About Unity Day

UNITY DAY: Together against bullying — united for kindness, acceptance and inclusion. Wednesday, October 19, 2016

Make it **ORANGE** and make it end! What are your true colors when it comes to bullying? If you care about safe and supportive schools and communities make your color **ORANGE** on **Unity Day**. That's the day everyone can come together – in schools, communities, and online – and send one large **ORANGE** message of support, hope, and unity to show that we are together against bullying and united for kindness, acceptance and inclusion.

"**ORANGE** provides a powerful, visually compelling expression of solidarity," said Paula Goldberg, Executive Director of PACER Center. "When hundreds of individuals in a school or organization wear orange, the vibrant statement becomes a conversation starter, sending the unified message to kids to know that they are not alone, and that our society supports bullying prevention in our schools, communities and online."

Individuals across the nation, and even world-wide, can participate in Unity Day:

- Wear **ORANGE** in the school, workplace, home and community. It can be an orange T-shirt, tie, hat, wristband, socks, or even shoelaces.
- Promote the event at school and in the community with posters, banners and parent letters - and through social media with images, posts and information.
- Inspire participation through activities such as Project Connect, Unity Day parade and mural projects.
- Share stories and pictures on Facebook and Instagram using #UnityDay2016
- Dance to "You Can't Take That Away from Me" featuring a performance by 2016 American Idol star Tristan McIntosh.

"One of every four school-aged children will be bullied this year - upwards of 13 million students," said Julie Hertzog, director of PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center, which sponsors Unity Day and founded National Bullying Prevention Month in 2006. "It's important these students know they are not alone and that they have the right to feel safe. By joining together and wearing **ORANGE** on Unity Day, we can send the unified message that we care about student's physical and emotional health and that bullying will no longer be accepted in this society."

Bullying statistics

- One out of every four students (22%) report being bullied during the school year. (**National Center for Educational Statistics, 2015**)

- 64 percent of children who were bullied did not report it; only 36 percent reported the bullying. (**Petrosina, Guckenburg, DeVoe, and Hanson, 2010**)

- More than half of bullying situations (57 percent) stop when a peer intervenes on behalf of the student being bullied. (**Hawkins, Pepler, and Craig, 2001**)

- School-based bullying prevention programs decrease bullying by up to 25%. (**McCallion and Feder, 2013**)

- The reasons for being bullied reported most often by students were looks (55%), body shape (37%), and race (16%). (**Davis and Nixon, 2010**)

Effects of Bullying

- Students who experience bullying are at increased risk for poor school adjustment, sleep difficulties, anxiety, and depression. (**Center for Disease Control, 2015**)

- Students who engage in bullying behavior are at increased risk for academic problems, substance use, and violent behavior later in adolescence and adulthood. (**Center for Disease Control, 2015**)

- Students who are both targets of bullying and engage in bullying behavior are at greater risk for both mental health and behavior problems than students who only bully or are only bullied. (**Center for Disease Control, 2015**)

- Students who experience bullying are twice as likely as non-bullied peers to experience negative health effects such as headaches and stomachaches. (**Gini and Pozzoli, 2013**)

Cyberbullying

- 19.6% of high school students in the US report being bullied at school in the past year. 14.8% reported being bullied online. (**Center for Disease Control, 2014**)

- 90% of teens who report being cyberbullied have also been bullied offline. (**"Seven Fears and the Science of How Mobile Technologies May Be Influencing Adolescents in the Digital Age," George and Odgers, 2015**)

Statistics about bullying of students with disabilities

- Only 10 U.S. studies have been conducted on the connection between bullying and developmental disabilities, but all of these studies found that children with disabilities were two to three times more likely to be bullied than their nondisabled peers.

(*Disabilities: Insights from across fields and around the world;* **Marshall, Kendall, Banks & Gover (Eds.), 2009**)

- Researchers discovered that students with disabilities were more worried about school safety and being injured or harassed by other peers compared to students without a disability. (**Saylor & Leach, 2009**)

- The National Autistic Society reports that 40 percent of children with autism and 60 percent of children with Asperger's syndrome have experienced bullying. (**"Bullying: A Guide for Parents"**)

- When reporting bullying youth in special education were told not to tattle almost twice as often as youth not in special education. (**Davis and Nixon, 2010**)

Statistics about bullying of students of color

- More than one third of adolescents reporting bullying report bias-based school bullying. (**Russell, Sinclair, Poteat, and Koenig, 2012**)

- Bias-based bullying is more strongly associated with compromised health than general bullying. (**Russell, Sinclair, Poteat, and Koenig, 2012**)

- Race-related bullying is significantly associated with negative emotional and physical health effects. (**Rosenthal et al, 2013**)

Statistics about bullying of students who identify or are perceived as LGBTQ

- 81.9% of students who identify as LGBTQ were bullied in the last year based on their sexual orientation. (**National School Climate Survey, 2011**).

- Peer victimization of all youth was less likely to occur in schools with bullying policies that are inclusive of LGBTQ students. (**Hatzenbuehler and Keyes, 2012**)

- 63.5% of students feel unsafe because of their sexual orientation, and 43.9% because of their gender expression. (**National School Climate Survey, 2011**)

- 31.8% of LGBTQ students missed at least one entire day of school in the past month because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable. (**National School Climate Survey, 2011**).

Weight-Based Bullying

- 64% of students enrolled in weight-loss programs reported experiencing weight-based victimization. (**Puhl, Peterson, and Luedicke, 2012**)

- One third of girls and one fourth of boys report weight-based teasing from peers, but prevalence rates increase to approximately 60% among the heaviest students. (**Puhl, Luedicke, and Heuer, 2011**)

- 84% of students observed students perceived as overweight being called names or getting teased during physical activities. (**Puhl, Luedicke, and Heuer, 2011**)

Bullying and Suicide

- There is a strong association between bullying and suicide-related behaviors, but this relationship is often mediated by other factors, including depression and delinquency. (**Hertz, Donato, and Wright, 2013**)

- Students who bully others, are bullied, or witness bullying are more likely to report high levels of suicide-related behavior than students who report no involvement in bullying. (**Center for Disease Control, 2014**)

- Students victimized by their peers were 2.4 times more likely to report suicidal ideation and 3.3 times more likely to report a suicide attempt than youth who reported not being bullied. (**Espelage and Holt, 2013**)

- Students who are both bullied and engage in bullying behavior are the highest risk group for adverse outcomes. (**Espelage and Holt, 2013**)

- Suicide is not a natural response to being bullied. This myth has the dangerous potential to normalize suicide behavior in response to suicide and thereby create copycat behavior among students (**Center for Disease Control, 2014**).

Interventions

- Bullied youth were most likely to report that actions that accessed support from others made a positive difference. (**Davis and Nixon, 2010**)

- Actions aimed at changing the behavior of the bullying youth (fighting, getting back at them, telling them to stop, etc.) were rated as more likely to make things worse. (**Davis and Nixon, 2010**)

- Students reported that the most helpful things teachers can do are: listen to the student, check in with them afterwards to see if the bullying stopped, and give the student advice. (**Davis and Nixon, 2010**)

- Students reported that the most harmful things teachers can do are: tell the student to solve the problem themselves, tell the student that the bullying wouldn't happen if they acted differently, ignored what was going on, or tell the student to stop tattling. (**Davis and Nixon, 2010**)

- As reported by students who have been bullied, the self-actions that had some of the most negative impacts (telling the person to stop/how I feel, walking away, pretending it doesn't bother me) are often used by youth and often recommended to youth. (**Davis and Nixon, 2010**)

Bystanders

- Bystanders' beliefs in their social self-efficacy were positively associated with defending behavior and negatively associated with passive behavior from bystanders – i.e. if students believe they can make a difference, they're more likely to act. (**Thornberg et al, 2012**)

- Students who experience bullying report that allying and supportive actions from their peers (such as spending time with the student, talking to him/her, helping him/her get away, or giving advice) were the most helpful actions from bystanders. (**Davis and Nixon, 2010**)

- Students who experience bullying are more likely to find peer actions helpful than educator or self-actions. (**Davis and Nixon, 2010**)