

March 2010

Educational E-News

School Liaison Newsletter



Five Actions Parents Can Take If Their Child Has Been Involved in Bullying

Source: Education.com

If you think your child is being bullied, take action now. Bullying is not something that just goes away on its own, it is not something that children can work out amongst themselves, and it is not something kids will just naturally outgrow. If you know (or think) that your child is bullying or being bullied, believe them and intervene immediately. Some suggested actions include:

1. Talk with your child's principal and classroom teacher about the problem and see if they have noticed anything.
2. Have your principal notify other teachers, recess aids, hallway monitors, and cafeteria staff so that everyone who comes in contact with your child can be on the lookout and poised to intervene should an episode be repeated.
3. Arrange opportunities for your child to socialize with friends outside of school to help build and maintain a strong support system.
4. Encourage your child to stick with a friend at recess, lunch, in the hallways, on the bus, or walking home because kids are more likely to be targeted when they are alone.
5. If your child is taking part in cyberbullying, make sure that they are aware that such behavior is not acceptable. Many children fail to realize that saying mean things about someone on the Internet or through text messaging is a form of bullying. If your child is victim to cyberbullying, teach them to not respond to the message, and bring it to the attention of an adult.

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National Holidays:

March 14th:

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS

March 17th:

ST. PATRICK'S DAY

Local SL installation calendars:

MCAGCC 29Palms:

www.29palms.usmc.mil/visit/schoolliaison

MCAS Yuma:

http://www.yuma.usmc-mccs.org/Webmodel/MFS/School_Liaison/Schoolliaison.html

MWTC Bridgeport:

<http://www.mwtc.usmc.mil/school-liaison/>



School Bus Behavior!

Q: *My daughter says a boy is bullying her on the school bus. I told the bus driver about it and they moved the boy to a new seat, but she said he is still making comments to her. I don't know what to do about it. Any advice?*

A: There are a couple of things that need to be addressed. One is the bullying and the other is your daughter's response to it. In "real life" we can only change ourselves, so I would start with talking to your daughter about what makes a bully a bully. Talk about the fact that this child is having problems in his own life that make him feel the need to control or have power over others. Help her to understand that bullying is a product of the bully not the fault of the person who is being bullied. That may help her to be able to ignore the comments and not be as affected by his behavior.

Next, bullying is not ok. If you have spoken with the bus driver, the next step is to talk with the principal. Riding a school bus is a privilege and not a right. Children who can not behave appropriately on a bus can be suspended from the bus for a period of time. Take careful notes of what dates the incidents occur and exactly what is said. This will help the principal in dealing with the other child's parent. Stay in close communication with the school regarding the problem. If you still feel like your child is getting targeted and feel you are not being heard at the school level, take your concerns to the superintendent's office if you live on base or to the student services department of the district office if you live off base. Again, documentation is key so keep good notes and send email when possible to keep a dated record of your communications.



St Patrick's Day!

When: March 17th.

Saint Patrick's Day is in honor of the Patron Saint of Ireland, who brought Christianity to the Emerald Isles, as Ireland is known. It is truly a day of celebrating Irish history, ancestry, traditions and customs.

Are you Irish perchance!?! Well, the saying goes everyone is a little Irish on Saint Patrick's Day.

Roots of Tradition: Saint Patrick's Day is held in honor of Saint Patrick, the missionary who brought Christianity to the Irish people in the 400's AD.

Erin Go Braugh is perhaps the most common Irish term you will hear. It means "Ireland Forever".

Did You Know? Over 34 million Americans are of Irish descent. That's almost nine times the population of Ireland!



WEB RESOURCES OF THE MONTH:

STOP BULLYING NOW!

This government sponsored website provides resources for both kids and adults related to bullying. The website has signs to watch for to let you know if your child is being bullied, webisodes, games, and resources. www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/kids/

KIDS AGAINST BULLYING

This website is very kid friendly. It features polls, contests, what if scenarios, and information on how to stop bullying. There is a downloadable coloring sheet that can be entered in their contest.

<http://www.pacerkidsagainstbullying.org/>



What You Can Do to Keep Your Children Safe on the Playground?

by Tessa LaPresto, School Liaison MTWC Bridgeport

Ask your elementary-aged child what his or her favorite subject at school is and he or she probably won't hesitate before they say: recess.

Recess is a great time for students to take a break from their class work and take part in unstructured activities. Playgrounds are great places for kids to run around with peers and expend energy.



Recess can also provide an opportunity for children to get hurt! Each year, 200,000 children are treated in U.S. hospital emergency rooms for playground equipment-related injuries. An estimated 148,000 of these injuries involve public playground equipment. Most of the injuries are the result of falls. Also, about 15 children die each year as a result of this sort of accident. Most of the deaths are due to strangulations, not falls.

While safety begins with the design, inspection and supervision of playground equipment and is the school administration's responsibility, there is still much a parent can do to ensure their children are safe on the school playground.

Being aware and involved makes a big difference in protecting your children from school-related injuries. Since most of us can't be with our kids throughout the school day, we have to focus on what we can do: advocate for safe practices and teach your child how to act responsibly on the playground.

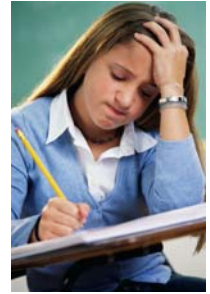
1. Personally check out your child's school playground. Check for broken or rusted equipment, sharp edges or points and tripping hazards. Report any dangers to the school administration and follow through until the problem is corrected.
2. Send your child to school in properly-fitting clothing appropriate for the weather conditions and closed-toe shoes to prevent cuts, splinters and tripping.
3. Teach your child basic safety rules. You may even want to visit the playground with your child, show them which pieces of equipment are suitable for their age, and discuss the rules. Personalize the safety rules to the playground your child will use. Do not overwhelm younger students; choose 4 to 5 general guidelines that will ensure safety on the playground.
4. Set behavior expectations. Once you've taught the rules, emphasize that you expect them to follow them and explain consequences. Ask about playground behavior at the first parent conference or sooner. Remember to be reasonable. Telling a child not to run or jump during recess is an exercise in futility. It makes more sense to teach them how to jump safely: check the area first to make sure no children are in the way and land on both feet with knees slightly bent.
5. Explain how important it is that they listen to their teachers on the playground.
6. Discuss what they should do if they get hurt.
7. Prepare for the possibility of difficult social situations. Talk about bullying and other situations in which kids can get "hurt" on the playground by other kids. Provide tools for how to handle these situations.
8. Invite students to verbalize the rules often during the year, so they are reminded often of the expectations.
9. Parents can also take the additional step of learning and reinforcing the school's specific playground rules.

At Antelope Elementary School in Colville, California, Principal Jason Reid stresses that the two most important rules parents could reinforce are to follow the staff's directions and respect others. While those are standard rules for most schools, individual schools may have important rules unique to their site. Parents may not know about these rules unless they ask. For example, Antelope Elementary School does not allow children to play "tag" or any other "hands-on" games during recess. Also, students must count to 20 while waiting their turn for the swings. During the winter, students may not throw snowballs.

Mr. Reid also stresses the importance of teaching your children to "report all problems to the adults as soon as possible."

Getting Your Child Ready for Testing Source: [State: Maine Department of Education](#)

Testing is an important part of your child's educational program. Testing provides useful information for you and your child's teacher and helps you plan a better program. As a parent, there are several things you can do to make testing a good experience for your child.



- **Relax** - Testing is usually a fun experience. Often a young child sees testing as a series of games. You can help your child by telling them that testing is usually O.K. and he will only do things that other children his age can handle.
- **Rest** - A child with plenty of rest is more able to think clearly and stick with a job.
- **Be Honest** - The truth is, some parts of the testing will be easy for your child and some parts may be hard. Most school tests are made for children between the ages of 6 and 16-so some questions are very, very easy and some are quite hard. Some parts of the test can be like puzzles- nobody gets all of a puzzle right the first time.
- **Trust** - Trust your school. The teachers and principal of your school will try to help you understand what the test will be about.

Achievement Tests Taken from Education.com

Quizzes and exams that teachers routinely use to check on students' learning are the most common - and frequent - tests your child takes in school.

In addition to regular classroom tests, your child will take one or more achievement tests that public schools are required to give each year. These tests, which provide a snapshot of what children know, are used to gauge how well schools educate students.

When your child takes a state-required achievement test, your child's performance is compared with the performance of other students in the school district - and the entire state. Remember that as a parent, you should receive information regularly about your child's performance on tests - the tests teachers use routinely in the classroom as well as state-required achievement tests. Remember, it is the combined information from many sources, not any one test, which will give you the best picture of your child's academic success.

Analyzing Reading Passages

By Elena A. McShane, School Liaison for MCAS Yuma

March and April are typically the months that U.S. school systems administer annual standardized tests to all students. This is the time of year when test anxiety among students can be at its highest. However, following some very basic test taking strategies can alleviate some of this anxiety and build confidence among primary and high school students.



As an elementary school teacher and reading interventionist, I found that teaching my students' four basic steps to analyzing reading passages significantly improved overall comprehension and test scores. Teachers and parents can review these steps with children throughout the year as they complete classroom and homework assignments.

The Four Steps to Analyzing a Reading Passage

1. **Read the title, look at picture clues, and make predictions.**
2. **Read the questions and underline important key words.**
3. **Read the story/passage one paragraph at a time and underline important details.**
4. **Answer questions referring back to the passage to help find answers.**

How is Cyberbullying Different from Face-to-Face Bullying

Source: Research on Cyberbullying: Key Findings and Practical Implications, Neil Tippet, Fran Thompson and Peter K Smith, education.com

- The victim has no place to hide; the bully can target them anytime and anyplace.
- Cyberbullying can involve a very wide audience (e.g. through the circulation of video clips on the internet), although the bully may not be aware of their reactions.
- The bully is relatively protected by the anonymity of electronic forms of contact, which acts as a safeguard against retaliation or sanctions.
- As with some indirect traditional bullying, the cyberbully does not usually see the response of the victim, changing the satisfactions or inhibitions normally generated by this.
- Adolescents who tended to spend more time online tended also to report that they cyberbullied or were themselves cyberbullied more frequently.

What does cyberbullying look like?

- Cyberbullying can involve varying forms of technology:
 - * Mobile phone calls
 - * Text messages
 - * Picture/video clips
 - * E-mail
 - * Instant messaging
 - * Chat rooms
 - * Websites
 - * Gaming
- In a recent study, cyberbullying most commonly involved phone calls, texts and instant messages
- The nature of electronic bullying or cyberbullying often includes:
 - * Sending mean, vulgar, or threatening messages or images online or via text
 - * Posting sensitive, private information or pictures about another person
 - * Intentionally excluding someone from an online group
 - * Pretending to be someone else in order to make that person look bad²
 - * Spreading lies and rumors about victims
 - * Tricking someone into revealing personal information
- The nature of gaming as a place where cyberbullying occurs can happen through gaming websites or PC and console games with online components (e.g. Nintendo Wii, Xbox 360, and Playstation 3).
 - * Cyberbullying in gaming is usually referred to as "griefing" and is fairly common among young gamers who use IM, chat, and voice chat features to tease and taunt other players.³

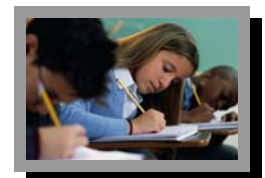
Test-Taking Tips (taken from kidshealth.org)

Do you sweat, chew your pencil, and feel butterflies in your stomach as your teacher hands out a test? A lot of people (adults included) get freaked out when it's time to take a test.

It's natural to feel some stress about taking tests. In fact, sometimes a little adrenaline (a hormone made by your body during times of excitement or stress) is a good thing to jump-start you.

Here are some tips for taking tests:

- ❖ **Multiple-Choice Exams:** think of your own answer before looking at the choices provided. Eliminate clearly wrong answers, and then make your best guess.
- ❖ **Essay Exams:** organize your thoughts in a brief outline. Look for key words such as compare, contrast, describe and identify. Start with a short summary or topic sentence, and then make your points.
- ❖ Get enough sleep the night before the test.
- ❖ Listen closely to any instruction.
- ❖ Read the test through first.
- ❖ Focus on addressing each question individually.
- ❖ EAT Breakfast.
- ❖ And RELAX.



***GOOD LUCK!!! ***

SL Contact Info:

- ❖ MCAGCC Twentynine Palms:
Website: <http://www.29palms.usmc.mil/visit/schoolliaison/>
phone: 760.830.1574
- ❖ MWTC Bridgeport:
Web site: <http://www.mwtc.usmc.mil/school-liaison/>
Phone: 760-932-1521 (MWTC Bridgeport)/ 760-784-4548 (Coleville)
- ❖ MCAS Yuma:
Web site: http://www.yuma.usmc-mccs.org/Webmodel/MFS/School_Liaison/Schoolliaison.html
Phone: (928) 269-5373

A best friend is like a four
leaf clover: hard to find and
lucky to have.
~Author Unknown

Happy St. Patrick's Day!



Tina, Tessa & Elena

HOME SCHOOLING

If you're considering homeschooling your children, here are some things you may not have known:

- 1. There are structured programs available.** From written curricula to online programs to Virtual Schools, you can set up a home school as structured as you like. Some public school districts have state funded programs to aid home school families, which offer free books, supplies and personnel and offer accreditation.
- 2. Your home state makes a difference.** Depending on where you live, you may be given free reign over your children's education, or you may have to meet state minimum requirements. North Dakota, Vermont, New York, Rhode Island, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania have the most stringent homeschooling laws, requiring parents to submit achievement test scores, according to the **Home School Legal Defense Association**.
- 3. Lack of socialization is not a problem.** "Socialization starts in the family," says Ben Forbing, a stay-at-home dad in St. Petersburg, Florida, who home schools his three children. "Usually this helps strengthen family bonds as opposed to traditional school, where parents begin to feel they don't know their kids anymore, especially in their teen years," Forbing said, in an email interview April 25. Home school advocates say the assertion that homeschooled children are more isolated is false. They say homeschooled kids spend time with more diverse age groups and spend more time in the community.
- 4. You don't have to be a teacher to home school your children.** "If you can read, write and love your kids, you can home school," Mooney said. What you lack in teaching experience you can make up for by using resources – sharing extracurricular teaching, joining networks of other home school families, and taking advantage of what your public school offers.
- 5. It won't always be easy.** "It is a big responsibility," Forbing said. Some of the **problems with homeschooling** are that it's hard work being the parent and the teacher, and you rarely get a break to recover from burn-out.



Do what you have, with what you have, where you are.

– Theodore Roosevelt