

# Press Release

For Immediate Release

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## **Bullying prevention and intervention key topics at National Middle School Association Conference**

School bullying is epidemic in America. It often is cited as a factor in school shootings. In an effort to prevent bullying, many states have adopted laws mandating bullying prevention programs. Middle school administrators from around the country will gather in Houston, Nov. 8, for a special three-hour program to learn how to protect students and school districts from the effects of bullying. Some 10,000 middle school administrators are expected to attend the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual National Middle School Administrators Conference at the George R. Brown Convention Center.

Mary Jo McGrath, author of “School Bullying: Tools for Avoiding Harm and Liability,” (Corwin Press, 2007) will educate the administrators on the fundamentals of detecting bullying and legally fit interventions to stop it. Her program will focus on the three types of bullying, how to detect and identify incidents and patterns of bullying, the 10 myths of bullying, how to break the student “code of silence” about bullying, and six powerful practices to create, monitor and maintain a safe environment for all students.

She will present a second program exposing the growing trend of Emotional Bullying, Friday, Nov. 9, at 1:15 p.m. This type of bullying activity includes rumor spreading, exclusion, ostracizing and other means of social scheming. The program also includes an exploration of technobullying—which uses three-way calling attacks, harassment by instant messaging, online impersonation, abusive blogging and other cyber-enabled harassment techniques. Once the domain of girls, relational bullying now is genderless and pervasive. Participants will learn the fundamentals of detecting, identifying and intervening in such bullying attacks.

Ms. McGrath, who has recently appeared on CNN and ABC Evening News, discussing sexual predators in schools, will also present a workshop on Protecting Students and Educators in Extra-Curricular Settings. This presentation, beginning at 12:15 p.m. Nov. 9, will focus on how to provide safe, effective supervision to students while on overnight trips and field trips; how to screen and manage volunteers and chaperones; and how to protect against charges of deliberate indifference and reckless disregard.

Mary Jo McGrath, attorney at law and founder/chief executive office of McGrath Training Systems, is a frequent presenter at the school-related national conferences. Using the insights she has gained during more than 20 years as school district counsel, as an investigating attorney, and as a nationally known expert witness in cases regarding school district duty and liability, Mary Jo has created risk management training programs that target the greatest liabilities in public education. McGrath Training Systems, located in Santa Barbara, Calif., provides training on site, on line and on video. For more information, go to [www.mcgrathinc.com](http://www.mcgrathinc.com).