



# WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 9, 2010

On January 27, I attended a seminar on bullying. The presenter was Rosalind Wiseman, the author of “Queen Bees and Wannabes” and several other books about children and how they act. It is important to know the signs of bullying. Every 7 minutes a child is bullied. It is a growing problem especially with the advancement in technology. It is far more likely for girls to bully others using social networking sites, instant messenger, and texting. She brought up supporting House Bill 1523 which is to revise the pupil safety and violence prevention act. Schools try to prevent information that they do not want coming in by installing firewalls which are no good anymore due to cell phones. As soon as children can begin using technology they can abuse it. When children are given the privilege of using technology it is prime time to tie in family values.

Many schools put up posters or banners in regards to acting kindly towards others but these do no good unless there are people (teachers, parents, etc) who are modeling the behaviors they expect from children. The most important time to model respect is when parents are angry or hateful towards someone. Children can be relationally aggressive at 4-5 years old. Children have grown up in a society in which you must be feared to be respected. The Latin meaning for respect is “look back at past achievements”. There is no excuse for bad manners. A good method for parents, if they have the available resources, is to sit down with their child and find someone that they both agree is trustworthy and a good role model that the child can go and talk to because many children may be uncomfortable going to their parent(s), like an ally. It is also good for children to have a friend who is not afraid to have their back in terms of letting each other know if they are doing something that is wrong. Children need to feel competent in their abilities.

One mistake many parents make is when a child is “talented” at something (e.g. music, sports, art, etc) many overwork children in the area and then it kills the child’s joy. Children are growing older but are not gaining maturity. Meanness is a bi-product of pushing kids to act older than they really are.

80% of children have cell phones. It is inevitable that children will deal with conflict. Children need to be able to competently deal with conflict and technology. Social and academic competence goes together. Many people brush off cyber bullying and tell children to ignore it,

not realizing that it hurts just as much as face-to-face bullying. Many parents tell children to “just be nice to them”, “ignore it”, “just hit them back”, these are **not good!** When a socially aggressive child is bullying and the victim tries to be nice, it comes off as weakness and takes away their dignity. Ignoring the bully is never a good response because it strips away the underlying message of what children are trying to tell the adult they have gone to, they are asking for help because they are getting hurt. Hitting back is no good either. It tells the child that you do not understand them and it also gives the message that bullying is okay. The child also risks the consequences of them getting caught retaliating and schools tend not to see the victims side of it and never respond to the initiator of the conflict. Many schools say they have a “zero tolerance” policy which is bad because it is like having blinders on.

Rosalind spoke of this practice she uses called S.E.A.L.

S= stopping, breathing, listening to the body, where do I need to confront person

E= explain exactly what I like/don't like, and what I want/ don't want.

A= affirming and acknowledging what you may have done to contribute to the problem

L= locking in/out relationship

Any part of S.E.A.L. that you use is a success. When discussing bullying with children try to keep your own worries inside because children will be less likely to come to you.

Truly listening to what children have to say can be very challenging, especially for parents because there is a lot that they are not going to want to hear which is why having an ally is good. A good practice for anybody is to sit down and make a list of a couple called Unshakeable Unbreakables which are things that you want in a friendship that you must have and you should keep somewhere that you can look at it when you need it.

#### Links on Bullying Information

<http://www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/kids/>

[http://kidshealth.org/teen/school\\_jobs/bullying/bullies.html](http://kidshealth.org/teen/school_jobs/bullying/bullies.html)

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/michelle-renee/bullying-school-texting-c\\_b\\_437476.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/michelle-renee/bullying-school-texting-c_b_437476.html)

[http://www.aacap.org/cs/root/facts\\_for\\_families/bullying](http://www.aacap.org/cs/root/facts_for_families/bullying)

#### Topics in the News

[Child Abuse Drops Sharply in US](#)

[Kids do as well with same-sex parents, study says - Kids and parenting- msnbc.com](#)

[U.S. researchers find new clue to infant deaths](#)

[Studies Reveal Why Kids Get Bullied and Rejected - Children's Health - FOXNews.com](#)

**PSA Section**

[\*\*YouTube - Tolerance PSA: "Dear Parents"\*\*](#)