



CIRCLE OF
RESPECT™

Dear Educator,

The most common form of violence in our country is bullying—and it happens with the direct or indirect support of parents and schools. For too long bullying has been considered almost a rite of passage, a society-wide form of unchecked hazing that is widely believed to be simply part of growing up. And when schools have responded to severe cases, they have frequently addressed the antisocial behavior reactively, with zero-tolerance policies, punishments of various kinds, segregation of victims, and so on. But bullying is learned behavior that can be *unlearned* and prevented.

To help schools and parents alike, the National Crime Prevention Council has introduced a new program: the **Circle of Respect**. Long known for its familiar animated character, McGruff the Crime Dog, NCPC has introduced this anti-bullying campaign as part of its overall mission to keep students safe from crime. It's a natural extension of that mission, because research has shown that bullying can be a precursor behavior to further violence and criminal activity. *The Circle of Respect's objective is to intervene in that cycle, providing a positive message designed to encourage respect and consideration for others and oneself—to use respect as a means for managing conflict and preventing violent and criminal behavior.*

EDUCATORS IN THE CIRCLE OF RESPECT

Perhaps best of all for educators, Circle of Respect is designed to offer school administrators, classroom educators, and teachers of at-risk students with a unified pro-social approach to bullying that includes the home as well as the in-school environment. It will help educators identify bullies and victims, and rather than addressing the antisocial or the injured, it will assist school efforts to intervene with *both* groups. In this way, educators can work with parents to help all students enter the Circle of Respect.

To support the aforementioned objectives and introduce the Circle of Respect to you, your colleagues, students, and their families, we have developed the accompanying Educator's Guide, which addresses different program components for different student age groups. We welcome your involvement in this innovative, proactive anti-bullying program and hope that your school community, like many others across the country, will be part of the Circle of Respect.

Please be sure to visit the website and join the Circle of Respect:

www.circleofrespect.org



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