



SEPTEMBER, 2009

THE KID ZONE

Zac has never really liked sports but he tries! He's in P.E. and once again, he's the last one to be picked to play on a basketball team. Zac feels angry and alone. You have to be good at sports to sit with the popular guys in class. To make matters worse, Zac is called "baby," "sissy," and "mama's boy!" Why can't Zac be accepted for who he is? He may not be great at sports, but he can play a mean game of chess!

Karrie is adopted. She was born in Japan but lives in the United States. The kids in her class make fun of her by calling her names. Karrie feels like she is treated differently because she is from another country. A group of girls in class will not allow her to sit by them at lunch or play with them at recess. Karrie is tired of not having any friends.

WHAT IS GOING ON? What were you thinking when you read the stories about Zac and Karrie? Have you ever had the same feelings or the same problem? Have you ever treated someone differently because they were not like you or your friends?

Sometimes we treat other kids different because:

- They look or talk funny (to us!).
- They go to a speech class.
- They are from another country.
- They go to a funny church (not mine!).
- They don't have brand label clothes (that are in style!).

It hurts when you're left out because you are *somehow* different from someone else. Sometimes we have silly ideas that make things worse! We may think that *only boys should play football* or that *girls make the best cheerleaders*. We don't understand why a girl would want to play football. *Football is for boys!* And why would a boy try out for cheerleading? He's a *boy!* Boy's don't do cheers.

When we're not someone's friend because they are "different," we're not only hurting them, we're hurting ourselves. When we like others who are different from us, it's like saying, "I like me!"

BE BRAVE - there's a lot of likable people out there!

TRUE OR FALSE?

- | | | |
|--|------|-------|
| 1. Tall people should play basketball. | True | False |
| 2. Boys should not wash dishes after dinner. | True | False |
| 3. Old people should not drive cars. | True | False |
| 4. Boys are meaner than girls. | True | False |
| 5. Girls need to be teachers or nurses. | True | False |
| 6. Short people should not run races. | True | False |
| 7. Girls cry easier than boys. | True | False |
| 8. A family needs to live in a house. | True | False |
| 9. Smart people make straight A's. | True | False |

Every answer is FALSE. A tall person may not want to play basketball and a short person may run in a race. Boys can help with dishes and other chores at home. As long as they can see, older people can drive cars. Girls and boys can both be mean and they can be whatever they want to be when they grow up. Families live in apartments and some may live with other family members, like aunts or uncles. A smart person may make a B just like any other student.

When we say things like, “*I don’t like green people,*” how do we know that we might not like a green person? Remember: the things that make us different make us special. Would you want to look, act, and live like everyone else? Would you want everyone to dress the same? Of course not! That’s silly!



**Treat others how
you want to be
treated.**

**Yeah...it's *that*
easy!**