WHEN WORDS BECOME WEAPONS: Educational Perspectives and Legal Parameters  
JULY 12, 2011

8:30 – 9:00 Registration and coffee
9:00 – 9:15 Welcome
Andrea Spencer, Dean, Pace University School of Education

Morning Keynote Addresses: 9:15 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

9:15 – 10:45 When words become weapons: Educational perspectives and legal parameters
Frank Laghezza is Special Counsel to Schools and Executive Assistant District Attorney in the Crime Prevention Division of the Kings County Office of the District Attorney in New York City. Renee Turner Gregory is Bureau Chief of School Advocacy in the Kings County Office of the District Attorney. Previously she worked for over 15 years as a special education teacher for the NYC Department of Education. Mr. Laghezza’s and Ms. Gregory’s remarks will focus on the impact of bullying on students in school and in the community, and on current and newly passed NY State anti-bullying legislation. School-wide techniques and strategies for minimizing bullying will be presented.

10:50 – 12:30 Where’s the legal line? “Trash talk,” teasing, verbal harassment and threats
Emily Waldman is an Associate Professor of Law at Pace Law School, where she teaches Law & Education, Constitutional Law, Employment Law, and Civil Procedure. She is the Chair of the Education Law Section of the American Association of Law Schools. Her remarks will focus on the First Amendment limitations on schools’ ability to restrict students’ on-campus and off-campus speech, while also addressing the potential liability that schools face if they do nothing in response to hostile student speech.

Break:
12:30 – 1:30 Buffet lunch
Screening of anti-bullying video resources
Exhibit of anti-bullying educational materials

Concurrent Afternoon Sessions: 1:30 – 3:00 p.m.

Session A: Creating inclusive schools and making them safe for everyone
Mary Jane Karger, LMSW, ACSW, Co-Chair of the Hudson Valley Chapter of GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network), Yorktown Heights, NY

Session B: On the spectrum and on the web: The vulnerabilities of ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) students to social networking abuse
Mary Riggs Cohen, Ph.D., Clinical Director of the Social Learning Disorders Program of the University of Pennsylvania Psychiatry Department, Philadelphia, PA, and an associate of the Asperger Center for Education and Training, in New York City.

Session C: Reduction of Stigma in Schools (RSIS): A professional development curriculum for educators
Elizabeth Payne, Ph.D., Director of The Queering Education Research Institute (QuERI), Syracuse University School of Education.

Session D: Speak up for yourself! Teaching teens self-advocacy skills
Stacy Violante-Cote, JD, MSW, Director of the Teen Legal Advocacy Clinic and Principal Attorney, Immigrants and Refugees: New Arrivals Advocacy Project, Center for Children’s Advocacy, Hartford, CT

Session E: Supporting an anti-bullying culture in schools: Empowering the bystander
Regina Cappiello, Director of Curriculum and Professional Development, Nyack Public Schools, NY

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