



## Florida Children and Youth Cabinet

THE CAPITOL  
400 S. MONROE STREET, SUITE 2002  
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32399-0001  
WWW.FLGOV.COM/CHILDRENS-CABINET



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

October 1, 2015

**Contact:** Jamie Sowers

Jamie.Sowers@ahca.myflorida.com

### **The Florida Children and Youth Cabinet Commemorates National Bullying Prevention Month with Statewide Awareness Campaign**

**TALLAHASSEE, Fla.** – This month, the Florida Children and Youth Cabinet (Cabinet) will join state agencies, school districts, faith-based organizations, and other community stakeholders in recognizing October 2015 as National Bullying Prevention Month.

The Cabinet originally established its Bullying Workgroup as a response to the negative impacts that bullying and cyberbullying were having on Florida's children and youth. This is the second year that the Cabinet has worked to raise awareness for bullying prevention and support activities that promote the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of every child.

Wansley Walters, Chair of the Florida Children and Youth Cabinet, said, "Every child deserves to grow up healthy and in an environment free from violence. Bullying and cyberbullying are inappropriate behaviors that we are seeking to address with the help of community advocates such as parents, teachers, coaches, religious figures and mentors."

This year, the Bullying Workgroup is supporting the efforts of Stand Strong USA, an organization that provides guidance and resources to teens currently facing depression and bullying in their daily lives. In November, schools in South Florida will host Nick Vujcic, a renowned international speaker who shares his inspiring story in an effort to promote bullying and suicide prevention.

The Cabinet is also supporting the efforts of the Monique Burr Foundation for Children, provider of Child Safety Matters, a research-based educational program for students in grades K-6. This program is designed to educate and empower students, school personnel, and adults with information and strategies to prevent bullying, cyberbullying, digital abuse, and all types of child abuse. Materials sent to schools will include posters created by the Cabinet's workgroup and its partner, Florida Healthy Kids, for display within classrooms and hallways. The Child Safety Matters training program is available free of charge to all public schools in Florida.

Elizabeth Dudek, Co-Chair of the Bullying Workgroup and Secretary of the Agency for Health Care Administration, said, "Regardless of how long they continue, acts of bullying and



## Florida Children and Youth Cabinet

THE CAPITOL  
400 S. MONROE STREET, SUITE 2002  
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32399-0001  
WWW.FLGOV.COM/CHILDRENS-CABINET



cyberbullying can have negative impacts that last a lifetime. We are committed to protecting current victims of bullying, preventing future conflicts, and supporting programs and resources that promote positive character development in those who express their frustrations through physically or emotionally aggressive acts.”

Dr. Judy Schaechter, Co-Chair of the Bullying Workgroup and Member of the Florida Children and Youth Cabinet, said, “Bullying prevention is a community issue. It may look like it happens between two people, but stopping it is a responsibility shared by all: those who see it, who can intervene, and who can protect, prevent, teach, and heal.”

To download a copy of the Governor’s proclamation for National Bullying Prevention Month 2015, and files for the bullying prevention posters, please visit the Florida Children and Youth Cabinet’s website at <http://www.flgov.com/childrens-cabinet-bullying-workgroup/>

For information and resources related to bullying prevention, please visit the Florida Department of Education’s website at <http://www.fldoe.org/schools/safe-healthy-schools/safe-schools/bullying-prevention.stml>

For more information about the live events and simulcasts hosted by Stand Strong USA, please visit [www.StandStrongFlorida.com](http://www.StandStrongFlorida.com).

For more information about the Monique Burr Foundation or the Child Safety Matters training program, please visit: [www.MBFChildSafetyMatters.org](http://www.MBFChildSafetyMatters.org).

###