



The Coalition of Jewish Teen Leaders

Letter from the Coalition of Jewish Teen Leaders

Members, alumni, parents, family and friends –

During the past several months, bullying, teasing, and harassment among teens has become more prevalent. Tolerance of people, regardless of race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation, has always been an important issue, and now it is time for us, as a coalition of Jewish teens, to address it. There are instances when we must set aside the things that make us unique from one another, and come together to support a common purpose. This is one of those opportunities. Now more than ever, it is necessary to take a stand on the issues of bullying, harassment, and intolerance, and come together as one unified Jewish community to truly make a difference.

The Coalition of Jewish Teen Leaders, or CJTL, was created with the purpose of bringing together Jewish teen leaders from the major Jewish youth movements, including BBYO, NCSY, NFTY, USY, and Young Judaea. As representatives of the major Jewish youth movements, we are united in taking a stand against bullying everywhere. While each of us belongs to a different Jewish youth movement, we are connected by our passion and desire to fulfill *tikkun olam*, our responsibility to repair the world. Together we must create a more inclusive and open Jewish community for today and tomorrow. We urge all Jewish teens, as well as all those who work with Jewish teens and the parents and families of Jewish teens, to take a stand against hate.

Please join us in signing the Keshet Community pledge called “Do Not Stand Idly By” before December 31, 2010. It only takes a moment to sign, but together as we strive to reach our goal of 18,000 signatures we will be making a statement that will be echoed throughout Jewish communities around the world. It is one of many steps you can take in order to start creating safer spaces for Jewish youth. By signing this pledge, we have agreed to be a part of a united front against bullying that stands for inclusion and tolerance.

We hereby commit to end bullying and harassment of any kind in our synagogues, schools, organizations, and in our community as a whole. We have spoken up, and now it is your turn. As our religion tells us, we are created *b'tzelem Elohim*, in the image of God, and therefore, it is our role and responsibility as individuals, and as a community, to always respect one another.

L'shutafut v'shalom, in partnership and peace,

Jeremy Sherman & Arielle Braude, BBYO International Co-Presidents

Amanda Esraelian, NCSY

Daniel Landesberg, NFTY North American President

Joshua Block – USY North American President

Molly Stein, International Mazkirah Young Judaea

Find collective resources online:

- BBYO teens have released a [new resource](#) on combating bullying in partnership with the PANIM Institute of BBYO and have created an international effort, [Stand UP For Each Other: The Campaign for Respect and Inclusion](#).
- NCSY regions across North America are leading sessions on ending bullying. NCSY's International Director, Rabbi Steven Burg, also spoke out [against teenage bullying](#).
- NFTY has compiled an initiative called [Living NFTY: Bullying Teasing and Harassment](#) including programmatic and Jewish resources relating to bullying and Jewish responses to bullies.
- USY has released [“Love Thy Neighbor, Love Yourself”](#) a resource on building healthy relationships, which includes resources on the topic.