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For Immediate Release

Elvis the Penguin and ICARE

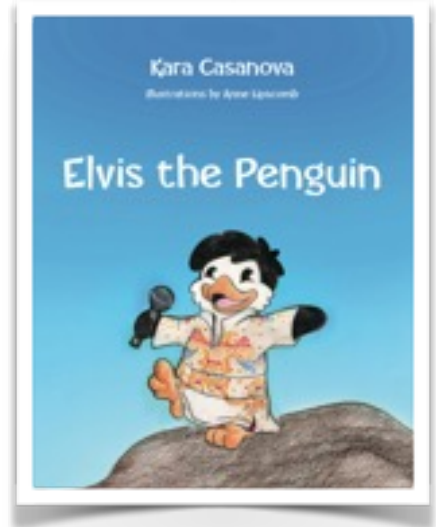
Children's Book Being Used to Address Bullying in Schools

Baton Rouge, LA - Last year Baton Rouge author Kara Casanova licensed her children's storybook, *Elvis the Penguin*, to ICARE, a non-profit in the East Baton Rouge Parish School System, to develop anti-bullying and social tolerance curricula. The *Elvis the Penguin* curricula will be rolled out to elementary schools served by ICARE beginning March 9, 2015.

The curricula comprises three grade-appropriate lesson plans and activities for Pre-K through fifth grade students. ICARE specialists, school guidance counselors and teachers will use the book and materials to engage students in a variety of discussions on bullying and social tolerance.

The lesson plans use the story and images of *Elvis the Penguin* to help children define bullying and social diversity by identifying with the characters who are bullied in the story, and discussing appropriate actions students can take to address bullying whenever they encounter it.

Soon after publication, the author realized the book's potential as a tool for addressing bullying and social tolerance, and approached ICARE Director, Gwynn Shamlin, about partnering to use the book in EBRP schools. Shamlin immediately recognized that using *Elvis the Penguin* would be an effective and innovative way for ICARE to address the ever-present problem of bullying. He tasked ICARE Specialist, Tanya Griffin, to begin developing impactful lesson plans and activities based on the story and illustrations.



“I’m very proud that my little penguin will be used for such an important purpose. I didn’t set out to write an anti-bullying story,” stated Casanova. “My primary goal was to write a funny and entertaining story for kids. The fact that Elvis the Penguin gets teased about his hair, and because he’s different from the other penguins, was just an organic part of story telling. But as I spoke to children after readings, it became obvious that the book could be used by adults to springboard into discussions with children about bullying.”

According to StopBullying.gov, 28% of all US children have experienced bullying. Verbal and social bullying are the most prevalent forms. Although rare, if left unchecked, bullying can escalate into violence; of the school shootings that took place in the 1990s, StopBullying.gov reports that in 12 of the 15 incidents, the shooters had a history of being bullied.

“Bullying has such a horrendous emotional impact on people. We must have discussions with kids on recognizing it and stopping it. And we must have discussions with them about why it’s important to be kind to and tolerant of others who are different from ourselves,” Casanova continued.

Individuals, groups and organizations can obtain the materials and purchase copies of the book by contacting Kara Casanova on the Elvis the Penguin website.

Further information can be obtained by contacting Kara Casanova or ICARE director Gwynn Shamlin.

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