

National Education Association Bullying Survey

A Joint Project of NEA's Human and Civil Rights Department, Research Department, and Education Support Professional Quality Department

Over the past two years, NEA has partnered with subject experts from Johns Hopkins University and other academic institutions. This collaboration led to the collection of data from NEA members about their experiences with student-to-student bullying in schools. A survey of 5064 teachers and education support professionals was conducted in the Spring of 2010. The survey was extensive, covering such topics as members' knowledge base, needs, experiences with various types of bullying, and experiences with bullying of special populations, e.g., GLBT, religious groups, etc. Key findings include:

- 62 percent of school employees report they have witnessed bullying two or more times in the last month.
- 98 percent believe it is “their job” to intervene when they see bullying happening in their school.
- 46 percent of school employees—teachers and education support professionals—say they have not received training on their district's bullying policy.
- 61 percent say they would benefit from additional training on when and how to intervene in bullying situations related to perceived sexual orientation or gender nonconformity.
- 74 percent say they could benefit from training on when and how to intervene with cyberbullying.
- The survey also shows that education support professionals are as likely to witness bullying as teachers and are as committed as teachers to solving the problem. Thus, education support professionals must be included in bullying intervention and prevention training.
- Connectedness (between staff members and staff and students) was found to be an important predictor of willingness to intervene in bullying situations. Staff with higher feelings of connectedness were more likely to report being comfortable intervening with bullying across all special populations and in situations involving negative racial or religious comments as well as sexual remarks.
- Finally, the survey indicates that bullying is a problem across the country—in rural, suburban and big city schools. In other words, any school district official who assumes they don't have a bullying problem is probably mistaken.

The data collected in this survey will provide additional information that will strengthen the bullying prevention and intervention training that has long been offered by the Department of Human and Civil Rights, particularly as it relates to the role of education support professionals in anti-bullying efforts.

Planned follow-up activities include: distilling the survey report to accompany a public announcement of its findings, disaggregating the data to learn more about specific populations (such as comparing bullying in rural/urban schools, comparing the experiences of different education support professional job groups, and analyzing the differences by grade level), and working directly with selected priority schools to provide bullying prevention training.