

It's time ... to share your experience

*"SAYING SOMETHING CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE,
EVEN IF WE DON'T KNOW HOW."*

– Aidan

Last summer at camp, there was a boy named Jimmy. He was in a cabin with kids who were older than he was. Jimmy seemed nice, but the other kids in his cabin kept harassing him about being gay. A lot of this was led by one of the older kids named Charlie. I saw some of this going on and talked with my counselor who had a lot of experience at the camp. He said that the camp was "looking into it". But after three days, Jimmy left camp. Whatever the camp was doing was not enough or they just did not act fast enough.

I couldn't believe it. I have been coming to this camp for years and nothing like this had ever happened before. It's a great camp that has all of the usual stuff like boating and hiking. It also has this great thing at the end of the summer where we all light a candle from just one source and talk about what we feel connected to. I couldn't believe a guy like Charlie would come to a camp like this or make homophobic comments.

A few days after Jimmy left, I went up to Charlie and asked him if he realized what he had done - that Jimmy left because of the harassment. He said, "Sure," he got what he had done. He was not ashamed of what he had done at all. He said that the kid was gay and he deserved all he got. He deserved to die. I couldn't believe he would say that. I was shocked that Charlie would feel that way and feel OK about saying that."

*Some names and identifying facts have been changed to protect individual identities