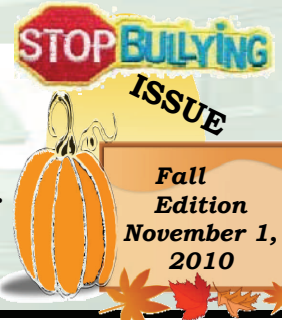




Principal Peteani Press

Mission Statement:

Every student will graduate prepared for college, career and citizenship.



"Children who bully often lack the ability to understand how others might feel...let your child know how important it is to respect other peoples' boundaries, belongings and especially the feelings of others." (Mann, Katie, 2009, Getting Bullied, pg.34, Shining Lion).

Dear Heatly Parents and Guardians:

I decided to focus this issue of my newsletter on the very serious issue of school bullying. Bullying seems to be on the rise everywhere and is a **"hot topic"** in the news media right now due to a rise in the incidents of teen suicide related to bullying, otherwise know as bullycide. As principal, I have noticed an increase in bullying behavior at Heatly and wanted you, as parents and guardians, to be aware of strategies and preventive measures you can use with your children to help identify and combat school bullying. Please contact me immediately if you know of any issues of school bullying. We need to work together to stop bullying!

Nine Things Every Parent Can Do To Prevent School Bullying

(Adapted from <http://www.tonic.com/article/nine-things-every-parent-can-do-to-prevent-bullying>)

1. **Be aware that prevention is always best.** Children of any age are much less likely to become targets of bullying or bullies themselves if they have high self-esteem. Model self-value, praise your child often, acknowledge their strengths and accomplishments and create opportunities to experience things they do well to build their confidence.
2. **Be proactive in your child's school.** Not all of us have time to serve on the PTO, but a great proactive step can come in the form of a letter or email to the head of the PTA that is also copied to a school administrator. It should clearly express the need for the development of a bullying prevention program in your child's school. [Bullypolice.org](http://www.bullypolice.org) can also be a great resource for you. This watchdog organization advocates for bullied children and reports on every state's anti-bullying laws. ****The Heatly School Safe Schools Committee will be working on an Anti-Bullying Policy.**
3. **Keep your eyes and ears open.** Every time you have the opportunity to observe your child interacting with other children, do so. This will help you to identify who their peers are and their level of comfort, confidence and authenticity when dealing with them. It may also provide the opportunity to spot bullies in the mix.
4. **Never forget that communication is key.** Establishing open lines of communication with your child is an essential component of effective parenting. That is especially true when it comes to the prevention, early detection and working as a team to bring the bullying to an end. A child is usually reluctant to talk to adults about bullying because he/she fears it will make the situation worse. Acknowledge your child's concern, reassure him/her of your commitment to handling the situation in a way that won't make it worse and commit to taking steps as a team.
5. **Seek the right help.** If your child is being bullied, contact the counselor at your child's school or a teacher with whom you and ideally your child, have a good rapport. Reaching out to an adult in the school who really knows and cares about your child as an individual will often yield more effective action.
6. **Educate yourself and your child on cyberbullying.** Online bullying is most common among pre-adolescents and teens and involves attacks in the form of distribution of humiliating photos, dissemination of false or private information and targeting individuals in cruel online polls. Because this is a time when peer influence and judgment is paramount, cyberbullying can impact a victim's emotional health well into their adult life. Before you permit your child to have a cell phone or open a Facebook or similar account, explain real-life consequences of being cyberbullied or participating — actively or as a bystander — in cyberbullying. Then, create a set of guidelines in writing. These should consist of your clear expectations such as treating others as you wish to be treated and requiring that they let you know immediately if they become a target of cyberbullying so you can address the situation quickly and effectively together.
7. **Never advocate fighting fire with fire.** Under no circumstances should you encourage your child to deal with bullying by bullying back. This will only perpetuate the cycle and really wipes out an opportunity to gain effective tools for dealing with bullying behavior, which may come in various forms throughout your child's life. After all, most of us have experienced a co-worker, employer, professor or even family member who exhibited some form of bullying behavior that we had to find constructive ways of dealing with.
8. **Be aware of signs that your child may be a bully.** If you are going to be dedicated as a parent to ending bullying, it will be necessary for you to be just as diligent if your child is the bully. Warning signs include a tendency to deliberately exclude, humiliate, physically harm or spread rumors about other children. Even the earliest signs of this behavior should be addressed by clearly communicating that this behavior is not acceptable. Additionally, it is extremely important that efforts be made to get to the root of the bullying through conversations with your child and the assistance of a child psychologist if necessary.
9. **Seize the teachable moment.** If a silver lining can be found here, it is in the opportunity to educate your child about human behavior. Help your child understand that people of all ages who treat other people poorly usually don't like themselves very much or are unhappy with some core aspect of their lives. This perspective may help them to realize that the bullying is much more about the bully and not about something that is wrong with them. This can help prevent the tendency to blame themselves, which can in turn, can cause further serious blows to their self-esteem.

STOP cyberbullying

According to the Cyber Bullying Research Center, cyber bully victims are almost twice as likely to attempt suicide compared to those who have not endured such bullying. It is estimated that 85 percent of bullying goes on without anything being done about it. Because almost all cyber bullying occurs off school grounds, teachers and school administrators may not be able to intervene and many times police won't get involved because no "official crime" has been committed. Sadly, parents are almost never aware of what is happening.

Ron Collins of RemoveItNow.com says that their goal is not only to provide resources for victims of cyber bullying, but to also reach out to parents of cyber bullies. In order to reduce the incidents of cyber bullying, total parent participation is needed.

So, what can parents do?

- **Have your children take you to the sites they frequently visit and show you what they do on those sites.**
- **Have your children show you their profile on social networking sites to make sure it is both accurate and appropriate.**
- **Check your children's "friends list" on various accounts and make sure you recognize the identity of each "friend."**
- **Make sure you stress with your children the importance of never sharing their passwords with ANYONE so that they don't risk someone impersonating them.**
- **Encourage school age children to change their passwords regularly.**
- **Teach school age children to encrypt access to their phone and computer.**
- **Have a very serious conversation with them about "sexting," the risky practice of sending sexually explicit photos or messages that can be easily forwarded without their knowledge.**
- **Establish a family policy for acceptable computer use.**
- **List what may or may not be done on the computer.**
- **Include clear rules about time limits.**

Adapted from: <http://www.free-press-release.com/news-10-tips-to-help-parents-prevent-cyber-bully-attacks->

STOP CYBER BULLYING

Bullying through email,
through instant messaging,
in a chat room
on a website or gaming site,
through digital messages or
images sent on a cellular phone ;>



Governor Paterson Signs

"Dignity For All Students Act"

On September 8, 2010, Governor David A. Paterson signed into law the Dignity For All Students Act, which will help ensure that school administrators and educators have the tools and resources in place to afford all students—and particularly those that are targeted by bullies—an educational environment in which they can thrive. "Every student has the right to a safe and civil educational environment, but far too often young people are ruthlessly targeted by bullies," Governor Paterson said. "Bullying and harassment have disrupted the education of too many young people, and we in government have the responsibility to do our part to create learning environments that help our children prosper. I am proud to sign this bill into law as it will help ensure that students from harassment, discrimination and bullying on school grounds and at school functions." (<http://www.state.ny.us/governor/press/090810-DignityStudentsAct.html>)

Snapshots at jasonlove.com



Bullying is NEVER OK and there isn't ANY excuse for it!

"Oh, heavens no. I was merely speaking figuratively when I said that I was going to break every bone in his body."

Important Dates to Remember!

- November 2—No School for Students (Full Day Off) —Teachers' Conference
- November 3—School Picture Day
- November 10—Go Home Drill, K-6 at 2:20 pm, 7-12 at 2:16 pm
- November 11—No School Veterans' Day
- November 18—1/2 Day of School for Students in Grades K-6 with Dismissal at 11:00 am
- November 19— Full Day of School— Listed as 1/2 day in Error
- November 24-26—No School Thanksgiving Break

Have a Happy Thanksgiving!

PLEASE NOTE: The computer should not be allowed in your child's bedroom. Have the computer set up in a highly visible area such as the living room or family room.

