



The School District of Osceola County, FL
Terry Andrews, Superintendent

Press Release (English and Spanish)

November 30, 2011 - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Dana Schafer, Director of Community Relations - Osceola School District --
407-870-4007 or 407-908-8811 (cell)

Presentation on Bullying, Cyberbullying, and Teen Depression

Sticks and stones can break your bones, and words can scar you for life. Bullying is a widespread and serious problem that can happen anywhere.

The Osceola School District and the Holocaust Memorial Resource and Education Center of Florida take bullying seriously. In December 2010, the Center launched the UpStanders Stand Up to Bullying initiative in 10 Orange County middle schools. Thanks to a generous grant from Dr. Phillips Charities, the program is expanding into Osceola County this school year.

On December 14, 15, and 16, John Halligan, whose 13-year-old son committed suicide in 2003 due to years of repeated bullying, will be talking to the seventh grade at five Osceola county middle schools. He will also have an evening presentation on December 15 at 7:00 p.m. at Horizon Middle School. His focus will be cyber bullying, signs he and his wife missed, what they might have done differently. "Nothing can ever bring back our Ryan. Nothing will ever heal our broken heart," said Halligan. "But we hope by sharing the personal details of our tremendous loss, another family will have been spared a lifelong sentence to this kind of pain."

The community is welcome to attend the evening presentation at no charge. There is no reserved seating so be sure to come early. Contact Carol Dierksen at the Holocaust Center at cdierksen@holocaustedu.org or 407-628-0555 for more information.

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