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Weekly Update | March 27, 2019

Vol. 3, Issue 4

A Message from Angie



Kindergarten children enjoying the change in the weather

Last week I had the opportunity to present information about [bullying](#), [cyberbullying](#), and [social media use](#) to a parent audience. I have presented to families about these issues every year for over a decade. What I am finding is that the social media and screen time components now garner the most interest and dominate the conversation. This is an important shift. The digital lives of our children have taken over and the consequences are significant. Despite the disproportionate influence of the online world on the lives of our

always has an online component and their digital lives make them vulnerable.

Bullying is an abuse behavior and is different from conflict, drama, or being mean. Conflict is a normal part of human relationships. Learning how to deal with conflict is an important developmental task of childhood. Bullying is *repetitive* behavior that is *intentional* and emotionally *impactful*. It occurs in situations when there is a *power imbalance* between the children and results in fear. Today most bullying behaviors are not obvious and physical. Children are well supervised making physical aggression fairly rare. Instead, children engage in social cruelty. Most of the bullying that occurs today is the accumulation of many small behaviors like whispering, ignoring, eye rolling, and giving dirty looks. Children are aware of the school rules and are careful not to break them. These behaviors fall into a gray area that can be difficult for adults to detect.

When concerns about a potential bullying situation are raised by a teacher, parent, or student we investigate the situation using the parameters in the definition. What the research tells us is that labels are not particularly important. What is important is that students feel listened to and that there is a response. Our teachers are trained to consistently and immediately respond to overt behaviors. Teachers make it clear with their quick responses that socially cruel behaviors are not acceptable at our school. We want our students to understand that we expect them to behave in a reasonably civilized and considerate manner at all times, even if they're mad, having a bad day, their feelings are hurt, or someone is being annoying. Our faculty consistently communicates this expectation to students.

The internet further complicates the social worlds of children and teens. Children increasingly feel that they must be in constant communication. Being away from social media can make many adolescents incredibly anxious. They are afraid that they will miss something online, often losing sleep to keep up. They misread digital communications and dwell on comments from others. They have difficulty understanding privacy and security and often inadvertently put themselves at risk not just for cyberbullying, but for becoming the victims of predators online. Many young children are using social media often without the knowledge of their parents. Owning a smartphone is the biggest risk factor for elementary and middle school aged cyberbullying.

What children and teens are doing online changes constantly. Generally once adults are aware of a trend it is on its way out. That being said, [this list](#) provides some guidance as to what types of apps are currently popular with children and adolescents. Many of these trends facilitate cyberbullying and expose children to dangers online. Keeping ahead of them is difficult, but critical.

The good news is that students are highly aware of bullying and cyberbullying and are increasingly responsive. Research shows that the best intervention is peer intervention. Even a quick comment like, "just ignore him," from a peer can make a world of difference for a child that feels targeted. As parents and educators we must support students as they learn to do this for each other.

While bullying awareness is important and has helped to reduce relational aggression, far too many behaviors are being labeled as bullying. It can be easier for a child who is avoiding working on friendship skills to say that they are

challenging process that will include conflict and hurt feelings. Just because something is not classified as bullying doesn't mean that it isn't important and doesn't mean that children do not need help dealing with it. Never hesitate to reach out to adults at school for help with social issues whether they can be classified as bullying or not.

The [Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center](#) and [Common Sense Media](#) are excellent resources for more information about these topics. It is often difficult to know what is appropriate and what is inappropriate when it comes to children and screens. [These recommendations](#) are a start, though I realize that it can be difficult to implement restrictions when so much of the world, including schoolwork, is online.

Many who were unable to attend last week reached out requesting copies of the handouts and information from the meeting. Please feel free to go through the [slides](#) and browse the links above. Don't hesitate to reach out if you have further questions.

Angie Pepin
Principal, South Shore Charter Public School



Our 24th Annual Auction and Comedy Night is this Friday, March 29th at Doubletree by Hilton in Rockland! The auction is our largest fundraiser of the year, and all proceeds raised benefit the South Shore Charter Educational Foundation that funds our K-12 community.

Please take a peak at our online auction and [start bidding now!](#) This link is open to all so please share with friends and family.

You can still participate in our 50/50 raffle [here](#) and you do not need to be present to win. We will announce the winner Friday night. Currently, the pot is at \$1500. Good luck to all!

Thank you to all the students, teachers, and parent volunteers that have been helping and working hard to make this event successful.

Please don't forget to fill out the
[2019 Annual Parent Survey](#).
All comments may be sent directly to
boardoftrustees@sscps.org
Thank You!

Subscribe	Past Issues			Translate ▼	RSS
	Wednesday	03/27	MCAS Grade 10 ELA		
	Thursday	03/28	High School Theater Workshop to Speakeasy Stage Company Boston		
	Thursday	03/28	Level III Operation Conservation to NE Wildlife		
	Friday	03/29	SSCEF Annual Auction and Comedy Show		
	Mon-Fri	04/01-04/05	American Heart Association's Kids Heart Challenge		
	Monday	04/01	Grade 3 to Commonwealth Museum		
	Wednesday	04/03	Professional Development Early Release	12:00pm	
	Wednesday	04/03	Parents Association Hosts Faculty/Staff Luncheon		
	Wednesday	04/03	High School Human Performance Workshop hosting Movie Afternoon		
	Wednesday	04/03	NHS Hosting Blood Drive at 700 Longwater Drive	11am-7pm	
	Thursday	04/04	School Council Family Engagement Taskforce <i>The taskforce needs your input. Learn more, come to a meeting, or give online feedback.</i>	3:40pm 4:45pm	
Save the Date!					
	Wednesday	04/10	High School Music Workshop Fundraiser “The Beatles”	6-7:00pm	
	Thursday	04/11	International Food Night at Stetson Hall , Randolph Register today!	6-7:30pm	

Weekly Updates are emailed and posted to our website www.sscps.org every Wednesday.

Here are links to upcoming events and other items of interest.

- [Food Service](#) –April Order Forms and Menus are available!
- **Order your 2019 Yearbook!** Order online at www.coffeepond.com and use password: bluejaguar or complete an order form available at the front desks
- [SSCPS Counseling Department](#) offers workshop information and resources for students and families
- Visit our new online option to [purchase](#) SSCPS apparel
- Please visit our [Giving](#) link for information regarding *The Fund for SSCEF*
- From the Health Office: [March Nutrition Newsletter](#)
- [2019 Annual Parent Survey](#)

Please contact Pam Algera at palgera@sscps.org to submit SSCPS items for publication.

[Accountability Plan](#)

[SSCPS By-Laws](#)

[School Improvement Plan](#)

[School Council](#)

Schedules by Level:

- [Level I](#)
- [Level II](#)
- [Level III](#)
- [Level IV](#)

[Pick-up Procedures](#)



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