



**NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF
ULSTER COUNTY EXECUTIVE MIKE HEIN**



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**ULSTER COUNTY EXECUTIVE MIKE HEIN PROCLAIMS: JANUARY 31ST
TO FEBRUARY 4TH *NO NAME CALLING WEEK* IN ULSTER COUNTY**

Kingston, NY – County Executive Mike Hein proclaimed the week of January 31st *No Name Calling Week* in Ulster County. No Name Calling Week (NNCW) is an opportunity to provide educational activities aimed at ending name calling of all kinds, especially bullying. During this week, numerous educational events will be held in Ulster County designed to put an end to bullying.

According to a 2009 National Youth Risk Behavior Survey, about one in five teens had been bullied at school in the last year. The United State's government's Find Youth Info website reports the following statistics on bullying:

- Bullying is most common among middle school children, where almost half of students may be bully victims
- Between 15 and 25 percent of students overall are frequent victims of bullying, and 15 to 20 percent of students bully others often
- About 20 percent of students experience physical bullying at some point in their lives, while almost a third experience some type of bullying

“The statistics associated with bullying are alarming and have prompted us to take immediate action,” said Ulster County Executive Mike Hein. “One of the great things about having our new form of government is that we have the ability to identify important issues such as bullying and the flexibility to affect change by taking immediate action. I am working hard to make Ulster County the healthiest county in New York State and improving the physical and mental health of our young people by curtailing bullying is an extremely important part of this effort.”

To kick off NNCW in Ulster County, County Executive Mike Hein sponsored a webcast class created to teach middle school and high school students about the negative impacts of bullying. The webcast was viewed this morning by students across Ulster County.

Participants in the web class included: Mike Hein, Ulster County Executive; Legislator Walter Frey, Chairman of the Health and Human Services Committee of the Ulster County Legislature; Joakim Lartey, Coordinator of Youth Development at Ulster County BOCES Instructional Services and a member of the Ulster County Human Rights Commission; Dr. LaMar Hasbrouck, Ulster County Public Health Director; Rob Conlon,

Co-Chair, GLSEN Hudson Valley; Michael Berg, Family of Woodstock Executive Director; Ellen Pendegar, Mental Health Association Chief Executive Officer; and Vanessa Shelmandine, Director of Programs and Services, Hudson Valley LGBTQ Community Center, Inc.

“Bullying is a growing epidemic and we need to educate the youth of Ulster County about the possible outcomes resulting from bullying,” said Legislator Walter Frey, Chairman of the Health and Human Services Committee.

“No Name Calling Week is a great way to establish healthy habits and behaviors in our young people at an early age,” said Public Health Director Dr. La Mar Hasbrouck. “It is also going to further the County Executive’s Healthy Ulster goal of making Ulster County the healthiest county in New York State.

“Media coverage over the last several months has made it abundantly clear to everyone what those of us working with LGBTQ youth have long known – that bullying and name calling can have tragic results,” said Lance Ringel, President of the Hudson Valley LGBTQ Community Center. “We applaud County Executive Hein’s action in proclaiming No Name Calling Week in Ulster County, which will help raise awareness of the harmful and even deadly effects of bullying and name calling on all youth at risk, including LGBT youth.”

“As a member of the Kingston Board of Education, I am very aware that bullying among youth frequently occurs in school settings: hallways, cafeterias, buses, locker rooms, and classrooms,” said Maureen Bowers. “While it is essential schools respond to all students involved - the bully, the bullied, and the bystanders - we cannot do it alone. I am very pleased with the county's support, and their webcast initiative. It is a clear reminder: It does take a village to raise a child.”

“As Chief Executive Officer of the Mental Health Association in Ulster County it is important for me to be involved with NNCW because a person’s mental health depends on the support of others and being treated with acceptance and respect. All differences can be celebrated and integrated into healthy living for everyone and our community,” said Ellen Pendegar, MS, RN, PMHCNS-BC.

"We have reached a point of crisis in our schools where we can no longer ignore the impact of bullying on learning environments and the community as a whole, said Rob Conlon, Co-Chair, GLSEN Hudson Valley. “No Name Calling Week provides an opportunity for youth and adults to work together to create respectful environments. The exciting No Name Calling Week partnership between schools and youth-serving organizations in the Hudson Valley helps to reinforce that message of respect both in and outside of school."

"As a health educator in Ulster County, I am able to work in different schools and organizations and I can observe how pervasive bullying and name calling are among all ages and groups,” said Danielle Loftus, an Ulster County Health Educator with Planned

Parenthood of the Mid Hudson Valley. "The only way to end bullying is through a cultural shift. In the Hudson Valley I believe that is what we are starting with No Name Calling Week. We have begun the process of this cultural shift towards safety and acceptance for everyone."

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