

Parent Power



Fall 2007

Did you know?

The sentence "The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog" uses every letter of the alphabet.



"The highest result of education is tolerance"

Helen Keller

Parent Power
is now online!



www.co.franklin.pa.us

Kickoff a Stress-Free School Year

For many children, the first day of school can be a source of anxiety with homework assignments and tests just around the corner. Starting the school year off on the right foot can help minimize a child's stress level throughout the year.

The experts at Sylvan Learning Center suggest parents help their children prepare for the return to school by encouraging a structured routine and staying actively involved in their child's education. Sylvan offers these tips and ideas to make the transition from summer to school easier:

- **Designate a specific time and place for homework** that is a consistent, quiet place for your child to study. Make sure the area is free from distractions and that study tools are at your child's fingertips.
 - **Stay on schedule.** Your child should keep a schedule of all classes, assignments, project deadlines, test dates, times for studying, and extracurricular activities. The more thorough the schedule, the more efficient your child will be. This will also minimize late night homework, cramming for tests, and anxiety.
 - **Emphasize organization.** Color-coded binders for each subject might help some students stay on track. Keeping notes organized helps test preparation later in the year. Work with your child to determine the best method to get and stay organized.
 - **Encourage learning at home.** Learning outside of the classroom helps children perform better in school. To nurture reading skills spend at least 10 to 15 minutes a day reading with your child. To enhance math skills, allow your child to help plan the next family trip and compute miles, cost of gas, and the other expenses.
- Article contributed by Heather Drachbar and Tammy Costolo of Sylvan Learning Center, Chambersburg PA

bullying

The School Bully Can Take a Toll on Your Child's Mental Health

Ask any child what a bully looks like and he or she is likely to describe someone who is bigger and stronger. Yet, while bullies certainly are known for their ability to over-power others physically, mentally bullying can be just as damaging to children.

When children are picked on by bullies, whether physically or mentally, many feel the need to suffer in silence for fear that speaking up will provoke further torture. But bullying is not a problem that usually takes care of itself. Action needs to be taken. Parents and care-givers are sometimes reluctant to intervene in conflicts between children, but they *can* teach children *not* to take part in - or become victims of - bullying. Children can be taught to assert themselves effectively.

If your child feels he or she is a victim or witness to acts of bullying, contact his or her teacher or guidance counselor. You can also go to www.mentalhealth.org/child to access free publications from the federal center for mental health services.



Take Action Against Bullying

If you suspect your child is being bullied:

- Make sure your child knows being bullied is not his or her fault.
- Let your child know that he or she does not have to face being bullied alone.
- Discuss ways of responding to bullies.
- Teach your child to be assertive.
- Tell your child not to react, but to walk away and get help if pursued.

For more information: 1-800-789-2647
www.samhsa.gov www.modelprogramssamhsa.gov

Basic Tools for Tolerance

Submitted by
Stan Shilling, CASD, K-12 Counseling Supervisor

Teach our children to learn before they judge.

Help our children to focus on what they have in common with others rather than on their differences.

Practice respecting differences.



Learn about other cultures through reading, watching a movie, viewing artwork, eating food and asking questions from individuals of another culture.

As adults, we need to be cautious of what we do and say that our children learn from.

Encourage our children to openly discuss stereotypes and how this affects our relationships and our community.

Teach our children about friendships and how the qualities that promote these relationships are more important than any of the differences associated with under-represented populations.

Teach our children socially appropriate and healthy ways to resolve conflicts.

Have a child become a Pen Pal with a child from a different culture.

Promote positive sportsmanship during athletic events.

Ensure that our children have a means of reporting bullying and harassment.

Expose our children to volunteering opportunities, especially with under-represented populations.



Encourage our children to do random acts of kindness.

Your Child's Mental Health

WHAT EVERY FAMILY SHOULD KNOW



Mental health is how we think, feel, and act in order to face life's situations. It is how we look at ourselves, our lives, and the people we know and care about. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, evaluate our options, and make choices. Like physical health, mental health is important at every stage of life. Everyone has mental health.

MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

It's easy for parents to recognize when a child has a high fever. A child's mental health problem may be more difficult to identify. Mental health problems can't always be seen. But the symptoms can be recognized.



You may notice behaviors in your child that puzzle, annoy, or even frighten you.

Mental health problems can be diagnosed because mental health professionals have studied and documented the symptoms. Some of these problems are depression, anxiety, conduct, eating, and attention deficit/hyperactivity disorders.

Mental health problems affect one in every five young people at any given time. An estimated two-thirds of all young people with mental health problems are not getting the help they need.

Many children and adolescents have periods of emotional stress that would benefit from short-term treatment, but those problems would not necessarily result in a "diagnosable" mental health problem.

Examples of these mental health problems may include grieving the recent loss of a loved one or improving family relationships.

THE CAUSES

We don't know all the causes of mental health problems in young people. We do know that both environment and biology can be involved. Examples of biological causes are genetics, chemical imbalances, and damage to the central nervous system. The medical profession refers to these as neurobiological brain disorders.

Many environmental factors can put children at risk. For example, children who are exposed to violence, abuse, neglect, lead poisoning, or loss of loved ones through death, divorce, or broken relationships are more at risk for mental health problems. Other risk factors include rejection because of race, sexual orientation, religion, or poverty.



The National Mental Health Information Center has information that can help you find the services your family may need. It has

trained specialists that can give you useful information about service providers, organizations, and other local and national resources that can help you.

It's confidential, and it's free.

Call: 800.789.2647 / (TDD): 866.889.2647

<http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov>

SAMHSA's National

Mental Health Information Center

P.O. Box 42557, Washington, DC 20015

Manito, Inc. ESCAPE Parent-Child Center Offers No-cost Classes for Parents

Coming SOON: Anger Management Workshops!

General Parenting-6 weeks

Location: Christ United Methodist Church, Waynesboro

When: Mondays Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, Nov. 5

Time: 6-8pm

Peaceful Solutions for Parents of Teenagers-5 weeks

Location: Cedar Street Mennonite Church, Chambersburg

When: Tuesdays Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

Time: 6-9:15pm

Parents of Children ages Birth-5 years old-6 weeks

Location: Cedar Street Mennonite Church, Chambersburg

When: Thursdays Oct. 11, 18, 25, Nov. 1, 8, 15

Time: 6-8pm

Peaceful Solutions for Parents of Teenagers-5 weeks

Location: Christ United Methodist Church, Waynesboro

When: Tuesdays Nov. 6, 13, 20, 27, Dec. 4

Registration required.
Call 263-7707
Child care is available.

Manito now offers
Parent Coaching!
Call 263-7707
for information.

Conversation Starters... some questions and statements to get some talk started!

- Where would you go if you could travel anywhere?
- What makes you scared?
- What do you love about school/work?
- What makes you laugh?
- Do you learn more when you win or lose? Why?
- What was the best thing that happened to you today?

Above questions from *15+ Take Time to Listen ...Take Time To Talk* . www.samhsa.gov

Banana Split Cereal Who said banana splits were for dessert?

Yogurt, cereal, and fruit combine to make a powerhouse breakfast!

You will need:

1 small, ripe banana

1/2 cup fresh blueberries or other fresh fruit

1/2 cup nonfat or low-fat vanilla yogurt

1/2 cup low-sugar cereal (Cheerios, Wheaties, Grape Nuts, etc.)

Peel the banana & slice it lengthwise. Then spoon the yogurt in a mound in the center of a cereal bowl. Sprinkle the cereal on top of the yogurt and arrange the banana halves on either side of the yogurt.

Sprinkle the top with the blueberries or other fruit.



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Check out these cool websites!

wiredkids.org

lots of info on internet safety, games, and activities for the whole family.

inventionatplay.org

part of the Smithsonian National Museum of History site, explores invention and encourages inventive creativity!

5aday.gov

kid-friendly recipes and more.

