when Ed became a father, at the young age of 19, that he would straighten out. A year went by before Ed walked away from drugs for good, and almost 12 years before he kicked the alcohol habit.

He became a full-time Kung Fu teacher and is sought after to this day at various venues such as teaching seminars and speaking engagements. Ed was successful at many business endeavors such as managing a grocery store, and was the number one pager salesman in the country.

In 1997, Ed, and his wife, Brenda, started **Animal Adventures**, an animal rescue and education center that delivers a record number of performances each year, along with having a science and education center open to the public. Ed has a family of six children, and brings what seem to be several lifetimes of experience in his sharing of the Bullying/Self-Esteem program by Animal Adventures!

Most Recent Testimonial:

October 21, 2013

Good Morning Ed,

I want to thank you again for bringing The Animal Adventures Bullying Program to our school. Your presentation was the most unique perspective on bullying we have witnessed - a real concrete experience to which the kids could relate. Many of our students wrote about the experience afterwards and expressed a new appreciation and understanding of this volatile topic.

We are grateful to Animal Adventures for helping us as we confront the real life problem of "Bullying," and the devastating effects thereof.

You made a real difference in our continued efforts.

Sincerely,
Mary-Beth Juneau
Lead Teacher
Union Hill School
Worcester, MA