



# Mayor's Campaign to End Bullying in Alexandria

## Summary of Committee Activities

### General Talking Points

August 2020

- Chair of the Mayor's Campaign to End Bullying - Mac Slover, Retired, Former RPCA Regional Program Director ([mac.slover29@outlook.com](mailto:mac.slover29@outlook.com))
  - Would like to sincerely thank the committee members who have worked to get this important information out to the community. Children and people are talking about it more and more. See the members listed at the end of this summary.
  - **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 and increase 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 current Mayor Justin Wilson.  
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.
4. Bullying is a problem with serious and negative implications that should be dealt with *by all members* of the community.
5. 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.

### Nationally

- 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."

## *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.

## *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 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 & 2018. The practice now in place at the recreation centers.

## 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
- 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.

### **Current Mayors Campaign to End Bullying Committee**

Mac Slover – Chair, Retired - Alexandria Department of Recreation

William D. Euille, Former Mayor

Sheri James – Alexandria City Public Schools

Darrell Simpson – 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  
Fannie Allen – Community Citizen/Black Women For Positive Change  
Joy Paluska – National Center for Missing & Exploited Children  
Morgan Garner – Alexandria Sheriff's Department  
Nathan Toews – Seniors – Meals Programs  
Cate Peabody – Seniors - Meals on Wheels Program