

COUNTY OF SUFFOLK



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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Steven Bellone
SUFFOLK COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Roderick A. Pearson
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
YOUTH BUREAU

Dear Community Partner:

The New Year promises to be a very exciting year for Suffolk County, its schools and its youth bureaus. Through the collaborative efforts of the Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone, Suffolk County Youth Bureau, Suffolk County Youth Board Coordinating Council, and CAPS (Child Abuse Prevention Services), the second countywide anti-cyberbullying campaign will be launched in an effort to educate and sensitize our youth to the issues surrounding bullying.

Bullying does not discriminate. It reaches individuals of all ages, all ethnicities, and all socio-economic levels. However, when it touches a young child, it resonates deeply and oft-times, so powerfully, that it leaves an indelible mark on a child's future.

Suffolk County's anti-cyberbullying campaign needs your support, and the support of your school-aged youth, each of whom will enjoy the possibility of countywide recognition for their efforts. All that is required is a bit of creativity, thought, and willingness to meet a simple challenge by developing an original 8 1/2" x 11" poster reflecting, in words and/or images, the child's perceptions of cyberbullying and its impact. The posters will be judged and the winners determined in accordance with the attached guidelines.

"As technology evolves, so do the ways to bully. If the word "bullying" makes you think of one child picking on another in the schoolyard, it is time to update our image of how students bully. While the face-to-face harassment certainly still exists, new ways of bullying have emerged as technology advances. With the easy access to cell phones, instant messaging, mobile devices, social networking websites, and other technologies, bullying has found its way into cyberspace. The Internet has become a place for some children to post mean and inappropriate comments about their peers. In recent studies, 20 to 43 percent of middle and high school students have said they have been the victims of this form of bullying. In another recent survey, 88 percent of teens reported seeing people being mean or cruel on a social networking site."

We are hoping that our Anti-Cyberbullying campaign will assist your schools/youth organizations raise awareness of this very important issue. In addition, if your district or organization is interested in bringing a cyberbullying workshop or speaker to your school/youth group, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Thank you for your support. We hope we can count on you as we embark on this countywide project.

Sincerely,



Roderick A. Pearson, Executive Director
Suffolk County Youth Bureau



Ilene S. Cooper, Chair
Suffolk County Youth Board Coordinating Council