

NEWS



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Orange County Executive

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For Immediate Release

1-26-12 THIS WEEK IN ORANGE COUNTY BY EDWARD A. DIANA

Growing up as a kid in Middletown, I was a firm believer in the old adage “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me.” As a father, I would remind my children of that same saying whenever they were upset by an argument with a friend or nursed hurt feelings because someone called them an unkind name. I’d encourage them to stand tall, let the hurtful name roll off their back, and in a day or two all would be forgotten – and most often that was the case.

Unfortunately for young people today, the electronic age in which we live makes it much more difficult to forget instances of name-calling or bullying. Now, thanks to the internet, texting, social media, and other electronic communications, the power of that affront can be incredibly magnified and multiplied. That’s why it’s more important than ever that we help children understand the long-term and lasting consequences of their actions, provide them with the tools and resources they need to cope, and give them safe places, and people, they can turn to when facing challenges. Bully or bullied, our young people need guidance and support.

So that we may focus attention not only on the issues of bullying and harassment facing our young people today, but the resources available to them, as well, Orange County is proud to once again recognize No Name-Calling Week from January 30 to February 3. Together we can stem the tide of name-calling and promote respect for all people in Orange County.

Orange County No Name-Calling Week is being sponsored by the Cultural Equity Taskforce (CET) in Orange County in partnership with Joint Membership of Health and Community Agencies (JMHCA), Orange County Youth Bureau, Orange County Department of Mental Health, Orange County Department of Social Services, Orange County Probation Department, Orange County System of Care and Orange-Ulster BOCES. Programs and activities designed to promote respect and understanding of diversity will be held at schools and local organizations throughout the week.

As a County, and a community, we are fortunate to have a number of outstanding programs to meet the needs of our young people and help them tackle many of the challenges that come with growing up. For more information about a variety of youth-oriented services, I encourage you to visit the Youth Bureau’s pages on the County website at www.orangecountygov.com and check out their *Directory of Children, Youth & Family Services*. You can also request a copy by calling 615-3620. Two other excellent resources are the Orange County System of Care website at www.mysystemofcare.com and the Mental Health Association’s site at www.mhaorangenyny.com. Through these resources you will find a wealth of information for young people and their families.

I look forward to joining with Legislative Chairman Michael Pillmeier at the meeting of the full Legislature on Thursday, February 2 to proclaim No Name-Calling Week for Orange County. I hope that this recognition will initiate conversations and inspire not only young people, but people of all ages, to eliminate bullying and foster respect throughout our communities each and every day.

Until next week, wishing you good health and happiness,

Edward A. Diana
County Executive