

**We invite your school to participate in a groundbreaking research project about bullying in fall, 2009.**

Bullying and harassment affect many students, yet few researchers have asked *students* what really works to reduce these behaviors. Schools across the United States are participating in a new research project by Dr. Charisse Nixon and Stan Davis to do just that, and we invite you to join them.

This project has been approved by the IRB (research ethics review panel) at Penn State University.

We seek a wide range of elementary, middle and high schools for this project – small, large, urban, rural, private, public and representing different geographic areas, ethnic characteristics and income levels. We seek schools that have implemented bullying prevention, harassment prevention and other social justice initiatives and those that have not yet implemented these programs. There will be no cost to the school for students to participate in this anonymous on-line survey.

This research study is the first large-scale effort to ask young people what works in bullying and harassment prevention **based on their own experiences and observations**. The information we gather will help to identify the most effective and realistic strategies for targets of bullying, adults, and peer bystanders to use to prevent and mitigate the effects of bullying. We believe it is time for *young people* to help define what effective interventions may look like in the school setting. We believe that students are an invaluable resource when it comes to increasing our understanding of effective prevention and intervention efforts related to bullying. They are the true experts on what works.

Our goal is to compile a body of knowledge of the most helpful interventions in order to help adults and youth reduce bullying and harassment in their own schools. We want to give young people a powerful voice in shaping future interventions. We will use their knowledge as the basis for a book and website which will guide educators, parents, and youth in applying effective interventions to reduce bullying and optimize students' development.

**Identities of specific schools participating in this project will remain confidential and all student responses, anonymous. Each participating individual school will receive a detailed summary of students' responses to the survey questions along with summary data representing schools across the United States.**

All students in grades five to twelve are eligible to participate in this study. The survey will ask young people who have been bullied or harassed what they, adults and bystanders did, and which of those actions worked to help them feel safer and more connected in school. The survey will also ask young people who have *observed* bullying and harassment what they and others did and what the results of their actions were.

If your school chooses to participate in this study, we will work with you to define a time period for your students to complete the survey in your computer laboratory or on other school-based computers. We expect the survey to take less than 45 minutes to complete. You can view this survey online at <http://tinyurl.com/df6bjh>. We welcome any feedback or questions you may have.

We urge you to participate in this exciting research project and hope you will also pass this invitation on to other schools.

**To take part in the Youth Voice Project, or to ask questions, please email Stan Davis at [stan@stopbullyingnow.com](mailto:stan@stopbullyingnow.com) or Charisse Nixon at [cln5@psu.edu](mailto:cln5@psu.edu).**

Yours truly,  
Stan Davis and Dr. Charisse Nixon

About the researchers:

Dr. Charisse Nixon is an Associate Professor of Developmental Psychology at Penn State Erie in Pennsylvania and is the author of several research articles. She is also the coauthor of "*Girl Wars: 12 Strategies That Will End Female Bullying*" (Fireside, 2003) as well as several scholarly articles.

Stan Davis is the author of *Schools Where Everyone Belongs: Practical Strategies for Reducing Bullying* (2nd edition, Research Press, 2007) and *Empowering Bystanders in Bullying Prevention* (Research Press, 2007). He trains schools throughout the United States and works as a school guidance counselor in Maine.