

Press Releases

02-07-11 OC Exec Diana Recognizes No Name-Calling Week***Announces New Anti-Bullying Initiative for Schools - Letters to Daddy Program***

Orange County wrapped up its first-ever No Name-Calling Week initiative with the reading of a proclamation by County Executive Edward A. Diana at the Government Center in Goshen last week. He presented the proclamation to event chair Nadia Allen, Executive Director of the Mental Health Association in Orange County.

Mr. Diana called upon all of Orange County's citizens, schools, businesses, and civic associations to recognize and support this important initiative that will promote respect, build self-control, confidence, and resilience to bullying, both in and out of school settings.

"The prevalence and severity of bullying and harassment among youth have become serious issues in society at-large, and, unfortunately, even in our own community," said the County Executive. "It's important that we bring attention to these issues and launch an on-going dialogue about ways to eliminate name-calling and bullying so that we may create a better, brighter, future for our young people."

Orange County's No Name-Calling Week was sponsored by the Cultural Equity Taskforce (CET), in partnership with Joint Membership of Health and Community Agencies (JMCA), 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. Schools and youth-serving agencies were invited to participate in a variety of events and activities to encourage respect and appreciate diversity, as well as host events in schools throughout the week.



Orange County Executive Edward A. Diana presented Nadia Allen, No Name-Calling Week chairperson and Executive Director of the Mental Health Association in Orange County, with the official proclamation following his reading of it.



Joining Orange County Executive Diana (center) for the Letters to Daddy announcement were representatives from the musical production Jeff Rich, Will Rodman, and John O'Neil, as well as Orange County Youth Bureau Director Carol Chichester and David Jolly, Orange County Commissioner of Social Services.

In her remarks, Nadia Allen thanked the County Executive for his commitment to Orange County's youth and his unwavering support of the No Name-Calling Week initiative. "No longer can we say 'names will never hurt me'," said Allen. "Verbal bullying is the most frequent form of bullying facing our young people today, and no child is immune. No Name-Calling Week is just the beginning of our efforts to promote respect for all in Orange County," continued Allen.

Sharing in that belief, the County Executive concluded No Name-Calling Week with a special announcement that will continue the efforts started by this initiative.

"It is our responsibility to protect our children, listen to them, guide them, and give them the tools they need to cope," said Mr. Diana. "That's why I'm proud to announce that Orange

County is embarking on a partnership with 4eProductions to bring 'Letters to Daddy, the Musical Key to Bully Free' to every interested elementary and middle-school in Orange County."

The 60 minute musical production will address the many life issues facing children today, including bullying, name-calling, and violence. It will be cast entirely with children from Orange County.

"We are excited to be launching 'Letters to Daddy' with the support of Orange County," said Will Rodman, show producer and co-founder of 4eProductions. "We look forward to working with our schools to create a culture of caring and kindness in our County."

For more information about the "Letters to Daddy" production and a sampling of music from the show, as well as a music video, visit www.letterstodaddy.com.