



Connections



Fall 2011

La Crosse County
Human Services

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WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CHILD IS TEASED OR BULLIED

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By Michele Borba., author of Parents Do Make A Difference! How to Raise Kids with Solid Character, Strong Minds and Caring Hearts

My son's only seven, but he's been coming home upset every day. He says a boy named Mark keeps teasing him. Now the rest of the kids won't play with him because they are afraid Mark will start picking on them, too. He's miserable and doesn't want to go to school. What can I do to help him?

Some of the toughest problems parents must deal with happen right on the school playground where teasing, bullying and mean-spirited kids abound. There seems to be an epidemic of mean-acting kids these days. In fact, the National Education Association estimates that 160,000 children skip school every day because they fear being attacked or intimidated by other students. While we can't prevent the pain insults can cause, we can lessen our kids' chances of becoming victims. In my book I tell parents the best thing to do is teach our kids how to deal with their tormentors. Doing so will show them there are ways to resolve conflicts without losing face or resorting to violence and will boost their confidence. So the next time your child is upset from teasing, here are a few ideas I suggest you do:

1. Listen and gather facts. The first step is often the hardest for parents: listen to your child's whole story without interrupting. Your goal is to try to figure out what happened, who was involved, where and when the teasing took place, and why your child was teased. Unfortunately, teasing is a part of growing up, but some kids seem to get more than their fair share of insults. If your child appears to be in no immediate danger, keep listening to find out how she reacts to the bullying. By knowing what reaction didn't stop the bully, you can offer your child a more effective option.
2. Teach a bully-proofing strategy. What may work with one child may not with another, so it's best to discuss a range of options and then choose the one or two your child feels most comfortable with. Here are six of the most successful strategies to help kids defend themselves:

(Continued on page 6)

Mark Your Calendar!

Save the Date...

The **Holiday Open House** will be held on
Thursday, November 17th,
beginning around 5:30pm
at the **Children's Museum** in La Crosse

Watch your
mailbox for
more details!

~ UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS ~

Hmong New Year Celebration

Saturday-Sunday, October 8-9 | 7:00am-5:00pm | CRUSA Soccer Fields (2500 Hauser St., La Crosse)
The La Crosse Area Hmong Mutual Assistance Association, Inc. and the La Crosse area Hmong Community cordially invite you, your family, and friends to join them for their 2011-2012 Hmong New Year Festival. Activities include sports tournaments, cultural performances and food & clothing booths. There will also be Saturday Night Party at the La Crosse Center from 6:00pm until midnight. For more information visit www.lacrossehmaa.org.

The Parenting Place's Annual Costume Swap

Saturday, October 8 | 9:00am-12:00pm | The Parenting Place in La Crosse (1500 Green Bay St.)
Bring a clean gently used costume, on a hanger, **before October 6th** to the Parenting Place in La Crosse and receive a coupon to come to the Costume Swap and choose another costume. For more information contact Fran at 608-784-8125 or visit www.theparentingplace.net.

20th Annual Chili Cook-Off

Saturday, October 8 | 11:30am-2:30pm | State Bank Financial parking lot (401 Main St., La Crosse)
All proceeds from this event go to D.A.R.E., G.R.E.A.T., and Habitat for Humanity. Get your fill of chili, and then enjoy the fun of Historic Downtown La Crosse Day. For more information visit www.statebankfinancial.com/chilicookoff.php.

Children's Miracle Network Radiothon 2011

Thursday-Saturday, October 13-15
Tune in to La Crosse Radio Group stations CC106.3, Magic 105, Eagle 102.7 and WLFN 1490 to hear incredible stories from families touched by Children's Miracle Network Hospitals in our area. Turn your radio up, call in, and make a donation or go online at gundluth.org/cmnhospitals and click on 'Make a gift'.

BOOseum Halloween Party

Friday, October 21 or 28 | 5:30pm-7:30pm | Children's Museum of La Crosse
Non-scary party for children ages 2-9. Goodies, games, crafts, stories, Big E bounce house and more. Costumes encouraged but not required. Cost per child is \$5 (museum members) or \$10 (non-members); accompanying adult FREE. Pre-registration and pre-payment required. Call 608-784-2652 or visit www.funmuseum.org.

Enchanted Forest

Saturday-Sunday, October 22-23 and 29-30 | 10:00am-2:00pm | Myrick Hixon EcoPark, La Crosse
A safe, non-spooky trick-or-treat hike featuring fairytale scenes and characters. Crafts, snacks and a concert by Hans Mayer will be provided afterwards at the EcoPark Center. Cost is \$7 for adults and \$2 for children. For more information visit www.myrickecopark.com.

Mark Your Calendar!

~ TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES ~

PRE-SERVICE TRAINING—FOUNDATIONS

To register for Foundations or for a make-up session contact Rhonda Rude at 789-4834.

Sessions 1, 7 and 6

*Saturday, October 15 | 8:00am-4:00pm | La Crosse County Human Services—basement auditorium
Trainers: State worker Karla Hasart and foster parent Suanne Kraft*

Sessions 8 and 5

*Saturday, October 29 | 8:00am-4:00pm | La Crosse County Human Services—basement auditorium
Trainers: State worker Karla Hasart and foster parent Suanne Kraft*

Sessions 2 and 4

*Saturday, November 12 | 8:00am-4:00pm | La Crosse County Human Services—basement auditorium
Trainers: Social worker Richelle Zimmerman and foster parent Suanne Kraft*

Sessions 3 and 9

*Saturday, December 3 | 8:00am-4:00pm | La Crosse County Human Services—basement auditorium
Trainers: Social worker Richelle Zimmerman and foster parent Suanne Kraft*

LCHSD ONGOING FOSTER PARENT TRAINING

*Registration is **required** for all participants! Contact Rhonda Rude at 789-4834 to register.*

Development of Infants and Toddlers

*Saturday, October 22 | 9:00am-3:30pm | La Crosse County Human Services—basement auditorium
Trainers: Foster parent Suanne Kraft and social worker Richelle Zimmerman
Deadline to register: October 17th, 2011*

Legal Risk Adoption Case Planning

*Sunday, October 23 | 1:00pm-5:00pm | La Crosse County Human Services—basement auditorium
Trainers: Foster parent Rita Wolcott and social worker TBA
Deadline to register: October 17th, 2011*

Culture of Birth Parents

*Tuesday, November 8 | 5:30pm-8:30pm | La Crosse County Human Services—basement auditorium
Trainers: Foster parent Suanne Kraft and social worker Will Herber
Deadline to register: November 3rd, 2011*

You See Policies. We See Values

*Saturday, November 19 | 8:30am-12:30pm | La Crosse County Human Services—basement auditorium
Trainers: Foster parent Suanne Kraft and social worker TBA
Deadline to enroll: November 14th, 2011*

Co-Parenting

*Sunday, November 20 | 1:00pm-5:00pm | La Crosse County Human Services—basement auditorium
Trainers: Foster parent Suanne Kraft and social worker TBA
Deadline to enroll: November 14th, 2011*

Mark Your Calendar!

COMMUNITY TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

NOTE TO FOSTER PARENTS...please remember that per policy all training hours earned from outside resources must be pre-approved and verifiable. Be sure to retain a copy of the training certificate, flyer, or agenda.

NAMI Basics

*Mondays, October 10-November 14 | 6:00pm-8:30pm | La Crosse County Human Services (300 N. 4th St.)
- or -*

Wednesdays, October 12-November 16 (same time and location)

NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) will be offering a free, six-week course for parents and other primary caregivers of children and adolescents living with mental illness. NAMI Basics is taught by parents who have lived similar experiences with their own children. Course elements include:

- * The trauma of mental illness for the child and the family
- * The biology of mental illness—getting an accurate diagnosis
- * The latest research on the medical aspects of the illness and advances in treatment
- * An overview of treatment options
- * The impact of a child's mental health illness on the rest of the family—caregivers and siblings
- * An overview of the systems involved in caring for children and teens and the importance of record keeping

Please register by calling Jennifer at 608-782-3910 or Kae at 507-895-6827.

1-2-3 Magic!

Mondays, October 17 & 24 | 9:00am-11:00am | Stein Counseling (571 Braund St., Onalaska)

Tuesdays, November 15 & 22 | 6:00pm-8:00pm

Mondays, December 12 & 19 | 9:00am-11:00am

This course teaches child management techniques that work for children ages 2 to 12. Learn to (1) Control obnoxious behavior using a simple technique to get your kids to stop doing what you don't want them to do (whining, arguing, tantrums, sibling rivalry, etc) (2) Encourage good behavior using several methods to get your kids to start doing what you want them to do (cleaning rooms, going to bed, homework, etc)., and (3) Strengthen relationships and learn powerful techniques that reinforce the bond with your children. Cost is \$45 per person. Register online at www.effectivebehavior.com. For more information call 608-785-7000 x221.

Dr. Bruce Perry's "The Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics with Traumatized Children"

Tuesdays, October 18-November 1 | 5:30pm-8:00pm | La Crosse County Human Services—basement auditorium

Dr. Perry is co-author of *The Boy Who Was Raised As A Dog: What Traumatized Children Can Teach Us About Loss, Love and Healing*. Social Workers Dawn Miller and Sarah Wagner-Barton will host a viewing of Dr. Perry's seven-part video series in which he describes the effects of trauma and neglect on the developing brain and a new treatment approach for these children. This video series is highly recommended for all foster parents, relatives providing care, and professionals working with children who have experienced trauma. To register call Rhonda Rude at 608-789-4834.

Baby Signing

Thursday, October 20 | 6:00pm-7:30pm | Gundersen Lutheran—5th floor (1900 South Ave., La Crosse)

This class will help participants understand the impact parents have on the learning and emotional well-being of their child. Learn about the importance of baby sign language and how to use it with your baby. Fee is \$20. For more information, contact Megan at 608-775-6878.

Mark Your Calendar!

Parenting with Love and Logic

Thursdays, November 3 to December 15 | 6:00pm-8:00pm | Stein Counseling (571 Braund St., Onalaska)
Author Jim Fay teaches that parents should "lock in our empathy, love, and understanding" prior to telling kids what the consequences of their actions will be. This course teaches parents how to hold their kids accountable in this special way. Help your children develop an internal voice that will guide their decisions and help them stand up to peer pressure. Cost is \$99 per person. Register online at www.effectivebehavior.com. For more information call 608-785-7000 x221.

What Makes Toddlers Tick?

Wednesday, November 9 | 6:00pm-7:30pm | The Parenting Place In Onalaska (1035 Riders Club Road)
If you are living with toddlers in your home you know how lovely and how challenging days (and nights) can be. Join this discussion to understand what makes a toddler tick and how best to meet their needs and yours to create harmony and fun in your home. Presented by Fran Swift, Parent Educator. For more information or to register call (608)784-8125.

A Place in My Heart Conference

Saturday, November 12 | 9:00am-4:00pm | Glacier Canyon Lodge at the Wilderness, Wisconsin Dells
An annual event by Adoption Resources of Wisconsin. Arleta James, MS, PCC, an adoption professional for 12 years, will lead a discussion entitled "Brothers and Sisters in Adoption." If you are a parent concerned with the impact of fostering or adopting on the children already in your family this workshop will help you. Cost is \$45 per person/\$80 per twosome or \$50 per professional. Breakfast and lunch included. Register online at <http://aplaceinmyheart2011.eventbrite.com> or call 414-475-1246 for more information.

~ INDEPENDENT LIVING ~

Thursdays, October 13-November 17 | 4:00pm-5:15pm | La Crosse County Human Services—Room 2100
Independent Living sessions will begin this fall for youth ages 15-18. There will be pizza, door prizes, and fun! Please contact Becky La Force (785-6180) or Molly Mitley (789-4892) with any questions.

OCTOBER IS FIRE PREVENTION MONTH

Take some time this month to review
and practice your fire escape plan!



- Assert yourself. Teach your child to face the bully by standing tall and using a strong voice. Your child should name the bullying behavior and tell the aggressor to stop: "That's teasing. Stop it." or "Stop making fun of me. It's mean."
 - Question the response. Ann Bishop, who teaches violence prevention curriculums, tells her students to respond to an insult with a nondefensive question: "Why would you say that?" or "Why would you want to tell me I am dumb (or fat) and hurt my feelings?"
 - Use "I want." Communication experts suggest teaching your child to address the bully beginning with "I want" and say firmly what he wants changed: "I want you to leave me alone." or "I want you to stop teasing me."
 - Agree with the teaser. Consider helping your child create a statement agreeing with her teaser. Teaser: "You're dumb." Child: "Yeah, but I'm good at it." or Teaser: "Hey, four eyes." Child: "You're right, my eyesight is poor."
 - Ignore it. Bullies love it when their teasing upsets their victims, so help your child find a way to not let his tormentor get to him. A group of fifth graders told me ways they ignore their teasers: "Pretend they're invisible," "Walk away without looking at them," "Quickly look at something else and laugh," and "Look completely uninterested."
 - Make Fun of the Teasing. Fred Frankel, author of *Good Friends Are Hard to Find* suggests victims answer every tease with a reply, but not tease back. The teasing often stops, Frankel says, because the child lets the tormentor know he's not going to let the teasing get to him (even if it does). Suppose the teaser says, "You're stupid." The child says a rehearsed comeback such as: "Really?" Other comebacks could be: "So?," "You don't say," "And your point is?," or "Thanks for telling me."
3. Rehearse the strategy with your child. Once you choose a technique, rehearse it together so your child is comfortable trying it. The trick is for your child to deliver it assuredly to the bully--and that takes practice. Explain that though he has the right to feel angry, it's not okay to let it get out of control. Besides, anger just fuels the bully. Try teaching your child the CALM approach to defueling the tormentor.
- C** - Cool down. When you confront the bully, stay calm and always in control. Don't let him think he's getting to you. If you need to calm down, count to twenty slowly inside your head or say to yourself, "Chill out!" And most importantly: tell your child to always get help whenever there is a chance she might be injured.
 - A** - Assert yourself. Try the strategy with the bully just like you practiced.
 - L** - Look at the teaser straight in the eye. Appear confident, hold your head high and stand tall.
 - M** - Mean it! Use a firm, strong voice. Say what you feel, but don't be insulting, threaten or tease back.

www.fostercare.com

SENIOR PORTRAITS FOR YOUTH IN CARE

Senior pictures are important to all youth! Unfortunately, youth in foster care are not always able to enjoy this experience with their friends and classmates. The Foster Care and Adoption Resource Center and Adoption Resources of Wisconsin offer a Volunteer Photography program which provides graduating seniors with the option and opportunity of receiving their Senior pictures. Participating youth have the opportunity to purchase pictures at a significantly reduced rate. A network of volunteer photographers is in place to help youth in foster care get their senior pictures to share with their family and friends. These pictures are more than just pictures; they are important keepsakes from their high school years.



For more information, please contact Jenna Czaplewski at jczaplewski@wi.adopt.org, 414-475-1246 or 800-762-8063.

HAVE YOU CHECKED OUT FOSTERCLUB.COM?



FosterClub.com is the national network for young people in foster care. It's a place they can turn to for advice, information, and hope.

FosterClub helps open the way for young people to transform their lives and provides a forum to raise their voice. Their members engage with peers and regain control over their situation through support, skill building, and healing opportunities. FosterClub's young leaders achieve impressive levels of success as they demonstrate remarkable resilience. At FosterClub they have real life opportunities to become true heroes as they reach back to improve the foster care system for their younger peers.

FosterClub has over 20,000 Members from across the country. If you aren't a Member, JOIN NOW (it's free). There are two levels of membership. Official Members are young people aged 24 or younger who are or have been in foster care. Supportive Members include anyone else who wishes to support young people in foster care. You might be a caseworker, foster parent, older alumni of foster care, student, pastor, grandmother, adoptive parent, or any other concerned citizen... you are invited to join the Club and show your support for young people in foster care. Becoming a member has its perks. When you become a Member, you get to build a really cool little cartoon of what you look like (an avatar). Every time you leave a comment, update your profile, or write on the message board, you'll earn points. Get a top score, and you will be acknowledged on the front page of FosterClub.com! Want the latest and greatest information, including new opportunities like scholarships, internships or events going on in your area? As a Member, you'll receive instant updates from FosterClub.com.

Some of the other features you will find at FosterClub.com include:

- * Safe social networking
- * Engaging content for youth such as "Foster to Famous" and "Questions + Answers"
- * Special interest club sections
- * A section with information specifically for foster parents and other supportive adults

FosterClub.com is also the website used by the State of Wisconsin to collect information about how youth are doing after they transition out of the foster care system. These youth are asked to log on to the website and complete the N.Y.T.D. (National Youth in Transition Database) survey after their 17th, 19th, and 21st birthdays.

It is recommended that all foster youth set up an account on the site. Please take some time to check it out if you haven't already!

built for youth...
Foster Cub has questions about foster care
FREE resource!
Check out our new publication – the coolest way for kids to learn about foster care!
download >

powered by youth...
in the news!
100 young people from foster care are honored!
FosterClub
OUTSTANDING YOUNG LEADERS
read more >

changing life in foster care...
get involved with NYTD!
take the survey!
2 years in foster care I want to be counted!
nytd
go to NYTD >

Connections



LA CROSSE COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES

300 4TH SREET NORTH

LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN 54601

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Pass the word on!

Do you know anyone who's interested in being a foster parent? Orientation sessions for those who'd like to learn more about the program are held the first Monday of every month from 5:30pm to 7:00pm. Those interested in attending should call Rhonda Rude at 789-4834 to sign up.

Is there anything you'd like to contribute to our newsletter?

Please send your ideas, comments, or suggestions to:

Attn: Sharon McHugh
La Crosse County Human Services
300 N. 4th St.
La Crosse, WI 54601
mchugh.sharon@co.la-crosse.wi.us
(608) 785-6056



Foster Care & Adoption Resource Center

Looking for information on Wisconsin foster care or adoption? The Foster Care and Adoption Resource Center provides the following services:

- Resource lending library
- Links to training opportunities and resources
- *Fostering Across Wisconsin* quarterly newsletter

Visit their webpage at www.wifostercareandadoption.org or contact them at their toll free number 1-800-947-8074 .