

HOMEROOM

Mother And Daughter Tackle Bullying Issue

They wrote a book giving advice on how to deal with harassment.

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ZEPHYRHILLS — Among the books about bullying being written these days is one written by the mother-daughter team of Madonna Wise and her daughter, Rachel.

"Kachina and The Bully," due to be released next month, follows a middle school student and her friends as they deal with bullies and offers practical tips for dealing with harassment.

"Bullying has always been an issue in schools, but now people are looking at it differently," said Madonna Wise, a retired Pasco County educator and licensed mental health counselor.

For years, Wise has been looking at how children interact. With 30 years of experience in schools, she has worked as a teacher, guidance counselor, principal and district office administrator in Pasco, including Zephyrhills High, Stewart Middle, Pasco High, Woodland Elementary, Centennial Elementary and West Zephyrhills Elementary. These days, she's supervising nearly 100 counselors in Polk County.

Her daughter Rachel, 14, the freshman class president at Zephyrhills High School, wanted to add a personal perspective to her mother's academic knowledge.

"I've always been a bit of a peer helper," she said.

It was Rachel's compassion for peers affected by the clique system that led her to collaborate with her mother. She drew on her experience as a member of the Acting Studio



Local educator Madonna Wise and her daughter, Rachel, 14, have collaborated on a children's book on bullying. They each wrote five chapters.

in Lutz, where students work on problem-solving and peer issues through improvisation exercises.

"Our improvisation centers around real issues of kids," she said.

Mother and daughter each penned five chapters of the book.

"Kachina and The Bully" wasn't the first published work for either.

Rachel wrote a section of the book, "A Girls Guide to Achieving In the Arts," and her mother has written four books, most recently an anthology of Zephyrhills history, seen through an educator's perspective.

Eventually, Rachel wants to develop a Kachina series and to speak to classes and groups about bullying.

The book is available through Amazon.com and other distributors. For information, go to www.madonna-wisebooks.com.