

White House Summit on Bullying Prevention

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Introductory Comments¹ for Researchers' Panel

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Good morning. I'd like to start by thanking President & Mrs. Obama for giving us this timely opportunity to look at how we can improve the school experience for ALL students, their parents, & community members. I especially extend our appreciation to students, and family, school & community members who have come together to participate in this important call to action

WHO AM I?

My name is George Sugai, & I am Carole J. Neag Endowed Professor in Neag School of Education at University of Connecticut where I Direct Center for Behavioral Education and Research, and Co-Director w/ Rob Horner, National Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, funded by the Office of Special Education Programs and US Department of Education

My wife, Betsy, is Principal of North Windam School in CT & we have 2 kids, Kiyoshi & Reiko, who have successfully navigated the public school systems

I mention my wife & kids because everyday they represent what is important about what I do, & also remind me everyday that everything I know, they have taught me.

In addition, I have been a teacher, camp counselor, & administrator, & now spend most of time teaching courses & conducting research, & disseminating best

¹ A condensed version of these comments were orally presented. To see opening remarks by President and First Lady Obama and panel discussion, go to <http://www.c-span.org/Events/President-Obama-Remarks-at-Conference-on-Bullying/10737420138-1/>

² Opinions expressed are the author's, and no endorsement by the OSEP Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports or the University of Connecticut should be inferred. Contact the author at George.sugai@uconn.edu, or for more information, www.pbis.org or www.cber.org

practices related to classroom management, school discipline, school climate & culture, positive behavior supports.

My main interest is establishing & sustaining positive, successful, & predictable social cultures that enhance learning experience for all students, especially those kids who are high risk for school failure.

MAIN MESSAGE

If I can make one suggestion from what I've learned from our work, it would be that ALL members of the school community must invest formally & diligently in doing 3 things:

1. Actively & positively supervise all school settings, for example, classrooms, hallways, gymnasiums, sporting events, dances, & buses, by (a) moving, (b) having our heads up and scanning, & (c) interacting.
2. Actively & formally teach, model, & recognize those social behaviors that we value in our schools & society, for example, respect, responsibility, caring, etc.
3. Maximize academic engagement & success for all students.

By doing more of those three basic strategies, we can create & sustain effective, caring & respectful teaching & learning environments, which can prevent the development & reduce effectiveness of bullying behavior.

Thanks for giving us this opportunity to share our thoughts.