



PARENTS AGAIN

A Newsletter for Kinship Family Caregivers

Bullying

With the increase in technology and social media comes an increase in bullying among kids and teens. Bullying is reported most often during the middle school years, but it happens at all grade levels, from pre-K to high school and even college.



Washington State has Anti-Bullying laws and policies requiring schools to work to prevent bullying and to respond when it happens. One of the best things you can do as a parent or guardian is to know these laws and policies, and to advocate for your child if they are being bullied.

Types of Bullying

There are several types of bullying. Kids can be the victim of one or more types at the same time.

- Physical Bullying such as tripping, pushing, or hitting.
- Verbal Bullying such as name calling, threats, gossip, and starting or spreading rumors.
- Relational Bullying such as forced isolation or being purposefully excluded from activities.
- Cyberbullying such as harassing and mean messages, or content (images or statements) posted by others to destroy a reputation or spread a rumor.

Warning Signs of Bullying

- ⊖ Unexplained injuries; engaging in self harm.
- ⊖ Changes in mood, eating habits, self-esteem, relationships/friendships, and/or sleep.
- ⊖ Feeling helpless, depressed; thoughts of harming self or committing suicide.
- ⊖ No longer want to go to school; avoid social situations; increase in “sick” days.
- ⊖ Possessions frequently “lost” or damaged.

- ⊖ Hiding phone or tablet when someone is near.
- ⊖ Close social media accounts and open new ones or have none at all.

What to Do About Bullying

As a victim of bullying, your child can learn positive self talk to help with the loss of self esteem that comes with repeated bullying. They can also work on maintaining a calm composure when bullied. Showing emotions is what fuels the bully’s actions. Here are some guidelines for what to do:

- ★ **Do not** tell your kids to fight back or to ignore the bully and **do not** contact the bully’s parents.
- ★ Make time to talk to your child and truly listen and hear what they say about what is going on.
- ★ Find out what they need to make them feel safe.
- ★ Let the child know the bullying is not their fault and work together towards possible solutions.
- ★ If you can, seek out more information from others to understand the situation.
- ★ Get information on policies, contact the school, and advocate for the child.
- ★ Seek professional help if needed (counselor, ombudsman, mediator, police).
- ★ Do not give up if you receive pushback.

If the bullying is online:

- ★ Take screenshots or photos of anything online or visual that can be seen.
- ★ Block the bully and report the offence to the social media platform.

★ Document the steps taken by you and the child to resolve the bullying, including contact made with the social media platform, along with the results.



...continued on page 2

Bullying

...continued from page 1

How To Help Prevent Bullying

Start talking about bullying to children at a young age. Keep communication open and honest as they grow up. Ask questions and check in with your child to show them that you are a safe person for them to share what's happening and to ask for help. Keep them updated on who they can contact at their school if they need help. Try to stay in the loop on who their friends are and the different kids in the groups of friends your child interacts with.

Watch out for the warning signs listed on the previous page. If you see any, talk to your child immediately. Try and determine the cause of the warning sign so it can be addressed, whether it's caused by bullying or something else.

Monitor your child's social media accounts and what they are accessing (apps, websites, videos, and other content). Teach them and establish rules about appropriate social media behavior and use of technology. Try to be their "friend" or "follow" them on social media sites. If they won't let you, maybe another family friend that they trust can do it. Know your child's logins for email and other sites. Yes, all of this is much easier said than done! But, it's important for your child's physical and emotional safety.

What if Your Child is the Bully?

As when your child is the victim of bullying, communication and open dialogue is important. Talk with your child, not at them, about the problem actions and why the actions are not acceptable or appropriate. Show them the possible consequences for bullying. Try to get to the bottom of the reasons for their actions and behaviors.

Children may bully to fit in, due to peer pressure, or because of personal issues, trauma, or abuse. They may be acting out to get attention, as a call for help. A child may also be bullying because they are bullied. Seeking professional help and support may be beneficial to helping the child choose positive actions and behaviors.

If you would like more information on Anti-Bullying laws and policies in Washington State, please visit:
www.stopbullying.gov/resources/laws/washington

—adapted from stopbullying.gov

Halloween Safety

Halloween is almost here!

With most COVID restrictions lifted, there's a return to regular activities, even for those among us who still mask-up and maintain social distance for personal or health reasons. Halloween may be extra busy this year, so here are some tried-and-true Halloween safety tips for kids and adults, too!

STAY SAFE!
Halloween Safety Tips



Kids

- 👻 Walk on sidewalks or paths. If there aren't any sidewalks, walk facing traffic.
- 👻 Cross the street at corners and crosswalks.
- 👻 Watch for cars that are turning or backing up.
- 👻 Make eye contact with drivers before crossing in front of them.
- 👻 Never go in a strangers' home or car, even if they say they know you or someone you know.
- 👻 Keep electronic devices put away and your full attention on your surroundings.
- 👻 Only trick or treat at homes with their porch lights on.
- 👻 Wash your hands before opening and eating any candy.
- 👻 Don't eat candy that isn't wrapped in the original wrapper.

Adults

- 👻 Add reflective tape or stickers to costumes to make children more visible to drivers.
- 👻 Go with children who are under 12.
- 👻 For children who are older and mature enough to go on their own, make sure they stick to familiar areas and are with a group of friends.
- 👻 Help kids avoid tripping and fall hazards by making sure their costumes fit properly.
- 👻 Make sure kids can see and breathe by checking that costume masks fit.
- 👻 In case you get separated, have kids carry a note with your name/address/phone number.
- 👻 Teach children how to dial 911.
- 👻 Inspect all candy to ensure it's wrapped in the original wrapper. Throw away any candy that is unwrapped or looks tampered with.

—adapted from safekids.org and kidshealth.org

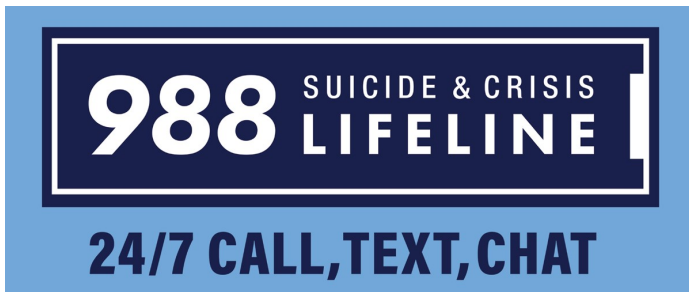
988: New Crisis Line

988, the new 3-digit number for anyone having a mental health crisis, emotional distress, or thoughts of suicide, has launched nationwide!

988 can be used to call, text, or chat. A trained crisis counselor is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days per year. All calls, texts, and chats are free and confidential. You are not required to provide any personal information to access the crisis counselors.

You can use 988 for:

- ★ Mental health crisis,
- ★ Emotional distress,
- ★ Substance use issues or concerns,
- ★ Thoughts of self-harm,
- ★ Suicidal thoughts,
- ★ Worries about someone else who may be going through any of the above and may benefit from crisis support.



988 connects you to the
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
which can also be reached at
1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Holiday Assistance



Ready or not, the holidays are just around the corner! Plan ahead to make sure you get on local lists for resources to help with food and gifts. Our agency, AAADSW, makes a Holiday Resource list available as soon as community organizations let us know their details, usually in early October. Many organizations start registration in October, and it's not uncommon for their programs to completely fill up within days.

If you know you will be in need of assistance for your kinship children, please contact Sarah Revord as soon as possible to get on the waiting list for the two programs we refer to. When registration opens, Sarah will submit names from the Kinship list. Families are signed up in the order in which they call Sarah, and it's not guaranteed that you will get signed up for a program, as registration for assistance programs fills incredibly fast. The two holiday programs we refer families to are the *Clark County Sheriff's Office Santa's Posse Program*, and the *Mannahouse and Live Love NW Christmas Program*. You are signed up for one program per family. Please do not contact these programs directly, as they only take referrals from agencies and schools. Please do not sign up through the schools and then contact Sarah to sign up — this takes a spot from another family and doesn't get you additional help.

Sarah Revord | 360-759-4317
sarah.revord@dshs.wa.gov

COMING UP!

Oct 21 Parents Again Support Group | on Zoom | 1-2:30pm

Vape Information Training | on Zoom | 1:30pm-2:30pm

Nov 17 What is vaping? What are the risks of vaping and tobacco? How to talk to your kids and help prevent the use of tobacco and vaping products.

Nov 18 Parents Again Support Group | on Zoom | 1-2:30pm

To register for these upcoming events, contact:
Sarah Revord | 360-759-4317 | sarah.revord@dshs.wa.gov

PARENTS AGAIN

Kinship Programs

201 NE 73rd Street

Vancouver WA 98665

ADDRESS SERVICES REQUESTED



Happy Halloween
 October 31, 2022



November 24, 2022

AAADSW KINSHIP PROGRAMS

Are you a Grandparent or other family member raising a relative child? Support is available to grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles or other relatives raising a child age 18 or under, whose parents are not present in the home.

At the Area Agency on Aging & Disabilities, we strive to offer choices, improve quality of life, and respect you and the child(ren) you care for. Our knowledgeable and dedicated staff are committed to providing you with the information, assistance, and support you need to continue caring for your Kinship Kid(s).

We also offer supports for seniors, adults with disabilities, and family caregivers caring for adults.

Clark County

360-694-8144 • 888-637-6060

201 NE 73rd Street

Vancouver, WA 98665

Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Counties

360-577-4929 • 800-682-2406

1338 Commerce Avenue, Suite 309

Longview, WA 98632