

# SAVE students seek unity, understanding

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Mischa Lopiano/The Fayetteville

## SAVE group

Members of the Jack Britt High School Students Against Violence Everywhere (SAVE) meet on Thursday, April 16, 2015 in Fayetteville, N.C.



don't realize how bad some kids have it."

The Jack Britt SAVE chapter formed last year. It is one of more than 2,100 chapters in 48 states and seven countries, according to a group spokesperson.

The organization tries to give student leaders tools to help prevent school shootings and bullying. Chapters participate in a National Youth Violence Prevention Week, held this year in late March.

"We're not a cool club," Jackson said. "You have to want to be in this. You have to want to do service projects and not be rewarded with academic points or an honor cord, that kind of thing."

Chanyang Davis, a senior, is president of the Jack Britt SAVE chapter. He said the group tries to address national issues on a local level.

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The students gathered in groups of three or four in a Jack Britt High School classroom. One student in each group asked the others for directions to a movie theater or store.

The thing was, the students asking for directions were talking in a language the others didn't understand.

The confusion that ensued had a serious purpose - to show the students what it feels like to be an outsider.

The students are members of the Students Against Violence Everywhere chapter at Jack Britt High School. They were participating in an exercise at a recent SAVE meeting.

Through a variety of exercises and activities, SAVE members try to teach their fellow students about diversity, bullying, conflict resolution and a variety of other issues they may face.

Recently, the Jack Britt SAVE chapter, along with a chapter from Pinecrest High School, attended a summit in Raleigh where they shared ideas with students from around the country.

"It lets them know they can trust each other and they can trust adults," said David Jackson, Jack Britt safe school coordinator and SAVE adviser. "The things I hear, you

"Through teamwork, you can start to understand other people," Davis said. "It helps to show people that other people care. It helps spread the message of unity, that we should be one unit as a student body."

Sophomore Rhiannon Potwin is a SAVE board member. She said she has always liked helping people, and SAVE is a way for her to do that.

Rhiannon said school violence can take many forms.

"Physical violence isn't always an issue at Jack Britt, but there is a lot of talking behind the back and miscommunication," she said. "If people could explain what's going on, I think there would be less violence."

Fariha Momin, a junior, is SAVE vice president. She said the group's focus on violence takes forms including encouraging safe driving habits such as not texting behind the wheel. Recently, the chapter was named one of 20 to share in a \$75,000 grant from the Allstate Foundation to promote safe driving.

Jackson agreed that social media is a new frontier in potential student violence.

"Outside of school, it's our biggest problem," he said. "They'll get to chatting at night and then come to school the next day and confront somebody about it."

As the school year winds down, SAVE members are wrapping up projects while planning for next year. Projects include an essay contest on stereotypes.

Fariha, who attended the Raleigh summit, said it's important to get the different perspectives.

"By getting the different viewpoints, you see there's different options," she said. "You see there's more than one solution to a question."