

the official newsletter of
BiasHELP of Long Island

biasBEAT

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SINCE 1997

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BiasHELP Launches Brand New FAST Program in Brentwood's South Middle School -By Jeffrey L. Reynolds, Ph.D

With a small grant from the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), BiasHELP has joined forces with the Brentwood South Middle School to pilot FAST (Families and Schools Together) for sixth-grade Latina girls. FAST is a nationally renowned program and by bringing it to Brentwood, BiasHELP is reaching an underserved population of at-risk girls and their families in a proactive and comprehensive way that addresses key risk factors for violence.



With help from Family Service League, which runs FAST in other schools, BiasHELP staff members Loida Santos and Libny Mateo were fully

trained in administering FAST and led a dedicated team that included school personnel, a local parent, a student and a staff member from Adelante of Suffolk County. The team successfully recruited seven families to participate in *continued on page 4*

BiasHELP Receives Funding to Continue Vital Programs



BiasHELP has received a number of grants to support our anti-violence and bullying prevention programs. We want to extend our thanks and gratitude to NYS Senator John Flanagan, NYS Assemblyman Bob Sweeney (pictured at left), NYS Senator Craig Johnson, NYS Assemblywoman Pat Eddington and NYS Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel for securing grants on our behalf. These elected officials have made it possible for us to continue our important work with Long Island's young people in schools, youth organizations and communities.

BiasHELP also thanks the Roslyn Savings Foundation, Bank of America and the Adolph and Ruth Schnurmacher Foundation for recent grants to support our school-based violence prevention programs. The demand for our anti-bias and bullying education programs has skyrocketed and these grants will help us keep pace with the rising demand.

“ ... this type of program is innovative and successful in bringing families together to help their children make better choices... ”



From the President/CEO

Sometimes smaller agencies are unable to keep up with all of their publications like newsletters, press releases and agency brochures because the organization has too few people doing too much work. Unfortunately, this is true of BiasHELP of Long Island. Although it has been a long time between newsletters, I am very proud of this Fall issue of the biasBeat newsletter. As you will see in reading the newsletter, the agency is certainly on the move in keeping up with the issues that are at the forefront of our community.

Through the articles and pictures in this newsletter, you will understand that BiasHELP's programs and projects have continued to evolve and expand over the last few years. We are very proud of our NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) grant, which supports our Middle School Families and Schools Together (FAST) program. As you can see by the graduation pictures in this newsletter, this type of program is innovative and successful in bringing families together to help their children make better choices to avoid violence and substance use, while developing the skills necessary for their future success.

Our federally funded Communities Empowering Youth (CEY) grant

is vitally important for smaller, youth-focused grassroots agencies to get the technical assistance and training they need to be able to provide the much-needed services they offer to their communities. Through this grant, BiasHELP was able to offer assistance to STRONG Youth in Nassau County that does outstanding work in gang prevention and interventions. The Hispanic Brotherhood of Rockville Centre has looked toward their need to expand services beyond their Rockville Centre catchment area. EOC of Suffolk is planning an exciting community engagement activity to promote fatherhood through active involvement and innovative strategies. The First Baptist Church of Riverhead is reorganizing their non-profit programs for future growth. BiasHELP has moved into a more public role by continuing our school-based violence prevention programs, as well as tackling the ever-growing problems of school-based bullying and cyberbullying.

In the coming months, BiasHELP will debut both its new website and agency brochure that will more accurately reflect all of the projects and programs the

agency will undertake in our second decade of service to all who face bias or discrimination based on race, religion, gender, age, ethnicity, disability or sexual orientation.

Paul Barouh

BiasHELP, Inc.

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Presidential Election 2008: What will be the Price of History?

By Dr. Gail Barouh, President/CEO, BiasHELP

Beyond my administrative role as CEO of BiasHELP, my work with our Diversity Done Right educational trainings is something I have carved out as my own personal agency program since the creation of Mirror Images in 2004, a four-part educational diversity DVD series that tackles many of the social issues of these times, including race, religion, ethnicity and sexual orientation. The video series stops short of inclusion of DVDs on age, gender, and disability discrimination. Even without DVDs on these topics, I, and other consultants that do diversity trainings, have always included discussions and exercises on these additional underlying prejudices. Some of the exercises that we have done in our programs over the last couple of years have covered the hypothetical question: "What if a Presidential election had people on the ticket that were not all white heterosexual males?" Although creative in our group exercises, most of us doing diversity training could not envision how historic the 2008 Presidential election would become.

In a country that has been so careful over the past two decades to be politically correct in how we talk about minority groups and gender discrimination, this process has unequivocally proven how far we still have to go. Diversity, tolerance and non-judgmental thinking should not be something that only has importance when it doesn't affect our personal lives. Americans have been put to the test of how far we have come in inclusion in a country founded on freedom and democracy for all. Given that, as CEO of BiasHELP, I, like many others, was very proud and excited that true diversity would become a historical reality in the 2008 Presidential election. So, I guess it would be a good question to ask to see how we are doing with this unprecedented election. Let's start with race. For the first time we have a Presidential candidate nominated by one of the two major recognized political parties of this country who is a young, bi-racial U.S. Senator. He has been called a Muslim, which for many means that he is automatically a terrorist. He has been loved by many and vilified by many based on the color of his skin and not necessarily his political beliefs. Prior to his acceptance of the nomination of his party there had already been an arrest for an assassination attempt. Our other major party nominee, if elected, would be at 72, the oldest

American to hold office as President. He is a war hero who spent 5 years in a prisoner-of-war camp and cannot raise his arms above his shoulders to even salute the American flag. He is also a cancer survivor. Some have speculated based on his age and physical disability, that he is in the early stages of Alzheimer's disease. Although these 2 individuals would represent historical change, the major party Vice Presidential candidates also represent historical changes. One individual is a white 65-year old man with a long-term 30-year history as a U.S. Senator and has run for President twice in the past 20 years. He is honored and respected, although his life has been touched by tragedy in that after his first election to the Senate, his wife and daughter were killed in a car accident and his two surviving sons were injured and hospitalized. For the next several years, he was a single parent to his young sons who were at the time 2 and 5 years old. As a result of this tragedy, the Vice Presidential nominee was actually sworn in as Senator in the hospital room of his injured son. The other major party nominee is a female Governor with five children, including a four-month-old son with Down Syndrome. Her accomplishments as a Mayor and Governor have been considerable yet, unlike the male Vice Presidential candidate, she has immediately been accused by both men and women alike of not being up to the job because her first responsibility should be as a mother. In addition to having a 19-year-old son deployed to Iraq on Sept. 11, 2008, she also has

a 17-year-old daughter who is pregnant. More has been told and exposed about the daughter than the son.

This often-prejudicial frenzy around race, religion, age, gender and disability, all the things that agencies like BiasHELP have worked to eradicate, has become the forefront of this electoral process. The world is watching this election and for them it is hard to understand this type of prejudice, hate and discrimination based on age, race, or gender because for many other countries around the world these are not historic candidates. They have women leaders. They have leaders of all races and ethnicities and many of their leaders serve well into their eighties. With the eyes of the world upon us, perhaps we should take a page from what parents, teachers, and religious leaders tell young people all the time, it's not whether you win or lose, it's how you play the game.

If we do not change our attitudes, prejudices, and stereotypical beliefs, which have been shamelessly exploited by the media, I, and many other human rights advocates, fear that election day will become a hollow victory for the winning Presidential and Vice Presidential ticket. History will be made for sure, but not by electing who we admire and trust the most to lead the country, but rather by whom we fear the least.

Interested in a BiasHELP workshop?



A comprehensive series of workshops, discussions, group exercises and educational presentations are used to increase knowledge and understanding about bias crimes, bullying and hate-related harassment in social environments.

For more information or to plan a workshop please call us at

631-479-6015

BiasHELP Launches Brand New FAST Program in Brentwood's South Middle School

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the 10-week series of evening workshops and all seven graduated on June 25, 2008.

Each FAST session included several activities designed to enhance family communication and bonding. A family meal was served each week and families played age-appropriate family communication games, with parents in charge of turn-taking and maintaining a non-critical atmosphere. Parents participated in "buddy time" with each other for private conversation and processing daily

stresses, kids interacted with each other during structured play time and each child shared important one-on-one time with a parent. Opening and closing routines involved all participants, strengthening community and family relationships through rituals.

Parent graduates have moved on to FASTWORKS, monthly support groups designed to hone parenting skills, build community relationships and provide ongoing support for parents as their children enter junior high school. The first session was a barbecue at Heckscher State Park in East

Islip and participants will attend groups monthly for two years.

Because FAST is an evidence-based model program, it comes with a rigorous independent evaluation conducted by FAST National. Among the findings so far: Parents reported improving trends in expressiveness (+22%) and total relationship (+54%). Youth reported statistically significant increases in cohesion (+43%), expressiveness (+55%) and total relationships (+98%). Parents reported significant improvement in their relationship with FAST child

FAST Overview

FAST was developed in 1988 by Dr. Lynn McDonald – a senior scientist at the University of Wisconsin in Madison – and has received numerous awards and honors, including becoming a SAMHSA model program in 2002. FAST is being implemented in 45 states and 5 countries and has been shown to be effective across languages, socio-economic strata, and in urban, suburban and rural settings.

FAST is a collaborative prevention and parent involvement program designed to address alcohol and drug abuse, violence and delinquency, and school failure. It's a family based intervention that reduce risk factors and enhances protective factors in youth and their families – in this case Hispanic girls and their families living in Brentwood.

Among the specific aims of FAST are the following:

- Enhance family functioning by strengthening the parent-child relationship in specific, focused ways and by empowering the parents to become primary prevention agents for their children.
- Prevent the target child from experiencing school failure by improving the child's behavior and performance in school, empowering their parents as partners in the educational process and increasing the family's connection to the school.
- Prevent substance abuse by the child and family by increasing the family's knowledge and awareness of substance abuse and its impact on kids and linking the family to appropriate assessment and treatment services if needed.
- Reduce the stress that parents and children experience from daily life situations by offering ongoing opportunities for building social support among parents, linking the family to appropriate community resources and services, and building the personal effectiveness and self esteem of each family member.

(+17%) as well as their ability to recognize ATOD problems (+45%), where to get help (+50%) and negative ATOD effects (+33%). Taken together these findings indicate greater family functioning and improved ATOD knowledge, which will likely help prevent substance abuse in family members/children. Parents reported statistically significant increases in community relationships (+17%), total social relationships (+17%), as well as a 28% increase in tangible support. Youth reported a 31% statistically significant increase in community relationships scores.

Both parents and youth experienced growing social support, which can help buffer them against negative effects of stress. The Youth Stress Checklist results indicated an average of 282.60 points, suggesting a high stress level, though youth reported an improving trend of 91% in positive coping skills. Youth further reported statistically significant decreases on their emotional symptoms (-52%) and total difficulties (-36%) while parents reported a 114% improving trend in school-to-parent contact.

These improvements help youth become academically more successful. On a 10-point scale, parents reported their satisfaction with FAST as 9.7 (1=very dissatisfied, 10=very satisfied). When asked what they valued most about the program, parents noted their relationship with their children, sharing goals with other families, and gaining their youth's confidence. Youth also rated their satisfaction with the FAST program and the average satisfaction level was 3.7 (1=very dissatisfied,

4=very satisfied). Moreover, youth rated their relationship with their parents, school personnel, other FAST youth, and community organizations on a 10-point scale (1=poor and 10=excellent). They rated their relationship with their parents a 9.2, with school personnel an 8.8, with other FAST youth a 9.7, and with community organizations, an 8.5. Asked what they valued most about the program, youth overwhelmingly noted importance of communication with their parent, then learning about alcohol and talking about their

problems. The extensive and lengthy evaluation report concluded that "there is evidence to suggest that the Families and Schools Together (FAST) program at the Brentwood Middle School has achieved the desired objectives of improving family functioning, personal effectiveness/parent empowerment, social support and the target youth's behavior."



What parents said about FAST...

"Most valuable about this experience is that my daughter has more confidence in me."

"My daughter is more open with me and seems happier."

"It made me realize how much my daughter needs me to listen and understand her."

"Now I won't think twice about committing to any program that helps me or my children."

What children said about FAST...

"I was able to talk to my Dad more."

"[My parents] get along better with me."

"My Dad has tried not to get mad very easily."

"[I enjoyed most] talking about our problems and letting out our feelings."

NYC Acts to Reduce School-Based Bullying and Bias-Related Incidents

New York City officials kicked-off the school year this month with a comprehensive new set of initiatives aimed at combating bullying and harassment in the city's public schools. A new Chancellor's Regulation, A-832, will make New York City's efforts to combat bullying and harassment based on ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and other factors among the strongest in the country.

The new regulation builds on New York City's "Respect for All" diversity campaign and establishes a formal, standardized procedure for the filing, investigation, and resolution of complaints of student-to-student bias-based harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying.

Highlights of the historic regulation include the following:

- A clear and comprehensive definition and prohibition of bias-based harassment based on a student's actual or perceived race, color, creed, ethnicity, national origin, citizenship/immigration status, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation or disability;
- A clear reporting procedure and requirement that each school appoints a designated staff person to whom reports of bias-based harassment can be made;
- Prompt investigations of bias-based harassment reports as well as inclusion of the incident into a central city-wide database within 24 hours;
- A written report for the alleged victim of the results of any incident investigation within 10 days;
- In addition to disciplinary action, follow up interventions such as counseling and sensitivity training for offenders; and
- Training on bias-based harassment and the "Respect for All" diversity training will be delivered to all students and staff annually.

The NYC Department of Education will publish annual reports on bias-based harassment in schools, including information about individual schools. This will foster transparency, accountability and protect children in the five boroughs. Now how about we do the same for children in Nassau and Suffolk?

Capacity Building Update

As BiasHELP completes its second year of a three year federal grant, we are thrilled with the progress made to date among our four partnering organizations - Hispanic Brotherhood of Rockville Centre, STRONG Youth in Hempstead, Economic Opportunity Council of Suffolk and the First Baptist Church of Riverhead. Each of these organizations along with BiasHELP, serve at-risk youth and are receiving funding, training and technical assistance to enhance their capacity to serve kids. The process began two years ago with a comprehensive needs assessment of each organization and we've worked together as a team to achieve key development milestones along the way. In addition to providing public relations and media training to all partners, BiasHELP has purchased computer equipment, office furniture, board development and training, business plan consulting, legal services, feasibility studies and other goods and services for each of its partners. Special thanks to the Administration of Children and Families' Compassion Capital Fund! Look for a more detailed article about this transformative initiative in the next edition of BiasBeat.

LINCS
is proud to produce
**Chef's 4
Secrets**

"An Elegant Food & Wine Tasting Celebration"
"Celebrity Auction and Entertainment"

Place: The de Seversky Center
Old Westbury, NY 11568

An event produced by the Long Island Network of Community Services (LINCS), to benefit the Long Island Association for AIDS Care (LIAAC) & BiasHELP of Long Island.

Tickets are available at \$150.00 per person or table of 8 for \$1000.00.
For advance reservations, please call (631) 479-0010.
Seating is limited & no tickets will be available at the door.



Sunday, November 16, 2008
5:00-9:00 PM



BiasHELP Honoree
Deborah Barrett-Anderson

As Administrator for Juvenile Justice Programs at the Nassau County Youth Board, Deborah Barrett-Anderson has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to Nassau's youth and families. She's worked to support, mentor and guide our region's non-profits serving at-risk youth, creating and enhancing programs that reduce violence, substance abuse and other potential barriers to success.

**Event Information: Please call the Development Team at 631-479-0010
or E-mail at development@lincsonline.org**

www.ChefsSecrets.org

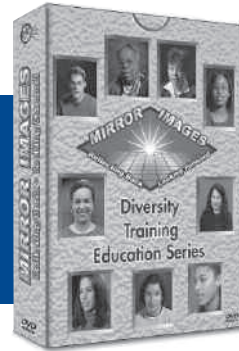
The Long Island Network of Community Services (LINCS) is a community based 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit agency working to enhance the programs of publicly supported health and human service organizations.

Diversity Training in 2008: Now More Important Than Ever!

- Businesses/Corporations
- Schools/Colleges
- Non-Profits
- First Responders, such as police officers, firefighters, EMTs and hospital employees
- Government/ Municipal Employees

Features insights into the four major faces of diversity in America:

Race, Ethnicity, Religion and Sexual Orientation



Each Boxed Set Contains:

- Four (4) DVDs lasting approximately 28 minutes each
- One 10-minute re-cap disk
- One promotional DVD
- An audience-specific instructional companion booklet and study guide



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