

MCCPTA Sub-Committee on School Climate and Safety

Resources

The purpose of the [MCCPTA Sub-Committee on School Climate and Safety](#) is to empower and equip MCPS students, families, and staff to safely, effectively and collaboratively address social conflict, bullying, violence, and injustice in school settings. The Sub-Committee is open to any MCPS students, parents, caregivers and staff. To join the listserv, please email MCCPTA-health-and-safety-new-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

SAFETY AND SECURITY

MCCPTA upholds the [National PTA Position Statement on Child Safety and Protection](#).

The Montgomery County Board of Education [Policy on Child Abuse and Neglect](#) guides MCPS procedures and protocols for recognizing, reporting, and preventing suspected child abuse and neglect of students. Mandatory online training for MCPS volunteers and contractors on recognizing and reporting child abuse and neglect is accessible [here](#).

In spring 2017, MCPS launched a comprehensive review of protocols, practices, and infrastructure related to the critical imperative of maintaining safe, orderly learning environments for all students. The review is being spearheaded by the MCPS Department of School Safety and Security (DSSS), working in collaboration with school administrators and the Office of School Support and Improvement. As part of the comprehensive security review, MCPS is examining security procedures already in place to determine the appropriate next steps for individual schools and systemwide. The review began with MCPS's 25 high schools, and an [interim report](#) has been released summarizing the findings. The MCCPTA Sub-Committee on School Climate and Safety submitted [these comments](#) on the report to MCPS.

CIVIL RIGHTS AND EQUALITY

MCCPTA upholds the [National PTA Position Statement on Citizenship and Equality](#).

This [PowerPoint presentation](#) prepared by MCPS Board of Education member Jill Ortman-Fouse focuses on issues of equity within MCPS. It includes a lot of data and information that may be of interest to school communities.

The [MCPS Study Circles Program](#) provides the structures for effective dialogue and action so that schools, and the school district, can address practices and policies that limit their ability to close the racial achievement gap.

The [Anti-Defamation League](#) (ADL) is one of the nation's leading civil rights and human relations organizations. [No Place for Hate](#) is one of ADL's signature education initiatives, an organizing framework for K-12 schools committed to creating sustainable change that leads to improved school climate. Participating schools are able to incorporate ADL's anti-bias and anti-bullying resources within their existing programming to form one powerful message that all students have a place to belong. Over 1,700 schools across the country were designated No Place for Hate in the 2015-2016 school year. The goal of No Place for Hate is to inspire a national movement led by students and educators who are

committed to using the power of positive peer influence to build inclusive and safe schools in which all students can thrive.

[Teaching Tolerance](#) provides free resources to educators—teachers, administrators, counselors and other practitioners—who work with children from kindergarten through high school. Educators use our materials to supplement the curriculum, to inform their practices, and to create civil and inclusive school communities where children are respected, valued and welcome participants. Our program emphasizes social justice and anti-bias. The anti-bias approach encourages children and young people to challenge prejudice and learn how to be agents of change in their own lives. Our Social Justice Standards show how anti-bias education works through the four domains of identity, diversity, justice and action.

[Communities United Against Hate \(CUAH\)](#) - Montgomery County is a nonpartisan organization that unites our diverse community to combat bigotry, support victims of hate, and promote inclusiveness in Montgomery County, Maryland. CUAH is a network of diverse organizations. Together, CUAH members facilitate increased support of programs, activities, trainings, ideas, and other initiatives of fellow member organizations that address hate and bigotry. CUAH recognizes that our public schools are critical points of entry in combatting bigotry and promoting inclusiveness. CUAH members are also concerned about the uptick in incidences of hate, bigotry and harassment occurring at local schools. CUAH is launching a Youth Engagement and Leadership Project (YELP) to identify and provide concrete financial, mentoring, and community support for students who have developed or are developing projects designed to combat bigotry, discrimination and hate, build cultures of dignity, and promote inclusiveness and equal opportunity in our schools and communities.

[Cultures of Dignity](#) is an organization and online resource that works with parents, educators and young people to successfully navigate the challenges of young adulthood. [Owning Up](#) is a curriculum that teaches young people to understand their individual development in relation to group behavior, the influence of social media on their conflicts, and the dynamics that lead to discrimination and bigotry.

UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS

MCCPTA upholds the following positions on the rights and services for undocumented students:

[National PTA Position Statement on the Rights and Services for Undocumented Children](#)

[MCCPTA Resolution on the Rights of and Protections for Undocumented Children](#)

[Resolución sobre los Derechos y Protecciones para Niños Indocumentados del MCCPTA](#)

[Superintendents' Letter on Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals \(DACA\) Program](#)

[CASA de Maryland](#) is an excellent resource for undocumented students and families, offering a "Know Your Rights" workshop in English and Spanish. More information about the program is available [here](#).

SEXUAL, GENDER-BASED HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE

MCCPTA upholds the [National PTA Resolution on Response to Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence Affecting Students](#).

A Washington Post article, [Sexual harassment among teens is pervasive: Here's how parents can change that](#), notes that "Most parents have failed to address and prevent misogyny and sexual harassment in their children's lives: 76 percent of survey respondents reported that they never had a conversation with parents about how to avoid sexually harassing others. Similar majorities had never had conversations with their parents about various forms of misogyny." The article offers suggestions for how to engage in meaningful, constructive conversations about this difficult topic with your child.

[Choose Respect Montgomery](#) is a multi-faceted prevention initiative designed to educate teens about healthy relationships and the warning signs of teen dating violence. Choose Respect is a Montgomery County program, sponsored by the County Executive's [Domestic Violence Coordinating Council](#). Choose Respect Montgomery is hoping to expand its relationship with MCPS and bring the Choose Respect Initiative to every school in the County. The program currently involves four elements:

1. [A free annual conference](#) for teens, parents, youth service providers and educators from across the county. This year's conference is set for April 15, 2018 at Richard Montgomery High School.
2. [A public service announcement contest](#) where students submit 1-minute videos focusing attention on the prevalence of teen dating violence and where students can go to get help.
3. A free 45-minute instructional presentation for teens.
4. A program designed for male athletic teams called [Coaching Boys Into Men](#) (CBIM). CBIM is a free program from Futures Without Violence that utilizes the unique and important role that coaches play in the lives of young men. The program includes a comprehensive toolkit that assists coaches in planning important discussions with athletes about respect for women and girls and that violence does not equal strength. Currently CBIM is in the varsity and junior varsity football teams for Northwest High School, Richard Montgomery High School, Springbrook High school, and Blair High school. Also, the weight room instructor at Magruder high school is also conducting the program in his classes.

[Love is Respect](#) is an online platform that seeks to engage, educate and empower young people to prevent and end abusive relationships. Highly-trained advocates offer support, information and advocacy to young people who have questions or concerns about their dating relationships. Love is Respect also provides information and support to concerned friends and family members, teachers, counselors, service providers and members of law enforcement. Free and confidential phone, live chat and texting services are available 24/7/365. **Chat at www.loveisrespect.org; Text loveis to 22522*; Call 1-866-331-9474**

SAFE TECHNOLOGY

MCCPTA upholds the [National PTA Position Statement on Student Data Privacy and Security](#).

[Discovery Education Digital Safety Resources](#) offer interactive curriculum resources for teachers, parents and students to gain critical information on cybersafety, cybersecurity, and cyberethics. The content provides crucial lessons on stranger danger awareness, malware and malicious websites, and cyberbullying, making sure that students grow to become responsible digital citizens.

[Security Education Companion](#) by the [Electronic Frontier Foundation](#) is a resource for people learning about or teaching digital security to their friends and neighbors. If you are new to digital security, want tutorials for privacy-protecting tools, or want translated guides in 13 languages, head to [Surveillance Self-Defense](#) (SSD).

[Common Sense](#) is the leading independent nonprofit organization dedicated to helping kids thrive in a world of media and technology. It provides information, advice, and innovative tools to help families use media and technology as positive tools.

[Digital Armor](#) lists resources and federal laws on privacy protection and dealing with abusive on-line conduct. Digital Armour is run by Brad Shear, a leading authority on digital privacy and protection and a MCPS parent. He can be reached at (301) 652-3600.

TEEN SUICIDE PREVENTION

Montgomery County encourages using the following numbers for free and confidential help with suicide prevention:

Montgomery County Hotline: 301-738-2255
Montgomery County Crisis Center: 240-777-4000
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255

According to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's website, warning signs of suicide include:

- talking about wanting to die
- looking for a way to kill oneself
- talking about feeling hopeless or having no purpose
- talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain
- talking about being a burden to others
- increasing the use of alcohol or drugs
- acting anxious, agitated or recklessly
- sleeping too little or too much
- withdrawing or feeling isolated
- showing rage or talking about seeking revenge
- displaying extreme mood swings

[Crisis Text Line](#): Text HOME to 741741 from anywhere in the USA, anytime, about any type of crisis. A live, trained Crisis Counselor receives the text and responds quickly.

[Umttr](#) (Your Life Matters) was founded in response to the tragic suicide of a fellow student, athlete, and friend by the students and families of Winston Churchill High School in Montgomery County, Maryland. Umttr empowers schools and youth athletic organizations with the funds, information, and tools they need to create a compassionate culture where every person matters. We aim to place mental well-being and caring support at the forefront of teens' daily interactions.

[The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals. It also offers specific resources for [youth](#). 1-800-273-8255.

[The Society for the Prevention of Teen Suicide](#) offers resources for youth, parents and educators. [Not My Kid: What Every Parent Should Know](#) is a 17-minute video to help parents understand whether or not their child is at risk of suicide and what to do about it.

[Sources of Strength](#) provides the highest quality evidence-based prevention for suicide, violence, bullying and substance abuse by training, supporting, and empowering both peer leaders and caring adults to impact their world through the power of connection, hope, help and strength.