

**NEWS
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CITY OF PADUCAH, KY



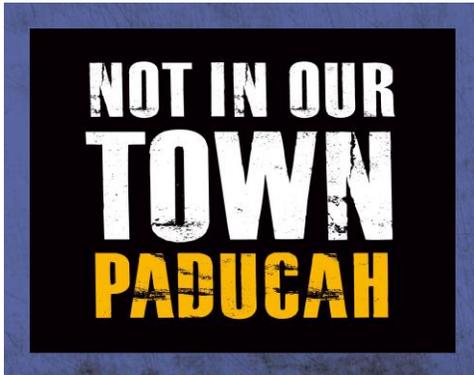
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Anti-Bullying Task Force Learns How to Become Most Effective



PADUCAH – Since the announcement and introduction of the members of the Mayor’s Anti-Bullying Task Force on July 1, the Task Force has had two meetings to start working on a plan of action in moving forward.

At a recent Task Force meeting, the group held a conference call with Dr. Becki Cohn-Vargas, Director of Not in Our School (NIOS). Dr. Cohn-Vargas has spent more than 35 years in public education. She initiated NIOS in 2003, a program

to combat bullying, harassment, homophobia, and racism. She has worked with more than 150 schools and colleges across the United States to develop bullying prevention curriculums. Dr. Cohn-Vargas was able to give the Task Force information about national programs that are in place and guidance on how to be most effective.

Mayor Gayle Kaler says, “We want people to understand the message that only by promoting an awareness of the importance of a compassionate and inclusive community can we make progress in how we view people and how we, in turn, treat people.

Dr. Cohn-Vargas advised the Task Force to first start by selecting one or two projects or awareness events in addition to working with the local schools to find out what programs are in place and how the Task Force can be of service. She also reminded the group that October is National Bullying Prevention Month. The Task Force now is now working on its mission statement which is based on what they hope to accomplish in five years.

Mayor Kaler also says she has received a \$1000 donation from a local citizen, Cindy Tilford. The funds will be placed in an account with the Community Foundation of West Kentucky and will be used for anti-bullying awareness projects.

For more information about NIOS, visit <http://www.niot.org/front>. For more information about the Mayor’s Anti-Bullying Task Force including the list of members, visit www.paducahky.gov.

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