

Coalition Update 8/04:

The **Coalition held a meeting at NJ Law Center on 8/17/04**, with about 20 state organizations attending (and others participating but not available on this date). I'll provide brief (and incomplete and informal) **updates on the discussion and projects, below**, but full reports from project leaders will appear on the site shortly.

(1) Law Project: The project met for several hours on the morning of 8/17, with much focus on the LW/Toms River case (see note, above) and its implications. It was decided that until LW is decided on appeal, a training for lawyers on bullying-related cases and law cannot be held. Interim steps will be taken, in particular placement of ads in various law-related publications to ask lawyers who are interested in bullying-related issues and training to contact us (at the web site, once it's ready to receive contact information from visitors - shortly). A summary of the LW decision will also be written for website posting.

(2) Training/Resources: There was extensive discussion of various methods which could be used to identify, review and then recommend bullying-related resources and information. The complexity of the task was noted. An interim step will be to consider creating a screen for general use, specifically a series of questions which should be asked of consultants and programs, in terms of identifying characteristics which effective bullying-related approaches should have.

(3) Parents' Initiative: Coalition organizations are asked to refer parents who are interested in participating in initiative development to the project leaders. Project discussion emphasized importance of addressing bullying from diverse and culturally competent perspectives.

(4) Hotline/Support Line: Discussion emphasized two separate functions, taking calls from parents (which is nature of most current calls to existing line at Office of Bias Crime and Community Relations) and taking calls from children, which requires different expertise. Contacts with other state organizations who provide hotline services to children (and adult) callers around various issues, some with similar characteristics to bullying (e.g., DV) will be made and collaborative possibilities pursued. Funding options also discussed, which, along with volunteer services, would be of special importance to this project.

(5) Website: Help is currently being provided by a graduate student volunteer (responsible for the excellent redesign), but additional help from one of the Coalition organizations - just offered - is on the horizon. This should allow for necessary website upgrade. Organizations will now be canvassed, to provide data and links for posting, as well as requests for website features. Timeline should be over the next one to three months, for website development to point it can be more generally 'rolled out'.