

Bullying: What To Watch *Helping Parents Understand the Signs*

Has your child suddenly had declining grades or unexplained injuries? Have they purposely been trying to avoid school? They could be the victims of bullying.

"Bullying is a widespread problem among children, especially teenagers," says Beth Nauert, M.D., a Texas pediatrician. "Bullying should always be taken very seriously by parents, educators, and the authorities."

BULLYING SIGNS

Children who are bullied are repeatedly exposed to aggressive, negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and have difficulty defending themselves, says Dr. Nauert.

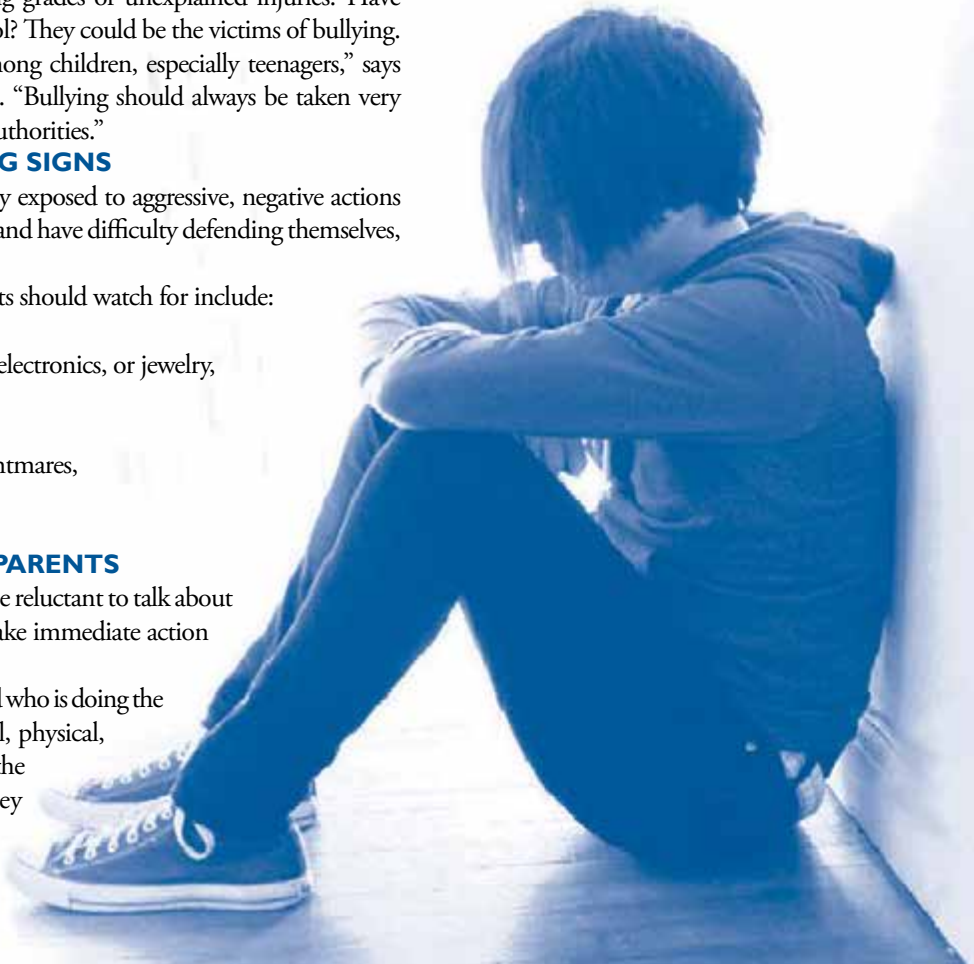
Some clear signs of bullying that parents should watch for include:

- unexplainable injuries,
- lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics, or jewelry,
- feeling sick or faking illness,
- changes in eating habit,
- difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares,
- not wanting to go to school,
- running away from home.

ACTION PLAN FOR PARENTS

Because children who are bullied may be reluctant to talk about it, parents who suspect bullying should take immediate action to help their children, says Dr. Nauert.

"Parents need to find out from their child who is doing the bullying, whether the bullying was verbal, physical, or cyberbullying, and where and when the bullying is happening," she says. "They should then speak with their teacher, principal, school administrators, or local law enforcement."



October is National Bullying Prevention Month

The Forum

NEWSLETTER INFO

NEWSLETTER

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The goal is to fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9. Each digit may appear only once in each row, each column, and each 3x3 box.

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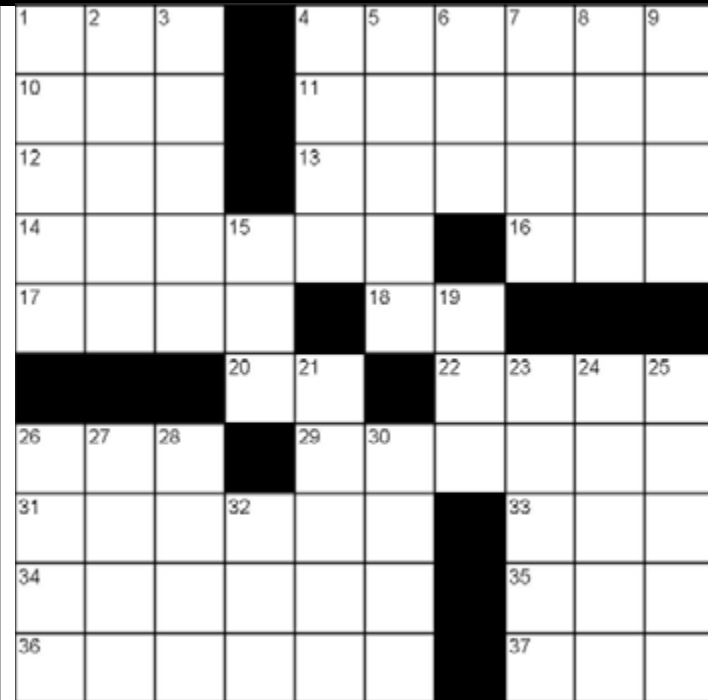
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ACROSS

1. Legume
4. Rolled up paper
10. Carry
11. Irrational fear
12. Wing
13. Animal disease
14. Gentle breeze
16. Eastern Time
17. Region
18. Military policeman (abbr.)
20. Deutschmark (abbr.)
22. Meat alternative
26. Slumber
29. Bayer's competitor
31. Pilot
33. Pull
34. Seed remover
35. East northeast
36. Gully
37. Little bit

DOWN

1. Shopping mall
2. Swiss mathematician
3. Open
4. Energetic
5. Amulet
6. Fleece
7. Off-Broadway award
8. Fish stories
9. Endure
15. Held
19. School group
21. Nautical "friend"
23. Eight
24. Female singer ____ Apple
25. Single
26. Space ship builders
27. Declare positively
28. Landing
30. Roman emperor
32. Hoopla

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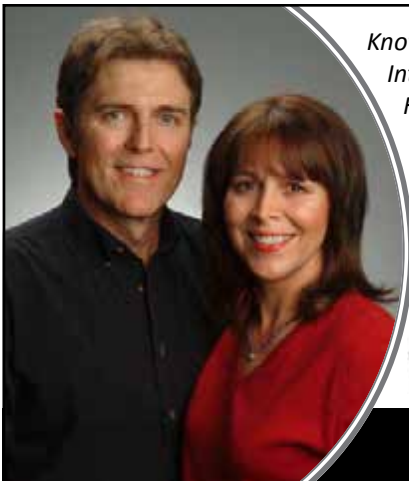
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Halloween Tips

PORCH LIGHTS - a porch light on means fair game for Trick-Or-Treating. If you are not distributing candy or are done for the evening, please turn your lights off. And Trick-Or-Treaters...if you see a porch light off, be respectful and move on to the next illuminated house.

HELLO? - Knock or ring the bell no more than twice. If the door isn't answered within a minute despite the porch light being on, assume you've gotten one of those folks who didn't read Tip 1.

FRIGHTENING LIMITS - If you are the person who wants to jump out of the coffin tucked in the corner of your front porch, please make sure that the age of the 'victim' is appropriate. While pee will wash off concrete, you might ruin the night for a dressed up 2 year-old princess.

WALKING - Stay on sidewalks or pathways. Don't take short cuts through lawns or flowerbeds.

Manners matter - Saying "Trick-or-Treat" before and "Thank You" afterward is a small price for collecting free candy on Halloween.

GAME OVER - Don't Trick-or-Treat after 9pm. Families with children or older people may well be in bed after that.

TRAFFICKING - Vehicles: drive extra slow and look for kids. Chaperones/Kids: Stay off roads as much as possible.

BLINDED BY THE LIGHT - Glow sticks, reflectors, flashlights - all are good to make your kids visible to anyone who fails at Tip 6.

FLAME OFF!! - Jack-o-lanterns/candles set a spooky mood, but open flames near dangling costume sleeves and flammable accessories is dangerous. Consider battery-powered tea lights.

THANKS... - If you're going to give out goodies to Trick-or-Treaters, buy individually wrapped treats. Save special homemade goodies and fresh fruit as presents for the folks you know rather than strangers who are coming to your door Trick-or-Treating.

R-E-S-P-E-C-T - Not everyone celebrates the holiday, or celebrates it in the same way you do. We live in a community with diverse beliefs and views. Please show respect as you yourself would want to be respected.

DON'T SCARE THE LITTLE ONES TOO BADLY! - If you've got a really creepy costume to answer the door, or you decorate your house from sidewalk to front porch in graveyard chic - remember that what can be delightfully frightening to older kids and adults can terrify toddlers and young kids. Before jumping out of bushes, screaming when you open doors or leaping out of fake coffins at Trick-or-Treaters, take a quick glance to make sure they're of an appropriate age-group to enjoy such a scare. Save the best frights for those who can really appreciate them. You'll have more fun, and the parents of the little kids will be grateful. Having to take home a hysterical Trick-or-Treater who has been scared witless on their first time out is no fun for anyone.



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End of Summer Home Maintenance Tips

Submitted by Eric Hegwer

As the weather begins to cool in Central Texas, and the brutally hot days of August are behind us, now is the time to take care of all those little items that you've been putting off in favor of staying inside your air conditioned living room.

Each of these projects is inexpensive, easy, and you can easily accomplish several in a weekend.

LANDSCAPING

Pull up some weeds, lay down some mulch, and prune back the plants. Hire some neighbor kids to rake the leaves. The end of the summer is also a great time to fertilize for the fall/winter dormant season for native Texas plants.

CLEAN GUTTERS AND DOWNSPOUTS

Clogged gutters can overflow, potentially causing damage to the wood fascia around your home. Cleaning your gutters is easy, but does involve climbing up a ladder and scooping out some gross stuff. If you aren't comfortable with heights or don't know how to use a ladder, hire a pro. Scoop out the dirt, leaves, and debris, and wash everything clean with water from a hose.

OUTDOOR PAINTING AND TOUCHUPS

Walk around your house and look for any areas that need touch ups, are peeling, or look rough. Carefully scrape or sand the area, prime, and paint with the matching color to complete the repair.

CAULKING AND SEALING

Check key areas around windows and doors for gaps. Cracks can cause leaks and higher energy bills and can be easily repaired with caulk or expanding foam. Also, check for loose trim boards, and re-attach them as necessary.

ASPHALT AND CONCRETE REPAIR

To prevent shifting and tilting of driveways and sidewalks, reseal asphalt every two years and fill cracks in concrete with epoxy.

Maintaining your home doesn't have to be difficult. Especially when you catch problems early and fix them. In doing so, you will increase your home's value and prevent costly repairs down the road. If you aren't able to do this work yourself, hire a professional or inquire with your neighborhood HOA to see if any able bodied neighbors can help.

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Boo! What are you going to be for Halloween? Sometimes, it can be fun to dress up as a group. Maybe your brothers, sisters, friends - or even parents - will want to join in the fun. Here are some costume ideas for groups of two or more.

- sun and moon
- winter, spring, summer, and fall
- salt and pepper shakers
- a toothbrush and a tube of toothpaste
- cop and robber
- doctor and patient
- veterinarian and animal (dog, cat, or bunny)
- fireman and fire dog (dalmatian)
- fisherman and fish
- squirrel and nut
- teacher and student
- pilgrim and Indian (or turkey!)
- prince and princess (or king and queen)
- cowboy and horse (or cowboy and cowgirl)
- dog and bone (Arf! Arf!)
- Santa and elf (or Mrs. Claus)
- macaroni and cheese
- Flopsy, Mopsy, and Cottontail (from Peter Rabbit)
- Dorothy, the Tin Man, the Scarecrow, the Lion, and Toto (from the Wizard of Oz)
- Sonny and Cher (ask your parents!)
- vampire and bat
- burger and fries
- peanut butter and jelly
- three blind mice
- three little bears
- three little pigs

And no matter what you dress up as, please be safe while you're haunting the neighborhood!



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