



**BEST PRACTICES  
CLEARINGHOUSE**

- Lessons from the Field -

## Promising Strategies to Prevent Student Harassment and Bullying Behavior

*Wednesday, October 30, 2024 | 3:00 – 4:30 PM ET*  
*SPEAKER BIOS*

### Bryan Williams

Director, Office of Safe and Supportive Schools, U.S. Department of Education



Mr. Bryan Williams is the Director of the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Safe and Supportive Schools (OSSS). In this role, Mr. Williams oversees a broad portfolio of programs designed to support school and community efforts to foster safety and promote positive learning environments, including activities related to school climate and safety, the mental health and well-being of students and staff, and readiness and emergency management.

Mr. Williams has been with the Department since 1995. Prior to being named as Director in 2021, Mr. Williams served as the Group Leader for the Student Support and Academic Enrichment (Title IV, Part A) team and as a Program Analyst within OSSS.

### Dr. Kevin Vagi

Behavioral Scientist, Division of Violence Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



Dr. Kevin Vagi, PhD, serves as a Behavioral Scientist in CDC’s Division of Violence Prevention. He is a subject matter expert in youth and community violence, firearm violence, bullying, sexual and dating violence, and crime prevention through environmental design. He serves as a senior science officer for CDC’s Youth Violence Prevention Centers (YVPCs) and CDC representative to the [StopBullying.gov](https://www.stopbullying.gov) Editorial Board.

## Larkin Mainwaring

High School Senior, FL

Ms. Larkin Mainwaring is a high school senior who advocates for bullying prevention and raises awareness for students with invisible disabilities. As a PACER's National Youth Advisory Board member, she has organized numerous awareness events and collaborated with various organizations. Larkin founded Spread the Word Kindness Bracelets, donating a portion of the proceeds to bullying prevention efforts. Additionally, she volunteers with Kids Helping Kids Pasco. Ms. Mainwaring also serves on the youth board for the Ehlers-Danlos Society, advocating for invisible illnesses like Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome, a condition that she personally is impacted by. Ms. Mainwaring authored and illustrated Don't Bully Me For What You Can't See, reading it in schools to promote bullying awareness. She is passionate about performing, and in her spare time, she loves performing at her local community youth theatre, where she is currently Belle in Beauty and The Beast.

## Dr. Catherine Bradshaw

Senior Associate Dean for Research, University Professor, School of Education and Human Development, University of Virginia, VA



Dr. Catherine P. Bradshaw, Ph.D., M.Ed., is a University Professor and the Senior Associate Dean for Research at the School of Education and Human Development at the University of Virginia. Before her current appointment at U.Va., she was an Associate Professor and the Associate Chair of the Department of Mental Health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, where she maintains an adjunct faculty position. She holds a doctorate in developmental psychology from Cornell University and a master's of education in counseling and guidance from the University of Georgia. Her primary research interests focus on the development of aggressive behavior and school-based prevention of behavioral and mental health problems in children and youth. She collaborates on research projects examining bullying and school climate; the development of aggressive and problem behaviors; effects of exposure to violence, peer victimization, and environmental stress on children; children with emotional and behavioral disorders and autism; and the design, evaluation, and implementation of evidence-based prevention programs in schools. She has led a number of federally funded randomized trials of school-based prevention programs, including Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and social-emotional learning curricula. She also has expertise in implementation science and coaching models. Dr. Bradshaw works with the Maryland State Department of Education and several school districts to support the development and implementation of programs and policies to

prevent bullying and school violence, and to foster safe and supportive learning environments. She collaborates on federally funded research grants supported by the NIMH, NIMHD, NICHD, NIDA, CDC, NIJ, U.S. Department of Education, and the Institute of Education Sciences, with awards totaling over 70M. She is a member of the National Academy of Education and has published more than 350 peer-reviewed articles and chapters in edited volumes. She was previously the Associate Editor for the Journal of Research on Adolescence and is currently the editor of the journal Prevention Science and senior associate editor for Social and Emotional Learning: Research, Practice, and Policy. She is a coeditor of two editions of the Handbook of School Mental Health (Springer, 2014, 2023), the editor of Handbook on Bullying: A Life Course Perspective (2017), and the co-author of Preventing Bullying in Schools: A Social and Emotional Learning Approach to Prevention and Early Intervention (2020).

### Dr. Katelyn Birchfield

Program Coordinator and Implementation Support & Coaching Specialist, Youth Nex, University of Virginia, VA



Dr. Katelyn Birchfield is a former middle school special education and English Language Arts teacher. She currently works at Youth Nex at the University of Virginia across a variety of grant-funded projects, focusing on building school and division-wide partnerships to design and implement various prevention programs. As a component of this implementation work, Dr. Birchfield provides coaching support to elementary and middle school teachers, teacher coaches, and administration across four different states. Dr. Birchfield's work focuses primarily on mental health and social emotional skill development, equity literacy, and culturally sustaining and anti-racist teaching practices. She is passionate about providing supportive and equitable opportunities and climates for student growth and development. Dr. Birchfield holds a bachelor's degree in psychology and elementary education with an ESL certificate from William & Mary and a master's degree in special education from William & Mary.

## Judy French

Coordinator, PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center, CA



Ms. Judy French leads the Los Angeles office of the National Bullying Prevention Center, bringing our resources to schools, healthcare institutions, community organizations and others through in- person and virtual presentations, workshops, and materials distribution in the Southern California area and nationally. She offers support and assistance to parents, students, educators, administrators, and community members who are impacted by bullying and are working to create healthier communities. She is a sought-after speaker whose presentations have reached approximately 30,000 people over the past 8 years. She has also facilitated and presented workshops throughout the country on communications skills, conflict resolution, relationship building, leadership, and self-advocacy.

Ms. French is available to speak about the resources available through PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center. Contact her at [Judy.French@PACER.org](mailto:Judy.French@PACER.org).

## Amy Hutcherson

School Psychologist, Waynesboro Public Schools, VA



Ms. Amy Hutcherson is a former elementary special education teacher who has worked as a Nationally Certified School Psychologist in Waynesboro Public Schools (VA) for over 20 years. She primarily serves preschool and elementary school students, staff, and families.

Ms. Hutcherson earned her undergraduate degree from Bridgewater College in Virginia and continued her education at James Madison University, where she received both her Master's and Education Specialist degrees. Her background in special education has provided her with extensive opportunities to collaborate with staff and families to implement interventions that foster student success and build inclusive and welcoming school environments.

Ms. Hutcherson's professional interests include staff wellness and retention, supervision of graduate students, and implementation of district-wide protocols, procedures, and philosophies to create equitable, effective, and cohesive learning communities.

When she's not working, Ms. Hutcherson enjoys making music, traveling, and spending time with her family.

## Hannah Mills

School Counselor, Waynesboro Public Schools, VA



Ms. Hannah Mills is a school counselor at Wenonah Elementary in Waynesboro, Virginia and is a National Certified Counselor. This is Ms. Mills' sixth year as a school counselor and sixth year at Wenonah. She primarily works with students in grades 3-5, but serves all students at the K-5 level.

Ms. Mills earned her undergraduate degree from the University of Mary Washington where she majored in Psychology and Spanish. She later earned her Masters of Education in Counselor Education at the University of Virginia. She most enjoys teaching engaging social emotional learning lessons so that all students learn fundamental skills to manage their emotions, build and maintain healthy relationships, make thoughtful decisions, and achieve their goals. Additionally, Ms. Mills is passionate about building relationships with students so that they feel safe and cared for at school.

When she's not working, Ms. Mills enjoys reading, crafting, and traveling to visit friends and family.