

# INTRODUCTION TO THIS GUIDE

*Now, more than ever, Americans must work together to counter the racism, bigotry, discrimination, and intergroup violence that pose significant threats to the full participation of all Americans in a democratic society.*

- [www.partnersagainsthate.org](http://www.partnersagainsthate.org)

## OVERVIEW

The Partners Against Hate *Peer Leadership: Helping Youth Become Change Agents in Their Schools and Communities* provides educators, law enforcement personnel, parents, and other family and community members with information and resources for establishing peer leadership programs in secondary schools and youth service organizations that give students the skills and confidence to stand up for civility in their schools and communities and to become role models in confronting bias-motivated harassment.

## AUDIENCE

The guide is designed as a resource for individuals and groups interested in involving and empowering youth in organizational efforts to prevent bias-motivated behaviors and hate crimes.

## CONTENTS

In addition to this Introduction, *Peer Leadership: Helping Youth Become Change Agents in Their Schools and Communities* includes the following sections:

- **The Need for Peer Leadership Programs** – provides a snapshot of the current climate in our nation’s schools and includes the latest statistical information about students’ experiences with bullying and other bias-motivated behaviors, and violence in their

schools. A rationale is presented for using peer leadership programs as one effective strategy to respond to the lack of respect and civility that can lead to conflict and is the root of many incidents of school violence.

- **Peer Leadership Program Implementation** – includes an introduction to peer leadership and includes suggested program goals, strategies for identifying potential peer leaders, and general guidelines for implementing peer leadership programs in secondary schools and youth service organizations.
- **Peer Leadership Programs** – provides a sampling of the wide variety of peer leadership programs offered by organizations throughout the country and includes contact information to learn more about these programs.
- **The Partners Against Hate Peer Leadership Model** – provides a detailed description of the Partners Against Hate Peer Leadership Model and explains how to contact trainers who can provide additional information on implementing the Partners Against Hate program at schools and youth organizations.

