

*Sponsored by the Rape Treatment Center  
UCLA–Santa Monica Medical Center*

New strategies and new  
solutions to address bullying and  
peer harassment in the digital age

**THIRD ANNUAL**

# **What the Tech?**

**INVITATIONAL CONFERENCE**

How to foster kids' compassion,  
learning, and healthy  
relationships

**ACTION PLANS**

**for parents, schools, and kids**

**Thursday, January 30, 2014 from 8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.**  
*(lunch and parking provided)*

## WHY THE RAPE TREATMENT CENTER IS SPONSORING THIS CONFERENCE

Rape Treatment Center prevention education programs reach thousands of students each year in schools throughout our community. We also provide education for parents and school personnel. The issue of peer mistreatment, online and offline, is more visible, more immediate, and more challenging for young people, parents and schools than ever before.

Peer mistreatment in all of its forms, online and offline, causes harm – to the children who have these experience and to those who are witnesses. Most children who are mistreated by their peers tell no one. Most children who are witnesses remain silent and do not take action. Few schools have effective, formal programs in place that address these issues.

This conference is about solutions.

Conference presenters will provide effective strategies parents, educators, and young people can use to prevent peer mistreatment and to teach children skills that will help them navigate these experiences when they occur. Presenters also offer concrete tools that schools can use to proactively address these issues and create safer learning environments for children. Parenting and school climates that promote respect, compassion, inclusion, and social/emotional learning also contribute to resilience in children.

The most effective strategy for preventing peer mistreatment is to foster a youth culture in which it is “cool” and common for kids to be openly kind and caring with their peers, and in which kids “stand up” and “stand with” other youth if they are being ridiculed, ostracized, harassed, abused, and/or bullied. Engaging and empowering youth to be leaders and agents of change – among their peers – is a major theme of this conference. Youth who have created exemplary programs will be among the presenters.

Our speakers share with us a commitment to cultivating the values and actions of inclusion, respect, courage and compassion in the relationships, programs, institutions, and activities that are crucial to every child’s learning and development.

“Education of the mind  
without education of  
the heart is no  
education at all.”  
— Aristotle



Learn from national experts strategies parents and educators can use to foster children’s compassion for others, prevent peer mistreatment, and create school cultures that support learning and healthy relationships.

### Topics to be Covered

- Fascinating new research on prevalence and patterns in peer mistreatment among youth in Los Angeles schools
- It’s not just “bullying” – it’s also public ridicule, harassment, social ostracism, cyberbullying, and other mean-spirited behaviors
- How peer mistreatment harms the children targeted, witnesses, and the larger school community?
- How children and adults who are bystanders can change outcomes
- The most effective prevention strategy – engaging students as peer leaders and agents of change
- Digital risk taking behaviors children engage in at different ages and stages of development
- Solutions: concrete action plans for parents and school personnel

## **8:30 – 9:00: BREAKFAST AND REGISTRATION**

*(Conference proceedings start promptly at 9am)*

## **9:00 – 12:00: MORNING SESSION**

### **Welcome and Introductions**

*Gail Abarbanel, Director, Rape Treatment Center*

### **Peer Relationships: What's Happening with Kids in Los Angeles Schools**

*Jaana Juvonen, Ph.D., Professor, Developmental Psychology,  
University of California, Los Angeles*

Jaana Juvonen has conducted research on peer relationships and peer harassment since the 1990's, including extensive studies of students in Los Angeles schools. Her work identifies critical changes that often occur in kids' values and behaviors when they transfer to middle school. Her recent study of 2,000 ethnically diverse youth, funded by the National Science Foundation and National Institutes of Health, informs us about the pervasiveness of peer harassment in kids' daily lives, online and offline, why few kids tell their parents, and the personal consequences of these experiences. Her research also offers valuable insights about how bullies and harassers are perceived by their peers, the kids who are respected and considered "cool," and the crucial role of peers who are bystanders in stopping peer mistreatment. Understanding Dr. Juvonen's findings is fundamental to designing effective school programs and policies, and provides valuable insights and guidelines for parents.

### **Fostering Empathy and Building Compassion in Today's Youth**

*Charisse Nixon, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Psychology,  
Pennsylvania State University, The Behrend College*

Charisse Nixon and Stan Davis created the landmark *Youth Voice Project* that asked 13,000 youth in schools throughout the United States what should be done to address peer mistreatment and ostracism. Dr. Nixon will highlight what targeted students identify as the most effective (and ineffective) responses to peer mistreatment, including actions taken by themselves, their peers, and adults in their schools. The findings are clear – in order to raise happy, healthy, confident, competent, caring children, we need a culture in which mean-spirited behavior is no longer tolerated, even in the name of friendship or "just joking around." Regardless of intent, mean or cruel behavior causes harm. Instead of focusing primarily on punishing harassers, we need to implement strategies that build inclusive and respectful school cultures in which kindness and peer support are recognized and valued. Dr. Nixon will identify specific strategies for making schools safer and more supportive environments for learning, and reducing peer mistreatment by promoting compassion and connectedness and helping kids develop cognitive skills for social problem solving.

## Panel: Meet Young People Who Are Inspirational Leaders and Agents of Change in Their Schools and Communities

The *Peace First* program empowers young people to be empathic and engaged citizens who demonstrate courage and leadership in fostering compassion among their peers. Some of the inspiring students in this program will speak about their work.

## The Latest in Kids' Use of Social Media and Apps: Keeping Up with Rapidly Changing Trends

*Andrew Solmssen, Managing Partner, Possible Worldwide and Founding Member, Rape Treatment Center Men's Leadership Council*

Andrew Solmssen presents an overview of the ever-changing patterns in kids' use of social media and digital technologies to inform and guide parents and educators in these aspects of kids' lives. He will discuss how to keep up and be "in the know" about current trends.

## 12:00 – 1:00 LUNCH

## 1:00 – 2:30 AFTERNOON SESSION

### Solutions: Action Plans for Schools and Parents

*Elizabeth Englander, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology and Founding Director of the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center, Bridgewater State University*

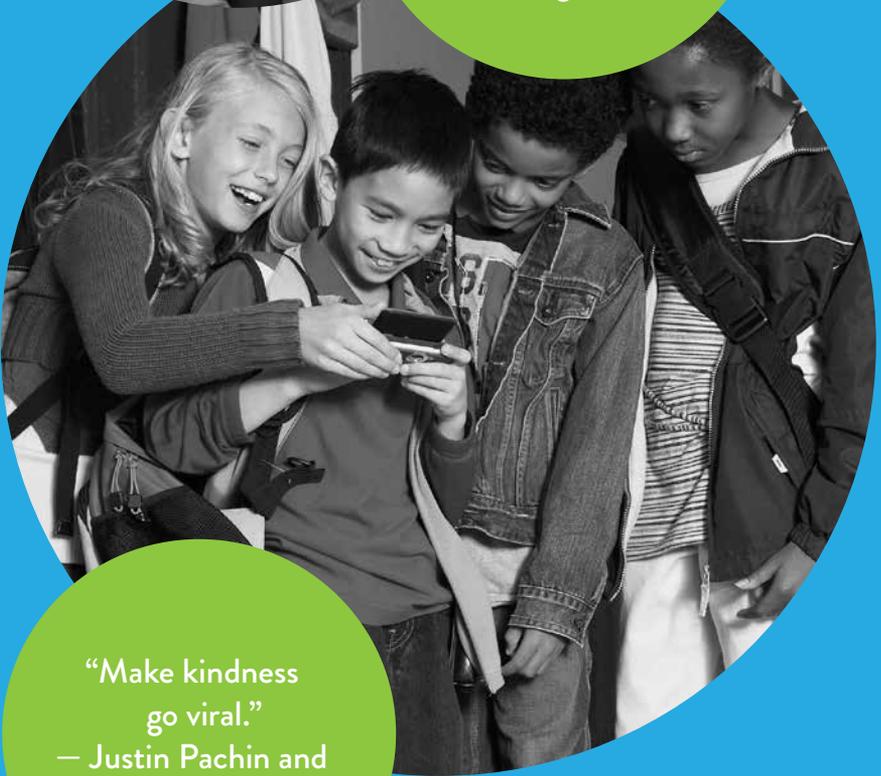
The Center that Elizabeth Englander founded is dedicated to preventing social cruelty and fostering pro-social behaviors among youth in their relationships and communications online and offline. Dr. Englander will discuss how bullying and cyberbullying interact, common forms of digital risk taking among children at different ages, and the amplification of peer mistreatment in cyberspace. She has conducted research with more than 45,000 children, parents, and educators throughout the United States to identify effective strategies for preventing bullying and cyberbullying, and for intervening when peer mistreatment occurs. She provides guidance and action plans for parents and schools, as well as creative ways for their collaboration to build safe and supportive learning environments for children.

### Get Your Questions Answered

*Open Discussion and Q & A with Our Speakers*



“Make caring  
common.”  
— Harvard Graduate  
School of Education  
Program



“Make kindness  
go viral.”  
— Justin Pachin and  
Sameer Hinduja

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**To register online, please visit  
[whatthetechconference.com](http://whatthetechconference.com)**

Location:

The California Endowment  
1000 North Alameda Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012  
We expect the conference to fill to capacity.

For more information, call 310-319-4246  
or email [whatthetech@therapefoundation.org](mailto:whatthetech@therapefoundation.org)