



Orange County News

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Contact: Dain Pascoello, 845.291.2700, 845.545.5225 c
Nadia Allen 845.342.2400, X326 or nadia@mhaorangenyc.com

ORANGE COUNTY 2014 NO NAME-CALLING WEEK ANNOUNCED

MIDDLETOWN, NY – Schools and youth-services organizations throughout Orange County have declared January 20-24, 2014, as Orange County No Name-Calling Week. The prevalence and severity of bullying and harassment among youth has gained national attention in recent years. Educators, parents, mentors and service providers will conduct activities aimed at stemming the tide of name calling and promoting respect for all.

Orange County No Name-Calling Week is being sponsored by the Cultural Equity Taskforce (CET) in Orange County in partnership with the Orange County Executive's Office, Orange-Ulster BOCES, Orange County Youth Bureau, Orange County Department of Mental Health, Orange County Department of Social Services, Orange County Probation Department, Orange County System of Care, and Joint Membership of Health and Community Agencies (JMHCA).

CET is a group of human service providers and community members committed to promoting the fair, just, and equitable delivery of publicly funded services to the people of Orange County. The group operates on the fundamental principle that it is the right of every culture to express itself and develop in an environment free from oppression.

“Ownership of issues around youth safety must come from the community at large,” said Nadia Allen, Executive Director, Mental Health Association in Orange County and Chair, Cultural Equity Taskforce in Orange County.

No Name-Calling Week provides an opportunity to promote respect, build self-control, confidence and resilience to bullying, both in and out of school settings. We are pleased to announce that Orange County Executive Steve Neuhaus will recognize and proclaim January 20-24, 2014, as Orange County No Name-Calling Week.

The fourth of its kind in Orange County, this countywide effort to address bullying and harassment began from a “Safe Schools Roundtable” convened by GLSEN Hudson Valley and the Hudson Valley LGBTQ Community Center in Kingston. For over four years, community and

school district leaders have come together to develop projects that address the issues of bullying and safety in our communities.

We believe that a little more kindness can go a long way toward fundamentally changing the name-calling and bullying cultures in our schools, especially when a foundation of respect is taught in elementary school. That's why GLSEN is introducing a new theme for No Name-Calling Week: Celebrate Kindness.

For the past four years, we have encouraged schools, youth programs, faith communities, service organizations and the entire community to participate in No Name-Calling Week. Only by teaching respect and encouraging kindness throughout our communities can we eradicate bullying and harassment in our schools.

The County Executives of Dutchess, Orange, and Ulster have lent support to a Hudson Valley-wide "No Name-Calling Week" through proclamations and press conferences.

Schools and organizations participate by providing opportunities for classroom discussions, special events and information sharing, and by encouraging students to speak out about bullying. Weeklong activities throughout the Hudson Valley will culminate on Friday, January 24 with a Student Creative Expression Exhibit to be hosted at Ulster BOCES in Port Ewan, NY.

Learn more about the project at www.nonamecallingweek.org.

IT'S A FACT:

- Verbal bullying is the most frequent form of bullying experienced by both boys and girls.
- 96 percent of New York students regularly hear the word "gay" used in a negative way in school, such as "That's so gay" and "You're so gay."
- 66 percent of New York students report that people at school are harassed at least sometimes because of their looks or body size.
- Both boys and girls report that they had been bullied away from school sometimes or weekly.
- Bullying creates a climate of fear and disrespect in schools and has a negative impact on student learning.

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An official Orange County Executive proclamation is attached.

NO NAME-CALLING WEEK

WHEREAS, name-calling and bullying are pervasive in our schools; and

WHEREAS, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) study of public, private, and parochial school students in grades 6-10 found that almost a third of 6th to 10th graders – 5.7 million children nationwide – have experienced some kind of bullying; and

WHEREAS, victims of bullying and name-calling commonly do poorly in school and suffer from high rates of absenteeism due to this harassment; and

WHEREAS, bullies themselves demonstrate poor social and emotional adjustment, social isolation, lack of success in school, and involvement in problem behaviors, and are more likely to end up engaging in criminal behavior in their adult lives; and

WHEREAS, name-calling has no place in our schools, as it impedes the learning process for all; and

WHEREAS, No Name-Calling Week, scheduled for January 20-24, 2014, is an invaluable project that is supported by a broad-based coalition of education and youth-services organizations that are concerned about the detrimental effects name-calling has on students;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that I, Steven M. Neuhaus, Orange County Executive in the State of New York, and L. Stephen Brescia, Chairman of the Legislature, do hereby proclaim January 20-24, 2014 as:

No Name-Calling Week

in Orange County and call upon teachers, students, parents, and school officials, particularly those working in grades 5-8, to appropriately observe the week through activities, lessons and programs designed to reduce name-calling and bullying on the basis of body size, ethnicity, gender identity or expression, physical or mental ability, race, religion, sexual orientation, social or academic standing, or any other attribute for which students are singled out for such unacceptable behavior.

Steven M. Neuhaus, County Executive

L. Stephen Brescia, Chairman