

# Hateless Tour Kicks Off Bullying Prevention Week

April 7, 2015

On Monday, April 6th, and Tuesday April 7th, approximately 800 students from Earl Oxford, Meadows, King George, Green Acres, J.R. Reid, O'Kelly and Kirkcaldy Heights kicked off Bullying Prevention Week with a performance from Canadian R&B/Soul/Pop award winning artist, Flo and the Nationwide Anti-Bullying Tour - Hateless.



# The Brandon Sun

## Singer's 'Hateless' Tour Aims to End Bullying

By: Lindsey Enns

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*Winnipeg R&B singer Flo performs during the "Hateless: Together We Can End Bullying" tour stop at Meadows School on Monday morning. Flo's song "Hateless" is what helped inspire the bullying awareness tour.*

Be yourself, don't listen to bullies and think before you post something online.

Those are just a few of the messages students received loud and clear during an anti-bullying tour stop in Brandon on Monday.

Fresh from spring break, students at Meadows School were treated to performances and motivational speakers as part of the "Hateless: Together We Can End Bullying" tour.

Speakers acted out instances of online bullying, spoke of their own personal bullying experiences, and students got pumped up and inspired by performances from award-winning R&B vocalist and Hateless founder Flo.

Her song "Hateless," which is about spreading love and acceptance, helped inspire the main idea behind the tour.

"That song was written based on what's been happening in schools ... I call it the bullying epidemic," Flo said. "We thought, 'Let's do something, let's create a movement.'"

Hateless co-founder Sangeetha Nair said she has noticed most anti-bullying awareness efforts strictly denounce bullies, so they wanted to take a different approach.

"We want to accept the bullies so that they have a platform to come out and be themselves, and express themselves and channel their emotions of negativity into something positive," Nair said.

Rylan Kyle, a Grade 8 Meadows School student and a Youth Revolution member, said it's presentations like these that help raise awareness in schools.

"I really enjoyed it," Kyle said following Monday's performances. "It speaks volumes on how individuals together can make a huge impact."

As a student, bullying is a "serious issue," he said, and others need to stand up to it, prevent it and not be apart of it.

As someone who has been bullied in the past, Kyle said it's important schools have a counsellor or designated teacher on staff that students feel comfortable speaking to.

Although technology and the Internet can be used in positive ways, they also help fuel bullying, Flo said.

"Cyberbullying is rampant. It's huge out there, and it's worse now than it ever has been," she said.

The key to stop bullying in schools is to help students find what they are most passionate about and find an outlet through which to express themselves.

"Bit by bit, one by one, we can help ... rectify this situation and make change."

Monday's show was the tour's fifth stop after visiting schools in Saskatchewan, Ontario and the United States.

The tour will be at Earl Oxford School today, Alonsa School tomorrow and Alexander School on Thursday before heading back to Winnipeg.

Hateless is a volunteer-powered initiative launched in Winnipeg in 2013. So far, it has reached more than 20,000 students in schools across North America.



*Grade 12 student Tara Green from Woodlands shares her personal experiences with online bullying with students at Meadows School during the Hateless event on Monday.*