



## Teaching Your Kids Internet Ethics

Technology in the hands of our children has never been a greater challenge. The internet, Facebook, iPods, pictures and texting on cell phones are the ways kids communicate today. It allows them a private life that most of us know very little about.

The key to how they manage this privacy is our “connection” to them. How closely do we stay in touch with our kids and pay attention to what they’re doing and when and with whom? How often do we talk to our children...and really listen to them? If they trust us and know that we will be there for them, they’re more likely to adhere to the ethics of our family...standards that are never more important than when parents are not around. If we talk openly about what we believe in, what we stand for, before long those values will become their own.

The challenge for parents is that our kids have a whole new set of communication tools and many of these young people don’t fully understand that the old rules apply. We actually need to teach them, explain to them how ethics apply to these tools. “If you wouldn’t wear it in front of your grandmother, don’t wear it to the school or to the dance. If you wouldn’t do it in the middle of a packed football stadium, don’t do it anywhere someone has a camera or a cell phone. If you don’t want that picture on the front page of the newspaper, don’t send it on your cell phone.”

Kids don’t think through the consequences. They don’t think, “If I send this picture to Bobby, he might send it to some friends, who might send it to a hundred others and the next thing you know, it’s on a dozen Facebook sites and all over the internet, forever.” This just doesn’t occur to them; they don’t think that way because they don’t have the life experience that we do. We have to help them.



In the case of cyberbullying, some kids really may be sadistic and mean; however, many of them are just too young, and not well taught to realize the harm they do, and have done.

In the virtual world they are ungoverned. They are left alone in the wilderness of the web where there is no sheriff, no vice-principal, no hall monitor to keep our kids in line. Which means it’s our job as parents.

Since we can’t always be there to see what they write on someone’s Facebook page or in a text message, we have to build within them empathy and a conscience that will serve them when we’re not there.

They cannot feel the pain and tears of the victim because they can’t see it or hear it. We have to teach them, role model for them, describe to them the hurt that you cannot see on the Internet.

(Source: connectwithkids.com; 07/29/11; 09/17/11)

## Bullying Legislation Begins With You

New Jersey’s Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights is putting schools on the spot. It mandates that any teacher who sees or hears of an offensive incident must file a written report within two days. Every school must also have a designated anti-bullying specialist who then opens an investigation.

With or without legislation, schools nationwide are already on the spot. The American Medical Association calls bullying a public health issue. While schools strive to hit benchmarks for academic achievement and student success, the National Association of School Psychologists reports that every school day 160,000 children stay home because they are afraid of getting hurt at school. Something has to change.

The anti-bullying spotlight needs to be on students, parents and communities nationwide — because the real solution can be found in nothing less than cultural change, one person, one family, one classroom at a time. Today’s pervasive culture of cruelty and intense competition (online, in person, in the media) needs to shift to a culture of caring — learning to live from the inside out, motivated by intrinsic rewards of accomplishment and learning rather than the extrinsic rewards of trophies, class rank and test scores.

Many believe that, as a general rule, students today are meaner than they were generations ago. Bullying has changed, perhaps, because we have. Globally, we are more competitive than in any time in history. When kids (and adults) are narcissistic and value competition, materialism, fortune and fame, the end result is a crueler culture. A culture that experts say begins to show problems with conflicts in relationships, with a breakdown in community, and a lack of connection.

How do we encourage a culture of caring that teaches empathy and promotes concern for others rather than just for oneself, a culture that values respect and kindness, and builds a connected community? By each of us learning to live from the inside out, demonstrating and learning from the emotional pay-off of being assertive rather than aggressive, and kind rather than cruel. We need to literally teach kids and help them experience what it means to live in a connected community where you don’t have to watch your back because your friends and family have your back.

Look for opportunities in day-to-day life and provide real-life stories and examples of how students can speak up for themselves without intimidating others. Try to make certain that everyone has at least one friend — someone they can count on that has their back. If you see a student that is completely isolated, try to pair that student with other children who share common interests. Most importantly, teach students that taking care of one another is a priority, at school and at home.



(Source: connectwithkids.com; 09/01/11)

**SAVE  
THE  
DATE!**

In response to the many requests we have received for more information on bullying, SCIP will be hosting an all day conference and evening community forum on March 22, 2012 to address the problem of bullying.

We have invited the parents of an 11 year-old boy, who took his own life as a result of being bullied, to speak. They have accepted our invitation and will also be speaking at the evening community session. These parents are receiving high praise for their presentations.

Other presentations will include topics on the various forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying, laws & legislation and more. More information and registration forms will be forth-coming in January 2012.



## Heavy Methamphetamine, Marijuana Users At Increased Risk of Schizophrenia

Researchers examined medical records of patients admitted to California hospitals over a 10-year period with a diagnosis of dependence or abuse for methamphetamine, marijuana, cocaine, opioids or alcohol, HealthDay reports. The study included 42,412 people in the methamphetamine group, and 23,335 in the marijuana (cannabis) group.

Patients hospitalized for dependence on methamphetamine and who had never been diagnosed with schizophrenia or psychotic symptoms at the beginning of the study were 1.5 to 3 times more likely to be diagnosed with schizophrenia over the course of the study than patients who used cocaine, alcohol or opioids. The risk of schizophrenia in methamphetamine users was similar to the risk seen in heavy marijuana users, the researchers report in the American Journal of Psychiatry.

"We really do not understand how these drugs might increase schizophrenia risk," researcher Dr. Stephen Kish said in a news release. "Perhaps repeated use of methamphetamine and cannabis in some susceptible individuals can trigger latent schizophrenia by sensitizing the brain to dopamine, a brain chemical thought to be associated with psychosis."

(Source: jointogether.org; 11/11/11)

## Family Time...Promises Broken

Spending more time with family ranks as number six on Time magazine's list of the Top Ten broken New Year's resolutions. Experts agree that relationships are the single greatest source of happiness, and, for kids, spending time with family is what makes them happy.

"If you go outside the U.S. you'll find a lot of children in very impoverished places who are very happy because they spend a lot of time with other children and a lot of time with their parents. And so it's not material goods that makes for a happy childhood — and we haven't figured that out yet," says Dr. Peter Whybrow, a psychiatrist and neuroscientist.

Studies indicate today's American teens are more depressed than those of previous generations due to an emphasis on extrinsic values and material desires, rather than a value on relationships and connections that bring happiness. That is really turning the values inside out because, for mental health in the long run, you need to find something you are passionate about and have good relationships with other people.

One relationship-builder is spending family time at more frequent family dinners. According to the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse, teens who eat frequent dinners with their parents are more likely to credit that time spent as the reason they avoid using alcohol and drugs. Having dinner with your family, including your kids, five nights a week, provides amazing results.



And, believe it or not, teens agree. "I'm able to talk with them, I'm able to hang out with them, and when I need to, I'm able to tell them things that some kids wouldn't tell their parents...and there's a definite trust that allows me to feel free to decide to do the right thing," said one teen.

(Source: connectwithkids.com; 03/08/11)

## Prescription Drug Take Back

SCIP staff once again partnered with the Lincoln Police Department for the third DEA National Prescription Drug Take Back on October 29, 2011.



The Take Back was another success, with 2,932 lbs of unused or expired prescription medications collected throughout the state.

SCIP staff provided information on prescription drug abuse and the SCIP Program.

The next Take Back is planned for Spring, 2012. For more information, or to inquire about hosting a collection site in your area, contact your local law enforcement agency or go to the DEA's website: [www.dea diversion.usdoj.gov/drug\\_disposal/takeback/index.html](http://www.dea diversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback/index.html)

## Coming Attraction New Year—New Look!



A decision has been made!

Watch for the new SCIP logo, tagline and brochures to appear!

We have also made a slight change to our program name to better reflect all that we do.

All will be revealed in January 2012!

A big thank you to all of you who shared your comments and input with us...it was invaluable!

## Happy Holidays

Wishing you all a very safe and happy holiday season!



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We **Welcome** the following new schools and behavioral health agencies to the SCIP Program.

- Clearwater Public Schools; Clearwater
- Gibbon Public Schools; Gibbon
- Dawes Middle School; Lincoln
- Everett Elementary School; Lincoln
- Sacred Heart Catholic School; Lincoln
- Counseling & Enrichment Center; Kearney
- Grace Counseling; Wayne
- Associates in Counseling and Therapy; Lincoln

**THANK YOU** for your caring attitude and commitment to the success of the youth in your community!