

NJ Update 6/04:

Town models are beginning to move forward and attract interest. The one of which I'm most aware, since I'm involved with it, is Cranford Cares About Bullying (CCAB). After a long, slow period of development, it is starting to move. There is a commitment and plan to holding a 'Sabbath Weekend' this fall and a town-wide youth activity this spring, featuring a performance of *New Kid* (the powerful play about bullying from George St. Playhouse, in New Brunswick). The idea of the Sabbath Weekend is that on one designated weekend, all of the participating faith community leaders in the town will concurrently address the issue of childhood (and perhaps adult, as well) bullying in their sermons and other activities. This should draw strong attention from the media and the community, and lead to further faith-community-based bullying awareness activity. The campaign, which is sponsored by the Cranford Interfaith Clergy Council, will provide the faith community leaders with materials about bullying, including the national campaign handouts mentioned above (one of which is written specifically for faith communities). There are also 2 new books which address bullying from a spiritual/religious perspectives (both from a Christian perspective, only): *Bullying as a Spiritual Crisis*, and *Confronting the Demon* (which is primarily about adult bullying). While neither book is perfect, from an evidence-based point of view, they nonetheless represent an important advance in awareness of the importance of the issue.