YC MAGAZINE

September 2013 | connectingyouth.com

TIPS AND TOOLS

HOW TO KEEP YOUR CHILDREN SAFE

A STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Above the Influence

STOP. WALK. TALK.

Expect Respect

READING RESOURCES

Bye-Bye Bullies

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September 2013

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Expect Respect

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YC Magazine is a free quarterly publication and is currently a joint effort by the Lake Placid/Wilmington Connecting Youth and Communities Coalition "CYC" and the Youth Connections Coalition of Helena, MT.

Our vision: Connecting youth and community through advocacy, education and engagement to foster youth to be educationally and vocationally productive, civically and socially connected and physically and mentally healthy.

If you have ideas for articles which you would like to see, please contact us. We would love to hear from you.

Tina Clark, CYC Coordinator
518-523-2474 x 4008
tinateam@roadrunner.com

Carol Hayes, CYC Development Director
518-523-2474 x 4021
carol@preventionteam.org

FROM THE *President*

MARY DIETRICH

Greetings! In this edition I would like to focus your attention on some of the key people behind the CYC. Maybe we should call them the faces behind the crowd. First our two part time staff people, Tina Clark, Coordinator and Carol Hayes, Development Director, both women work 24 hours a week on CYC initiatives and are very dedicated and passionate about their work.

We are also very fortunate to have an active, involved Board of Directors who serve on many committees and really determine the direction of the organization. Jason Leon is our Vice President, Paul Varga serves as Secretary and Cora Clark as Treasurer. This group joins with me as our Executive Committee.

Also serving on our Board of Directors is a unique blend of adults and youth from varying "sectors" of our community: Alicia Brandes, Brenda Cotton, Constance Whalen, Dan Mayberry, Gabby Armstrong, Haley, Brandes, Joe LaPierre, Kyle Carrow, Lori Fitzgerald, Michelle Bowen, Ryan Grady and Sue Sweeney.

In addition to our Board, we have strong partnerships including: Clay Reaser, Lake Placid Central School, Shipman Youth Center, Doug Haney, Town of Wilmington, Naj Wikoff, The Prevention Team, National Sports Academy, North Country School, St. Agnes School, Lake Placid Business Association, The National Guard, Kiwanis Club of Lake Placid, Stewarts, Lake Placid Police Department, NY State Troopers, NY State Dept. of Conversation and the Essex County Sheriff Department and District Attorney's Office.

We invite you and your organization to consider joining us in our endeavors to work towards a healthy environment for our youth. ■

MARY DIETRICH, Coalition President
email: marydietrich@verizon.net

We care about this community...

TALK TO US.

LAKE PLACID/WILMINGTON

CONNECTING YOUTH AND COMMUNITIES

For more information go to www.connectingyouth.com.

- By Derek VanLuchene, Ryan United

keeping YOUR CHILD SAFE

It's every parent's worst nightmare: your child is missing. You immediately begin to look and, as you do, the fear builds and you think about the unimaginable. You begin to think about the breaking news stories involving a child who has been abducted or who has gone missing and is never found. Luckily, most children who disappear are found within a short time and the incident is never reported to police. This scenario happens daily in our community and across the county.

Unfortunately, in this country there is the opposite extreme when a child is abducted by a stranger. Although these cases are rare (about one percent of all child abductions), they are the worst of the worst and require the most amount of resources to investigate and solve.

This horrific ordeal happened to my family in 1987, when my eight-year-old brother, Ryan, was abducted and murdered by a repeat sex offender. Ryan was playing in our backyard and literally disappeared. His body was found a day-and-a-half later, and the offender responsible was arrested. Having been through something like this, it is my family's mission to educate communities on how to stay safe and how to prevent a situation like this from happening again.

The key to educating parents and communities when it comes to child abduction is to differentiate myth from reality, but at the same time give the tools that can prepare them for the worst case scenario. Every year about 800,000 children go missing in the United States, but this statistic can be misleading in the sense that most don't know this number includes events that stem from a custodial parent violating a parental agreement. Of those 800,000 children reported missing, about 200,000 of them are abducted by a parent or legal guardian who is in violation of a custody agreement.

About 58,000 children fall victim to non-family abduction. In this category, the child is usually taken by someone who they may be familiar with. Included in this category of abduction is the worst of the worst, and what my family faced when Ryan was taken. About 115 other children in the non-family abduction category were taken by complete strangers. These crimes are the most dangerous in that the end result is likely death or serious injury to the child (75 percent of these children were murdered in the first three hours after abduction).

The remaining missing children who make up the 800,000 fall into the category of runaways, throwaways or the cases where there is simply no answer to the child's disappearance.

Our children are our future; we must come together as families and communities to protect them. While you may never face this situation in your family, it is vital that you have the conversation with your children about ways to stay safe.

PARENT TIPS

- **Know where your child is and what they are doing at all times.**
- Talk with them about things and people that make them feel uncomfortable.
- **Create a unique password or phrase that is unique to only you and your child that will prevent them from going with someone who does not know the correct response.**
- Let your child know that it is their right to be safe and protected from dangers.
- **If anyone puts them in a danger, they need to get away and tell someone they are not safe.**

There is a slim chance that your child will become a victim of a stranger abduction; however it is vital to have **the tools to communicate** with your children and keep them from becoming a victim.

A STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

By Coral Thurstrum, Capital High School Senior

I hope someday this will all come to an end. I hope they can see the benefits to living above the influence.

As a high school senior, I've experienced a lot in school, from difficult tests to friend drama and alcohol to drugs. One of the most prevalent drugs I've experienced is indeed marijuana. Now, I've never personally done it, but I have multiple friends who have used and have heard endless stories. It seems to be one of the most popular drugs for students to do.

Occasionally, I get a little mixed up on my opinions of pot because I would never want my friends to get in trouble, and many people put the best spin on it they can, but I remain above the influence. I've never felt like I've needed a mind altering substance to have fun, and I have lots of friends who feel the same way. However, I do have friends who feel and act differently. The saddest thing in my opinion is the absolute control this substance has over their lives. Sometimes it can really take hold and cause them to do stupid things.

One of the biggest problems I've seen is the ever-rising number of people with access to "medicinal" marijuana. It seems to be the new "z-pack." Doctors seem to give it to anyone with any sort of pain. This may not be realistic, but pot should not be given as the new pain medication. It should be reserved for the people who really truly need it, not just someone who's in a little bit of pain.

With the increase of medicinal marijuana comes an increase in availability to people who really don't need it at all. The increase in demand means an increase in drug dealers thus continuing a cycle in our schools of illegal use. I walk down the halls and smell pot on the students who just come in after smoking, I see deals happen in our own school parking lot, and I go into classes and see kids who seem permi-fried. It's honestly quite tragic.

I am very disappointed in our generation, and the society that has made this "ok." I know our schools have made an effort to stop the dealing and the usage, but they have yet to make enough headway. The younger end of my generation is clever and finding new ways to use and deal without getting caught.

I hope someday this will all come to an end. I hope for my generation and their brain cells' sake, medicinal marijuana can become more exclusive. I hope people who smoke pot realize the high isn't worth the consequences. I hope they can see the benefits to living above the influence just as I have and find something in life they can be passionate about so they don't feel the need to get high. ■

We want to be heard...

TALK TO US.

LAKE PLACID/WILMINGTON

CONNECTING YOUTH AND COMMUNITIES

For more information go to www.connectingyouth.com.

Check out who's standing out in our community.

IS THERE SOMEONE YOU'D LIKE TO NOMINATE?

Please email tinateam@roadrunner.com
and tell us why this individual has stood out in your crowd.

FACES IN THE CROWD

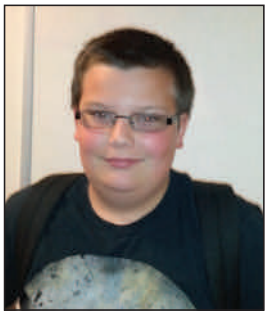
Carrie Lincoln, Brette Lawrence, Montana Preston

LAKE PLACID MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL, 10TH & 11TH GRADE

These ladies were studying at the school this summer. Their usual hang out spot is the Wilmington Youth Center. They had lots of positive things to say about the director of the Youth Center, Kate Sears. "She is awesome, creative and fun." "She does an amazing job." They want people to know that the youth center is a safe and fun place to be. Brette says, "I've been going to the park since I was four years old". Featured at the park are Giant Indestructible Bubbles and lots of crafts including metal and bead work.

Jason Leon VICE PRESIDENT OF CONNECTING YOUTH AND COMMUNITIES

Jason believes he was born to serve and is most proud to serve our great community as member of the Lake Placid Elementary School family, Lake Placid Village Board of Trustees, and as Vice President of Connecting Youth and Communities (CYC). The reason he commits the time to serve is to create a strong, healthy, and safe environment for our future leaders. Jason's belief is that the children of this community are its very future and his goal is to do everything possible to help prepare them for the leadership roles they will someday assume.



Sky Begor LAKE PLACID MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL, 7TH GRADE

We found Sky on his way to the school library to work on his Science this summer. When we asked him what his friends would say about him he said they would call him "Nice and Funny". Sky loves to be with his friends. He thinks his friends find him pretty funny. He says he is nice to people because people are nice to him. He helps at home with the animals (cat and dog) and brings in the wood in the winter. He enjoys helping out. He also likes sports. He has played baseball and is looking forward to playing basketball and soccer this year.

Trillium Macario NORTH COUNTRY SCHOOL, 9TH GRADE

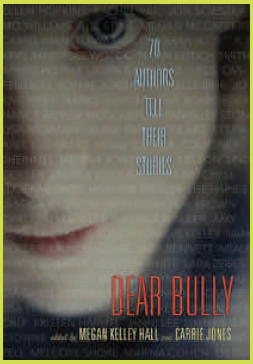
Trillium is 14 years old and part of the family that owns Mulvey's Adirondack Farm Market in Wilmington. They are pleased to grow and share their vegetables for everyone in their community to enjoy. Her family's business also supports the local community by carrying products from other local businesses. A few of Trillium's favorite things to do are skiing, dancing, swimming, playing basketball, being outside, and playing the guitar and stand-up bass. Trillium also enjoys going to NCS, working on the school's farm, the academic program, and especially playing the bass in music class!

bye-bye BULLIES

By Lauren McGovern, Professional School Counselor, North Country School

The many aspects of bullying have received a lot of media attention in recent years and spurred the work of CYC, a push for more social-emotional curriculums in schools, and increased parent involvement to build positive educational communities. While the saying "It's a different world" has a significant level of truth to it because of students' access to online methods of meanness, the act of bullying is pretty straightforward: a chronic pattern of physical, emotional, or verbal abuse against another person. As parents and educators, we want to do what we can to help children navigate the world in healthy, appropriate ways. A couple of recent books on the topic of bullying provide helpful hints, strategies, and resources for parents, educators, and targets of bullying themselves.

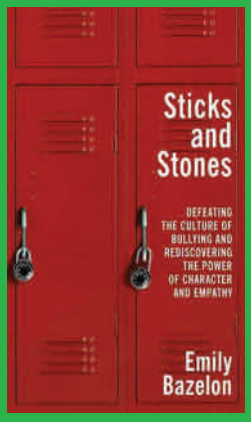
DEAR BULLY: 70 AUTHORS TELL THEIR STORIES (METCALF, HALL, AND JONES, HARPERTEEN © 2011) >>



This collection is divided into sections such that make it easy to skip around for what you want: Survival, Just Kidding, Insight, Regret, and more. The authors are all established writers of Young Adult and children's literature, so the stories are of their teen experiences growing up in the 1980s and 90s. Although the resource list is fairly limited, the biographical sketches of each author and current titles is exceptional and could help young teens seek out more work by an author whose work they enjoyed.

If you're just looking for read-aloud books to frame a basic conversation with middle school children about empathy (without overloading them) or you're an educator looking to enhance your social-emotional curriculum, than SLOB by Ellen Potter, Because of Mr. Terupt by Rob Buyea, or Wonder by R. J. Palacio are excellent, modern novels to get you on your way.

STICKS AND STONES: DEFEATING THE CULTURE OF BULLYING AND REDISCOVERING THE POWER OF CHARACTER AND EMPATHY (BAZELON, RANDOM HOUSE © 2013)

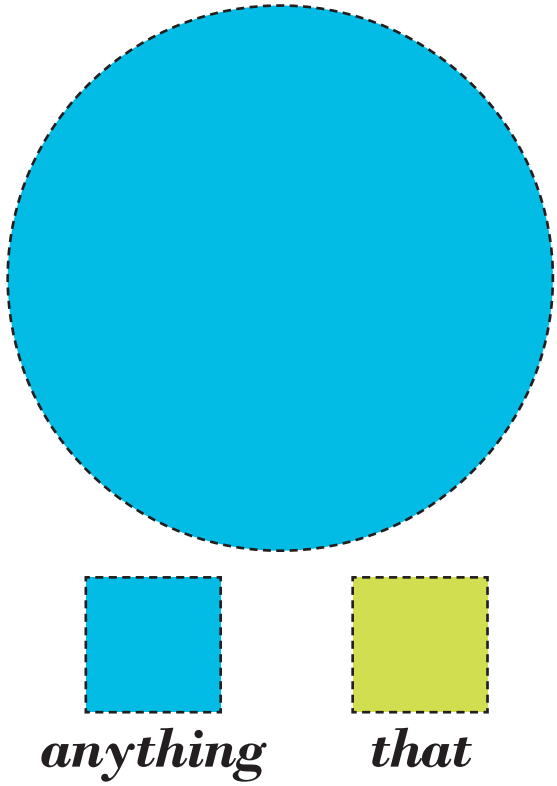


>> Emily Bazelon takes a hard look at bullying in the 21st century with this well-researched profile of three students, their families, and their schools. The author talks candidly about what school officials can do to combat bullying effectively (and hits hard about areas where schools fall short). Bazelon, the parent of two boys herself, talks of parents' responsibility as a tricky balancing act between engaging with kids and going too far to restrict their freedoms. She says, "By all means, when a child is being tormented, she needs help. Psychic wounds can be as damaging, and as lasting, as physical ones. At the same time, kids have to learn to cope with emotional bruises in order to grow up. They have to learn to handle conflict, to stand up for themselves and their friends, to recover from rejection. They have to feel in their bones the deep power of resilience and the magnetic pull of empathy."

The author also provides a varied and separate list of resources for students, parents, and educators. Combined with the resources in Dear Bully, parents and educators have a significant starting point or several new initiatives to enhance their empathy-building efforts.

FUNNY BONE

things
MEAT LOAF
would do for love



AND I QUOTE

life begins
at the end of your
comfort zone

- NEALE DONALD WALSCH

40 DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS

40 Developmental Assets are essential qualities of life that help young people thrive, do well in school, and avoid risky behavior.

Youth Connections utilizes the 40 Developmental Assets Framework to guide the work we do in promoting positive youth development. The 40 Assets model was developed by the Minneapolis-based Search Institute based on extensive research. Just as we are coached to diversify our financial assets so that all our eggs are not in one basket, the strength that the 40 Assets model can build in our youth comes through diversity. In a nutshell, the more of the 40 Assets youth possess, the more likely they are to exhibit positive behaviors and attitudes (such as good health and school success) and the less likely they are to exhibit risky behaviors (such as drug use and promiscuity). It's that simple: if we want to empower and protect our children, building the 40 Assets in our youth is a great way to start.

Look over the list of Assets on the following page and think about what Assets may be lacking in our community and what Assets you can help build in our young people. Do what you can do with the knowledge that even through helping build one asset in one child, you are increasing the chances that child will grow up safe and successful.

turn the page to learn more!

assets in action

40 DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS

EXTERNAL ASSETS

SUPPORT

1. **Family support**: Family life provides high levels of love and support.
2. **Positive family communication**: Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parent(s).
3. **Other adult relationships**: Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults.
4. **Caring neighborhood**: Young person experiences caring neighbors.
5. **Caring school climate**: School provides a caring, encouraging environment.
6. **Parent involvement in school**: Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school.

EMPOWERMENT

7. **Community values youth**: Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth.
8. **Youth as resources**: Young people are given useful roles in the community.
9. **Service to others**: Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week.
10. **Safety**: Young person feels safe at home, at school, and in the neighborhood.

BOUNDARIES & EXPECTATIONS

11. **Family boundaries**: Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person's whereabouts.
12. **School boundaries**: School provides clear rules and consequences.
13. **Neighborhood boundaries**: Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior.
14. **Adult role models**: Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior.
15. **Positive peer influence**: Young person's best friends model responsible behavior.
16. **High expectations**: Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well.

CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF TIME

17. **Creative activities**: Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts.
18. **Youth programs**: Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in the community.
19. **Religious community**: Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution.
20. **Time at home**: Young person is out with friends "with nothing special to do" two or fewer nights per week.

If you or your child would like to submit a picture that represents one of the 40 Developmental Assets, please email tinateam@roadrunner.com with a picture and the number of the asset the picture represents.

Not all pictures are guaranteed publication.

INTERNAL ASSETS

COMMITMENT TO LEARNING

21. **Achievement motivation**: Young person is motivated to do well in school.
22. **School engagement**: Young person is actively engaged in learning.
23. **Homework**: Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day.
24. **Bonding to school**: Young person cares about her or his school.
25. **Reading for pleasure**: Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.

POSITIVE VALUES

26. **Caring**: Young person places high value on helping other people.
27. **Equality and social justice**: Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty.
28. **Integrity**: Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs.
29. **Honesty**: Young person "tells the truth even when it is not easy."
30. **Responsibility**: Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility.
31. **Restraint**: Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.

SOCIAL COMPETENCIES

32. **Planning and decision making**: Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices.
33. **Interpersonal competence**: Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills.
34. **Cultural competence**: Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds.
35. **Resistance skills**: Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations.
36. **Peaceful conflict resolution**: Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.

POSITIVE IDENTITY

37. **Personal power**: Young person feels he or she has control over "things that happen to me."
38. **Self-esteem**: Young person reports having a high self-esteem.
39. **Sense of purpose**: Young person reports that "my life has a purpose."
40. **Positive view of personal future**: Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future.

EXPECT RESPECT

By Susan Dotter

For students to thrive in their schools and communities, they need to feel safe and be safe – socially, emotionally, and physically. Youth, parents, schools, and communities have a role to play in building positive, supportive environments. Though research on preventing and addressing bullying is still developing, we know that efforts to improve school climate and encourage positive interactions among students and staff can significantly reduce bullying.

Effective youth programs require strong administrative leadership and ongoing commitment on the part of the adults in the school system and at home. Programs that show the most promise are comprehensive in approach.

One comprehensive approach, supported by the National Center on Positive Behavior Supports and Interventions, focuses on teaching youth to show respect to one another instead of telling them not to bully. It begins by establishing respect – or being respectful – as one of many positive expectations. The science of behavior tells us that most humans respond better when being told what to "do" instead of what to "don't." Children can be given a strategy to use if they receive or witness disrespect. "Stop … Walk … Talk" encourages youth to tell the perpetrator to stop, walk away, and tell a trusted adult. Clear distinctions can be drawn between "tattling" and responsible reporting. Tattling can be defined as an attempt to get another person into trouble whereas responsible reporting is an attempt to keep another person out of trouble (or danger). Parents having a consistent approach to teaching and expecting respect does not ignore that clear and consistent consequences need to be in place for youth who continue to display unacceptable behaviors. In addition, children and adolescents who feel threatened or unsafe need extra support.

Some people might think that youth, especially older ones, should already know how to be respectful. However, just as many, if not more, might believe that respect is not a behavior that is frequently observable in today's society. Disrespectful behaviors are not limited to students, school grounds or common areas in the community. Adult bullies continue to exist in the movies, the news and the workplace. Being respectful can be viewed as a lifelong skill that needs constant reminders, practice and reinforcement. It takes time and it takes effort. But the bottom line is this: families, schools and communities can benefit when we expect respect.

HOW TO TEACH RESPECT AT HOME

MODEL IT Parents are their child's number one role model. If your child sees you treating others with respect, he or she will be much more likely to display that behavior.

DISCUSS IT Make it clear that respectful behavior is something you value. Have conversations with your child about what you think is respectful and what you think is disrespectful. Make sure he or she understands… don't assume that they do.

POINT IT OUT Identify respectful and disrespectful behaviors that you see when you and your child are together. You can use examples from TV, movies, books and real life. Talk with your child about your observations. Ask him or her to point examples out to you.

RECOGNIZE IT Praise your child when he is she is being respectful. Offer specific feedback about what you saw and how that behavior displayed respect. Catch him or her being respectful and acknowledge it. Positive reinforcement helps to ensure that the desired behavior continues.

EXPECT IT Provide clear and consistent consequences when your child is not respectful. But before you do, remember to make sure that your child understands your expectations around the issue of respect and that you are also recognizing his or her successes, not just disciplining the times when he is she is disrespectful.

CELEBRATE IT Enjoy the relationships, attitudes and the atmosphere that can be created when you expect respect!

Q&A

Q. When does bullying elevate from a parent/school issue into a legal issue?

A. In New York, there is no specific law classified as "Bullying", however New York does have the laws of Harassment and Assault, which potentially can be used in bullying cases, depending on the circumstances. Some of what occurs, such as name calling or not talking to the person, is a parent/school issue. Some of the things that occur in school are issues that adults need to teach kids to work through without school or parent intervention.

When it goes beyond this then it MAY fall under certain crimes. One of the crimes that may pertain to text messages or Facebook messages is Aggravated Harassment. Aggravated Harassment is when, with intent to harass, annoy, threaten or alarm another person, he or she communicates with a person, anonymously or otherwise, by telephone, by telegraph, or by mail, or by transmitting or delivering any other form of written communication, in a manner likely to cause annoyance or alarm. Depending on what is being said, it could fall under this law.

Facebook is harder to work with than text messages since texts go directly to the person. With Facebook, unless it is sent directly to them, the child may hear about the comments and have to go look for them on other pages or the messages are forwarded to them so they can see them. If they are not obscene, harassing, or a threat, then it might not fall under the law. The students need to remember that people have the right to an opinion and can voice their opinion to others and if it is not obscene or harassing and not sent to the person, it may not a crime.

When it goes beyond words and to physical contact it becomes the crime of harassment or assault. Harassment is when, with intent to harass, annoy or alarm another person he or she strikes, shoves, kicks or otherwise subjects such other person to physical contact, or attempts or threatens to do the same. Assault is when with intent to cause physical injury to another person, he or she causes such injury to such person.

??? If you would like to submit a question to YC Magazine to be answered by someone on our panel, please email the question to tinateam@roadrunner.com. Not all questions are guaranteed to make the magazine, but we will do our best to answer your question via email.

AND I QUOTE

When I get sad, I stop being sad and be *awesome* instead.

TRUE STORY.

whether you think
YOU CAN
or whether you think
YOU CAN'T,
YOU'RE RIGHT

DYK DID YOU KNOW?

A twillionaire is a twitterer with a million or more followers.

There are more TV sets in the US than there are people in the UK.

A dime has 118 ridges around the edge.

We want to share our ideas...

TALK TO US.

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We want to be involved...

TALK TO US.

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BY THE NUMBERS

500+

To date, number of children who have been recovered nationally as a direct result of the Amber Alert Program.

2

Average number of birthdays a child spends in foster care.

$40k

Number of dollars saved by American Airlines by eliminating one olive from each salad. (uselessdata.org)

18

Number of acres of pizza Americans eat every day. (uselessdata.org)

10:10

The time displayed on watches in most advertisements. (uselessdata.org)

318,979,564,000

Number of possible ways of playing the first four moves per side in a game of chess. (uselessdata.org)

BACKPACK *safety*

By Dr. Nicholas Smith, Active Life Chiropractic Centre

By their teen years, 50 percent of youths will experience at least one episode of low back pain.

The Consumer Safety Commission estimates that there are almost 5000 emergency room visits annually due to injuries related to backpacks and book bags.

When a backpack is carried, abnormal stresses and strains are imposed to the spine, not to mention many other skeletal joints such as the feet, ankles, knees, hips, shoulder girdle, etc.

There are some simple steps that can be taken to mitigate a backpack's effect on a growing (or even mature) spine:

1. The pack needs to be sized appropriately for the child's body. An adult pack will have too widely spaced straps and be too long to fit the child's torso.
2. A pack should never be worn with only one of the straps. Both shoulder straps and the waist strap (provided there is one) should be used at all times.
3. The pack's load should be distributed evenly using any pockets to even the load.
4. The pack should not exceed 15 percent of the carrier's weight. This means if your child weighs 100 pounds, the pack should not exceed 15 pounds.

reading MEDIA become media literate

- By Jesse Franzen, 8th Grade English Teacher

The holiday advertising apocalypse is quickly approaching! Now that the shock has passed, it is time to prepare. There are ways to fight back against the powerful goliath of advertising manipulation.

As long as you're a person who buys stuff (and we all buy stuff), you're affected. No, you can't block out all the commercials, billboards, t-shirt logos, or stuff shot out of the gun at a sporting event, but you can prepare yourself and your child on how to read the ads.

Read them? Yes, there is a way to actually read and think about ads that is deeper than a blur on a side of the road or a fast flip of a page. And, pssst, it's pretty easy to do, even in today's complex world with the average person viewing between 300 and 3,000 ads per day.

No big deal, right? Then why is advertising a $620 billion industry? If advertising didn't work, which if you're like me, and say, "I'm smarter than that," then why does the industry even exist? Of course, the answer is that advertising works. Then again, who cares that it works? Honestly, it's not a big deal.

What *is* a big deal is knowing how ads work so we can arm our minds against the daily barrage. Advertisers don't hide how or what they are doing, but how often do we take time to stop and think about what and how they are marketing products towards us? When we see at least 300 ads per day, no one can think about all of them. If we sit back and think about some of the advertising techniques and the stuff cluttering every corner of our homes, then we as individuals can make decisions based on what we value, and not our blind-emotional draw to own new and fancy stuff.

What is media literacy? Media is anything that sends a message, and literacy is being able to read, write, and speak. In other words, it is the ability for a person to access, analyze, evaluate, and communicate information in a variety of forms, including print and non-print messages, according to the National Association of Media Literacy Education (namle.net).

Now it is time to equip ourselves for the advertising apocalypse because, let's face it, the minimum number of ads we see is only going to grow from 300. There are four identification tools used to rip apart an ad, which is called deconstruction: sender, receiver, message, and technique. I think of it as a puzzle.

Let's start with something difficult: product placement. For example, let's say you're watching the neo-classic holiday movie "Home Alone." You come to the pizza party scene, where Fuller gulps his soda, which we know will make him wet the bed. We hear the classic line, "Fuller, go easy on the Pepsi." At the time, and still for some, this was a classic line for teasing a sibling.

This seems discouraging and difficult, but let's break it down. Who is sending us this message? Easy one – Pepsi. Who is the intended audience for this message? More difficult, I suppose. The answer would be anyone who has ever seen the movie or the sibling of someone who has seen it. What is the message? Is it that if we drink Pepsi, we all will wet the bed? Nah. I wouldn't want to buy Pepsi if that was the case, nor is that really what I'm feeling.

The real answer is that Pepsi is so delicious, that I can't and don't want to stop myself from drinking it, even if I know something bad could happen to me, like a midnight changing of the bedding. That's right, there is something that delicious, and we are to believe it's Pepsi. That's it, and if you notice, Pepsi (among many other advertisers as well) has kept up that same message for generations. Otherwise, I suppose we'd all just drink tap water.

What is the technique? Product placement. There are the cans, the kids, and they are all having a great time. It's a simple message and a pretty simple technique. It could have been any soda company in that classic line, but it wasn't. Forever, it will be Pepsi that loosened the bladder of Fuller.

Homework time (and remember to do this, because the advertising apocalypse is now, and it's only getting worse). Go about your daily life, and when you're with your child and you both stumble upon an ad, use your new mind-weapons (sender, receiver, message, technique) to deconstruct the ad. You'll always be right and, seriously, it is fun. You get to interact with your child, play a sort of game, and make a deeper, more meaningful relationship while teaching your child to be an informed, active consumer.

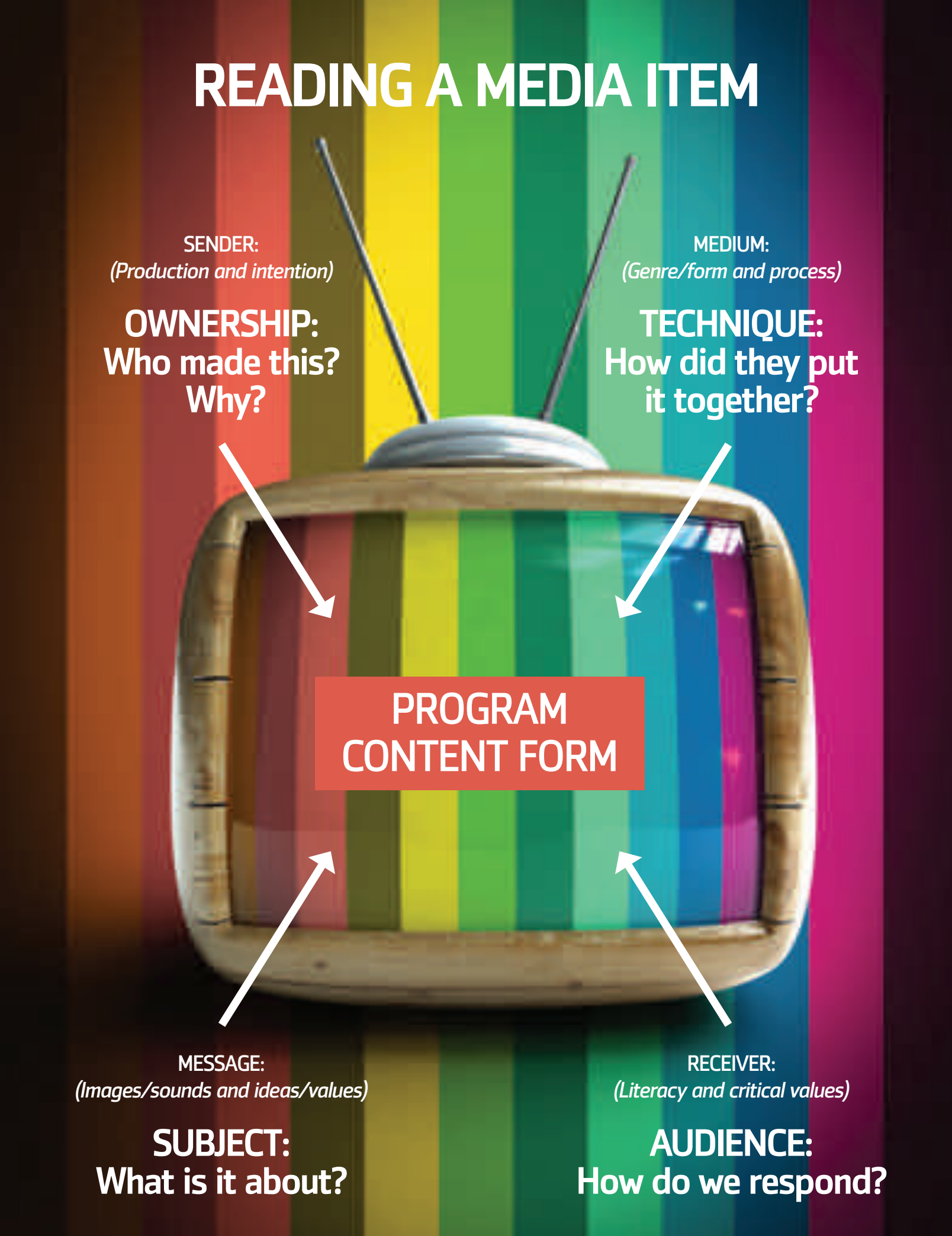
DYK DID YOU KNOW?

Children's sense of smell is better than adults'.

TYPEWRITER is the longest word that can be made using the letters only on one row of the keyboard.

Venus is the only planet that rotates clockwise.

READING A MEDIA ITEM



SENDER:
(Production and intention)

OWNERSHIP:
Who made this?
Why?

MEDIUM:
(Genre/form and process)

TECHNIQUE:
How did they put it together?

PROGRAM
CONTENT FORM

MESSAGE:
(Images/sounds and ideas/values)

SUBJECT:
What is it about?

RECEIVER:
(Literacy and critical values)

AUDIENCE:
How do we respond?

Connecting Youth & Communities online

TOOLS FOR PARENTS

HERE'S WHAT YOU'LL FIND:

- Latest News
- About CYC

- *I Matter* PSAs created by students
- Youth Activities Calendar

- How to Get Involved
- Support CYC

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www.ConnectingYouth.com