

## DEFEATING THE BULLY SYSTEM

Steve Owens joined the Optimist Club to speak about what the Treynor Schools are doing to stop bullying. There is a new state program in Iowa that every school in the state has to have a program next year to stop bullying. Treynor started their program this past year.

Treynor is using the Olweus [pronounced Ol-VEY-us] Bullying Prevention Program, a research based program. It is a comprehensive, school-wide program designed for use in elementary, middle, or junior high schools. Its goals are to reduce and prevent bullying problems among school children and to improve peer relations at school.

Bullying is when a person is exposed over a period of time to one or more negative actions on the part of one or more students. The key components of the program are school components, classroom components, individual components, and community components.

Training has involved everyone in the school, including teachers, bus drivers, janitors, and volunteers. The focus is on grades 3-8, but all grades from kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade included. The key to the program is prevention and awareness.

Bullying often involves an imbalance in power or strength. Bullying includes direct bullying and indirect bullying, both of which are addressed in the program. Direct bullying includes threats, force, and negative comments. Indirect bullying includes things like spreading rumors, deliberate exclusion from a group, and cyber-bullying.

For more information about the program, see <http://www.clemson.edu/olweus/>