

It's time ... to share your experience

*"I BELIEVE WE CAN BEGIN HEALING THE WORLD
(TIKKUN OLAM) ONE CHILD AT A TIME."*

– Alison

As Director of Education in a large synagogue, I had the chance to get to know many children and families and truly loved that part of my job. My main responsibility was oversight of all the after school programs for children and teens.

Although the community is large, we also live in a small town. When I heard from a community member that the local paper carried a story about a teen who exposed himself at the bus station, I knew who it was. I knew I had to do something.

Samuel* is a great young person in so many ways and is someone I hired to help out in the 6th grade classroom. I felt some responsibility for him and I knew I could not have him continue working with youth when he was acting so inappropriately. The safety and well-being of the students in the program had to be my first concern.

I spoke with Samuel about what happened and learning the full story, I let him know that he could no longer be paid to work in the classroom. This was one consequence of his actions. I also spoke with his mother to see if there was anything else that we could do together to support him and identify who in our community might be available as a support for her and for her son.

At the time, I also took this situation as a wake-up call to put some policies into place. I wanted to create a process to work through cases like this one in the future and ways to ensure we were doing everything we could to keep our children safe and supported. For me as an educator, it is so important to love and support all children and teens."

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