



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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August 23, 2016

TO: Chief School Administrators
Charter School Lead Persons
Renaissance School Project Lead Persons
Administrators of Approved Private Schools for Students with Disabilities

FROM: Nancy Curry, Director
Office of Student Support Services

SUBJECT: Week of Respect and School Violence Awareness Week

School districts statewide recognize the importance of continually fostering a positive school climate. The fundamental work being done to reduce incidences of violence and harassment, intimidation and bullying (HIB) within the schools is paramount and aids in providing students a safe environment in which they are able to attain academic success and grow as individuals. During both the Week of Respect and School Violence Awareness Week, school districts are afforded the opportunity to build upon their current work by delivering age-appropriate instruction to students on these essential topics.

Week of Respect – The *Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act (P.L.2010, c.122)* requires that the week beginning with the first Monday in October of each year (**October 3-7 in 2016**) be designated as the Week of Respect in New Jersey. To recognize the importance of character education, school districts, charter schools and Renaissance school projects are required to observe the week by providing age-appropriate instruction focusing on preventing HIB. Approved private schools for students with disabilities are encouraged, but not required, to observe this week. To facilitate planning, see online resources at <http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/sandp/climate/>.

School Violence Awareness Week – *N.J.S.A. 18A:36-5.1* requires that the week beginning with the third Monday in October of each year (**October 17-21 in 2016**) be designated as School Violence Awareness Week in New Jersey. To help school districts, charter schools, Renaissance School projects and approved private schools for students with disabilities comply with the requirements for School Violence Awareness Week, please refer to the attached guidance.

The New Jersey Legislature has set aside both weeks to highlight these very important issues. However, it is your clear, consistent message throughout the school year about positive school climate and student behavioral expectations that will help to reduce violence and create safe and supportive learning environments for all of our students and staff.

Please direct questions to the Office of Student Support Services at schoolclimate@doe.state.nj.us.

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Attachment

c: Members, State Board of Education
David C. Hespe, Commissioner
Senior Staff
John Worthington
Diane Shoener
Katherine Czehut
Julie McAloon
Kelly Allen
Elaine Lerner
Executive County Superintendents
Executive County Business Officials
Executive Directors for Regional Achievement Centers
Garden State Coalition of Schools
NJ LEE Group



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**Guidance for Public Schools, Charter Schools, Renaissance School
Projects and Approved Private Schools for Students with Disabilities
On School Violence Awareness Week
in Accordance with *N.J.S.A. 18A:36-5.1***

Prepared by:

**Office of Student Support Services
Division of Learning Supports and Specialized Services
New Jersey Department of Education**

**Guidance for Public School Districts, Charter Schools, Renaissance School Projects
and Approved Private Schools for Students with Disabilities
on School Violence Awareness Week
in Accordance with *N.J.S.A. 18A:36-5.1***

- All public school districts, charter schools, Renaissance school projects and approved private schools for students with disabilities (APSSDs) are required to annually designate the third week in October as School Violence Awareness Week. Activities should address preventing school violence, including, but not limited to, age-appropriate opportunities for student discussion about conflict resolution, issues of student diversity, and tolerance.
- During this week, schools should provide students, parents, school district staff and law enforcement staff opportunities to discuss methods for keeping schools safe from violence, to consider school safety and security plans; and to learn how to recognize students in need of help.
- Law enforcement personnel must be invited to join members of the teaching staff in the discussion of methods to keep schools safe from violence.
- Programs also must be provided for school employees that are designed to help them recognize warning signs of school violence and instruct them on recommended conduct during an incident of school violence.
- Ideas to consider in promoting the importance of school safety include:
 - Discussions about school policies and procedures for addressing violence and school crises;
 - Identification and assessment of troubled youth;
 - Involvement of parents and other community members;
 - Dissemination of informational materials;
 - Infusion of violence awareness lessons into the academic curriculum;
 - Implementation of character education activities that endorse respect, responsibility and tolerance;
 - Use of keynote speakers with expertise in bullying prevention or related violence prevention topics;
 - Presentation of lessons on conflict resolution, peer mediation, and bullying prevention by students; and
 - Training for school board employees in the areas of violence prevention and intervention, crisis response and related district policies and procedures.

Activity Planning

Provided below are suggested guidelines for school staff to consider in planning for School Violence Awareness Week. Additionally, some available programs, publications, organizations and websites are included on pages 3 through 9 of this document to aid in planning.

Student Discussions

Schools are required to organize activities to prevent school violence, including, but not limited to, age-appropriate opportunities for student discussion on conflict resolution,

bullying prevention, and issues of student diversity and tolerance. Law enforcement officers must be invited to join members of the school staff in the discussions.

School Employee Programs

Schools are required to provide programs for school employees that are designed to help them recognize warning signs for school violence and to instruct them on policies, procedures and recommended conduct during an incident of school violence. A few web resources for information on warning signs are:

- <http://cecp.air.org/guide/guide.pdf>;
- <http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/warning-signs.aspx#>; and
- <http://www.schoolsecurity.org/trends/warning-signs-of-youth-violence>.

Considerations in Planning Activities for Students

In planning activities with students, staff may want to consider the following tips:

- Organize small-group activities, as opposed to large-group presentations;
- Conduct student-centered, rather than adult-centered activities;
- Plan activities that are age-appropriate;
- Implement activities that build skills for non-violent responses to conflict; and
- Provide follow-up opportunities for processing information learned, asking questions, reinforcing information or skills learned, and to ensure understanding.

Resources

Provided below is a list of resources that may be helpful in planning activities for School Violence Awareness Week, as well as for improving the safety of schools. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of violence-related resources, but a diverse collection of supportive resources that school staff could review to determine the application of the information for their activities.

Organizations and Websites of Interest

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

Various resources dedicated to child and adolescent psychiatry.

www.aacap.org

American Counseling Association

Various resources dedicated to the social and emotional development of children.

www.counseling.org

American Psychological Association

Various materials for educators, parents, and children.

www.apa.org

American School Counselor Association

Listing of resources and additional links.

www.schoolcounselor.org

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

Various materials, training, research, and additional resources for educators.

www.ascd.org

Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence (Formerly the Center to Prevent Handgun Violence)

National initiatives include prevention programs for parents and youth on the risks associated with guns, legal representation for gun violence victims and outreach to the entertainment community to encourage the de-glamorization of guns in the media.

<http://www.bradycampaign.org/bradycenter>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

The CDC provides a variety of fact sheets on violence and injury prevention.

<http://www.cdc.gov/injury/>

Center for the Prevention of School Violence

Serves as a primary resource for dealing with the problem of school violence. The Center's focus is on ensuring a safe and secure school environment for every student, conducive to learning.

<http://test.ncdjjdp.org/cpsv/>

Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning

Provides research and publications on the relationship between social-emotional learning and school success.

www.casel.org

Cyberbullying Research Center (CRC)

The CRC provides up-to-date information about the nature, extent, causes, and consequences of cyberbullying among adolescents.

<http://cyberbullying.us/>

Horatio Alger Association

Provides a comprehensive national survey report of America's youth titled, *The State of Our Nation's Youth 2012-2013*. This back-to-school survey examines the attitudes and opinions of America's youth.

http://www.norc.org/PDFs/SONY/2012_SONY.pdf

International Bullying Prevention Association

This website provides bullying research and resources from around the world.

<http://www.stopbullyingworld.org/>

Keys to Safer Schools

This website equips teachers, students, parents, administrators and counselors with tools, training and materials.

<http://www.keystosaferschools.com>

Knowledge Path: Adolescent Violence Prevention

This online guide, compiled by the Maternal and Child Health Library at Georgetown University, offers a selection of recent, high-quality resources and tools for further research, including lists of websites, articles and print materials on adolescent violence.

<http://ncemch.org/knowledge/adolvio.php>

National Association of Elementary School Principals

Various resources and additional links.

www.naesp.org

National Association of School Psychologists

Various resources related to violence for parents and educators.

<http://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/school-safety-and-crisis/threat-assessment-at-school/>

National Association of School Resource Officers

Various resources and additional links.

www.nasro.org

National Center for School Engagement (NCSE)

The NCSE provides training and technical assistance, research and evaluation to school districts, law enforcement agencies and courts, as well as state and federal agencies, on student attendance, attachment and achievement.

www.schoolengagement.org/

National Crime Prevention Council - Be Safe and Sound in School

Be Safe and Sound is a public education campaign that seeks to raise awareness of school safety and security issues and to provide concrete measures that parents, community members and educators can take to make schools safer and more secure.

<http://www.ncpc.org/programs/be-safe-and-sound-campaign/about>

National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention

Provides extensive information on youth violence prevention.

<http://youth.gov/youth-topics/preventing-youth-violence>

National Institute of Mental Health

Contains in-depth links on trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

www.nimh.nih.gov/

National Parent Teachers Association (PTA)

Various resources, activities and additional links for educators, parents and youth.

www.pta.org

National School Safety Center (NSSC)

The NSSC provides school communities and their school safety partners with quality information, resources, consultation and training services.

www.schoolsafety.us/

New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE)

- *Administrative Code: Chapter 16, Programs to Support Student Development.*
Provides parameters for health and student support services, including *Subchapter 5, School Safety*.
<http://www.state.nj.us/education/code/current/title6a/chap16.pdf>
- *Keeping Our Kids Safe, Healthy and In School*
The NJDOE's resources for student behavior (including harassment, intimidation and bullying), safe and positive learning environments, student health, social services and afterschool programs.
www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/
- *Media Violence and Youth*
A pamphlet on the impact of a child's exposure to media violence.
<http://www.nj.gov/education/students/safety/behavior/MediaViolencePamphlet.pdf>
- *New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education*
Includes resources emphasizing the importance of respecting diversity and appreciating others, as well as lesson plans that provide ways to deal with issues of prejudice and bias in the classroom.
<http://www.state.nj.us/education/holocaust/>
- *New Jersey School Climate Survey*
A free resource for schools to assist in reinforcing positive conditions and addressing vulnerabilities for learning.
<http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/behavior/njscs/>
- *School Preparedness and Emergency Planning*
The NJDOE's resources for school security.
<http://www.state.nj.us/education/schools/security/guidance/safetycenter.shtml>

Operation Respect: Don't Laugh at Me

A non-profit organization dedicated to creating safe, caring and respectful environments for children.

<http://www.operationrespect.org/index2.php/>

Prevention Institute

Provides information on creating safe environments, violence prevention strategies and programs.

<http://www.preventioninstitute.org/component/jlibrary/article/id-36/127.html>

Programs and Publications

<u>A Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement Between Education And Law Enforcement Officials</u>	New Jersey Department of Education and the Office of Law and Public Safety http://www.nj.gov/education/students/safety/behavior/law/moa/
<u>Best Practices of Youth Violence Prevention:</u> <u>A Sourcebook for Community Action</u>	National Center for Injury Prevention and Control of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/introduction-a.pdf
<u>Bullying at School</u>	Olweus, D. (1993). <i>Bullying at School: What We Know and What We Do</i> . Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, Inc.
<u>Bullying in Schools</u>	The Center for Problem-Oriented Policing http://www.popcenter.org/Problems/problem-bullying.htm
<u>Bullying Prevention in Schools</u>	Stopbullying.gov www.stopbullying.gov/prevention/at-school/
<u>Bullying Prevention Resources</u>	A community violence prevention kit of resources and training materials for community members to organize violence-prevention forums and related initiatives. http://www.teachervision.com/bullies/school-safety-month/65589.html
<u>Bullying: What Parents, Teachers Can Do To Stop It</u>	American Psychological Association, April 2010 http://healthnewsdigest.com/news/Family_Health_210/Bullying_What_Parents_Teachers_Can_Do_To_Stop_It.shtml
<u>Cyberbullying: What school administrators (and parents) can do</u>	Beale, A. V., & Hall, K. R. (2007). <i>Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas</i> , 81(1), 8–12.
<u>Deadly Lessons - School Shooters: Secret Service Findings</u>	October 15, 2000 Chicago Sun-Times http://powerreporting.com/shoot.pdf
<u>Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools</u>	United States Department of Education, Educational Publications Center,

	Jessup, MD. To get a free copy, contact toll free at (877) 433-7827 or download a copy from http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/osep/gtss.html
<u>Exemplary and Promising Safe, Discipline and Drug-Free Schools Programs</u>	United States Department of Education http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/exemplary01/panel.html
<u>Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) Program</u>	United States Department of Justice http://www.great-online.org/
<u>Helping Children Deal With Scary News</u>	Children’s Hospital of Los Angeles http://www.chla.org/blog/physicians-and-clinicians/helping-children-handle-scary-news
<u>Impact of Disaster on Children in our Schools: A Program for School Nurses</u>	Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, Education and Training Division, Center of Alcohol Studies, Piscataway, NJ. To request a free copy of the CD contact (848) 445-4317.
<u>Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Model Program Guide (OJJDP)</u>	The OJJDP Model Programs Guide (MPG) is designed to assist practitioners and communities in implementing evidence-based violence prevention and intervention programs. The MPG database of evidence-based programs covers the entire continuum of youth services from prevention through sanctions to reentry. http://www.ojjdp.gov/mpg
<u>Reducing Bullying: Meeting The Challenge</u>	TeachSafeSchools.org http://www.teachsafeschools.org/bully.pdf
<u>Report of the New Jersey Commission on Bullying in Schools</u>	An Urgent Call for Legal Reform and Effective Practices to Combat Bullying in New Jersey Schools http://www.edlawcenter.org/assets/files/pdfs/bullying/Bullying%20Report%20December%202009%20-%20%20Final.pdf
<u>Safe Schools: A Handbook for Practitioners</u>	National Institute for Safe Schools, Alexandria Virginia (866) 711-NISS

<u>Safe, Supportive and Successful Schools: Step by Step</u>	Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice http://cecp.air.org .
<u>Safeguarding Our Children: An Action Guide</u>	United States Department of Education, Educational Publications Center, Jessup, MD. http://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/actguide/action_guide.pdf
<u>School Emergency Response to Violence</u>	http://www.ed.gov/programs/dvppserv/index.html
<u>Student-led Crime Prevention: A Real Resource with Powerful Promise.</u>	United States Department of Education http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/crimeprevention.pdf
<u>Youth Violence: What We Need to Know</u>	Report of the Subcommittee on Youth Violence of the Advisory Committee to the Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences Directorate, National Science Foundation. http://www.columbia.edu/cu/psychology/courses/3615/Readings/Youth_violence_NSF.pdf
<u>Youth and Violence: Students Speak Out for a More Civil Society</u>	Families and Work Institute http://www.familiesandwork.org/ Summary of Major Findings http://www.coloradotrust.org/sites/default/files/YouthSummary.pdf

Applicable Statute

NEW JERSEY STATUTES ANNOTATED
TITLE 18A. EDUCATION
SUBTITLE 6. CONDUCT OF SCHOOLS
PART 2. FACILITIES AND CONDUCT OF SCHOOLS
CHAPTER 36. CONDUCT OF SCHOOLS IN GENERAL

N.J.S.A. 18A:36-5.1. "School Violence Awareness Week"

The week beginning with the third Monday in October of each year is designated as "School Violence Awareness Week" in the State of New Jersey. School districts shall observe this week by organizing activities to prevent school violence including, but not limited to, age-appropriate opportunities for student discussion on conflict resolution, issues of student diversity, and tolerance. Law enforcement personnel shall be invited to join members of the teaching staff in the discussions. Programs shall also be provided for school board employees that are designed to help them recognize warning signs of school violence and to instruct them on recommended conduct during an incident of school violence. The Department of Education shall provide guidelines and information to boards of education for use in planning the activities in observance of the week and such funds as are necessary to pay the costs of the required activities and programs.
