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BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

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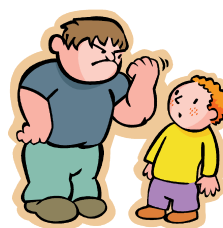
Bullying has always been a part of growing up. In the past, most adults, teachers, and counselors did not take bullying seriously. After the disaster at Columbine High School, and a number of high profile suicides, this attitude started to change. A number of studies began to show just how serious bullying is and the devastating effect that it has on the lives of children.

Bullying is a big problem. Every day thousands of children wake up afraid to go to school. Bullying is a problem that affects millions of students, and it has everyone worried, not just the kids on its receiving end. Yet because parents, teachers, and other adults don't always see it, they may not understand how extreme bullying can get.

Bullying is when a person is picked on over and over again by an individual or group with more power, either in terms of physical strength or social standing.

Two of the main reasons people are bullied are because of appearance and social status. Bullies pick on the people

they think don't fit in, maybe because of how they look, how they act (for example, kids who are shy and withdrawn), their race or religion, or because the bullies think their target may be gay or lesbian. Two of the main



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Verbal bullying can also involve cruel instant or email messages or even posting insults about a person on a website – practices known as cyber bullying.

Studies show that people that are abused by their peers are at risk for mental health problems, such as low self-esteem, stress, depression, or anxiety. They may also think about suicide more.

Bullies are at risk for problems, too. Bullying is violence, and it often leads to more violent behavior as the bully grows up. It's estimated that 1 out of 4 elementary-school bullies will have a criminal record by the time they are 30. Some teen bullies end up being rejected by their peers and lose friendships as they grow older. Bullies may also fail in school and not have the career or relationship success that other people enjoy.

Why do some people bully?

There are a lot of reasons why some people bully.

under pressure. But the stress response can also cause problems when it overreacts or fails to turn off and reset itself properly.

GOOD STRESS AND BAD STRESS

The stress response (also called the **fight or flight response**) is critical during emergency situations, such as when a driver has to slam on the brakes to avoid an accident. It can also be activated in a milder form at a time when the pressure's on but there's no actual danger-like stepping up to take the foul shot that could win the game, getting ready to go to a big dance, or sitting down for a final exam. A little of this stress can help keep you on your toes, ready to rise to a challenge. And the nervous system quickly returns to its normal state, standing by to respond again when needed. But stress doesn't always happen in response to things that are immediate or that are over quickly. Ongoing or long-term events, like coping with a divorce or moving to a new neighborhood or school can cause stress too.

CLASS OF 2015

STRESS: Get It Out Of Your Space and Move On

Feeling like there are too many pressures and demands on you? Losing sleep worrying about tests and schoolwork? Everyone experiences stress at times—adults, teen, and even kids. But there are ways to minimize stress and manage the stress that's unavoidable.

What is Stress?

Stress is feeling that's created when we react to particular events. It's the body's way of rising to a challenge and preparing to meet a tough situation with focus, strength, stamina, and heightened alertness.

The events that provoke stress are called stressors, and they cover a whole range of situations—everything from outright physical danger to making a class presentation or taking a semester's worth of your toughest subject.

The human body responds to stressors by activating the nervous system and specific hormones. The **hypothalamus** signals the **adrenal glands** to produce more of the hormones adrenaline and cortisol and release them into the bloodstream. These hormones speed up heart rate, breathing rate, blood pressure, and metabolism. Blood vessels open wider to let more blood flow to large muscle groups, putting our muscles on alert. Pupils dilate to improve vision. The liver releases some of its stored glucose to increase the body's energy. And sweat is produced to cool the body. All of these physical changes prepare a person to react quickly and effectively to handle the pressure of the moment.

This natural reaction is known as the **stress response**. Working properly, the body's stress response enhances a person's ability to perform well

BEING BULLIED?

What can you do if you are being bullied? Coping with bullying can be difficult, but remember, you are not the problem, the bully is. You have a right to feel safe and secure. And if you're different in some way, be proud of it! Spend time with your friends — bullies hardly ever pick on people if they're with others in a group.

You've probably already tried ignoring the bully, telling them to stop and walking away whenever the bullying starts. If someone is bullying you, you should always tell an adult you can trust. This isn't telling tales. You have a right to be safe and adults can do things to get the bullying stopped. Even if you think you've solved the problem on your own, tell an adult anyway, in case it happens again. An adult you can trust might be a teacher, school principal, counselor, parent, someone from your family, or a friend's parent. If you find it difficult to talk about

being bullied, you might find it easier to write down what's been happening to you and give it to an adult you trust.

Key facts about bullying.

Research has found that:

- 15-20% of all students are victimized by bullies at some point in their school career.
- Almost one in three children nationwide is involved in bullying, either as a bully or a victim.
- About 10% of students are afraid during much of the school day.
- 160,000 children miss school every day in the USA for fear of being bullied.
- 71% of teachers or classroom aides either did not know about or ignored bullying

incidents in their classes (based on a survey of students).

Bullying will typically stop in less than 10 seconds if another student intervenes.

Bullying incidents can be cut in half through a school-wide bullying prevention program.

About 20% of students have reported being victimized by online bullying.

WARNING SIGNS OF BEING BULLIED

Information for Parents about Bullying. Possible warning signs that a child is being bullied:

- Comes home with torn, damaged, or missing pieces of clothing, books, or other belongings.
- Has unexplained cuts, bruises, and scratches. Has few, if any friends, with whom he or she spends time.
- Seems afraid of going to school, walking to and from school, riding the school bus, or taking part in organized activities with peers (such as clubs).
- Takes a long, "illogical" route when walking to or from school.
- Has lost interest in school work or suddenly begins to do poorly in school.
- Appears sad, moody, teary, or de-

pressed when he or she comes home.

- Complains frequently of headaches, stomach aches, or other physical ailments.
- Has trouble sleeping or has frequent bad dreams.
- Experiences a loss of appetite.
- Appears anxious and/or suffers from low self-esteem.

If you are being bullied. No one needs to put up with being bullied. The Maryland State Board of Education developed and adopted a model policy to address bullying, harassment, and intimidation. All local school systems were required to establish a policy prohibiting bullying, harassment, or intimidation based on the model policy by July 1, 2009. The Prince George's County School System has a procedure to report bullying, harassment, or

intimidation. This form can be completed by a student, parent, teacher, counselor, or school employee.

Reporting of allegations of bullying, harassment, or intimidation.

All reports must be written using the *Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Form*. Reports must be promptly and appropriately investigated by school administrators or the administrative designee, consistent with due process rights, using the Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Incident School Form within two (2) school days after receipt of a Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Form.

Remember — you have a right to be safe and happy. Stop bullying!

STRESSFUL SITUATIONS

Long-term stressful situations can produce a lasting, low-level stress that's hard on people. The nervous system senses continued pressure and may remain slightly activated and continue to pump out extra stress hormones over an extended period. This can wear out the body's reserves, leave a person feeling depleted or overwhelmed, weaken the body's immune system, and cause other problems.

Although just enough stress can be a good thing, stress overload is a different story—too much stress isn't good for anyone. For example, feeling a little stress about a test that's coming up can motivate you to study hard. But stressing

out too much over the test can make it hard to concentrate on the material you need to learn.

- Pressures that are too intense or last too long, or troubles that are shouldered alone, can cause people to feel stress overload. Here are some of the things that can overwhelm the body's ability to cope if they continue for a long time: being bullied or exposed to violence or injury
- Relationship stress, family conflicts, or the heavy emotions that can accompany a broken heart or the death of a loved one

- Ongoing problems with schoolwork related to a learning disability or other problems, such as ADHD (usually once the problem is recognized and the person is given the right learning support the stress disappears)

crammed schedules, not having enough time to rest and relax, and always being on the go. Some stressful situations can be extreme and may require special attention and care. Posttraumatic stress disorder is a very strong stress reaction that can develop in people who have lived through an extremely traumatic event, such as a serious car accident, a natural disaster like an earthquake, or an assault like rape.



CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT



Child Abuse and Neglect Maryland, Prince Georges County and Central High School are taking steps to control child abuse and neglect. It is a state requirement that any report, complaint or suspicion of physical or sexual abuse or neglect of a child must be reported to the Child Protected Services or a

law enforcement agency. Prince Georges Administrative Procedure 5145 requires that a school employee immediately inform his or her supervisor or building principal of suspected child abuse and supply all relevant information about the incident.

It is important that suspected cases of child abuse or neglect be reported to Child Protected Services and should include a completed Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Form PS-60 the same day. The contact for Child Protective Services 301-909-2450, M-F between 8:30 am – 4:40 pm, 301-699-8605 after hours, and 301-699-8605 on weekends. The agency receives complaints on a 24 hour a day basis seven days a weeks. The Child Abuse Report-

ing Forms can be picked up from any counselor at Central High School.

This information applies to all school system employees or volunteers who supervised children. Any abuse such as sexual abuse, physical or mental injury and or neglect of a child must be reported. Maryland, Prince Georges County and Central High School together provides immunity from civil liability or criminal penalty to those who report, in good faith, suspected child abuse or neglect.

**Janice J. Sims,
Professional School Counselor**

Ongoing or long-term events, like coping with a divorce or moving to a new neighborhood or school, can cause stress, too..

What Cause Stress Overload?

Some stressful situations can be extreme and may require special attention and care. Posttraumatic stress disorder is very strong reaction that can develop in people who have lived through an extremely traumatic event; such as a car accident, a natural disaster like an earthquake, or an assault.

What Is Stress?

Stress is a feeling that's created when we react to particular events. It's the body's way of rising to a challenge and preparing to meet a tough situation with focus, strength, stamina, and heightened alertness.

The events that provoke stress are called stressors, and they cover a whole range of situations --everything from outright physical danger to making a class presentation or taking a semester's worth of your toughest subject. The human body responds to stressors by activating the nervous system and specific hormones. The hypothalamus signals the adrenal glands to produce more of the hormones adrenaline and cortisol and release

them into the bloodstream. These hormones speed up heart rate, breathing rate, blood pressure, and metabolism. Blood vessels open wider to let more blood flow to large muscle groups, putting our muscles on alert. The liver releases some of its stored glucose to increase the body's energy. And sweat is produced to cool the body. All of these physical changes prepare a person to react quickly and effectively to handle the pressure of the moment. This natural reaction is known as the fight or flight response. Working properly, the body's stress response enhances a person's ability to perform well under pressure.

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be activated in a milder form at a time when the pressure's on but there's no actual danger like stepping up to take the foul shot that could win the game, getting ready to go to a big dance, or sitting down for a final exam. A little of this stress can help keep you on your toes, ready to rise to a challenge. And the nervous system quickly returns to its normal state, standing by to respond again when needed. But stress doesn't always happen in response to things that are immediate or that are over quickly. Ongoing or long-term events, like coping with a divorce or moving to a new neighborhood or school, can cause stress too. Long-term stressful situations can produce a lasting, low level stress that's hard on people.

SIGNS OF STRESS OVERLOAD

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What Causes Stress Overload?

Although just enough stress can be a good thing, stress overload is a different story -- too much stress isn't good for anyone. For example, feeling a little stress about a test that's coming up can motivate you to study hard. But stressing out too much over the test can make it hard to concentrate on the material you need to learn. Pressures that are too intense or last too long, or troubles that are shouldered alone, can cause people to feel stress overload. Here are some of the things that can overwhelm the

body's ability to cope if they continue for a long time:

- being bullied or exposed to violence or injury
- relationship stress, family conflicts, or the heavy emotions that call accompany
- a broken heart or the death of a loved one
- ongoing problems with schoolwork related to a learning disability or other problems, such as ADHD (usually once the problem is recognized and the person is given the right learning support the stress disappears)
- crammed schedules, not having enough time to rest and relax, and always being on the go

Some stressful situations can be extreme and

may require special attention and care. Posttraumatic stress disorder is a very strong stress reaction that can develop in people who have lived through an extremely dramatic event-- such as a serious ear accident, a natural disaster like an earthquake, or an assault like rape.

Some people have anxiety problems that can cause them to overreact to stress, making even small difficulties seem like crises. If a person frequently feels tense, upset, worried, or stressed, it may be a sign of anxiety. Anxiety problems usually need attention, and many people turn to professional.

Get a good night's sleep. Getting





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(301) 499-7080 Main Office
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(301) 499-7087 Fax

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE SCHOOL'S COUNSELING DEPARTMENT

CYBER ETIQUETTE FOR TEENS

Falcon Facebookers and Tweeters, social media websites can be our best friend as well as our worst enemy. Colleges, Universities, and employers can have access to your Facebook Page and Twitter Account. Review and follow these Top 10 Cyber Etiquette Rules in order to have a positive social media relationship.

Top 10 Cyber Etiquette Tips:

1. Exercise the Golden Rule - Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. If you wouldn't speak to the person that way face to face then don't do it online.
2. Remember everything you post online is public. It doesn't matter whether or not you delete the message or text. If you've published it it's traceable. When you post things online your creating a cyber fingerprint.
3. DON'T USE ALL CAPS when you're emailing or posting something. All CAPS is a form of internet shouting.
4. Speak kindly, remember it may look like a screen in front of you but there's another person on the receiving end.

5. Don't post things when you're angry. It's never a good idea to post something when you're emotional. Take some time to clear your head before you deal with the situation this will help you refrain from saying something that you later regret.

6. Use different usernames and passwords. Don't use the same one all the time. Many teens use the same username and password for all of their sites and this is not a good idea. If someone figures out your security information then they'll have access to everything. It's best to set-up different usernames and passwords for maximum protection.

7. Don't make up silly email addresses. You will use your email address for college applications, job applications, resumes, and scholarship opportunities. Look at your email address does it set a good impression? If not, reset it.

8. Don't post pictures of yourself or others unless you mind them being shared with everyone. Be very selective of what you upload on the computer. Always have your parents review it before you post it. If your parents don't approve then you shouldn't be putting it on the internet. If it's a friend's photo then ask yourself if their parents

would want that photo posted. If the answer's "no" then don't publish it.

9. Don't talk to strangers. Don't get into chat rooms and reveal confidential things about yourself. You may feel that you know the person on the other end of your cyber connection but he/she can be a phony.

10. Don't give out personal and confidential information online. Never share your full name, home address, phone number, Social Security number, passwords, names of family members, or credit card numbers.

Bonus Tip:

Set time parameters on how long you're on the computer. The computer will never take the place of a person. Too much of anything is unhealthy so don't let cyberspace consume your life.

It's important that we help maintain an appropriate balance between computer use and face to face interaction. While technology is exciting and constantly changing, one thing remains the same - we need to know how to interact with one another. Teach your teen to use and not abuse technology.

References:

The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation - <http://www.kff.org/entmedia/mh012010pkq.cfm>

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enough sleep helps keep your body and mind. People who are experiencing stress overload may notice some of the following signs: anxiety or panic attacks a feeling of being constantly pressured hassled, and hurried irritability and moodiness physical symptoms, such as stomach problems, headaches, or even chest pain allergic reactions, such as eczema or asthma problems sleeping drinking too much, smoking, overeating, or doing drugs sadness or depression. Everyone experiences stress a little differently. Some people become angry and act out their stress or problems. And some people who have a chronic illness may find that the symptoms of their illness flare up under an overload of stress.

Keep Stress Under Control

What can you do to deal with stress overload or, better yet, to avoid it in the first place? The most helpful method of dealing with stress is learning how to manage the stress that comes along with any new challenge, good or bad. Stress-management skills work best when they're used regularly, not just when the pressure's on. Knowing how to "de-stress" and doing it when things are relatively calm can help you get through challenging circumstances that may arise.

Here are some things that can help keep stress under control:

Take a stand against over scheduling. If you're feeling stretched, consider cutting out an activity or two, opting for just the ones that are most important to you. Be realistic. Don't try to be perfect. And expecting others to be perfect can add to your stress level, too (not to mention put a lot of pressure on them!). If you need help on something, like school-work, ask for it. making you better equipped to deal with any negative stressors. Because the bipolar "clock" shifts during adolescence, many teens prefer staying up a little later at night little later in the morning. But if you stay up late and still need to get up early and not get all the hours of sleep you need. Learn to relax. The body's natural antidote to stress is called the relaxation response. It's your body's opposite of stress, and it creates a sense of well-being and calm. The chemical benefits of the relaxation response can be activated simply by relaxing. You can help trigger the relaxation response by learning simple breathing exercises and then using them when you're caught up in stressful situations. (Click on the button to try one.) And ensure you stay relaxed by building time into your schedule for activities that are calming and pleasurable: reading a good book or making time for a hobby, spending time with your pet, or just taking a relaxing bath. Treat your body well. Experts agree that getting regular exercise helps people manage stress. (Excessive or compulsive exercise can contribute to stress, though, so as in all things, use moderation.) Always eat well to help your body get the right fuel to function at its best. It's easy when you're stressed out to eat on the run or eat junk food or fast food. But under stressful conditions, the body needs its vitamins and minerals more than ever. Some people may turn to substance abuse as a way to ease tension. Although alcohol or drugs may seem to lift the stress temporarily, relying on them to cope with stress actually promotes more stress because it wears down the body's ability to bounce back. Watch what you're thinking. Your outlook, attitude, and thoughts influence the way you see things. Is your cup half full or half empty? A healthy dose of optimism can help you make the best of stressful circumstances. Even if you're out of practice, or tend to be a bit of a pessimist, everyone can learn to think more optimistically and reap the benefits. Solve the little problems, Learning to solve everyday problems can give you a sense of control. But avoiding them can leave you feeling like you have little control and that just adds to stress. Develop skills to calmly look at a problem, figure out options, and take some action toward a solution. Feeling capable of solving little problems builds the inner confidence to move on to life's bigger ones -- and it can serve you well in times of stress.

Build Your Resilience

Ever notice that certain people seem to adapt quickly to stressful circumstances and take things in stride? They're cool under pressure and able to handle problems as they come up. Researchers have identified the qualities that make some people seem naturally resilient even when faced with high levels of stress. If you want to build your resilience, work on developing these attitudes and behaviors: Think of change as a challenging and normal part of life. Believe that you will succeed if you keep working toward your goals. Take action to solve problems that crop up. Build strong relationships and keep commitments to family and friends. Have a support system and ask for help. Participate regularly in activities for relaxation and fun. Learn to think of challenges as opportunities and stressors as temporary problems, not disasters. Practice solving problems and asking others for help and guidance rather than complaining and letting stress build. Make goals and keep track of your progress. Make time for relaxation. Be **optimistic**. Believe in yourself. Be sure to breathe. And let a little stress motivate you into positive action to reach your goals.

Dr. Patricia Swinton,
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