

Dorothy L. Espelage PhD

Dorothy L. Espelage, Ph.D. (Professor, University of Illinois, Champaign) has conducted research on bullying, homophobic teasing, sexual harassment, and dating violence for two decades. She has over 120 research publications. She is PI on two CDC-funded Second Step randomized clinical trials to prevent violence in 50 middle schools. National Science Foundation funds her work to develop better observational methods to assess bullying among adolescents. NIJ and NIH are funding her longitudinal and social network studies of these behaviors. She conducts hundreds of keynotes and workshops to disseminate her research findings a year.

Jo Ann Allen

Jo Ann Allen is a lifelong residence of Santa Cruz County and has either lived or worked in nearly all cities and communities of the county. Jo Ann has been an administrator at the Santa Cruz County Office of Education for 24 years. Her duties encompass the oversight of multiple projects and programs to address the needs of high-risk youth populations. She has extensive experience in monitoring federal and state grant requirements, program implementation, coordination of services and vast experience in collaborating with multiple federal, state and local agencies to create sustainable programs to support “high-risk” youth. She has planned or been part of a planning committee for local, state and national conferences. She has a BA degree in Business and Project Management and has specialized training in organizational development, conflict resolution, youth development practices, strength-based assessments, school safety assessments, balanced restorative justice, Youth Court diversion programs, integration of preventative services into schools, and bullying/teen dating violence prevention – to name a few. She is a firm believer in creating protective factors in schools and communities that foster resiliency in all children and youth.