



Children First

Our mission is to respond to the complex needs of abused and neglected children, and those involved in their care, by providing best practice counseling, legal, and educational services. Through research, communications and training initiatives, we work to expand these programs to prevent abuse and help more children heal.



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For more information on reporting child abuse and neglect, please visit our website: www.nysppcc.org

Is My Child Being Bullied? Action Steps for Parents

By Mary L. Pulido, Ph.D.

Most adults can recall a time when they, or someone they know, were bullied. It usually was a very humiliating experience. The "school yard bully" was avoided at all costs; rarely did adults get involved. Well, the times have changed. My career has been devoted to protecting children—but usually due to abuse or neglect at the hands of an adult. Unfortunately, children also need to be protected from other children. To set the record straight, bullying is not teasing or the occasional name calling or arguments that happen between friends. Bullying is behavior that crosses the line, and, as we've recently seen in tragic cases, can drive children to commit suicide.

Bullying can be characterized as:

- Intentional. The bully means to hurt your child; it is not an accident.
- Harmful. Bullying can cause physical and/or emotional harm.
- Repetitive. Not usually a one-time occurrence; children are often targeted due to the fact that the bully thinks they won't take action against them.
- Imbalance of Power. The bully usually has a source of power over the child they choose to bully. It can be age, size, strength or social status.

Parents should be aware that there are different types of bullying. The most common are:

- Physical threats such as hitting, shoving, spitting or punching
- Verbal bullying such as name calling, threats, spreading rumors or lies
- Social exclusion, purposely leaving the child out of activities, team sports, birthday parties.
- Cyber-bullying; threats or slurs that are conveyed through the cell phone or internet.

Bullying hurts. Recognize the warning signs. Your child may not want to tell you about it. Parents who are in tune with their child may notice the following:

- Depression, or more moody or anxious than usual
- Grades slipping
- Suddenly has fewer friends
- Not wanting to go to school or participate in after school activities
- Changes in sleeping and eating habits
- Appears upset after phone calls, texts or using the computer
- Loses books, electronics, clothing or jewelry
- Unexplained injuries
- Expresses suicidal thoughts

As a parent, there are steps you can take to help your child with bullying. They include:

- Help your child understand bullying. Use a story in the media as a teachable moment to discuss this issue with your child. Reinforce that it is never your child's fault if they are bullied. It is not a reflection of anything wrong with them. The bully chose to use mean behavior—they are the ones who need help.

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Letter from the Executive Director



Dear Friends:

Welcome to spring! April is especially significant to The NYSPCC as National Child Abuse Prevention Month. The recent news reports of child sexual abuse in New York City's schools highlight how important it is for everyone to understand and recognize the signs and symptoms of child abuse or neglect. The NYSPCC's *Safe Touches* child sexual abuse prevention program, aimed at educating both children and adults

about this sensitive topic, works to address this issue. If you are interested in hosting a *Safe Touches* seminar for the parents at your child's school, please contact Steve Forrester, the Director of The NYSPCC Training Institute at 212.233.5500 ext. 219 or sforrester@nyspcc.org. To learn more about the *Safe Touches* program, please see Page 4. These issues demand our attention and our call to action, whether we're parents, caregivers, or child advocates at heart.

We look forward to seeing many of you throughout the coming year at one or more of our upcoming events:

- Thursday, April 12: Inaugural Spring Luncheon featuring keynote speaker Sapphire, author of *Push*, the novel that inspired the Academy Award®-winning film *Precious*. This afternoon will focus on educating New Yorkers about issues related to child abuse prevention.
- Thursday, May 24: Junior Committee Cocktail Party to kick-off summer
- Tuesday, November 13: 2012 Annual Gala: *Protecting Kids First!* Please see Page 3 for photos from the 2011 Gala.

We are thrilled to report that Sophie B. Hawkins, a past Gala entertainer, donated a portion of the proceeds from her concerts at The Iridium on March 11th. Sophie's dedication to raising awareness about child abuse and neglect is inspiring—thank you!

You are a vital part of The NYSPCC's efforts to keep children safe. Our programs provide hope and healing to vulnerable children, and your support of our mission makes that possible. Thank you.

Warm regards,

Mary L. Pulido, Ph.D.
Executive Director



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www.facebook.com/NYSPCC

Action Steps for Parents

Continued from cover.

- Keep tabs on your child. Check in about their school day, worries or concerns. Find out with whom they ate their lunch, and with whom they sat on the bus.
- Teach your child how to say "no" to bullying behaviors. Strategize with them about what they would do if they are confronted by a bully. Practice their responses. This should build their self-confidence.
- Tell them to immediately tell an adult about bullying. Children should avoid fighting, and immediately get an adult to intervene. If there is no adult present, they should report the instance after the fact.
- Be informed. Learn about your school's policy towards bullying. New York State has the "Dignity for All Students Act" (2012) that protects children from harassment on school property or at a school function. Find out who you can speak to if your child is bullied. It's also helpful to write down the details regarding the incident(s) as this record can be helpful to school administrators or the police. If it's cyber-bullying, keep copies of all messages or postings.
- Get help for your child to deal with the stresses of bullying. Speak with a school counselor or your mental health professional for support.

Helpful websites include:

Parentfurther.com, Stopbullying.gov, Cyberangels.org and Cartoonnetwork.com. For more information about keeping kids safe, visit us at www.nyspcc.org.

Save the Date The NYSPCC's Annual Gala **Protecting Kids First!**

Tuesday, November 13, 2012

The Plaza Hotel

For reservations and more
information:

212.233.5500 x.221 or
info@nyspcc.org



Kick-off Memorial Day Weekend
with The NYSPCC!

2012 Junior Committee Cocktail Party

Thursday, May 24, 2012

Dream Hotel Downtown @ The Beach

Tickets \$150 in advance;
\$175 at the door

[Click here to purchase.](#)

Program Spotlight: NIH Grant for Safe Touches research

The NYSPCC's child sexual abuse prevention program, *Safe Touches: Personal Safety Training for Children*, is the *only* one in New York City designed to reach children ages 5-8 in the public school system. To help determine whether children retain the knowledge and self-protective skills taught in the workshop, The NYSPCC has been awarded a grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to conduct a rigorous evaluation of *Safe Touches*. Partnering with the NIH will enable The NYSPCC to generate and disseminate robust evidence about the *Safe Touches* program, contribute to the child welfare field's knowledge base of evidence-informed programs, and identify effective strategies that prevent child sexual abuse. We are honored to work with such a prestigious organization.

2011 Annual Gala: *Protecting Kids First!*

On November 10, 2011, The NYSPCC honored Mark S. Weiss, Vice Chairman of Newmark Knight Frank, and Knicks legend and his wife, Allan and Tamara Houston of the Allan Houston Legacy Foundation. They received the Strength of our Society Award at our Annual Gala: *Protecting Kids First!* Emmy-award winning journalist and *Inside Edition* host Deborah Norville served as the emcee for the evening and guests were treated to a sparkling performance by "Wonder Woman," Lynda Carter. Thank you to our gift bag donors, Frank Sommerfield, Jason Wu at Tekserve, and Pete Sanders. Thank you to all of our friends and supporters who made this a memorable evening for The NYSPCC!



Caroline Niemczyk, Lincoln Frank, Penny Grant M.D.



Linsey Davis with Honorees Tamara and Allan Houston



Lynda Carter and Blaine Trump



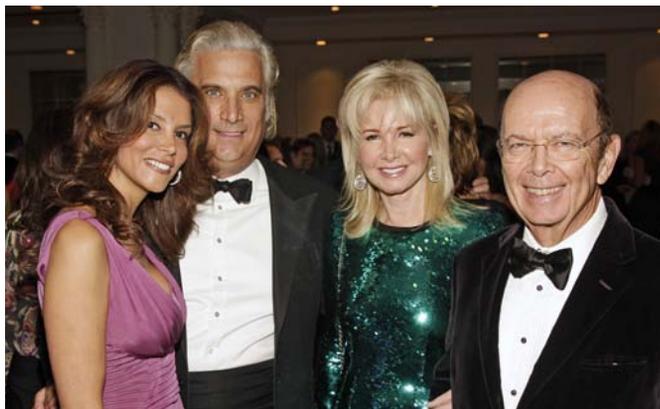
Pauletta Washington



Mark Weiss, Allan and Tamara Houston, Deborah Norville and Karl Wellner, Mary L. Pulido, Ph.D., David Stack



Steven Wechsler and Honoree Mark Weiss



Kara Young, Peter Georgiopoulos, Hilary and Wilbur Ross

We are grateful to the following supporters who have made Annual Fund gifts of \$500 or more since November 1, 2011 to help support our work with NYC's children:

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Thank you to the following donors and volunteers who helped make our 2011 Children's Holiday Party such a special occasion for the children in our programs! To see photos from the party, please visit www.facebook.com/nyspcc.

- Colgate-Palmolive Company
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- Tom and Tammy Eagan and Family
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