



ATD FOURTH WORLD

Children's message for the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty October 17, 2015, United Nations, New York

In our neighborhoods and schools, bullying and discrimination happen a lot. Children get bullied for things like their religion, nationality, or skin color; because they live in a shelter or answer a question wrong; or even because they were born with something that makes them stand out. This is bad, because discrimination and racism can also lead to murder.

As children, we want to stop discrimination and bullying, but it takes a lot of effort and responsibility. This means taking care of the things you have to do, and not asking or expecting other people to do everything for you. We can work together to stop this kind of behavior by being an example of positive behavior, by not bullying others, and by sticking up for other children who are being bullied.

As children, we take action toward a better future. We'd like to read an example shared by one of us and we hope it will inspire you to take action as well.

"I was on the ferry the other day with my sister. A kid was trying to come back to Manhattan because he was a runaway. He wanted food but he didn't have money for it, and I saw him digging in the garbage. My sister had given me twenty dollars so I could get food on the ferry. I spent most of my money on getting food for the boy because he didn't have anything. His clothes were all dirty. He sat next to me and the guy that was sitting in front of me said: "Move away! Move away!" I said, "No, no!" Maybe this man told me to move because he saw how I was dressed and how the boy was dressed. He was looking out for my safety, but from the boy's side it was discrimination because of how he was dressed.

My sister started talking to the little boy, and I told her, "You don't even know him." My sister said, "Yeah, you didn't know him either but you bought him food. Why don't you just be a friend and talk?" Then I started talking to him and when I asked him where he lived, he left. We tried to find him before we got off the ferry but we didn't see him.

I did what I did because my mom always taught me that if somebody doesn't have anything, and I have, I should at least try to help, and if he doesn't want the help, then just let him be. Trying to force someone to do something is not the right thing to do."

Friendship is another way to help end poverty because no child should be left without a friend, without family, without food, and without education. Being friendly can help someone, so even though it may only be a few words, it can lift someone's spirit for a moment in time. Friendship is so important because friends can have your back when you need them. For example, doing your homework with a friend after school is another way to help and encourage each other. We enjoy that very much.

When we think about a world without poverty, we think of a beautiful city with people who have food and clean water; a place where nobody is poor, where nobody has to go around asking other people for transportation, food, water, and other basic things they need to live; a place where all the people care about one another.