



Mayor's Campaign to End Bullying in Alexandria

Summary of Committee Activities

2014 - Present

Updated September 2021

- Chair of the Mayor's Campaign to End Bullying - Mac Slover, Retired, Former Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities - Regional Program Director (mac.slover@29outlook.com)
 - Would like to sincerely thank the committee past/present members who have worked to get this important information out to the community. Children and adults are talking about bullying issues and prevention more now.
 - **Question?** What are the four types of bullying? *Verbal, Physical, Social & Cyberbullying*

Background Information

1. **Goal:** Mayor's Campaign to End Bullying is to increase awareness of the negative impacts of bullying on youth and adults by increasing the resources and tools available to prevent bullying in Alexandria.
2. The initiative involves several agencies, including Alexandria City Public Schools, Recreation Department, Court Service Unit, Police and Sheriff's Departments, National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria, Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria, Senior Services of Alexandria, Rotary Club, community members and youth
3. Alexandria (under former Mayor Euille) joined this effort, spearheaded by the U.S. Conference on Mayors in 2014. Supported by former Mayor Silberberg, current Mayor Justin Wilson, past and present City Council members. Have received six (6) proclamations (2014 – Present) in support of Bullying Prevention and Awareness Month in October.
4. The Mayors Campaign to End Bullying is a national movement spearheaded by the National Conference of Mayor's to improve the community and school climate and improve the quality of life for all.
5. Bullying is a problem with serious and negative implications that should be dealt with *by all members of the community*.
6. The local Mayor's Campaign recognizes bullying as a community issue, that affects everyone from youth to adults. The issue is one that takes everyone to communicate in an open and on-blaming tone that is focused on building positive relationships and working together to support each other.
7. Active on social media (Tweeter, Facebook & web sites) through the City of Alexandria and Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS). Tweeter - #BullyFreeStartsWithMe, Facebook – City of Alexandria, Web Sites: www.alexandriava.gov/EndBullying & www.acps.k12.va.us/domain/7

Alexandria City Council Issue Statement On Inclusiveness

November 19, 2016

Alexandria, Virginia, is a city of kindness and compassion. We are a thriving community of engaged residents with strong ideals of peace, community service, and both shared and diverse cultures.

The city declares itself to be a hate-free zone. We are an accepting and embracing community where we treat each other with human dignity and respect. There is no place for intolerance in our community. This is a core value of our city.

National Youth Statistics

- More than 3.2 million students are victims of bullying each year
- Seventy one (71%) of students report incidents of bullying as a problem at their schools.
- In national surveys, one in four teachers sees nothing wrong with bullying and is unlikely to intervene in a bullying incident. Some adults consider bullying an acceptable "rite of passage."

Youth In Alexandria

- According to the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 13% of high school students reported being bullied on school property and 10% reported being bullied electronically.
- Twenty-five percent (25%) of middle school students reported being bullied on school property and 13% reported being bullied online
- 1 in 4 middle school students reported they have been bullied on school property.

National Senior Statistics

- Approximately 1 in 10 Americans aged 60+ have experienced some form of elder abuse.
- As many as **1 in 5 senior citizens** is the victim of verbal or physical abuse often by other seniors.
- Some estimates range as high as 5 million elders who are abused each year.
- One study estimated that only 1 in 14 cases of abuse are reported to authorities.
- Abusers are both women and men. In almost 60% of elder abuse and neglect incidents, the perpetrator is a family member.
- Two thirds of perpetrators are adult children or spouses.

Negative Effects of Bullying

- Poor social development
- Decreased academic achievement & Dropping out of school
- Criminal activity
- Other negative long-term consequences such as mental health issues - depression, anxiety, increased feelings of sadness, loneliness, physical harm to themselves or others and suicide.
- Bullying is **UNDERREPORTED**. Most victims remain silent out of fear of retaliation or shame, leading school and law enforcement officials to underestimate the extent of bullying. Student witnesses often fail to report incidents or even worst cases have gone unresolved by administration.
- To date, the Alexandria Mayor's Campaign to End Bullying has focused on studying the issue, meeting with stakeholders, children and parents to obtain information and feedback, and taking measurable steps to bring more communication, awareness and action into bullying prevention education.

Accomplishments

- Developed Talking Points Summary of committee's youth activities to be used when speaking about bullying (with help from children in the city).
- Developed a stable committee (made up of members from city agencies, organizations, ACPS, former Mayor and private citizens) that meets regularly at the Watson Reading Room
- Working with City agencies and ACPS to ensure that Bullying Prevention is discussed on a regular basis and encouraging youth to talk to each other and bring any issues forward to be worked out in a respectful and a way that can be resolved.
- Worked with Alexandria & Regional Gang Task Force yearly in support of local soccer and basketball tournaments and clinics.
- Co-hosted basketball tournament with Terra Ruffin-Pratt of Alexandria and Washington Mystics.
- Received City Council support of our efforts to mitigate bullying in Alexandria,

such as:

- Recognizing National Bullying Month each October by proclamation
- Joining the committee members in calling all community members – adults and youth – to pledge to end bullying of any kind, and to report bullying if it occurs
- Sharing information about reporting and resources
(Refer to ***Bully Free Starts with Me!*** flyer information)
- October month long list of activities by the committee, city agencies, school system and businesses on bullying prevention.

Examples of Activities: All Sports Saturdays, Poster Contest - (Prize winners & donations), Anti-Bullying Weekly Tweets, Tips and Resources each week, Recreation Center weekly bully free activities, ACPS weekly school activities, Campagna Center weekly activities, Ease Yoga and Café' weekly kid's activities, Bully Free TC Williams HS Field Hockey Night, Football game, volleyball clinics and youth football games, family splash night, Titan Takeover Night, "Lights On" Afterschool Bully Free activity with 4-H..

- Unity Day! – Monthly – City Unity Day On the Second Friday of Each Month – supported by city agencies, ACPS and organizations throughout the City. Wearing green in recognition of bullying awareness.
- Updated web site with the information on the campaign
- Interview with Hispanic Radio Station on Bully Free program
- Developed Pledge cards to sign by everyone.
- Speaking with children at TC Williams HS, Hammond MS Disability Awareness week, Ruby Tucker Afterschool Program, recreation department center staff meeting/trainings sessions
- Information available at coat & clothes giveaway, Thanksgiving Basket Giveaway and other community programs.
- Dedicated funding to support bullying prevention awareness activities in the amount of \$6,800.00 to continue the campaign for one year.
 - Tee shirts, pens, pencils, magnets, wristbands, signs, posters, banners
- A charge to the Committee to report back through the City Council/School Board to this group to report the results of the Campaign over this next year to City's Quality of Life Committee
- The Developmental Assets® are 40 research-based, positive experiences and qualities that influence young people's development, helping them become caring, responsible, and productive adults. The City of Alexandria has focused heavily on this initiative over the past several years with the goal of increasing assets among youth in order to reduce their risk of involvement in negative behaviors. Several community groups and organizations, including the

Mayor's Campaign to End Bullying came together in 2016 to learn more about the Developmental Assets and to select 3-4 assets to focus on moving forward. The assets selected were:

- * Positive Family Communication
 - * Community Values Youth
 - * Creative Activities
 - * Personal Power
- Developed a strong working partnership with Black Women for Positive Change National Organization. (2017 – Present)
 - Developing a monthly bullying activity and tweet or information to be emailed out.
 - Supported the ACPS Initiative of Restorative Practices Training for all Recreation Department Center staff – 2017 - Present. The practice now in place at the recreation centers.
 - Participated in the Suicide Prevention Workshop - 2019
 - Campaign has actively participated and is recognized in the Alexandria's Children & Youth Master Plan 2020 - Present
 - Presentation on Senior Bullying to Senior Ambassadors – January 2021 and Council on Aging – March 2021.

Plans In Action

- **Monthly Unity Days** – Is now recognized for a month (January, March, May, July, October) throughout the year. Tweets on Bullying are sent out and is supported by city agencies, ACPS and organizations throughout the City.
- **“Bully Free” Stars With Me!** “Night of Stars” Performing Arts Festival held on February 3 at the TC Williams High School Auditorium. Over 500 people attended the performance by nine of the Recreation Department's Recreation Centers.
- **Monthly Bullying Awareness Discussions** – held in the recreation centers as part of the Out of School Time Program.
- **Special Events or Activities** – each month agencies and organizations will have at least one day of bullying prevention programs to help continue to bring awareness.
 - Community Police Games (2018 & 2019)
 - Safe Place & Bullying Awareness – Site Training & Staff Trainings – (2015 – Present)
 - Stop The Violence Community Day
 - Rec Expo
 - Youth Basketball Games
 - Annual Cheerleading Competitions
 - Late Night Adult Basketball Games
 - Gang Task Force Youth Soccer Games
 - 2nd Thursdays Art Nights at Torpedo Factory
 - Alexandria Rotary Club Meetings
 - “Night of Stars” Performing Arts Festival – Theme in 2017
 - “Lights On” Afterschool Special Program – Theme in 2016
 - Black Women for Positive Change – Teen Program Presentations – 2016 – Present
With local Recreation Center – “Drop” & “On Second Thought”
- Banners/signs and posters continue to be displayed around the City and schools.
- Youth Development Workshops – Summer 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020
- Meeting with ACPS Superintendent and Principals and other community organizational leaders on Bullying Reporting (2017)

- Support to training of high school liaison students in who to respond to a Safe Place youth in crisis issue by training them to be able to guide youth were to seek help. (2017 - Present)
- Held Anti-Bullying Awareness Walk – October 2018 * Walked across Woodrow Wilson Bridge and back to bring awareness and to speak out against bullying.
- Sponsored Forum for youth and parents in October 2018 at TC Williams High School - on “Together... We Build Relationships” – that focused on having a community conversation to raise awareness about the impact of bullying.
- Committee will continue to meet monthly or more often as needed to keep the campaign fresh and the bullying topic upfront at various meetings and events throughout the City.
- 2019 – October & November – hosted Bullying Awareness Youth “Rise Above It” Conflict Resolution Workshops at the Patrick Henry and Leonard “Chick” Armstrong Recreation Centers. The two workshops were for over 100 youth that discussed what the meaning of conflict, causes of conflict, how to effectively and appropriately engage in conflict, what is bullying and cyberbullying and how to build confidence, increase awareness & empathy and better self-awareness.
- 2019 – developing other forums – “A Seat At The Table” – focused on communication and relationship building with youth and adults. How words matter, the power of words and tolerance. How to be a parent.
- March 2020 – Present - Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the committee’s meeting are held virtually. The committee faces many challenges during this period due to school/Out of School Time closings/limited openings to continue to provide awareness and programming to youth in the community.
- January & March 2021 – Present – actively leading Awareness Presentations to senior citizen’s serving agencies in Alexandria. Lead presentations to Alexandria Commission on Aging and to Senior Ambassadors. The committee will continue to expand the presentations throughout the public and private senior sectors of the City.
- October 2021 – Will be hosting Youth Community Forums on Bullying Awareness at Charles Houston Center, Hammond Middle School After School Program and Casa Chirilagua. We be hosted by the MCTEB Committee and lead by the Youth Advocacy Group.

Current Mayors Campaign to End Bullying Committee

Mac Slover – Chair, Retired - Alexandria Department of Recreation

William D. Euille, Former Mayor

Fannie Allen – Community Citizen/Black Women For Positive Change

Sheri James – Alexandria City Public Schools

Shannon Hudson-Odoi – Alexandria City Public Schools

Michael Johnson - Alexandria Department of Recreation

Jamie Aylor - Alexandria Department of Recreation

Andrea Blackford – Alexandria Office of Communications and Public Information

Percy White – Court Services Unit

Officer Bennie Evans – Alexandria Police Department

Faith Spillman – Alexandria Police Department

Allen Lomex – Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria

Emma Beal – Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria

Joy Paluska – National Center for Missing & Exploited Children

David Nye – Alexandria Sheriff’s Department

Marshall Hespe – Seniors - Meals on Wheels Program

Nathan Toews – Seniors – Meals Programs

On behalf of the Mayor's Campaign to End Bullying Committee, we would like to thank you for allowing us to share this presentation today. We look forward to working with many of you on future programs.



www.alexandriava.gov/EndBullying

www.acps.k12.va.us/domain/73