



# Bullying Task Force Report

## SECTION I: THE PROBLEM

### The Right to Learn in Safety---A Civic Principle

Learning without fear should be a basic democratic tenet. All school activity should be carried out in accordance with the fundamental values of respect, tolerance and safety. The school has the important task of imparting and instilling in pupils those values on which society is based ---individual freedom and integrity, equity, tolerance and responsibility.

The students and adults of Connecticut want safe, caring communities and schools with an environment of nurturance, high expectation and intellectual challenge. The crucial task of educational exploration should be inviting and supportive. Yet, some students hold a silent fear of formal learning environments.

### A Silent Fear

Children worry about their capacity to learn due to learning style differences; others face language barriers. Some students have difficulty mastering different stages of literacy. Many have problems at home. But there is a different fear among some in the schoolyard which is hidden and brutal. This fear is one of not being safe.

Aggression and disrespect in community always trespass the norms of safety. Yet, work and family stress, shifts in cultural values, a decrease in adult role models for children, as well as violent mass media have unintentionally spiraled into an intractable sense of insecurity for some children.

STUDENT  
QUOTES  
From the Task  
Force Focus  
Groups

*“Bullies will  
follow you to  
the end of the  
earth just to  
pick on you.”*

## The Mirror of Aggression

A community's or a family's manifestation of aggression is often mirrored in the schoolhouse. Though the shape of aggression takes many forms, children learn to model what they perceive as normative among adults. Some children are expressing concerns about their safety in the schoolyard, bus, or classroom because other children are verbally harassing, socially isolating, or physically hurting their peers. Student bystanders often feel nervous over inaction. Teachers may intervene, but sometimes lack the skill-set to be sure that their steps will stop reoccurrence.

*“There's nothing you can do to make them stop.”*

This pattern of aggression, whether the form is small or large, creates fear in children. A safe learning environment is inviolable. Education leaders and families together seek to create a non-violent culture with respect and dignity for every child at home and in school. Parents and teachers together want a return to civil society where aggression is prevented in all its forms.

## Youth Aggression in Contemporary Society

The scope of aggression children and youth face is reflected in:

- Sixteen percent, or 25,632 Connecticut arrests, involve young people 18 years or younger. Of this total, nearly 6,000 children were arrested for serious crimes. This is higher than the national average.
- Younger children commit crimes. Almost 11 percent of the 25,632 youngsters arrested in Connecticut were 12 years old or younger, with one in five charged with assault.
- School vandalism is cited as a prevalent problem by 74 percent of state school districts.
- School suspensions and expulsions are rising. In 1998-99, 458 offenses were reported for kindergarteners and 1,456 were reported for first graders.
- Young people continue to account for a disproportionate number of murder victims and perpetrators.
- Suicide remains the fourth leading cause of death among young people in Connecticut. The suicide rate among youth, ages 15-24, increased 25 percent between 1970 and 1998.

*“I was bullied for being overweight. The names don't bother me anymore because I'm used to it.”*

*Data from Police 1999 Crime Report and State Dept. of Education  
Jeffrey Daniels, Analyst*

## Parents Are Concerned

Parents expect the school to be a place where children learn in a safe environment. They expect schools to be “caring communities.” These expectations are based on the core civic principle of freedom from violence as a citizenry. Safety and security are important indicators of social health.

Among parents with children in grades K-12, according to the latest *Social State of Connecticut* report:

- Fifty five percent worry about their “child picking up attitudes or behaviors that go against their values.”
- Forty five percent worry about their “child being safe in school.”
- Forty one percent worry about students bullying other students.

## **The Importance of Focusing on the Whole School Climate**

Violence prevention and anti-bullying models which focus on the whole school reap the fullest gains. By creating a safe and secure school environment, adults enrich the lives of all students, fostering both personal growth and academic learning. Whole school models develop and maintain an environment in which attention is given to the social and ethical development of students, as well as to academic standards, in order to create effective learning conditions for every student to succeed. Moral, ethical and legal conduct is emphasized within a balance of individual rights and the common good, stressing responsibility, integrity, citizenship and a sense of community.

Programs that focus on an overall positive school climate stress: 1) the development of students' sense of self worth and acceptance; 2) student safety; 3) mutual trust; 4) positive interactions between staff and students; 4) value for individual differences; 5) a sense of caring among individuals, and 6) a collective sense of responsibility for student success. The school staff, in such an environment, possesses an in-depth knowledge of all students resulting in a comfortable and challenging classroom environment in which every student feels empowered.

## **What Is Bullying and Why Is It a Problem?**

Bullying is a common and potentially harmful form of violence among children that occurs in both school and community settings. Bullying among primary school children has been identified as one precursor to more aggressive and sometimes violent behavior in later grades. **The prevalence of bullying and the seriousness of its outcomes are significantly underestimated by many children and adults.**

## **Definition of Bullying**

A person is being bullied when he or she is the target, repeatedly and over time, of negative actions undertaken by one or several other individuals who are more powerful than the target in some way. Negative actions, which can begin with name calling, or social isolation and can build to actual attacks and/or attempts to injure or humiliate another person, include physical and verbal aggression, social alienation, intimidation, racial and ethnic harassment and sexual harassment

Bullying not only hurts the bully and the target, it also impacts the overall school climate and learning environment. Bullying is a form of repetitive and ongoing harassment, which crosscuts geographic, race and socio-economic segments of society.

*“The teacher just gives the bully a detention, but it doesn't help. Detention doesn't stop it.”*

*“Bullying is a way to get heard.”*

Research from Australia, Canada, England, Ireland, Japan, Norway and the United States provides compelling evidence for the importance of interventions with bullying. The repeated aggressive behavior has a chilling effect on school climate and enduring effects on targets.

Outcomes for the child who is bullied can include depression, isolation, poor school attendance, and diminished grades. At the extreme, bullied children can exhibit patterns of irrational retaliation, as in some instances of recent national school shootings. Yet, studies clearly show that early identification and intervention can help the bully, the targeted child and the bystanders.

### **Bullying Is More Pervasive Than Many Realize**

The *Bullying in Elementary Schools in Connecticut Study* surveyed principals and teachers and found that:

- Bullying and aggression are commonly seen in elementary schools. Bullying incidents occur “sometimes” or “more often” in nearly 9 out of 10 elementary schools in the state.
- The most common types of behaviors in elementary schools are name-calling, teasing, socially isolating students, and hitting.
- The frequency of these behaviors increases from grades 1 through 5.
- More than 60 percent of teachers devote fewer than ten classroom periods per year to teaching violence prevention curricula (i.e., conflict resolution, problem solving, and stress management).
- Most elementary schools have not conducted a recent evaluation of the prevalence of aggression and bullying or the effectiveness of implemented programs to deal with these issues.

This survey was conducted by Michele Beaulieu with support from the Safe Schools and Communities Coalition of the Governor's Prevention Partnership.

### **What the Research Tells Us About Bullying**

Statistics regarding aggression in our nation tell a grim story with a clear message; society has a stake in changing the behavior of bullies before they become adults.

- By age twenty-four, bullies identified after the age of seven are six times more likely than non bullies to be convicted of a crime; by age 30, they are four times more likely to have accrued three criminal convictions.
- In the United States, 20-25 percent of school children are directly involved in bully-target problems.
- In one midwestern study, 20 percent of fourth through eighth graders reported academic difficulties resulting from bullying.
- Targets are far more likely to bring a weapon to school than children who are not targets. 29 percent of targets nationally have brought weapons to schools.

*“I couldn’t go to the library to do research. The bullies would hurt me.”*

*“It really did affect my learning. There was no one to talk to about how I could go to school the next day and deal with it. Even remembering now, it’s angering me so much.”*

- Schools that address bullying effectively can create a more than 50 percent reduction in aggressive behaviors. These schools also see a decrease in other types of undesirable activity such as truancy, vandalism, shoplifting and underage drinking.

## Characteristics of Bullies, Targets, and Bystanders

### Bullies

The bully can be recognized most clearly by looking at character traits rather than physical attributes. The bully values aggression for the rewards it brings. He or she lacks empathy for the target and tends to lack guilt, fully believing the target deserved the attack. A bully likes to dominate. Bullies often lack specific social skills such as seeing the point of view of other people, taking responsibility for their own actions, and accepting constructive criticism. Contrary to general belief, the bully is not insecure or anxious, and does not have low self-esteem.

Parents or significant role models of bullies often model aggression. At home, punishments may be harsh and/or abusive. If not aggressive themselves, families may be permissive and tolerant of the child's aggressive behavior or inconsistent and/or unable to set clear limits.

Without intervention, bullies establish patterns of antisocial thinking. They are unlikely to feel empathy toward others, and unlikely to recognize their own pain as well. Bullies have trouble expressing anger appropriately. They are frequently in need of disciplinary action for aggression, are more likely to commit other anti-social acts such as truancy, fighting, theft, intoxication, and vandalism, and drop out of school more frequently than their peers.

Early identification and intervention can mitigate bullies negative and hostile reactions, and strengthen positive behaviors. A bully thinks in unrealistic ways, and successful interventions involve consistent enforcement of specific rules against bullying, graduated sanctions, and changing/correcting thinking errors. Neither punishment nor traditional therapy that focuses on feelings is typically effective with bullies.

### Targets

There are two types of targets: passive and provocative. Passive targets are likely to be more anxious and insecure than students in general. They lack the sophistication in social skills that would allow them to easily divert a bully's attention through humor or other strategies, and therefore yield easily to bullying. When attacked, they commonly respond by crying and withdrawal. They often have a negative view of their situation and of themselves, feeling a sense of shame and failure. They are often isolated, lonely, and/or depressed and may be emotionally fragile.

The provocative target is a child who is restless, irritable, and who teases and

*“The target is vulnerable. Everybody sees your wounds.”*

*“When people turn away and don't even acknowledge you're alive, that's bullying.”*

provokes others. They are children who are easily emotionally aroused. These children fight back in bullying situations, but are ineffectual aggressors. More difficult to recognize as a target than the passive target, the provocative target engages the bully but loses the power struggle. In a bully/target situation, the provocative target is in over his/her head.

Targets of either type may be students with special education needs. Research supports that students with learning disabilities are at greater risk of being targeted. All students, but particularly those who are targeted, might greatly benefit from life skills development to broaden their repertoire of responses in social situations and conflict.

### **Bystanders**

The most common characteristic of bystanders is that they choose not to take action when they witness a bullying situation. Bystanders often fear the attack will spread to them. Later, they frequently feel guilty that they have not stepped in to help. Observers are also susceptible to the contagious effect of bullying. Sometimes they join in the stigmatization.

Because 75-85 percent of students are not directly involved in bullying as targets or perpetrators, witnesses can be powerful forces in changing bullying behavior in schools. Teaching students to safely utilize the power of the "caring majority" is essential in engaging the whole school population in efforts to counteract bullying.

Bullying has profound effects on all children in a school and community. Students fear retaliation and also fear that no adult will help them. Children need to be taught to perceive adults as advocates, and to know that they will be kept safe. Targets and witnesses need to understand that they are not to blame, and that all children will get help when bullying takes place.

### **The Importance of Trained Educators**

Many times bullying behavior takes place when no adult is around. However, when adults are present, bullying is often ignored. One national survey shows students' perceive that teachers or other adults in classrooms do not address bullying incidents. Most of the time teachers have not been trained to handle bullying or to participate in whole-school frameworks on school safety. The lack of specific tools as well as enduring cultural norms that treat bullying as "kids being kids" lends itself to a modest response by school personnel.

### **Connecticut is Taking Action Against Bullying**

Recognizing the importance of this problem, The Governor's Prevention Partnership established a Bullying Task Force, co-chaired by Leslie Averna, Associate Commissioner, Connecticut State Department of Education, and

*"A target can only take so much before he or she explodes and defends himself."*

*"I felt like a bad friend, a weak person, watching it. I just didn't know what to do."*

Elaine Zimmerman, Executive Director, Connecticut Commission on Children to recommend effective school practices and public policy solutions to address bullying. The Task Force is comprised of experts in child development, learning, health, and aggression.

## SECTION II: Effective School Practices to Address Bullying

Criminologist Delbert Elliott studied over 450 programs to ascertain which best-addressed child aggression. Looking for replicable, cost-effective research-based models with significant deterrence effects, and sustainable outcomes, he found only 10 of what he defined as *Blueprints for Violence Prevention*.

*"The demand for effective violence and crime prevention programs has never been greater. To date, most of the resources committed to the prevention and control of youth violence at both the national and local levels, have been invested in untested programs based on questionable assumptions and delivered with little consistency or quality control. Further, the vast majority of these programs are not being evaluated. Worse yet, some of the most popular programs have actually been demonstrated in carefully scientific studies to be ineffective, and yet we continue to invest huge sums of money in them for largely political reasons."*

Delbert Elliott

*"Some teachers are observant, but there needs to be a personal relationship and protection for the student who reports."*

Bullying prevention and intervention, particularly when instituted at the elementary school level, have extensive outcomes with minimal costs. Early intervention keenly matters. Given the unexpected and startling impact of children shooting children in neighborhoods and schools, planful interventions and whole school training models are paramount to the right to learn in safety.

Specific anti-bully programs that have been utilized effectively in both Connecticut and the nation include:

- **Creative Response to Conflict, Inc. (CRC)** holds workshops for children and adults to develop skills to find nonviolent and creative solutions to conflict and bullying. Workshop programs include cooperation, communication, affirmation, bias awareness, mediation, diversity training and creative problem solving. It was founded in 1972 to encourage democratic values of tolerance and responsibility. *(For information, contact Priscilla Prutzman or Harmony Jones, CRC, Box 271, 521 N. Broadway, Nyack, NY 10960, 845-353-1796, ccrcnyack@aol.com, www.crcglobal.org.)*
- The main goal of the **Bullying Prevention Program**, developed by Scandinavian Researcher Dan Olweus, is to reduce bully/target problems in primary and secondary schools. It is the result of Olweus' pioneering research into bullying in schools, and includes the fundamental elements of effective bully prevention programs. A whole school approach, it aims to increase awareness/knowledge about the problem, to initiate action on the

part of all adults in the school community, to engage students in creating clear rules against bullying/aggressive behavior, and to develop support systems for the bully and the target of the bullying. Many states, including Maine, Colorado, South Carolina, Kansas and Massachusetts, have based their efforts on this model. *(For Dan Olweus' model in U.S., Susan Limber, Ph.D., Institute on Family and Neighborhood Life, Clemson University, 243 Poole Agricultural Center, Clemson, South Carolina 29634, 864-656-6320)*

***“Where do bullies bully?***

- **Bully Proofing Your School** is a comprehensive curriculum, which trains school personnel to implement strategies at the whole school, classroom and individual levels. These strategies include developing staff awareness and skills, informing and empowering all students, intervening effectively with bullies, understanding and supporting targets, and engaging parents and community beyond the school walls. *Bully Proofing Your School* has manuals for elementary and middle schools, and parent handbooks. *(For Bully Proofing Your School, Sally Stoker. 303-743-3670 ext. 8317)*

***Where don't they?”***

- **The Bullying and Sexual Harassment Prevention/Intervention Program** addresses teasing, bullying, and harassment and includes four volumes. Jointly produced by the National Education Association, the Education Equity Concepts, Inc., and the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, *Quit it! Bully Proof, Flirting or Hurting*, and *Gender Violence Gender Justice* comprise the K-12 curriculum. The ultimate objective of the prevention/intervention program is to develop a whole school campaign to change the school culture, which supports sexual harassment and bullying behavior. This program provides a unique opportunity for the local school district and the local National Education Association (Connecticut Education Association) affiliate to form a partnership to bring the program into the school to control bullying. *(For NEA's Bullying and Sexual Harassment Prevention/Intervention Program, Gaye Barke, 202-822-7732, E-mail: [gbarker@nea.org](mailto:gbarker@nea.org)). For Quit it! contact Barbara Sprung or Merle Froschl at 212-367-4585, or [Barbara@edequity.org](mailto:Barbara@edequity.org).*

***“Teachers walk down the hall.***

- **Operation Respect CT**, is a not for profit organization created to encourage climates of respect throughout the entire community. In addition to programs geared to educators and school staff, Operation Respect CT provides 1 – 2 hour sessions on topics such as “Cliques, Friendships and Bullying,” the affects of television violence on our society, the importance of good role models, the diminishing incidents of face to face communication in our world, and more. These sessions are available to PTO's, PTA's, community groups, workplaces and any other group interested in promoting a climate of respect. Shared respect is everyone's responsibility. *(Operation Respect CT, Jo Ann Freiberg, Executive Director, 1310 Silas Deane Hwy., Suite 217, Wethersfield, CT 06109. 860-721-7770. [www.operationrespectct.org](http://www.operationrespectct.org))*

***When kids are bullying or being bullied, the teacher keeps walking”.***

- **Don't Laugh at Me (DLAM)**, a program run by Operation Respect CT, uses song and a strong strategy toolbox to address the problems of bullying, ridiculing, teasing, excluding and harassment that commonly occur in schools. Based upon the Resolving Conflict Creatively Program, in collaboration with Educators for Social Responsibility, this was founded nationally by Peter Yarrow of Peter, Paul, and Mary, to provide tools for teachers to create and maintain a climate of respect in the classroom and the school. A core element of the philosophy of DLAM is the view that all members of the education community can and must help create and maintain climates of respect through the community. Teams from schools are invited to attend a free 2-day introductory session, including materials. DLAM is also available for schools and school systems for a more specialized, customized, on site full or half day program. (*Operation Respect CT, Jo Ann Freiberg, Executive Director, 1310 Silas Deane Hwy., Suite 217, Wethersfield, CT 06109. 860-721-7770. www.operationrespectct.org*)

*“I liked it that  
the teacher  
defended me.”*

- **Names Can Really Hurt Us** was developed in 1995 by the Connecticut Office of The Anti-Defamation League in response to educators' requests for a vehicle to teach students respect for differences. Names Can Really Hurt Us is a powerful student-centered assembly program designed to provide a safe forum in which students examine difficult issues and effect positive change in their own behavior and in their school communities. The planning and training process, involving administrators, teachers, students, parents, and community leaders requires approximately two months in advance of the assembly date. The program culminates with representatives sharing "Next Step" ideas with the goal of creating a school community that is welcoming and supportive of all students. (*Names Can Really Hurt Us, Marji Lipshez-Shapiro, Project Director, 345 Whitney Avenue, New Haven 06511-2316, 203-772-1300, Fax: 203-787-1524.*)

*“Bullies feed  
off your  
insecurities.”*

- The basic **Second Step** curriculum teaches students problem-solving and social skills. Lessons are divided into three areas: empathy training, impulse control, and anger management. There are four curricula, targeted to grades preschool to kindergarten, 1-3, 4-5, and 6-8. Second Step materials are also available in Spanish and represent diverse races, cultures and handicaps. The **Steps to Respect** is a new offering for grades 3-6, focusing on bullying prevention. (*For Second Step, Committee for Children, 2203 Airport Way South, Suite 500 Seattle, WA 98134, 800-643-4449, Fax: 206-343-1445, E-mail: [info@cfchildren.org](mailto:info@cfchildren.org)*)
- **The Youth Connect® Program** involves students in discussions about, and the elimination of, negative behaviors. It is a non-violence strategy, which fits within any existing core academic class or elective in grades 6-12 and challenges the acceptance of violence in peer groups, classrooms, homes, and the community. The program becomes the first ten minutes of each class day, with interactive, user-friendly lessons that require little time for the facilitator but which strengthen relationships between students, faculty, parents, and administrators. (*For The Youth Connect Program,*

Wanette Meekins, phone 281-479-4332; fax 281-479-4394)

- **Get Real About Violence** is an interactive, mixed media, research-based violence prevention curriculum available for students and staff in grades K-12. Recognized by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention as a "Promising Program" in prevention, Get Real About Violence incorporates normative education, skill streaming, cooperative team learning, and risk reduction research to target the attitudes and behaviors that underlie violence. The program offers easy-to-use lesson plans with videos and activities that impact the school, family and community. Get Real About Violence was developed by Comprehensive Health Education Foundation, the producers of Here's Looking At You, and Get Real About Tobacco. (For further details about curriculum, training, or to receive free demonstration materials, contact Wynn Shawver, 800-323-9084 ext. 106, [wshawver@unitedlearning.com](mailto:wshawver@unitedlearning.com) )
- **No-Bullying** is The Hazelden/Johnson Institute's K-8 program which includes teacher manuals and student handbooks for grades K-8. It provides grade-specific activities that help facilitate discussion about bullying and guides a group in creating positive norms about how they want to treat one another. This classroom curriculum would fit well integrated into a whole school bully prevention program. Parent awareness information and activities are also available. (For the No-Bullying curriculum, Hazelden Information and Educational Services, 1-800-328-9000, [www.htbookplace.org](http://www.htbookplace.org))
- **Challenge Day** is a powerful, all day workshop that addresses issues of violence, bullying, stereotypes and social oppression. It challenges the 100 participants (80 high school or middle school students and 20 adults from the community and/or school personnel) to see beyond their differences. Through a series of experiential games, activities, group discussions and trust building exercises, participants learn how to break down their walls of separation and create new levels of respect and communication that infuse their school community with caring. Challenge Day has reached thousands of youth since its inception in 1987, and was featured in a television documentary, *Teen Files: Surviving High School*, and the book, *Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul*. The workshop provides the foundation for a possible year-round mentorship program that sees youth as assets and facilitates a paradigm shift utilizing peer pressure as a positive influence. (The Challenge Day associates Program, PO Box 2208, Martinez, CA 94553. 925-957-0234; fax 925-957-9425; [www.Challengeday.com](http://www.Challengeday.com))

***“It’s the person  
on the  
receiving end  
who really  
decides if it’s  
bullying  
or not.”***

**Other Training Resources for Bully Prevention Programs in Connecticut**

Sonia D'Amato  
The Governor's Prevention Partnership  
30 Arbor Street  
Hartford, CT 06106  
860-523-8042 ext. 32  
Sonia.D'amato@preventionworksct.org

Sue Fulleton  
Connecticut Education Association  
21 Oak Street  
Hartford CT 06106-8001  
860-525-5641  
Suef@cea.org

Nancy Pugliese  
Safe and Drug Free Schools Consultant  
Connecticut State Department of Ed.  
P.O. Box 2219, Room 227  
Hartford, CT 06145  
860-566-5545  
Nancy.Pugliese@po.state.ct.us

*“Teachers lack  
of supervision  
makes bullying  
easier.”*

**SECTION III: RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE BULLYING TASK FORCE**

Early intervention in the home, school, and community is the best hope for diverting child and youth aggression, including bullying behaviors, in the schools. An effective response to bullying requires multiple strategies, ranging from those intended to prevent bullying from ever occurring, to those that require immediate and firm intervention.

The Bullying Task Force studied the comprehensive research on bullying, analyzed current model programs in the United States, brought in national experts, led public hearings on school safety and facilitated middle and high school student focus groups on school safety and bullying. From this research, the following recommendations are made to offer students a positive, safe learning environment:

1. Research-based **anti-bullying programs** should be instituted in schools in the early and middle grades. The core components of these programs should include:

**A. School-Wide Components:**

- A school-based team to coordinate and maintain bully prevention efforts;
- Whole-school training for professional and paraprofessional staff including, but not limited to, nurses, bus drivers, maintenance and cafeteria staff, office personnel, and volunteers to address instances of bullying effectively;

- A coordinated system of supervising students, with attention to increased adult supervision in areas where bullying most frequently occurs;
- A mechanism through which students can report bullying safely;
- An atmosphere that makes telling/talking about bullying acceptable;
- A consistently enforced discipline policy, which includes codes of conduct for students and staff, and specific rules and language against bullying behaviors;
- On-going public education efforts to reach all stakeholders (students, staff, boards of education, parents, community); and
- An evaluation component, which includes pre and post-test surveys to assess perceptions of safety and effectiveness of anti-bullying strategies.

#### **B. Classroom-Level Components:**

- Student and teacher-created classroom rules against bullying behaviors; and
- Regular classroom meetings/group discussions with students about bullying and respectful behavior.

#### **C. Individual-Level Components:**

- Non-punitive, multi-level, ongoing interventions with students identified as bullies, including consistent enforcement of non-punitive, graduated consequences, as well as establishing systems of support to reduce aggressive behaviors and strengthen positive social interactions;
- Interventions with students identified as targets, including establishing systems of support to develop a stronger sense of security at school and to strengthen assertive social interactions;
- Parent engagement, including discussing behaviors of concern, consequences, and systems of support.

2. Both pre-service and in-service **training for teachers, parents and other adults** in school buildings, (including coaches, parent volunteers, bus drivers, maintenance staff, administrators, guards, paraprofessionals, secretaries, etc.) should be provided to develop the skills and support necessary to take responsibility for creating and sustaining safe school environments.
3. Primary **prevention policies** should be adopted and implemented by school boards. The anti-bullying policy should be included in student and parent handbooks and reviewed with all staff periodically.
4. A **competitive grant program** for schools seeking to implement model anti-bullying programs should be developed by the State Department of Education.
5. **Alternate supports and strategies** for students should be implemented in school buildings. These may include provision of after-school programs, anger

management classes, character education, mentoring, conflict resolution, counseling for students and families, diversity training for students and adults, and alternative placements for at-risk students.

6. A **compendium of best practices** to reduce youth aggression, promote school safety and engage students in the planning should be developed and posted on the State Department of Education web site.
7. **Health professionals**, including school psychologists, school counselors, school nurses and school social workers, should be integral members of the intervention team. They should participate with mental health colleagues in identification and assessment of bullying behaviors, assist in the design and implementation of bullying behaviors and group and individual interventions for both bullies and targets.
8. **Collaborative agreements** among schools and community-based organizations should be developed in order to ensure replication of prevention program strategies and principles in the services they provide to students and families.

BULLYING BEHAVIORS CHART*					
MILD	MODERATE				SEVERE
<b>PHYSICAL AGGRESSION</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pushing</li> <li>• Shoving</li> <li>• Spitting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kicking</li> <li>• Hitting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defacing property</li> <li>• Stealing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical acts that are demeaning and humiliating, but not bodily harmful (e.g., de-panting)</li> <li>• Locking in a closed or confined space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical violence against family or friends</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Threatening with a weapon</li> <li>• Inflicting bodily harm</li> </ul>
<b>SOCIAL ALIENATION</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gossiping</li> <li>• Embarrassing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting up to look foolish</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethnic Slurs</li> <li>• Setting up to take the blame</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publicly humiliating (e.g., revealing personal information)</li> <li>• Excluding from group</li> <li>• Social rejection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maliciously excluding</li> <li>• Manipulating social order to achieve rejection</li> <li>• Malicious rumor-mongering</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Threatening with total isolation by peer group</li> </ul>
<b>VERBAL AGGRESSION</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mocking</li> <li>• Name calling</li> <li>• Dirty looks</li> <li>• Taunting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teasing about clothing or possessions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teasing about appearance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intimidating phone calls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal threats of aggression against property or possessions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal threats of violence or of inflicting bodily harm</li> </ul>
<b>INTIMIDATION</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Threatening to reveal personal information</li> <li>• Graffiti</li> <li>• Publicly challenging to do something</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defacing property or clothing</li> <li>• Playing a dirty trick</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking possessions (e.g., lunch, clothing, toys)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extortion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Threats of using coercion against family or friends</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coercion</li> <li>• Threatening with a weapon</li> </ul>
<b>RACIAL AND ETHNIC HARASSMENT</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joke telling with racial or ethnic targets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exclusion due to ethnic or cultural group membership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Racial or ethnic slurs, put downs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal accusations, insults</li> <li>• Public humiliation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Destroying or defacing property due to ethnic or cultural group membership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical or verbal attacks due to group membership</li> </ul>
<b>SEXUAL HARASSMENT</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sexual or "dirty" jokes</li> <li>• Conversations that are too personal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Howling, catcalls, whistles</li> <li>• Leers and stares</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Snuggies" (pulling underwear up at the waist)</li> <li>• Repeatedly asking someone out when he or she isn't interested</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spreading sexual rumors</li> <li>• Pressure for sexual activity</li> <li>• De-panting</li> <li>• Bra snapping</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cornering, blocking, standing too close, following too close</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sexual assault and attempted sexual assault</li> <li>• Rape</li> </ul>

\* from *Bully Proofing Your School: A Comprehensive Approach for Middle Schools* by Marla Bonds and Sally Stoker, Sopris Press, 2000. Used with permission by the authors.

**June Special Session, Public Act No. 01-1**

**AN ACT CONCERNING EXPENDITURES FOR THE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Sec. 32. (NEW) (a) The Department of Education shall establish, within available appropriations, a competitive safe learning grant program to assist school districts in (1) developing a school environment where children learn in safety without fear of physical or verbal harm or intimidation, (2) activities that encourage respect for each student, (3) decreasing early youth aggression, (4) establishing student conflict and intervention policies and strategies, (5) eliminating bullying behaviors among students, (6) extending safe school environment programs to extra curricular activities, (7) after school programs as described in subsection (c) of section 10-223c of the general statutes, and (8) the development of crisis and violence prevention policies and strategies which make school environments safe. Each local and regional board of education may apply for a grant at such time and in such manner as the Commissioner of Education prescribes.

(b) The department may accept private donations for purposes of the program provided such donations shall in no way limit the scope of program grants pursuant to this section.

(c) Any unexpended funds appropriated for purposes of this section shall not lapse at the end of the fiscal year but shall be available for expenditure during the next fiscal year for similar programs.

Approved July 2, 2001

## **Public Act No. 02-119**

### **AN ACT CONCERNING BULLYING BEHAVIOR IN SCHOOLS AND CONCERNING THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2002*) Each local and regional board of education shall develop a policy, for use on and after February 1, 2003, to address the existence of bullying in its schools. Such policy shall: (1) Enable students to anonymously report acts of bullying to teachers and school administrators, (2) enable the parents or guardians of students to file written reports of suspected bullying, (3) require teachers and other school staff who witness acts of bullying or receive student reports of bullying to notify school administrators, (4) require school administrators to investigate any written reports filed pursuant to subdivision (2) of this section and to review any anonymous reports, (5) include an intervention strategy for school staff to deal with bullying, (6) provide for the inclusion of language in student codes of conduct concerning bullying, (7) require the parents or guardians of students who commit any verified acts of bullying and the parents or guardians of students against whom such acts were directed to be notified, and (8) require each school to maintain a list of the number of verified acts of bullying in such school and make such list available for public inspection. The notification required pursuant to subdivision (7) of this section shall include a description of the response of school staff to such acts and any consequences that may result from the commission of further acts of bullying. For purposes of this section, "bullying" means any overt acts by a student or a group of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, humiliate or intimidate the other student while on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity which acts are repeated against the same student over time.

Sec. 2. Section 10-230 of the general statutes is amended by adding subsection (c) as follows (*Effective October 1, 2002*):

(NEW) (c) Each local and regional board of education shall develop a policy to ensure that time is available each school day for students in the schools under its jurisdiction to recite the "Pledge of Allegiance". The provisions of this subsection shall not be construed to require any person to recite the "Pledge of Allegiance".

## **Bullying Task Force Report Collaborators**

The **Connecticut State Board of Education** is responsible for general supervision and control of the educational interests of the state, including preschool, elementary and secondary education, special education, vocational education and adult education. It has a responsibility to assure that each child has, for the period described in the general statutes, equal opportunity to receive a suitable program of educational experiences. The Board provides leadership and promotes the improvement of education in the state, including research, planning, evaluation, educational technology, the publishing of guides to curriculum development and other technical assistance materials, the presentation of workshops and assessment.

The **Connecticut Commission on Children** brings representatives from the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government together with the private sector to promote public policies to improve the health, safety and learning of children through policy, capacity building and coordination. Through its statutory mandates, the Commission:

- Provides information and conducts research regarding the status of children and children's programs in the state;
- Enlists the support of the leaders of business, health, and education communities, state and local governments and the media to improve services and policies for children;
- Reviews coordination and assesses programs and practices in all state agencies as they affect children.

The **Governor's Prevention Partnership** is a non-profit, public private partnership, co-chaired by the Governor and a business CEO, whose mission is to lead a statewide prevention movement to promote the health, safety, and well-being of the state's future and current workforce. The organization has six major focus areas: parent involvement, youth mentoring, success at school, youth leadership, safe and drug free communities and prevention media campaigns.

### **Bullying Task Force Members**

Leslie Avera, Co-Chair, Associate Commissioner, Connecticut State Dept. of Education  
Elaine Zimmerman, Co-Chair, Executive Director, Connecticut Commission on Children

Cate Bourke	The Governor's Prevention Partnership
DeEtta Breitwieser	Connecticut Coalition of Pupil Services
Wanda Butler	Pomperaug High School
Karen Charest	Office of Congressman Christopher Shays
Gary Dennis	Windsor Partnership
Timothy Doyle	Connecticut Association of Schools
Therese Duncan	Connecticut Parent Teacher Association
Steven Edwards	East Hartford High School
Jo Ann Freiberg	Don't Laugh At Me
Paula Gill-Lopez	Connecticut Association of School Psychologists
Frances Gleason	Windsor Partnership
Elaine Gustafson	Yale University School of Nursing
Catherine Hogan	Connecticut Association of School Social Workers
Andrea Iger	Connecticut Children's Medical Center
Honorable Alex Knopp	House of Representatives
Jascinth Kong	Connecticut Children's Medical Center
Chareen Ledbetter	Hartford Urban League
Eleanor S. Lee	Eli Terry School
Marji Lipshez-Shapiro	Anti-Defamation League
Paula Lively	New Haven Police Department
Maggie Mahland	Connecticut Education Association (CEA)
Kathleen Matusiak	New Milford Public Schools
Owen McDonnell	New Fairfield High School
Eloise L. Middleton	Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES)
Vincent Mustaro	Connecticut Association of Boards of Education
Lisa Newell	The Governor's Prevention Partnership
J. Brien O'Callaghan	Center for School-Based Collaboration with Families
Elizabeth A. Odell	West Haven High School
Susan Patrick	The Governor's Prevention Partnership
Daniel Picagli	New Haven Police Department
Nancy Pugliese	Department of Education
Tarah Ryan	Stop the Violence
Michael Savage	Connecticut Association of Schools
Michael Schwarzchild	Connecticut Psychological Association
Michele Smith	Windsor Partnership
Donn Sottolano	Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES)
William Spielberg	Rogers Park Middle School
Roberta Tundermann	West Hartford Public Schools
Ramon Vega	Quirk Middle School
Ebony Watson	Stop the Violence

*Brave Enough to Be Kind* was co-authored by Leslie Avera and Elaine Zimmerman with the input from the Governor's Bullying Task Force. This report is updated as new data becomes available. It can be downloaded from the Connecticut Commission on Children website [www.cga.state.ct.us/coc/](http://www.cga.state.ct.us/coc/) For information, contact the Commission on Children, 18-20 Trinity Street, Hartford, CT 06106, 860-240-0290, fax 860-240-0248.