

Thrive update

 **Boulder Valley** School District
Excellence and Equity

Enhance Inspire
Inform healthy kids make smarter students

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JANUARY 2010

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Model appropriate cell phone etiquette and safety. For example, if you don't want your child texting during dinner or while driving, make sure you're modeling that behavior consistently yourself.

from
Sennen Knauer, M.Ed.
BVSD Counselor Coordinator

>> Keep Our Kids Safe Online

Earlier this year, some female students received some inappropriate email messages from an unknown address. This was all the more surprising and regrettable given that these were fifth grade students. The students reported these messages to their teachers.

Unfortunately, these incidents are common – some studies report that one in four pre-teens and teens have been harassed online through email, instant messaging (IM), or social networking sites. The anonymity of the internet makes cyber-bullying a reality today.

Here are a few ideas from educational and parenting organizations that can help keep our kids safe online:

1. Discuss this topic with your child. You may be surprised to learn that your child already has been a target of cyber-bullying. If so, the most important thing is to find out what kind of bullying is taking place. Are the words just cruel, or are threats involved? If your child is being victimized, make sure he or she lets you know when it's happening.

2. Keep records. Use your computer to copy and print all of the offending IMs or emails, including the "buddy" or "screen" name of the perpetrator. If physical harm is being threatened, you must talk to the police. Although it is difficult to discover the identity of an Internet name, authorities can do so if a life has been threatened.

3. Monitor your children when they are on the computer. Listen for signs that they are being unkind (cruel laughter as they send or read an IM or email), as well as for indications that they are being bullied. Then take action, either through the school or through the authorities.

4. Monitor the amount of time spent on the computer. Experts such as the American Academy of Pediatrics recommend that no more than two hours per day total be spent in front of a television and/or computer screen. Consider the screen time at school in that total as well.

This fall, we were able to identify the individual responsible for these messages and work with the parents to establish the above controls and administer some appropriate consequences. This incident was a learning experience for our families and teachers. We are also grateful that our students knew to report this inappropriate activity to adults they trusted.

We're in a new communication era! It's our duty as parents and educators to make the Internet a safe place for our kids to interact.

by **Jonathan Wolfer**
Principal, Douglass Elementary School, BVSD

>> Cyber-bullying and Internet Safety

“Cyber-bullying” is a form of bullying that relies on the use of internet-connected devices and cell phones to bully and harass others. For many parents it is a new form of harassment but for our children it is an every day part of their lives.

At Monarch K-8 an informal poll indicated that over 90 percent of our eighth-grade students use the internet regularly and have their own personal cell phones. While advances in technology offer many benefits, we as a society are seeing a significant increase in cyber-bullying and harassment. Many of the conflicts among students today involve some type of cyber abuse. In October Monarch K-8 counselor Christine Ross and Interventionist Julie Jungman attended a cyber-bullying workshop sponsored by the Anti Defamation League hoping to learn more about this growing issue. One of the things they learned is that 94 percent of adolescents go online and 43 percent of youth report having been the target of cyber-bullying. Sadly the consequences of cyber-bullying can be devastating including precipitating adolescent suicide.

Experts in this field stress that student and parent education is the key to prevention.

At Monarch K-8, Mrs. Ross and Mrs. Jungman have begun talking to all middle level students about this topic during health/PE classes. The purpose of the lesson is to increase awareness among middle level students about the problem of cyber-bullying and to provide them with strategies to deal effectively with the social pressure that encourages them to participate in online cruelty. Students receive internet safety strategies including how to take care of themselves if they become the target of cyber-bullying.

A brief presentation was also given to parents at a PTA meeting where Internet safety tips and copies of parent/child contracts were available.

The following websites offer excellent information for parents about this current problem:

<http://www.cyberbullying.us>

<http://www.Internetsafetycolorado.org>

<http://www.adl.org>

<http://www.RyanPatrickHalligan.org>

by Christine Ross
Monarch K-8 Counselor

You can only control what happens in your home, so talk, gather information, and even risk looking foolish so your kids stay open. Listen and make technology part of your family 'chat'.

from Mary Ellen Bayko
School Counselor/Psychologist -
Bear Creek Elementary

Key points for parents

- For youth today the use of technology is not an addition to their lives, IT IS THEIR LIVES!
- Cyber-bullying is more pervasive and seriously impacts more young people than other more publicized cyber safety issues.
- The faceless nature of cyber communication makes it easier to be cruel. Body language feedback is missing.
- Parents should become involved and understand the technology that their children are using.
- Clear and enforceable guidelines should be set around use of technology.
- Parents should evaluate carefully if their child has the maturity level to handle access to various technology.

Technology is both wonderful and scary. Our kids are exposed to so much we can't even begin to imagine. Don't be intimidated to have honest conversations about who your kids are communicating with in the cyber-world.

from Nick Vanderpol, M.Ed.
School Counselor -
Centaurus High School

>> Online Reputation Management

As seniors put the final touches on their college applications this year, they have one more thing to worry about -- their social networking pages. A recent study by Kaplan indicates that one in 10 admissions counselors at the country's top 500 colleges use social networking sites like Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter as part of the admissions process. What would admissions counselors find on your student's social networking page? What story do the posted pictures and comments tell about your student? Even if your student is not college bound, they still need to manage their online reputations -- a recent study conducted by Career Builder found that 45 percent of employers are using social networking sites to research job candidates, and 35 percent of those employers have found content on social networking sites that resulted in their decision not to hire a candidate.

Here are some tips to ensure that your student's online life represents the person that they want others to see in their offline life:

- Be careful about the image you portray on your social networking site, blog or webpage. First impressions are very important to the people looking at your online life.
- Set all privacy settings to the highest possible levels.
- Post NO photos of illegal activity, drug use, underage drinking, or violence.
- Be smart about your profile picture and information. **Both private and public colleges and potential employers have the right to look at everything you post online.**
- Don't join or start stupid/inappropriate groups; they can get you into trouble. Humor is a difficult emotion to portray online and your intent to be funny may not be interpreted as such.
- Make your pictures private so only your friends can see them, and only "friend" people you know and trust.
- Google yourself occasionally and look for any inappropriate information that someone else may have posted.
- Know what photos you are "tagged" in on your social network site. "Untag" yourself from anything inappropriate.
- Remember that once you post things online, you lose control of your content, even if you have privacy controls in place.

How you conduct yourself online is every bit as important as how you act in your daily life, and a little bit of caution and common sense in the beginning can save you from having regrets later.

by Jennifer Hanson Korb
BVSD Instructional Technology Specialist
President, Internet Safety Foundation

Have a talk with your kids about internet safety and make your expectations regarding limits clear. Keep communication open regarding sites they go to, games they play, and who they talk to on the internet.

from Justin Pacheck, M.Ed.
School Counselor - Lafayette Elementary and
Nederland Elementary

Become your child's 'Facebook friend'. They don't have to interact with you, but at least they know you are watching and to keep it under control.

from Melissa Glorioso, MSW
School Counselor - Creekside Elementary
and University Hill Elementary

Remember the old-fashioned way that we used to communicate with our parents? Most cell phone plans allow texting to be turned off for certain parts of the day. I guarantee you that if they need to get a hold of you, they will.

from Nick Vanderpol, M.Ed.
School Counselor -
Centaurus High School

Facebook, new cell phones, 'tweeting', email, IM-ing are all great communication tools but nothing beats face to face communication with your child.

from Kristin Borostyan
School Counselor -
Louisville Middle School &
Aspen Creek K-8

Q&A with Dr. J

Q: How do I know when my child is spending too much time on the computer or playing video games?

A: As more people engage in high tech recreation, there are increasing concerns regarding the effects of these activities and the potential harm of excessive computer and video game use. Some of the key factors to consider are:

Time dedicated to computer and video game use: Many experts recommend limiting use to two hours a day. A more practical time guideline can be based on the individual and the impact of use on daily functioning.

Impact on healthy daily functioning: Excessive use is more of a concern if it negatively interferes with school performance, peer socialization, family interaction, exercise/weight control, and interest in other activities.

Behavioral Effects: There are numerous studies that show a correlation between exposure to violent video games and aggressive

thoughts or behavior. None of these studies, however, can demonstrate long-term impacts or conclude that video gaming itself causes aggressive behavior.

What's a parent to do? The first step is to have an open discussion with your children regarding computer and video game use. If your child has a healthy social life and continues to function well at home and in school, simply monitoring use may be sufficient. If the amount of daily use time is excessive and/or you have concerns about your child's social, emotional or behavioral health, try setting clear guidelines. In addition, consider gaming and recreational computer time as a reward for completing homework, household chores, or engaging in prosocial activities. Help your child replace use time with other fun activities. Simply taking away the activity and leaving a vacuum, will likely lead to conflict and efforts to "get around" newly imposed rules.

It is also important to understand that excessive videogame/computer use may be a symptom of underlying emotional issues (e.g. depression, anxiety, social adjustment, etc.). Addressing the surface behaviors without treating these issues will only result in a reoccurrence of the undesired behaviors and/or new ones taking their place. If you have concerns about your child, consider an assessment by a mental health professional to determine the extent of the problem and better understand the underlying issues that may be fueling the behavior.

You can submit your questions directly to me by phone (720-217-3270), fax (720-381-6089), email (Jan.Hittelman@gmail.com), or regular mail (1527 Pine Street, Boulder 80302).

I hope to hear from you soon.

by Jan Hittelman
Licensed Psychologist

>> Cyber Socializing

With an increase in cyber-bullying and cyber-sexting, (sending explicit photos and language), it is important that parents add cyber-communication to the list of safety issues to discuss with the family.

What to Monitor

- Place computers in a central location.
- Limit on-line time. Perhaps additional time could be allowed as a balance for non-internet activities like walking the dog, reading a book, doing homework or yard-work.
- Familiarize yourself with the internet. Take an interest in what your kids frequent. Learn how to check browser histories, set privacy and safe search settings.
- Agree upon acceptable downloads. Credit cards should not be used without your consent.
- Keep passwords private.

Keep all computers in common areas in your home - don't allow them in your child's bedroom. Know their passwords and logins to the sites they're accessing."

from BVSD High School Counselors

Know your child's 'cyber friends' like you know their 'real friends'. To your child, it's the same thing.

from Sage Barber-Smith, M.A., NCC
Manhattan Middle School Counselor

What to Teach

- Once it's sent it can't be retrieved. If your instincts tell you not to say or do something, pay attention. You can't control who will ultimately read your secret, see your photo or witness your written tirade.
- Educate your children regarding what information needs to remain private such as financial information, social security numbers, home addresses, telephone numbers, their age and personal facts about friends and family.
- Inform them that a lot of false information is published.
- Remind them that chat sites are used by strangers. The alleged kid you are chatting with could be anyone.
- Request that an adult be notified if something intimidating has been sent to them on-line.
- If it's not okay at home, it's not okay on-line; no cruelty, no cheating on homework, no pornography.

Basically, parenting in the cyber-age demands the same common-sense approach that life has always demanded of parents:

- Teaching your kids what behavior is acceptable.
- Reinforcing positive behavior and healthy choices.
- Being a good role model.

by Elizabeth Matthews, LPC
Boulder Psychological Services
www.ThumbsUp.us

Talk to your family soon. Some active precautions can prevent reactive regrets.

To learn more, attend one or both of these free panel discussions at the Meadows Branch Library in Boulder starting at 7:00 p.m.:

January 11: Screen Time: TV, videogames & computers. How It Affects Your Child

January 25: The Impacts of Cell Phones & Texting

>>Calendar of Classes & Events

JANUARY 2010

Cultivating Lively Minds

Part of the BVSD series of Brainstorm Panels: Supporting our Non-Traditional Learners

Thursday, January 7, 6:00-8:00 p.m. at the BVSD Education Center, 6500 East Arapahoe Road
Panelists: Dr. Zack Alme, D.C., Wellness Coach; Joanne Neiman, M.A., L.P.C., Psychotherapy – Brainspotting; Judy Converse, MPH, LD, RD, author of *Special Needs Kids Eat Right*; and Linda Cain, MSED, Educational & Therapeutic Consultant. For more information, contact Anna Stewart, Parent Liaison, BVSD Parent Support Center: 720-561-5918 or anna.stewart@bvsd.org

Health Professions Career Fair

Open to all district high school students interested in exploring careers in healthcare

Friday, January 8, 10:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at Monarch High School, 329 Campus Drive, Louisville

Representatives from local post secondary institutions and healthcare facilities will be available to answer questions and provide career path information. A speaker from the Larimer County Coroner's office and the new BVSD health curriculum will be special highlights of the event. Attendees can get transportation to and from the event, a complimentary lunch, and a wide range of door prizes (including a laptop!). For more information, contact either Louise at louise.burger@bvsd.org or Patti at pas843@comcast.net.

Education Matters: Business Leadership Forum 2010

Presented by Impact on Education and the Boulder Chamber of Commerce

Monday, January 11, 7:00-9:00 a.m. at Glenn Miller Ballroom, CU-Boulder
Education is the key to our nation's economic success, at home and abroad. Former Denver Public School Superintendent Michael Bennet is now crafting education policy for the nation as a member of the U.S. Senate. Come hear his perspective on why education reform is critical to our economic future. Tickets are \$25 each and include breakfast. To purchase, go to www.boulderchamber.com and click on "Register for Chamber Events."

Pathways to Parenting Success: Screen Time: TV, videogames & computers. How It Affects Your Child

Panelists: Dan Fox, LPC, Linda Cain, MSED, Dr. Jan Hittelman

Monday, Jan. 11, 7:00-8:30 p.m., Meadows Branch Library, Boulder
Participate in a discussion about the effects of screen time on children and adolescent. Learn how to evaluate if your child is spending too much time plugged in. For more information: www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com

THRIVEupdate for BVSD Parents

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Look for us on the web!
www.bvsd.com

>>Calendar of Classes and Events

JANUARY 2010

ADHD Parent Support Meeting (BVSD)

Monday, Jan. 11, 6:00-8:00 p.m., Fireside Elementary School, 845 Dahlia Street, Louisville.

Contact Parent Liaison Anna Stewart for more information: 720-561-5918 or anna.stewart@BVSD.org

PEN Presents*

High Performance Parenting

Wednesday, January 13, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Louisville Middle School Auditorium, 1341 Main Street, Louisville

Back by popular demand, this dynamic presentation by LMS Principal Adam Fels and Counselor David Auday provides practical parenting strategies including how to set limits and boundaries, hold difficult conversations, balance sports and academics, and enhance the relationship with your teen. For more information, contact Nadine Grieshaber at noboc@msn.com or Sara Michaelis at akelly8@gmail.com.

Chaos to Connection Parenting Workshop

Are you looking for a deeper connection with your teen? Do you long for a family that is filled with love and joy rather than chaos and hurt?

This workshop will draw from the Chaos to Connection program to provide supportive practices that can easily be learned and applied throughout the new year and beyond. These practices and steps can help to provide better, more effective ways to address difficult behaviors and topics with your child.

Panelists: Ronna Evans, LCSW and Leslie Potter

Saturday, Jan. 23, 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Eastern Sun Academy, 6717 S. Boulder Rd., Boulder

Call 866-645-1781 or email jramey@vivenow.com to RSVP. This event is free.

Pathways to Parenting Success: The Impacts of Cell Phones & Texting

Discover the positive and negative impacts of cell phone use, reasons for concern and how to intervene when needed.

Panelists: Marcela Ot'alara G., LPC, Ann Kloos, LCSW, Michelle Kaye, LPC

Monday, Jan. 25, 7:00-8:30 p.m., Meadows Branch Library, Boulder

For more information: www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com

BVSD Positive Behavior Support Fair

Monday, Jan. 25, 4:00-6:00 p.m., in the Black Diamond Room, BVSD Education Center, 6500 East Arapahoe

Got PBS? Come to the first annual PBS (Positive Behavior Support) fair and see what's happening around BVSD. Elementary, middle and high schools will display and share their PBS systems for all to see. Whether your school is just thinking about PBS or in full implementation, come see what creative things others are doing and what PBS "looks like" around the district. For more information, contact Kelly Miller, LCSW, Positive Behavior Support Coordinator for BVSD: 303-870-7398 or kelly.miller@bvsd.org.

CAM Mentor Appreciation Night

Tuesday, January 26, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Nissi's Bistro, 2675 North Park Drive, Lafayette.

January is National Mentoring Month and BVSD is celebrating the growing success of its Community Access Mentoring (CAM) program with a big get together that is free and open to all. Current mentors will be honored and BVSD students will perform -- Streetside Studios hip hop dancers and the CAM Doghouse Music Band "Things That Go Boom." Please join us for what is sure to be a fun and inspiring evening. Light hors d'oeuvres will be served and dinners may be purchased.

Community Access Mentoring (also known as "Cool Afterschool Moves") is a grant-funded program that guides, empowers and inspires youth by providing school-based mentoring and afterschool program connections. CAM currently serves students at eight BVSD middle schools and would like to serve more, but they need more mentors. To learn more about CAM, please visit www.bvsd.org/mentor or contact Program Coordinator Dr. Patti Ashley at 720-203-6844 or patti.ashley@bvsd.org.

>>Calendar of Classes and Events

JANUARY 2010

Improving Communication, Responsibility, and Respect through Positive Discipline

Speaker: Dr. Jan Hittleman

Wednesday, January 27, networking 6:30 -7:00 p.m., talk 7:00-8:30 p.m. at Eldorado K-8, 3351 S. Indiana St., Superior. Please contact Sheryl Schwabe at 303-520-6803 or by email at sschwabe@comcast.net for more information and to RSVP.

PEN Presents*

HOPE- You Are Not Alone

Thursday, January 28, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Monarch High School, 329 Campus Drive, Louisville

This interactive gathering for youth and adults provides education and awareness on depression and suicide warning signs, symptoms and treatment. Personal journeys of HOPE featuring youth and adult speakers empower us to be voices of strength in our community. You are not alone! Join together to remove the stigma around depression so that people will view seeking help as a sign of strength and suicide is no longer an option. Sponsored by the HOPE coalition, PEN, Colie's Closet, and the Second Wind Fund of Boulder.

Contact: Betsy Fox at foxbetsyl23@msn.com or 720-563-7007

FEBRUARY 2010

Pathways to Parenting Success: Body Image and Eating Issues

Panelists: Lauri Benblatt, LPC, Marcela Ot'alora G., LPC, Jeffrey Kuhn, LCSW

Monday, Feb. 1, 7:00-8:30 p.m., Meadows Branch Library, Boulder

Increase your understanding of how and why eating disorders develop and learn about effective treatment strategies for these potentially life-threatening issues. For more information: www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com

Pathways to Parenting Success: Cutting and Other Self-Harm Behaviors

Panelists: Lauri Benblatt, LPC, Jeffrey Kuhn, LCSW, Susan Denison, LPC

Monday, Feb. 8, 7:00-8:30 p.m., Meadows Branch Library, Boulder

Self-harm behaviors are often difficult to understand. Learn more about the warning signs and the reasons behind these behaviors. For more information: www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com

ADHD Parent Support Meeting (BVSD)

Monday, Feb. 8, 6:00-8:00 p.m., Fireside Elementary School, 845 Dahlia Street, Louisville.

Contact Parent Liaison Anna Stewart for more information: 720-561-5918 or anna.stewart@BVSD.org

** All PEN events provide free childcare for kids 5 and over and Spanish interpretation upon request. RSVPs are required: For childcare, contact Kathleen Sepeda, kathleen.Sepeda@aol.com, 303-506-8929. For interpretation, contact Eugenia Brady, eugenia.brady@bvsd.org, 720-561-5150.*

>> More helpful information about kids and technology is available in the following resources:

Thrive Handbook (published by BVSD in 2008) – Available online at www.bvsd.org/parents/Pages/thrive.aspx – See pages 61-62.

NET CETERA: Chatting with Kids About Being Online
www.onguardonline.gov

This new 54-page publication from OnGuard Online gives adults practical tips to help kids navigate the online. It is freely available from their website. OnGuard Online is a resource provided by the Federal Trade Commission and made possible by multiple partners in the federal government and technology industry.

Foothills Parenting Classes

Winter 2010

Are you ready to put the fun back into parenting?
Looking for simple and practical skills that can be used immediately?

Add more tools to your parenting tool kit!

Becoming a Love and Logic Parent®

Jan. 20 - Feb. 24 (Wednesdays) 6:30–9:00 pm
Kohl Elementary School,
1000 West 10th Ave., Broomfield
Instructor: Cyndi Goldfarb

Feb. 2 - Mar. 16 (Tuesdays) 6:30–9:00 pm
A Class for Parents of Pre-Teens and Teens
Including one session on Natural Highs
presented by Avani Dilger
New Vista High School,
700 20th Street (at Baseline)
Instructor: Stephanie Bryan

Apr. 7 - May 12 (Wednesdays) 6:00–8:30 pm
Louisville Rec Center,
900 Via Appia, Louisville
Instructor: Sheryl Schwabe

Active Parenting for Stepfamilies™

Feb. 1 - Mar. 15 (Mondays) 6:30–9:30 pm
(No class Feb. 15)
Dreamcatcher Direct Instruction Center,
5440 Conestoga Ct. Boulder
Instructor: Stephanie Bryan

Costs and Childcare

Childcare is available for classes at the Parenting Place.
Call the instructors to register, for pricing information,
including price breaks for couples, and/or available
scholarships.

Instructors

Stephanie Bryan
(303) 397-0646 or www.REALparenting.net
Cyndi Goldfarb
(303) 494-8373 or cyndi@boulderparentingclasses.com
Marinela Maneiro
(303) 819-7606 or amorylogica@yahoo.com
Sheryl Schwabe
(303) 520-6803 or sschwabe@comcast.net

Love and Logic Early Childhood Parenting Made Fun!®

Jan. 17, 24, 31 (Three Sundays) 1:00–5:00 pm
Dream Makers Preschool,
Central Boulder, near 28th and Taft Dr.
– call for directions
Instructor: Cyndi Goldfarb

Feb. 6 - 27 (Four Saturdays) 1:00–4:00pm
Dream Makers Preschool,
Central Boulder, near 28th and Taft Dr.
– call for directions
Instructor: Cyndi Goldfarb

Feb. 6 - Mar. 6 (Saturdays) 10:00 am–12:30 pm
(Childcare available)
Parenting Place,
1235-A Pine St., Boulder
Instructor: Sheryl Schwabe

Feb. 9 - Mar. 9 (Tuesdays) 9:15–11:45 am
Real Parenting Office,
1530 55th Street, Boulder
Instructor: Stephanie Bryan

Feb. 10 - Mar. 10 (Wednesdays) 6:00–8:30 pm
Louisville Rec Center,
900 Via Appia, Louisville
Instructor: Sheryl Schwabe

April 3 - May 1 (Saturdays) 10:00am–12:30pm
(Childcare available)
Parenting Place,
1235 Pine #A, Boulder
Instructor: Sheryl Schwabe

Siblings Without Rivalry™

Classes scheduled upon request
Instructor: Stephanie Bryan

REAL Parenting®

Classes scheduled upon request
Instructor: Stephanie Bryan

Creating a class at your location

If you are interested in forming a class at your school
or community, please contact Cyndi Goldfarb.

www.FoothillsParentingClasses.com