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Wednesday, October 6, 2010; Posted: 11:10 AM - by [BWW News Desk](#)


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In the wake of the recent gay teen suicides, this year's touring production of The New Kid is especially relevant. Presented by The Random Farms Kids Theater, The New Kid is a musical about students at a middle school dealing with peer pressure, hazing, bullying and the importance of staying true to oneself. The show, which features young actors ranging in age from 10 to 15 years old, travels to local schools and includes a Q&A with students, teachers and the cast after the performance.

"The goal of this program is to create an awareness about the dangers of bullying in a way that's accessible to elementary and middle school students,"

says Anya Wallach, the show's producer. "Having kids perform for kids is tremendously advantageous because the audience can connect to the performers."

While The New Kid isn't a show about homosexuality, the core themes are meant to help younger students identify and address issues of character development that will give them the strength later in life to deal with personal differences - no matter what they are.

"The key is to start educating kids before they get to high school, so they arrive armed with the tools to deal with bullying in any form," Wallach explains.

The New Kid was written for grades 2-8 and has been performed at over 50 area schools (including parts of CT and NJ) in the last two years. Teachers interested in booking the show at their school can contact the theater at 212-956-2566 or email anya@randomfarms.com.