

# The Miami Herald

## Letters to the Editor

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### There's help to stop bullying

Re the May 16 letter, *Stop bullying*: Vanessa Fernandez is right that all schools should be addressing bullying problems. As an itinerant teacher with Miami-Dade County Public Schools, I travel to many schools each day and see the underlying issues of bullying in every place I visit: the intentional tormenting through verbal harassment, physical assault or other methods of coercion and manipulation.

It can involve direct attacks, such as hitting, threatening, intimidating, malicious teasing, name-calling, sexual remarks and stealing or damaging others' belongings. There also are indirect attacks, such as spreading rumors or encouraging others to reject or exclude someone.

Administrators and teachers try their best to address bullying as it occurs. But without the specific tools and information to help them develop non-confrontational communication skills, the task becomes a challenge.

I suggest that every principal contact the YES Institute ([www.yesinstitute.org](http://www.yesinstitute.org)). Its vision is to create a community in which all youth are healthy and free of violence, discrimination and the desire to commit suicide.

The YES Institute works with students and educators in public and private schools that choose to use it as a resource. YES offers staff training and facilitates dialogue for educational communities. Concerns over violence and bullying are spurring educators to search for solutions.

The challenge for the faculty is to create an environment that is conducive to learning, one that is as safe as it is educational.

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