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Spring 2020

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From the Publisher

We don't often do a themed issue because we like to have a variety of articles that cater to everyone in the family. However, when it comes to an important topic such as bullying, we feel it's important to dedicate an entire issue to it, as it does effect everyone in the family. So, in this issue, all feature articles and majority of the columns will be discussing bullying. Besides reading about the kinds of bullying that exist, you'll also read about what you can do if you are being bullied or know someone that is. Additionally, we have a few people who were brave enough to share their stories of bullying with us, and we truly appreciate that they took the time to do so. To respect their privacy, names may have been changed in certain stories.

In other news, I am very happy to report that we have a new columnist joining our team! Nicole Forrester will be our writer for our new *Finance & Real Estate Insights* column. Nicole is a local Durham and GTA Real Estate Broker with over 17+ years of experience in the financial industry. She was trained on Bay Street as an Investment Executive and Professional Financial Planner for one of Canada's largest financial institutions, and she looks forward to sharing her financial and real estate expertise with you. Be sure to head on over to page 34 and check out her first column; she discusses things you need to have in place that are important for good financial health.

I hope you enjoy reading our Spring 2020 issue. Feel free to share your thoughts on it with us. You can connect with us through our website www.thelocalbizmagazine.ca and Facebook page. Don't forget to also check out what our bloggers are up to.

Antoine Elhashem Publisher



From the Editor

I was fortunate enough to have never experienced bullying in my own life, but I know a lot of people who weren't so lucky. When I put out a call, looking for people who would be interested in sharing their stories with the magazine, the response was surprisingly high. Many people (including people I personally know) privately messaged me to tell me that they had been victims of bullying in their school days. The interesting (though unfortunate) trend I noticed with most if not all of these stories, was that nothing was done about the bullying. Concerns were voiced, complaints were made, but yet it continued...

Why?

I don't know the answer to this question but I'm interested in learning more. This is why, this issue we've decided to focus entirely on the topic of bullying. All the feature articles will be discussing some aspect of bullying. As mentioned earlier, we were also able to connect with a few people who were willing to share their experiences of being bullied with us so you can get a sense of the victim's perspective in this. It takes a lot of strength and courage to recall the events that happened and to put it down in words, and we truly appreciate these individuals for taking the time to do so for us. We also have a mother who shares her story of her child being bullied so you can understand the parent perspective better. I would have liked to have also had "a bully's" story to share with you, but unfortunately (yet not surprisingly?) there were no takers on that.

As always, I hope you enjoy reading this issue of the magazine. Feel free to send me your feedback on it. If you would like to pitch a story, or write for us, you can reach me at editor@thelocalbizmagazine.ca.

Wendy Chiavalon Editor-in-Chief











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Many of us can remember a time in elementary school or high school, when our appearance, religion, demeanour, gender, sexuality, personal tastes or any other differentiating trait was used as the butt of a joke, or a long-term theme of harassment. Whether this torment was stretched out over time or minimally experienced, we can all agree upon the fact that it was harmful, and wholly unacceptable.

This form of harmful behaviour that is intentional, repeated, and meant to scare, hurt, or exclude a person who is unable to defend themselves and leaves them feeling scared and/or uncomfortable is defined under the umbrella terminology of bullying.

Bullying is no longer simplified and limited to the school yard. It now transcends the schoolyard and can take the form of physical abuse, social mistreatment, discriminatory behaviour and cyber bullying. Bullying can also occur in the workplace, at home between spouses, and even between a parent and their child. The following article is going to describe all forms of bullying, and what they look liken in conjunction with the environment that they occur in. The long-term effects of bullying will then be discussed as well as the benefit of anti-bullying programs.

Types of Bullying

As previously mentioned, bullying doesn't always show its face in a clear and decisive manner. It could be your child, spouse, friend, or even a co-worker who is being bullied but are unable to detect it because we do not comprehend the varying definitions of it.

Physical Bullying

Forms of physical bullying can be defined as any behaviour that uses physical force to assert dominance in order to gain what the bully wants. This can be expressed through shoving, tripping, hitting, punching, poking, blocking, or using physical intimidation. A bully may want something from their victim, such as money, a product like a phone or laptop, or require the person to behave in a certain way that the bully wants. The kind of physical bullying will generally depend upon the context of the harassment. If it is a child at school, they may be bothered for something they have, or simply because of their appearance, or how they act, etc. If it is in the workplace, the bullying may be less obvious in a physical manner, but can still appear as inappropriate - poking, touching that is unwanted, and physical intimidation. Males are more likely to experience the physical form of bullying according to a 2002 study conducted by the Red Cross, who observed an increase in general fighting among students across the country that year.

Emotional/Verbal Bullying

Emotional bullying is similar to emotional abuse that can occur between adults, children, parents, grandparents, and spouses. This is the form of bullying that most females engage in, whether it be in the school yard, online, between spouses, or in the workplace. Emotional bullying can be expressed in the form of name-calling, intentionally hurtful comments, and repeated teasing. This can once more be done due to a person's appearance, race, sexual orientation, economic status, or because the bully wants something from the individual. Spousal bullying can quickly turn into abuse as the supposed teasing intensifies into constant criticism, emotional blackmail, yelling, screaming, and extensive name-calling. According to the same study conducted by the *Red Cross*, bullying behaviour for females peak in school settings in grades 6 through 9, with 37% having experienced it on a consistent basis.

A sub-form of emotional and verbal bullying is social bullying, or an intentional defamation of character through the spreading of false rumours or accusations. This can occur at school, in the workplace, or online. This form of bullying is incredibly isolating because it causes the victim to move inward and keep their pain a secret out of fear of new rumours being spread about them.

Cyber Bullying

Cyber bullying is the main form of harassment that has skyrocketed as a concern within elementary and high school settings. The *Red Cross* writes that out of six options, Canadian teachers rank it as the most problematic issue within their public schools. 89% of those teachers claimed that bullying and violence in general are serious issues for school teachers to have to cope with.

Internet victimization is more likely to occur in young age groups, between 15-20 years of age, according to 150 Stat Canada. The study states that 1 in 5 of these individuals between those ages experienced cyberstalking, cyberbullying, or both. Older individuals between the ages of 27-29 experienced it 15% of the time.

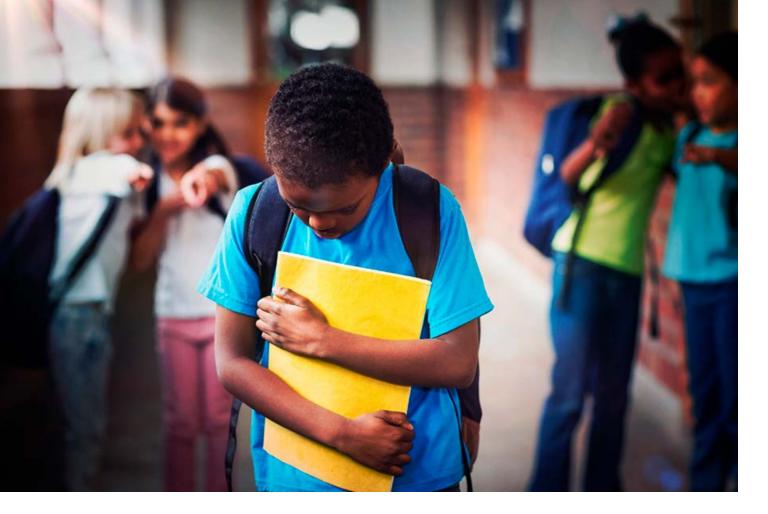
Cyberbullying is defined as a form of bullying that is sent through the internet that applies the use of emotional/verbal bullying. This



can occur through any social media platform or message program, such as texting, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Facebook Messenger, etc. The messages are negative in nature and are generally formed around name-calling, insults, threats, or intimidation. Cyberbullying is harder to detect for many teachers, friends, and partners, because it is often kept a secret, along with it acting as a 24/7 agitator on their personal devices. Information communicated electronically is generally permanent, which means that incorrect and harmful rumours can affect a victim's external world, such as the possibility of employment, admission to post-secondary school, and reputation with family and friends.

Discriminatory Bullying

This form of bullying occurs when the bully uses something about the victim that stands out in a certain environment against them, by means of criticism and demeaning insults. They may use elements of their character against them such as the colour of their skin, their perceived religion, sexual orientation, their gender, and perceived socioeconomic status. This can occur in the workplace under the guise of teasing and camaraderie, but eventually takes



an abusive turn – offensive jokes spoken in person or through email, intimidation, spreading rumours, the belittling of opinions, or asking questions that are too personal and unprofessional about a person's life outside of work.

Schools suffer with the issue of discriminatory bullying of LGBTQ plus individuals (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer plus) due to the progression of visibility within the communities. LGBTQ plus individuals are more likely to face high rates of depression, anxiety, suicidal tendencies, self-harming behaviours compared to heterosexual identifying individuals. In comparison to heterosexual individuals, LGBTQ individuals' risk of experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is also doubled, often due to bullying that begins at an early age. 77% of transgender respondents to a survey conducted by the *Canadian Mental Health Association* had seriously considered suicide and 45% of them have attempted suicide.

Individuals and Groups

Bullying can be conducted either by a single individual, or multiple people within a group. A child can consistently be picked on by one person in their grade or school, or by a group of friends, either in person or online. It is the same for household or workplace bullying; more than one person can tap into the mob mentality and join in on criticism, belittling, intimidation, or discriminatory behaviour against a certain individual.

Where It Occurs

Bullying can happen anywhere a person is consistently interacting with the same or similar individuals. Emotional/verbal, social, cyber, and discriminatory bullying can occur within all of the following environments, sometimes simultaneously.

At School

When people hear the word bullying, they most likely think of a schoolyard image where a child is being harassed for their lunch money. This image used to be taken lightly, but is now considered actual harassment. Whether a student is being verbally or physically harassed, the same level of support should be provided.

PREVNET (Promoting Relationships and Eliminating Violence Network) conducted studies with 100 researchers in 28 universities and arrived upon stunning results when it comes to bullying within schools. 75% of people in general have said that they at some point have been affected by bullying—which means 6 out of 8 people in your lives have somehow been affected by bullying behaviour. They found that 60% of males who bully in school have criminal records by 24 years of age, while those who are bullied are more likely to suffer from severe mental health issues such as depression and anxiety. The increase in cyberbullying as technology has advanced has only enhanced the severity of school related bullying. Over 1/3 of Canadian teens have observed cyberbullying taking place, while 1 in 5 report being victimized electronically. Canadian rates of bullying are higher now than 2/3



of OECD countries (The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development; democratic countries that support free market economies).

In the Workplace

More and more studies have conducted research on workplace bullying and are revealing some stunning results. In a study conducted in 2018 by the Canadian polling firm, Forum Research, out of 1,800 Canadians, more than 55% said they were either bullied or knew co-workers who experienced bullying at work. It was also found within this study that 1 in 2 employees were known to report bullying to their employer, but only a third of workplaces actually addressed the bullying issue. It was supposed by employment lawyers that harassment and bullying within the workplace has mainly continued because employers do not want to deal with the issue. Many employers are not trained on how to deal with the issue and complaints, so are uncomfortable when presented with them. But the long-term costs of absenteeism and legal issues that follow the inability to properly discipline coworkers who participate in bullying behaviour seem to be motivating employers to be proactive and educate themselves on the effects of workplace bullying.

At Home

Many children and adults have to cope with bullying that comes from the main place that they believe should make them feel safe: their home. Adults can bully their own children, which quickly

morphs into abuse due to the close proximity as well as the close relationship. Spouses can bully one another, which can also quickly morph into abusive behaviour. Another sibling can bully another, based on appearance, gender, or something discriminatory about them that makes them different. A study conducted in 2011 by the CDC's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) found that bullies, as well as victims of bullies were likely to have been exposed to violence at home in at some point in their lives.

The Power of Anti-Bullying Programs

Many children are afraid to report bullying due to the fear that "tattling" will only lead to an escalation of the bullying. The same goes for adults in the work force, and often times, spouses and children in their home environment. Anti-bullying programs within Canada are attempting to educate teachers, employers, and any person in a leadership or authoritative position on how to effectively cope and proactively diminish the high rates of bullying. Learn more about these programs and how to approach a bullying situation on page 13 of the magazine.

Sam Burton is a writer in the GTA with a focus on creative fiction but with an affinity for local and broader investigative journalism. Currently residing in Pickering, her striving goal in writing is to create a genuine connection with readers, whether it be through real-world events or those crafted from her own musings. Her photography portfolio can be found on instragram @typhoidandswans.



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Bullying has become far too common in Canada more than many parents, teachers, and young students would like to admit. Yet, it is not a novel occurrence—we can all recall some point in our lives when we were picked on for something about us that another person did not like. This form of harassment can take place in the workplace, at home, and as most commonly understood, within school hallways and classrooms, and the schoolyard.

This article is going to primarily focus on bullying that occurs at the elementary school level and high school level, which has greatly increased due to the presence of cyber bullying. But it is important to note that bullying in the workplace does occur, as it does at home between siblings and/or spouses. Additionally, this article is going to focus on what you can do as a parent, friend, and even victim to help deal with bullying behaviour before it gets to the point of adversely affecting a person's life and their mental health.

The Victim

Whoever you are, you have noticed a difference in behaviour in your child, friend, spouse, student, or classmate. They appear more anxious than usual, depressed, isolated, absent from work, absent from school, and having increasingly frequent stomach

aches (for children, this is a way that anxiety is manifested). You find out in some capacity that they are being bullied—whether it be on the internet or text message via cyber bullying, at school, at work, etc—and you want to do something about it. Thanks to increasing studies on the topic of bullying, there has been an influx of information on how to precisely do just that.

At School

It is often difficult for children and teenagers to come forward to a parent or teacher about bullying due to fear of increased intensity of harassment because of 'tattling'. Unless the child has grown up in an environment that distinctly encourages their self-esteem and the refusal to accept abuse, it may be hard to get the information you need out of your child. But the goal is not to force the information out of them, rather to wait for a time to ask them about school, projects, or friends. If they trust you, they will eventually inform you about what is bothering them.

Focus on the Family lists four ways that a teacher or parent can effectively respond to bullying:

Listen Carefully: The point of having your child or student talk, is to allow just that. The more they speak, the more they are going to reveal. Your job is to listen, and validate their feelings through the application of active listening. Nod your head and let them know you are here for them, and are taking what they are saying seriously. Try to write down serious offences should they occur, and let your child know that you are doing so. Take photos of injuries or damaged belongings for further reference. Keep your child in the loop about what you are doing so they understand that they are worth this effort. If you are a teacher and a student is confiding in

you, it would be best to inform the parents about the issue, documenting possible injuries with photos so you can all be on the same page.

- 2. Reassure Them: Once your child/student has informed you about the bullying situation, remind them that none of it is their fault. It is solely the fault of the bully. Inform them that bullying is a common occurrence, but it is never something that is okay. Reassure them that you are going to take the appropriate steps to protect them from this abusive behaviour. If the student or child fears retaliation for their actions of informing you or others about the bullying, let them know that staying silent will only allow the bully to continue to hurt them and others as well.
- 3. Do Not Approach the Bully's Parents Outside the School:
 Many parents have tried to take the issue of bullying into
 their own hands outside of school hours, but end up with
 many dire results. The bullying itself may escalate, parents
 may turn a blind eye and not accept what their child is doing,
 and expressions of violence and negative behaviour could
 continue between the parents, which in itself does not offer
 a positive model of resolve. The child's teacher and school
 principal are responsible for the child's well-being at school
 and are the ones that must take action. Firmly and assertively
 insist that the school outline a plan of action that will address
 what is going on with your child. Do not give in if your
 concerns are dismissed. If it is happening to your child, it is
 likely that it is happening to other children at the same school
 as well.
- 4. Determine What Was Internalized: There is usually some aspect of a child that a bully focuses on consistently, and harasses them about. It could be their appearance, religion, gender, etc anything that makes them stand out even slightly. The names they are being called, the physical abuse they are enduring, and the overall sensation of shame and worthlessness may be feelings that become internalized by the victim. In other words, the bullied child may actually begin believing that what the bully is saying about them is true. Once you address the actual bullying that is going on, it is important that you follow up with the victim to establish the internal dialogue going on inside their head. Not doing this can often lead to the festering of negative thoughts and feelings.

Anti-Bullying Programs

Many parents are not sure what to do when their child is being bullied, especially when the school does nothing in response to it. This is usually when parents take the issue into their own hands, but the results are rarely reasonable and productive. An option that many parents are now choosing that has been proven effective, is the establishment of anti-bullying programs. Many of these programs focus on prevention, as well as compassionate solutions that take both the victim and the bully into consideration. The Ontario Teachers' Federation lists multiple organizations on their website such as PREVNet, Operation Respect, Bullying Canada, The Canadian Safe School Network and COPA. COPA, a provincial Frenchlanguage non-profit organization is one of the main organizations that implements a bullying prevention program that focuses on sensitizing and informing the community about the issues of bullying, constantly generating new strategies and perspectives in order to end the cycle of violence.

Online

An entirely new form of communication has further enhanced the reach and abilities of a bully. It is fairly easy to constantly harass someone through social media, texting, emails, and various apps that involve interaction. These days when a child is being bullied at school, it is more than likely that they are also being bullied through their phone, on a certain app on their phone, through a video, or simply texting and messaging. Behaviourally, a child will seem withdrawn, more anxious, depressed, and avoid going to school if they are being cyber bullied the same way as if they were being bullied at school.

Addressing cyber bullying should be as high a priority as addressing all other forms of bullying. Bill Belsey runs www.cyberbullying.ca and offers a joint program and presentation that any teacher or parent can read and download. Within this presentation he offers some ideas as to what can be done about cyber bullying which include:

- Educating students through the development of empathy, reminding them that online actions have real life consequences
- Challenging the normalization of bullying behaviour through discussion
- Modeling positive uses of social media in the classroom and at home

For more information about his program, visit the cyber bullying website.

At Work

Not all bullying takes place between young children. Workplace bullying is very common, and involves the repeated mistreatment of an employee or one or more employees, which can involve threatening behaviour, humiliation, intimidation, work sabotage, and/or verbal abuse.

Gary Namie is the director of *The Workplace Bullying Institute* and gives advice to people who feel they are experiencing workplace bullying. He states that it depends on who is bullying you; a peer or subordinate, or the boss. Namie suggests that if it is a peer or subordinate, give a nonchalant response that does not further encourage the other person. If they continue, do your best to document everything; the dates, the times, the location, the details of the bullying. Be sure to have sufficient examples you can use to show your manager.

If the bully is your boss, the approach needs to be more delicate. Break the silence to co-workers, because it is likely that you are not the only one being bullied. There is strength in numbers, which will counteract the power dynamic between you and the boss. You can build a case with these individuals, noting how the bullying is essentially affecting the company's bottom line—productivity, absenteeism, turnover, etc. Approach HR after you have tried without success to address the issue with the supervisor, or if you feel you are unable to do so. Once more, always have clear documentation of dates, times, places, and specific examples of what has occurred.

Ultimately, if the bullying does not stop, it may be time to find another job. You can still make an effort to document everything that happened and sending it as a review on their job website. You



deserve to be treated with respect, and constant harassment is not good for your mental health.

Bully Diffuser / Permission Slip Approach

Garth Riley is a writer and presenter who created a specific method of approaching both victims of bullying and the bully themselves. He calls it, *The Permission Slip Approach*. What this approach entails is the mindful method of allowing certain internal and external factors to affect your feelings and behaviour. The thought or feeling is addressed, and then redirected into a new "recovery permission slip". The process appears as follows:

I,	
Give permission to	
То	
Signed	
Date	

The slip must reflect precisely what you are saying to yourself, or what you are saying about another person. It is meant to act as a mindful method of addressing the thoughts and emotions running through the person's mind, and can be written by either the bully or the victim and is effective for all ages. The second permission slip will be written in the same format, but with a new outlook that reframes the emotion and situation. This time, the permission will offer a solution, such as assessing a certain word before it is let into the child's mind, or for a child to practice deep breathing before lashing out in anger. It is a compassionate approach that brings to mind the issues of the bully, which diffuses further attempts to bully other children. For more detailed information about this specific approach, visit Garth Riley's personal website.

Sam Burton is a writer in the GTA with a focus on creative fiction but with an affinity for local and broader investigative journalism. Currently residing in Pickering, her striving goal in writing is to create a genuine connection with readers, whether it be through real-world events or those crafted from her own musings. Her photography portfolio can be found on instragram @typhoidandswans.



March 8, 2020

Snowhoes & Snowclues

Discover the wonders of winter wildlife! Track and identify signs of local animals, and learn some of their secrets for surviving chilly winter temperatures. Try out snowshoeing and leave behind tracks of your own! Snowshoes will be provided. In the event of a snow-free day, there'll be a winter walk through the woods. FREE Claremont 416-464-8879

March 21, 2020

Kids Against Hunger/Rotary Club of Ajax Food Packing Event

Rotary Club of Ajax and teams of community volunteers will package 50,000 meals during the Club's 7th Kids Against Hunger food packing event.

These hours are eligible for OSSD reporting. Forest Brook Community Church 60 Kearney Drive, Ajax ON, Time - 9:00 AM - 11:59 PM For more information contact Donna Bright at dbright56@hotmail.com

March 22, 2020

Sunday Speaker Series: Digger, Teacher, Soldier, Spy!

Welcoming back Dr. Amy Barron for her latest talk on the unexpected side of archaeology. What do archaeologists do when the world's at war? Surprisingly, many of them turn spy. During both the First and Second World Wars archaeologists on all sides became involved with military intelligence, turning their in-depth knowledge of the land and the peoples they studied to support their countries at war. Taking place at the Scugog Shores Museum Village (Schoolhouse).

Admission is \$10/person. Scugog

www.scugog.ca/museum 905-985-8698 ext. 103

March 28, 2020

An Evening With Danny Michel
Danny Michel's thoughtful and provoking
songs have earned him a devoted fan base,
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him as "just fabulous, he's kind of like Paul
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Mogens Galberg at mgalberg@gmail.com
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March 28, 2020

Spark! Children's Juried Art Show Explore your creative side and enter your artwork in Spark!, a juried art show for kids from Kindergarten to Grade 8. Art Drop-Off:

Saturday, Feb. 29: 12-4pm | Main Branch. In partnership with Pine Ridge Arts Council. Ajax Public Library - Main Branch 55 Harwood Avenue South, Ajax ON, L1S2H8 Time - 1:30 PM - 3:30 PM For more information contact libraryinfo@ajaxilbrary.ca or Phone: 905-683-4000 http://bit.ly/2XoTfLb

April 4 to 5, 2020

Sunderland Maple Syrup Festival
Enjoy the exciting variety of events taking
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April 9 to 25, 2020

Kiss the Moon, Kiss the Sun

A story about people finding the nerve to take responsibility, and persevering against the odds. Uplifting, poignant and funny, Kiss The Moon, Kiss The Sun will capture your heart and possibly change the way you view people forever. Whitby Courthouse Theatre. Admission is \$28/person.

www.whitbytheatre.ca 905-668-8111

April 10, 2020

905-718-9074

The Bowmanville Antique and Folk Art Show

The Bowmanville Antiques and Folk Art Show is Canada's premiere show of country furniture, listed pre-war Canadian art, folk art and decorative accessories. Discerning collectors and decorators flock to Bowmanville each spring for an opportunity to buy from the top dealers in the country, many of whom save their best offerings specifically for Bowmanville! Vetted invited dealers from across Canada, no vintage, crafts or reproductions allowed. Expect quality and nothing less. Clarington www.bowmanvilleantiqueshow.ca

April 11, 2020

Easter Parade

The Easter Bunny is coming to Pickering. Decorate your bike, wagon or scooter and participate in the parade - fun for all ages! Participation is free for everyone! Early registration is available now or register the day of the parade. Pickering 905.839,2990

April 11, 2020

Butter Tart Festival

Oshawa's Butter Tart Festival is a great way to experience the many different varieties of delicious butter tarts. Hosted at the Oshawa Convention Centre (67 Simcoe St N), there will be at least 10 local butter tart vendors along with a number of other complimentary product vendors to explore.

Oshawa

www.downtownoshawa.ca 905-576-7606

April 17 to 19, 2020

Spring Art Festival

Art show and sale with 70 artists participating in all mediums, inside Council Hall building at Camp Samac. Hourly draws for paintings. Lunch counter. FREE Oshawa 905-435-0575

April 30 to May 17, 2020

52nd Annual Juried Art ExhibitionOshawa Art Assoc. Opening night of Juried Art show at the R. McLaughlin Gallery.

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May 2, 2020

Oshawa Wine Tasting Festival

This fun and popular wine tasting event features many Ontario, Canadian and International wines. Attendees have the opportunity to "try and buy" selections often only available at the winery itself (Ontario wineries). Wine education and food sampling are also featured at this event. Event limited to age 19 and older.

www.downtownoshawa.ca 905-576-7606

May 3, 2020

The Hissing Folly by Cole Swanson

The Hissing Folly looks at Durham Region's ecological landscape and poses critical questions around human relationships with invasive species. This project includes the collection and removal of phragmites, resulting in the construct of a folly. Visual Arts Centre of Clarington 143 Simpson Ave., Clarington ON, L1C 3K8 Time - 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM
For information contact Aine Belton communications@vac.ca or Phone: 905-623-5831 www.vac.ca/coleswanson.html

May 11, 2020

Just For Today Alanon Family Group

Support group for anyone whose life has been affected by alcohol-families and friends of alcoholics.

This is a free adult event.
Port Perry United Church
294 Queen St, Scugog ON,
Time - 7:30 PM - 11:59 PM
For information contact Martha Schissler at
416-524-7960
www.al-anon.alateen.on.ca

May 11, 2020

Georgina-Brock Garden Club -Plant Auction

Huge auction sale of perennials, annuals and vegetable seedlings. Auctioneer Kevin McGuckin. Bring your potted and named plant donations by 6:15 pm. Viewing starts at 6:30 pm. Auction starts at 7:00 pm Wilfrid Hall C20915 Brock Road

May 23, 2020

905-420-4660 ext. 6104

Artfest on the Esplanade—Art of Sound

Every summer, Esplanade Park comes alive with music, dance, crafts and singing, along with children's art areas and artists demonstrations. This free arts event will include over 90 artists from across the province who show and sell a fantastic variety of original art which include Paintings (Oil, Acrylic, Watercolour), Photography, Pottery, Wood Carvings, Jewellery, home decor and more!

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For events that may have been added after the publication date and other ideas to plan your perfect day in Durham Region, visit www.durhamtourism.ca.



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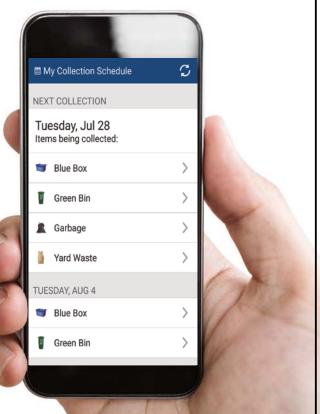


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I was 13 years old and I was about to start a new high school, in a new town, and I didn't know anybody at all.

When my parents decided to move from Scarborough to Durham Region back in the late 90's, I was not happy. Durham Region was just starting to develop. Not that many people lived out here – there was still quite a lot of farmland. The neighbourhood wasn't diverse the way it is now; it was a huge adjustment especially after living in Scarborough which was very multicultural.

I was bullied from the first day of Grade 9 to the last day of Grade 12. The kids would say that I'm fat, or too ugly, or too dark, or stupid, or that I looked drunk (and I've never had a drink in my life for the record.) It all started in gym class in the change room. Girls would make fun of me because I was fat. They would whisper things about me and start laughing. I remember asking one girl what they were laughing about and they said "nothing" and continued laughing. I knew it was about the fat girls. No one would come up to me and make fun of me until I was grade 10 – that's when they would flat out say it to my face. The boys would say that I was ugly, "third-world poor looking", and the girls would say, "I am a chunky butt cow".

The kids also excluded me during group work in class and didn't want to work with me. They would sometimes put rotten food in my bag. They'd wait until I left my desk or stepped out of the classroom and would put rotten food in my bag which was on the floor. One time, a boy even tried to put a condom on my head while I was writing a math test!

Some teachers knew I was being made fun of, but they didn't do anything; not one teacher tried to help. I would tell them and

nothing was done. It was like they didn't care, or maybe they were afraid of the bullies. I told the principal and they didn't do anything either. One time, I filed an incident report with the school against a boy who was bullying me, but still nothing was done. It seemed he had influential parents in high places, so he got away with it.

Being bullied has stopped me from doing things in life, and just enjoying life in general. I find myself blaming my parents a lot. I feel it was moving here that caused all these problems. If I could have just gone to high school in Scarborough with all my friends, perhaps things would have turned out differently. Looking back now, I still feel angry about what happened, especially if I see someone who looks like one of the kids who bullied me. I was much angrier about it back then though; the only relief now is that I'm not a high school student anymore.

By: S.M

The elementary years is a time of having fun, building friendships, gaining independence, and developing self confidence. For me, these years were filled with verbal, physical and cyber bullying; a time when I developed low self esteem, nervousness and anxiousness. I reflect on these years trying to understand, why me?

In school I was one of the quiet ones. I enjoyed reading, writing and being in the library, while most of the other kids enjoyed being outside playing games. I hated recess time because that meant I had to find other children to play with. For me, this was difficult. What if they say no? Then what am I going to do for 40 minutes.



I couldn't even take a book with me to read or write in because school policy did not allow students to take books outside. I go outside hoping for the best. Three older kids came up to me and started using foul language. I snapped back with inappropriate language as well. It was just what they wanted because they ran to tell a teacher on me. I got in trouble; I didn't bother to tell the teacher what they said. I didn't think they would believe me. I wonder if that was the moment when I became a target.

Unfortunately for me, this was only the start. Eventually those kids got themselves into trouble, but not before another group of kids decided to take over the job. It escalated from bullying at recess time to class time and even on the bus. These kids would say mean things about me and it went so far as to me being shoved into a locker.

No matter how many times my mom spoke to the principal, nothing was done. I remember filling out DDSB's "School Climate Survey" where I explicitly wrote about how I didn't feel safe as I was being bullied, and nothing was done.

These events have shaped who I am today. I decided that I am not going to be a victim anymore. But the fear and anxiety still affect me. Every now and then, I have nightmares about the bullies actually getting a hold of me, and myself not being able to handle them.

I need to feel in control. I guess this is where the bullied becomes a bully. I may not be a bully at school, but I became a bully at home with my brothers. I was always on top of my younger brothers, being mean; always telling them what to do, and I would say and do things to my brothers that bullies did at school.

At school, it got to the point where I would try to stay inside at recess, whether it was in the library, in the computer lab, doing work in class...anything that would prevent me from going outside. I became even more afraid of socializing.

The bullying has impacted every part of my life. I was always stressed and the slightest thing would set me off. I felt like I just did not know how to be nice to others, but I am slowly learning otherwise.

By: W.F

When I think of bullying, I picture kids on the playground pushing someone down and laughing at them. I imagine the victim as a loner and an outcast. It's hard to picture myself as a victim when I never fell into that stereotype.

I didn't realize until adulthood that what I endured as a child was a form of bullying. That's the thing about emotional bullying, it's difficult to detect and interrupt. Despite coming home from school crying nearly every day, my parents and I attributed the bullying to "girls being girls". But it was so much more than that.

I was a sensitive, positive, and vibrant child. I had many friends, enjoyed various after school activities, and had excellent grades. I was talkative and enthusiastic and was always laughing at something.

I first remember the bullying starting at around grade three, about 8 or 9 years old for me. Without understanding the concept of popularity entirely at the time, it was clear that I was nowhere near a loner or outcast. In fact, I was well liked by most of my peers and was part of a large clique of girls throughout my elementary years. Unfortunately, these "friends" could also be cruel and vindictive.

I don't know if it was boredom or the need to feel powerful, but everyday the two leaders of the clique would decide that one or two members of the group needed to be ignored or made fun of that day. I was often not the target, but I felt bad for the ostracized person and would go play with her. This would be taken as traitorous behavior and the others would forget why they were



mad to begin with and direct their hostility or silence towards me. This meant the originally ostracized girl would be accepted back into the group, whatever transgressions they had committed were forgotten, and now it was me who was left on my own, concocting elaborate apology statements to get me back in the good grace of the group. (To this day, I am incredibly efficient in creating apology statements, and my instinct is to express these apologies but knowing this tendency, I take a step back to determine if an apology is actually warranted in the situation.)

Most of my memories of the bullying have blurred together over the years, but some incidents are clearer. I remember one particular day, when I was in grade five, at the first recess of the day, I played with my grade four friends. (Two of my best friends from my neighbourhood were a year younger than me, or as my one friend regularly pointed out, I was only 9 months older.) At the next recess, I attempted to play with my grade five friends but was met with cold shoulders and dirty looks. I remember following them around like an abused puppy, desperate to understand what I had done wrong so that I could apologize for it. But nobody spoke to me; they even convinced the boys in my grade to ignore me. Finally, after what felt like hours, the ringleader of the group suggested I go play with my "real" friends. I remember feeling torn, no one in my grade would talk to me but if I played with my grade four friends again then it would give them more ammunition to hate me. So, I sat on the ground against the brick wall of the school, crying quietly, not knowing what else to do. And that was only one day of 6 years filled with constant passive-aggressive responses and countless rejections.

Being bullied is not usually just one single event that happened in your childhood, it's countless exposures to toxic situations and people. And the repercussions can follow you into your adult life.

After being told many times how immature and annoying I was, I truly began to believe it. I developed social anxiety, likely a disorder lurking in my shadow despite any outside factors, worsened by

the constant judgments of my peers. I remember many years later reading through my diaries of that time and my heart breaking for the girl who considered "good days" as days where she was able to stop herself from talking. The vibrant and chatty girl I had been faded away.

I carried the negative judgments with me, internalizing them so that it was no longer others' voices but my own. I'm 33 now, have been to therapy and still struggle to remind myself that I'm not actually annoying or dramatic. When I'm faced with rude or insensitive people my first instinct is to freeze. After the fact, I will be angry that they treated me that way but more disappointed with myself for not standing up for myself- again. I think of witty comebacks, think of calling them out, but in the moment, I am that young girl again, frozen in time, wanting to be accepted and liked-afraid to have a voice.

Although being bullied was obviously not a pleasant experience (and I do not wish it upon anyone), I am grateful that I not only survived but thrived despite it. I do not hate these girls (my "friends") who led the group, who broke me down far more than they built me up, but instead, I feel compassion for them. What was so bad in their lives that led them to this behaviour? Perhaps I am too understanding, but I don't think people randomly become bullies; there is always some underlying issue, maybe feelings of inadequacy, and most definitely, the presence of hurt and pain.

I occasionally see the bullies from my past and when they greet me with smiles I wonder: do they even know they were bullies? I hope they do. But even more worrisome: are they still bullies? I hope not. Will I ever truly know? Likely not, but that is fine with me because the past is merely lessons learned in resiliency and now, I choose to fill my mind with the positives of the present moment and hopes for a bright, fulfilling future.

By: T.R.

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Бунш

My heart broke into a million pieces, a huge lump lodged in my throat, dread overcame me and everything that was being said on the other end of the phone became a blur.

"There's been an accident, and your child is being taken by ambulance to the nearest hospital," the voice on the phone said.

When I arrived at the hospital, I couldn't believe my eyes. My daughter's back was to me, but I could see that one arm was in an air-cast on a straight board, while the other arm was strapped to a straight board. When I finally saw her face, she looked so black and blue. The left side of her forehead was bruised and her left eye was swollen shut. Her left cheek and nose were also quite bruised and

swollen. Her lips were 2-3x's the normal size and her mouth was black from all the blood. She was not able to close her mouth as the roof of her mouth was dislocated, and her four top front teeth were dislodged.

My daughter was visibly upset – crying – telling me it was all her fault. I managed to calm her down and asked her what happened. She couldn't talk that well due to her injuries, so I was informed of the incident by the school personnel that was there. I was told that my daughter was tripped "by accident", by another child; the child didn't mean to stick their whole leg out and make her fall.

I told the school personnel that this was NOT an accident, that there had been (bullying) incidents going on for the past few years now. In grade 6, the bully had just transferred to the school and tried to turn everyone against my daughter, spreading rumors and making fun of her and her weight. In grade 7, she punched and kicked my daughter numerous times. The bully told her

throughout grades 6, 7 and the first part of grade 8, that she was a black belt in karate and could beat her up whenever and however bad she wanted. She'd given my daughter several bruises and cuts throughout grades 6,7, and 8 from doing different things to hurt her. (The bully also would get into fights with other children during this time.)

My daughter had gone through so much over the past couple of years of elementary school. It was so hard watching day in and day out what she was going through. She even brought it up during parent teacher conferences—that she was scared and needed someone to talk to about the bullying going on. But nothing was ever done. My husband and I had to persuade her to go to school at times. She was just so scared... And the sad part was that nobody at the school seemed to be doing anything about the situation.

This incident has taken a huge toll on my daughter. In addition to not being able to attend school for the entire year last year (grade 8), she is still not capable of attending (high school) full time this year. She also suffers from depression, has frequent nightmares, and has been recently diagnosed with PTSD.

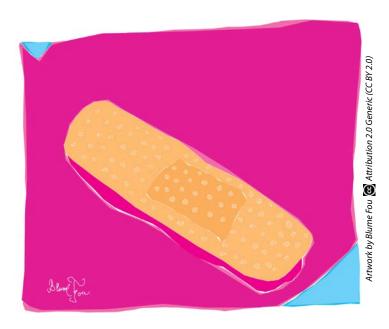
She feels that she is unimportant now, that she has no friends, as many of her friends that once supported her no longer have anything to do with her. Our family as a whole has also been affected. The incident has caused undo stress, anger, sadness, frustration, not only in our home but also in our work lives as well.

I was told that there is zero tolerance for bullying in school, but yet, the truth of the matter is that there really is NO such policy and/ or procedure against bullying. The school board has total control in determining and deciding if an incident that occurred was in fact bullying, or just an "unfortunate accident". I was told that by law, an incident report had to be filled out. Later on, however, I was informed by the principal that an incident report was not needed and even if it was, there would be no other names listed on it because of privacy issues. We told her she could "black out" the personal information and she said no.

I realize that in my daughter's situation, perhaps this other child did not intend for my daughter to get hurt like she did, but at the same time, what happens if you were to stick out your leg in front of someone who is running? They will trip and fall and hurt themselves!

Seeing my daughter sad, depressed, closing herself off to others when she has so much to offer, the look on her face when trusted adults said they don't remember her (or us) ever bringing up the issue of being bullied is disheartening. What is a child supposed to do...? It is very unfortunate what happens... You will have a child who starts to act out, or a child that becomes withdrawn and internalizes things. A child that has been a victim, becomes the aggressor. Thankfully, this has not been the case with my daughter. In spite of what has happened to her, she is not acting out, nor has she become the aggressor.

Bullying in general has gotten to the point that we need, in my opinion, to have an independent authority and/or expert on bullying to step in on such matters. School board superintendents can't deal with it, or won't, and say that it is dealt with at the school level. The trustees don't deal with it because they feel principals are more than capable. If you contact your provincial member of parliament, they'll say they don't deal with matters such as this. If



you contact your federal member of parliament, they tell you that the federal level doesn't deal with these types of matters.

So, my question is: WHO deals with these types of matters? I am sure that there are many parents out there who would like that same question answered. From the time our children leave the house in the morning until they arrive home after school, who is responsible for our kids? What are the students, teachers, vice-principals, principals, board employees waiting for before they step in? Another child to be bullied? Another child to start hurting themselves? Another child to commit suicide? Another child to be murdered? For what? Doesn't anyone care anymore? Wouldn't it make more sense to intervene at the earliest sign of bullying than to let things get worse?

What would you do if your child was being bullied? Wouldn't you want someone to listen? Would you listen? Honestly, most people often just dismiss the matter and tell the bullied child to ignore the perpetrator. But guess what? That doesn't always work.

So, my daughter is standing up. Her brother and sister are standing up. My husband and I are standing up. We're standing up to say, enough is enough. We're saying NO to the BULLY and YES to standing together to fight back against bullying. As the lyrics of John Dickinson's "The Liberty Song" go, ...by uniting we stand, dividing we fall.

Let's join together and break down one door at a time. Say NO and say ENOUGH NOW!!

H.M lives in Durham Region with her husband and 3 children.













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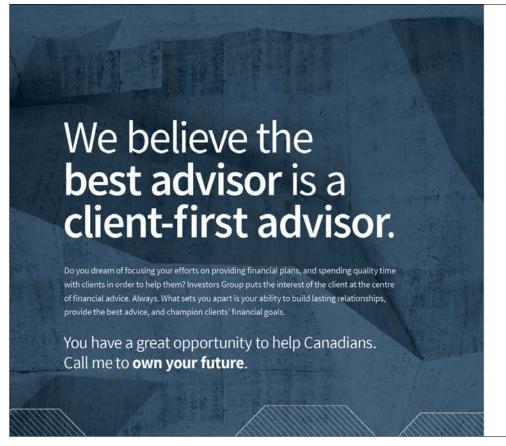
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For the whole family

Scoob! is the first animated full-length feature of the Scooby Doo franchise and is ready to delight on May 15th. A star-studded cast

of voices, including Zac Efron, Will Forte, Gina Rodriquez, and Tracy Morgan, add to this original story of the Mystery Inc. gang. It's a slick new look and has everything we can expect: ghosts, aliens, and lots of snacks!

The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge on the Run hits the big screen on May 22nd. This is the third installment of this family classic and has a new animation upgrade. SpongeBob enlists his friend Patrick to help him find his beloved pet snail Gary in what appears to be a "snail-napping". The two head to The Lost City of Atlantic City where they seek answers, but instead find temptation. In SpongeBob fashion, you will see priceless cameos, this time by Keanu Reeves, and lots of great laughs.

Actions and Thrillers

Vin Diesel stars in *Bloodshot*, as Ray Garrison, a skilled solider who discovers he has not only died but that he was rebuilt by a company called RST Corp. through nanotechnology. Garrison soon discovers that the company that "saved" him, is in fact controlling his body and manipulating him and its Garrison who shows them what an unstoppable solider really looks like. Check out this action adventure on March 13th.

John Krasinski is unveiling his next installment with *A Quiet Place Part 2* on March 20th. Emily Blunt, Millicent Simmonds, and Noah Jupe return as the Abbott family, now forced to venture away from their home, but quickly find that there is more to fear than the creatures that hunt them. Some incredible talent rounds out this cast with the addition of Cillian Murphy, Djimon Hounsou, and Okieriete Onanaodowan.

Comedies

Inside The Rain is written, directed, and starring Aaron Fisher as Ben Glass, a college student who has ADHD/OCD borderline personality. Determined to prove his genius, Glass decides to recreate a misunderstanding which threatens to expel him from college in the form of a movie. Getting no support from his parents or his therapist (Rosie Perez), Glass relies on help from a questionable movie producer (Eric Roberts) and a porn actress (Ellen Toland). This Rom-Com-Drama opens on March 13th.

Bad Trip is an R-rated comedy from the makers of "Jackass" and "Bad Grampa" starring comedians Eric Andre, Lil Rea Howery, and Tiffany Haddish. Part reality prank show and part "buddy road-trip" genre, we follow two friends as they embark across the country on an adventure of a lifetime, all while pranking bystander's in a typical hidden camera show fashion. The reactions are real and the pranks are next level. The laughs (and cringes) start on April 24th.

Stephanie as a multi-award-winning actor, writer, director, producer, voice talent, and comedian. She is a published author, co-host of "Eileen and Steph: Everything's Fine" podcast, and is the founder of the Not-for-profit "Durham Improv Collective Inc." Her years of experience in the corporate and entertainment industries has given her an edge as an insurance broker, where she specializes in Business and Entertainment insurance.



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Soul Searching



When your biggest bully is yourself...

Are you overly critical of yourself, despite others assuring you that you're fine?

It's extremely common that we tend to be the harshest judge on ourselves. This can stem from many life experiences, such as bullying, abuse, low self-esteem, perfectionism, and setting unrealistic standards. Your inner bully, like a real-life bully, will point out your flaws and gets immense pleasure finding the statement that hurts the most, using it to break you down even further.

Being your own worst critic can also be a type of defense mechanism. In a twisted way you are protecting yourself from others' judgment. After all, if you've already said it to yourself then maybe it will hurt less. (Reality check – it doesn't!)

The voice in your head may sound like your own but it can also be disguised as voices from your past – anyone, whether it be a teacher or friend or previous partner – that have cut you down. Maybe a teacher told you that you will never amount to anything and so you've let dreams fade from your avoidance to try anything new.

Unfortunately, your inner bully's voice can become almost second nature and so entangled in your mind that it's hard to believe anything else. But it is possible to separate the two. Here are some tricks in helping you defeat your inner bully:

Watch your internal dialogue. Your inner bully judges you incessantly using words you would hate to repeat out loud. Visualize yourself saying this to a child you love to remind you that this language is extremely hurtful. Then, instead of berating this child, try to build them back up.

Understand patterns. Are there certain situations that elicit specific judgments on a regular basis? If so, be mindful of how to manage the inner bully in these situations. For example, I know that when I walk into a fitting room my inner bully will want to have a field day judging my body. But knowing this, I can choose to go in fighting.

Challenge your negative thoughts. Use techniques from Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and consider the evidence against your negative automatic thought. If you're giving a speech at your brother's wedding and your inner bully tries to tell you how stupid you will sound, consider the evidence against this. Perhaps you've given speeches in the past and people complimented you. If you did poorly, most people would not go out of their way to compliment you.

Finally, have patience with yourself. Remember, we've let our inner bullies co-exist in our mind for so long that they often become second nature for us. Kicking them out is a continual (and exhausting!) process. Try not to judge yourself for being so hard on yourself. Noticing that these thoughts can be excessively harsh is the first step in healing.

Tara is a wellness blogger for The Local Biz Magazine who hopes to publish her memoir on finding hope and meaning while living with a mental illness.

by Bianca Schaefer

Get Fit: Inside & Out



From Being Bullied to Becoming a Better Version of Myself!

I was bullied between the ages of six and thirteen. And even though I moved during this time, it didn't stop a whole new batch of kids from bullying me. It seemed that bullying followed me wherever I went! But bullying goes well beyond other kids not liking you, doesn't it? You feel tormented, inferior, and downright fearful. It's all so mentally, emotionally, and physically exhausting. And even though I'm all grown up now, there's a few things I wish I would have known back then from studying Martial Arts.

Perseverance

Tae Kwon Do has taught me to persevere. When you get picked on at school, it would be easy to stay home and avoid trouble. But in martial arts, you're taught to persevere, to keep going, and to never give up; even when things get tough. My Master used to say, "the only difference between the white belt and the black belt, is that the black belt never gave up."

Self-control and Discipline

While you may think that Martial Arts is a combat sport, when learning, teaching, and sparring, you learn how to master self control; physically, mentally, and emotionally. Physically, knowing your strengths and limitations becomes part of your awareness. And just because you may know how to hurt someone, doesn't mean you should do it. That's where discipline comes in. Martial Arts is all about mastering self-control and discipline from within.

Respect

Tae Kwon Do has taught me the meaning of respect. To not only respect my teachers, colleagues, parents, and others, but to also respect myself and my value as a human being in this world. To have a reverence for people and my surroundings; being open and willing to learn and share what I have learned. But respect is not something that should be measured, but rather, it is something that should be given freely to all, knowing we all have equal value — no matter our differences.

Humility

Finally, Tae Kwon Do has taught me to be humble. You may master a technique, be gifted in a certain area of your life, or have accolades that make you feel accomplished. But the truth is, one can always learn and grow. Being humble by not boasting and exhibiting a sense of humility, demonstrates to others that you don't think you're better than they are.

So, to whoever has been bullied or to the one who does the bullying, I offer you my heart-felt advice: try martial arts. It's really not about becoming the next "Karate Kid". It's about changing the path you're on while becoming your best self.

Bianca Schaefer is a 360 Holistic Health Coach who inspires a global community to take charge of their health through nourishing their body, mind and soul with delicious foods, an active lifestyle and a mindset that believes anything is possible. Find out more about Bianca Schaefer on her personal website, Bianca Schaefer.













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Tweens, Teens & In-Between

by Sarah Malik



"In a way, bullying is an ordinary evil. It's hugely prevalent, all too often ignored - and being ignored, it is therefore condoned."

Trudie Styler

Happy Spring Readers! For this season's column, I decided to stick to this issue's theme of bullying because I believe it is a prevalent topic in the lives of tweens and teens. I want to shed light on my own experiences and some of the lesser known aspects of this issue.

Some forms of bullying are largely visible, and it is easier to see when it is occurring. However, the kind of bullying that I've seen happen the most, is the kind that most people wouldn't be able to recognize as bullying. This form of bullying usually involves a group of people who exclude other people from social interactions. Nothing will be said or done abruptly. It is more so the act of including everyone else and strategically excluding one or two people. This type of bullying hurts a lot because there is very little concrete proof that someone is being bullied. All that remains from these kinds of situations is the feeling of being isolated and left out.

Backbiting and gossiping are what fuels this type of bullying. Rumors passed from one person to another cause people to fear that the same rumors will also be spread about them. People tend not to support the victim because they fear being faced with the same treatment. This then results in a large group of people becoming hostile to a certain individual.

Due to this specific kind of bullying being so undercover and discreet, it oftentimes doesn't get dealt with as would other types of more "obvious" bullying. The perpetrator is usually able to put on a good face in front of teachers and guardians and therefore have their other actions go unaccounted for. Sometimes the victim doesn't recognize that they are in fact being bullied and so they never choose to reach out. There are times that I feel as if teachers and other adults may be turning a blind eye to the bullying occurring in their surrounding environment. Oftentimes it feels as if the perpetrator is being rewarded for their actions since they are usually popular and high achieving individuals. This makes the victim feel much worse as they feel much more isolated.

It is important that you tell someone how you, or others, are being treated so that you don't have to deal with this alone. As youth, we are often the ones who are in the lower position of a power imbalance but it is important that if you notice bullying going on around you, not only should you speak to the person being bullied and let them know you support them, but you should also reach out to a trusted adult and let them know that this kind of atmosphere exists in your environment. The longer we turn a blind eye to bullying, the longer it will continue. For all you fighters out there, I wish you a courageous and impactful Spring!

Sarah Malik is a Grade 12 student. She loves to read, write, and go on walks with her family and friends. Her dream is to one day travel the world.

by Josie Myers

Family Matters



This issue, I've put together some simple things you can do to communicate more effectively when dealing with bullying. While I had communicating with kids in mind while writing this article, these tips work when communicating with adults too—bullying does not discriminate by age!

1. Listen, REALLY listen!

I see a lot of parents at the school glued to their phones while their child is trying to get their attention. How would you feel if your child's teacher acted like this? And did you know that a common reason kids bully is because they lack attention from their parents?

Whether your child is bullying or being bullied, it's important to show them that you are listening. Stop what you're doing, put down your phone, and look your child in the eye when they are talking to you.

2. Validate Feelings

I was bullied in grade school. The focus of the bullying ranged from the food I brought in my lunch to the clothes I wore, and it went on for a few years. When I would tell the principal what happened, I was told I was "too sensitive". After a while, I stopped telling the principal even though the bullying continued.

Unfortunately, many adults don't understand how to properly communicate (with kids or other adults). By saying I was too sensitive, my principal brushed off my being bullied as if it was my fault for feeling the way I did, and it showed me that speaking up had no impact on what was happening to me.

If children are going to continue to speak up, they need to feel like they are being heard and that something is going to be done. A better option is to say something like, "I'm sorry that's happening to you. I can see that it's making you feel bad. Let's work on a solution."

3. Set a Good Example

Children soak up everything around them. When they see you sharing your problems in a healthy way, they are more likely to do the same. The way you interact with your child every day is important too. There are varying degrees of bullying. Being a parent is one of the most frustrating jobs there is, and it can be tempting to resort to bully-like behaviour such as using unnecessary aggression to get your child to do what you've asked. This is no way to parent and will end up encouraging bullying.

If your child is being bullied, or is bullying another child and you're not sure what to do, keep the lines of communication open and check out the Bullying Canada website for help.

With a master's degree in education and a background in Reiki, Josie Myers is an expert teacher and healer at her private practice Josie Myers - Opening and Balancing Life Force Energy. Josie helps moms find peace by supporting and guiding them to make the most of their motherhood journey. Josie lives in Ontario, Canada with her husband and son and her two cats.



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A Forkful of Healthy

Whole Wheat Banana Bread

This 100% whole wheat banana bread tastes just as flavourful and moist as regular banana bread. Swap butter with unsweetened applesauce, all-purpose flour with whole wheat flour, and some of the sugar with honey.

INGREDIENTS

3 medium ripe bananas, mashed (about

a heaping 1 and 1/4 cups)

6 tbsp unsweetened applesauce

2 large eggs

1/4 cup honey

1/4 cup packed light or dark brown sugar

1/3 cup milk

2 tsp pure vanilla extract

1 and 3/4 cups whole wheat flour

by Wendy Lee

1 tsp baking soda

1/2 tsp ground cinnamon

1/2 tsp salt

2/3 cup chopped walnuts

DIRECTIONS

- Adjust the oven rack to the lower third position and preheat the oven to 350°F. (Lowering the oven rack prevents the top of your bread from browning too fast.) Spray a 9×5-inch loaf pan with non-stick spray. Set aside.
- You can use an electric mixer or mix everything by hand. Beat the mashed bananas, applesauce, and eggs together until combined. Add honey, brown sugar, milk and vanilla. Set aside.
- Whisk the flour, baking soda, cinnamon, and salt together. Pour into the wet ingredients and mix until combined. Fold in the walnuts.
- 4. Pour the batter into the prepared loaf pan. Bake for 60-65 minutes, making sure to loosely cover the bread with aluminum foil halfway through to prevent the top from getting too brown. The bread is done when a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean with only a few small moist crumbs. This may be before or after 60-65 minutes depending on your oven, so begin checking every 5 minutes at the 55-minute mark.
- 5. Remove from the oven and allow the bread to cool completely in the pan set on a wire rack before slicing and serving.
- Cover and store at room temperature for 2 days, or in the refrigerator for up to 1 week. Banana bread tastes best on day 2 after the flavors have settled.
- Freezing Instructions: Tightly wrap the loaf or slices (individually or grouped) in 2-3 layers of plastic wrap or aluminum foil. Place wrapped banana bread in a large freezer-friendly storage bag or reusable container. Freeze up to 3 months. Thaw overnight in the refrigerator before serving

Protein: 3.7g

Carbs: 35.4g

Fat: 8.5g

Wendy is a food blogger, food photographer, writer, lifestyle strategist, self-taught chef and lover of animals. While living in Paris, she mastered the art of a perfect crepe and French cuisine, and also discovered the world of fabulous wines and champagne! Her passion to find healthy alternatives to popular dishes stems from her desire to live a fit and healthy lifestyle while still enjoying food!

by Nicole Forrester

FINANCE & REAL ESTATE INSIGHTS



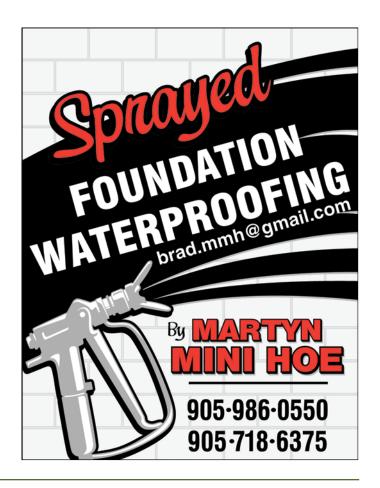
Going into a new year and decade, we take stock of where we've been and where we're going. Usually this pertains to our physical health, but how is your financial health? Is it in need of a checkup? Here are some key things that are vital for good financial health.

- 1. Emergency Fund Everyone should have 3 months salary put aside for emergencies. If you don't already have an emergency fund set up, the best way to do this is to set up a pre-authorized savings plan so that \$50-\$100 is transferred automatically every pay day into a high interest savings account until you have 3 months pay put aside.
- 2. Line of Credit A secure line of credit to your home carries the lowest rate of interest. A line of credit gives you access to emergency funds at a low interest rate and costs you nothing if you don't use it. It is a great way to have emergency funds available and avoid having to use a credit card (which carries a very high interest rate if you don't pay it off).
- 3. Paying Down Debt If you have credit card debt, you need to start paying it off. Consolidating your high interest credit card debt on a line of credit (which carries a lower rate of interest) is a great way to start paying down your debt. Always ensure to make minimum payments on time on all outstanding debt to ensure you maintain a good credit score.
- 4. Life Insurance policy Life insurance is designed to protect your family and other people who may depend on you for financial support. It gives your beneficiary tax free compensation in the case of your death. Having life insurance is also is a way of ensuring that your debts are paid off if you die. There are different life insurance options available depending on your circumstances; explore which is right for you.
- 5. RSPs/Pension Regular monthly contributions to your Registered Savings Plan or Pension is a great way to prepare for your retirement. Dollar cost averaging (small monthly contributions) coupled with time is your best friend when saving for retirement.

If you find you are lacking in any of these areas, start having conversations with a trusted financial professional so you can make this decade your best yet!

Nicole Forrester is a local Durham & GTA Real Estate Broker with over 17+ years of experience in the financial industry. Trained on Bay Street as an Investment Executive & Professional Financial Planner for one of Canada's largest financial institutions, she has extensive experience negotiating large financial transactions. Nicole's goal is to be a blessing to every person she meets and recognizes that every trade in Real Estate is not just a house. . . it's a Home. For more information, search Nicole Forrester Real Estate Broker on Social Media.





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Dear Sue-Ann:

I have been married for over ten years. In the beginning of our marriage, we always spoke to each other in a respectful and considerate way. As time has gone by, that has changed. In the light of the dialogue now about bullying and reading all of the literature about it, I realize that it has found its way into my marriage. When I sat and thought about my friends and what the conversations sounded like between them and their partner, I realized I was hearing a similar tone and conversation between them also. I am wondering if it is a sign of being together for a long time, or is it a sign of something else?

Signed: Looking for Kindness

A. Experience has taught me that what comes out of your mouth usually reflects what is happening inside. The change in tone between a couple can be a result of many things. Life events, boredom, frustration, and simply a loss of joy. Quite often, people as they age and get consumed by life's responsibilities and negative life events, become miserable. People can lose the sense of seeing resolution and hope.

What I suggest to resolve it is, having personal goals and setting achievable goals as a couple. Find something that you can be passionate about and that can be anything. Find something that is just for you that personally brings you joy. Hobbies, community involvement, education are just a few areas to consider. Remember, what we say is a choice...choose your words carefully. Sometimes we need to remind our partners and friends to do the same. If it is important to them, they will do it. I hope this helps.

Affirmation: With each breath that I take, I am always kind to myself first, and I have kind words for others... I am kind.

Sue-Ann is a mother of 3 and resides in the Oshawa area. She chooses to utilize her undeniable psychic ability to assist you in resolving all of life's issues. Host and Community Producer of Divine Lane on Rogers Cable 10, Tuesdays at 9 pm. You can find out more and forward your submissions to Sue-Ann at sue-ann@divinelane.com.

The COACH Corner



As a young boy growing up in the Caribbean, bullying and corporal discipline was a part of everyday life.

The strap was a part of school life, as well as home life. Fist fights were a way of settling disagreements. Staying home from school was not really an option unless you were sick. We had the tough person who always wanted to prove himself or herself. We saw this for the most part, as life at school.

Back then, short skirmishes would take place after school and differences were quickly dealt with. By the next day, all was well. Friendships were restored. Fights could not be too serious or else there would be explaining to do when you got home, which would then take this to a whole new level. Once the adults got involved there would be serious repercussions for you. You made sure your playground disputes were left on the playground.

We didn't have to deal with the viciousness of social media. When things happened back then, only a handful of classmates knew what was going on. With bullying today, the world can instantly know about you and your situation. The pressure now is incredible. The verbal abuse online can be overwhelming.

I was a little taken aback recently after speaking with an acquaintance of mine as he shared with me the bullying his daughter was going through. His daughter did not want to go to school; she was suffering from anxiety. Being far removed from having children in public school, I wasn't aware of how little I understood about the effects of bullying. As I reflected back on our conversation, I realized I was measuring my response to my friend's situation through the lens of my time in public school, and perhaps was not as understanding as I could have been to my friend.

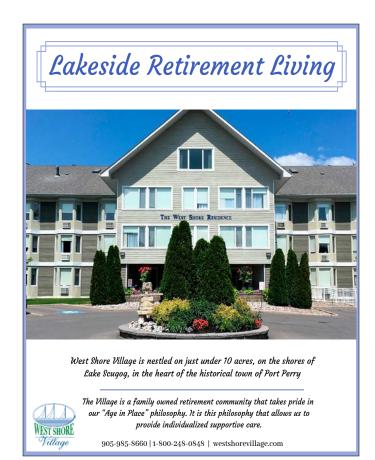
I later explored more into the bullying phenomenon that is prevalent today and the serious consequences, up to and including the rise in teenage suicides; I became alarmed and disturbed.

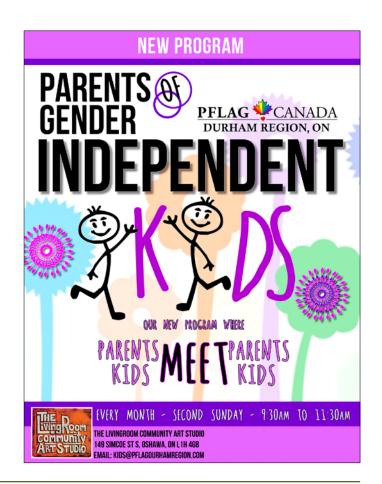
What kids today have to endure is very disturbing. What we dealt with back then in my time at public school was a walk in the park compared to what kids have to deal with today. How will this young generation be affected in the future?

We are familiar with the old nursery rhyme; sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me. We have come to realize how wrong the sentiment of that rhyme is. Bones will heal, it's the painful, deep cutting words that do the damage. Those wounds can profoundly, negatively affect us, and in some cases, never heal.

We should all be concerned. Let us do our part as friends, parents, teachers, mentors. As a village, let's be vigilant in helping our young people against the life altering effects of bullying.

Malachi Brown, life coach, applies his passion in helping others unlock their full potential, enabling them to live the abundant lives they were created to have.





The Golden Years



As a 'sweet little old lady', I spend time with others in the same age group having a good time at potlucks and restaurants, enjoying a few laughs. Some of these friends date back to my high school days. It would never cross my mind that they may be suffering from elder abuse, but sadly it does occur, and it could happen to any senior.

Elder abuse, according to a Government of Ontario web site is defined as, "... as any act or lack of action, within a relationship where there is an expectation of trust that harms a senior and causes them distress or risks their health or welfare." The abuse can happen in a home, residential setting or in the community. Any number of people could be the cause: family, friends, paid care providers, landlords, staff or any person in a position of authority.

Elder abuse can take several different forms:

- Physical abuse is one that causes injury or some sort of physical discomfort. This could be obvious; for example, you may see bruises on a person's body
- Psychological/emotional abuse causes a diminished sense of dignity and self-worth
- Sexual abuse would be some form of sexual behavior directed at a senior without their full knowledge or consent
- Financial abuse involves misusing funds and assets without the knowledge or consent of the person and not in their best interests
- Neglect involves intentionally withholding or not providing the necessities or care, because of a lack of experience, information or ability

There are warning signs of abuse and we need to become aware of them. Some warning signs include:

- Changes in mood (depression, fear, anxiety or detachment)
- Changes in behavior such as social withdrawal
- Physical harm with unexplained injuries
- Neglect such as a lack of hygiene, food or clothing

These warning can help you identify if a senior is possibly being abused. What do you do next? If you feel someone is in danger, you can report it to the police. If it appears someone is being abused in a long-term care facility, you are required to report it.

You can also try to talk to the senior you suspect is being abused to see if they will tell you what is going on. Let them know you are concerned and will help in any way you can. Keep the lines of communication open with them. Be patient and listen. Let them



know you believe them; don't judge them but assure them of your support.

We have to realize that we probably can't change things. The abused senior is likely afraid and making changes will be difficult. Don't deny what is going on; this will make things more difficult for them. Whatever you do, don't confront the abuser. You could put the senior being abused and yourself in danger. The best thing you can do is educate yourself and find out what resources are available. An online search, or calling your local community centre or community care access centre would be a great place to start. Find out what help is available and encourage the abused senior to seek help.

Linda Calder is a retired teacher. She likes to write and enjoys spending time with her family. She also enjoys going on cruises, taking pictures and scrapbooking.

Editor's Note: This is such an important topic that is not discussed often enough, that we thought it deserves a full page in this bullying themed issue.

Horoscope

MARCH 2020 to MAY 2020

Aries (March 21 - April 20)

You are looking back, evaluating past decisions with a clear mind. There are many things you said 'yes' to where a 'no' would have suited you better. Decisions made from emotions could have waited for a calmer frame of mind. Situations avoided could have been better handled with strategic attention. Hindsight is 20/20. Moving forward, remind yourself that you are not starting from scratch, but from experience.

Taurus (April 21 - May 21)

You find yourself in a power struggle. Someone is insistent on micromanaging your every move. You find it suffocating. Realize that this person seeks to create an external sense of power to balance an internal lack of control. They're working this conflict out by good old Freudian projection. The most compassionate thing would be to mirror them. Reflect and re-direct. Don't struggle

Gemini (May 22 - June 21)

You find yourself at a fork in the road. Remember when Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz came to a fork in the road on her way to the Emerald City? It was here that she encountered the Straw Man who was stuck because he didn't have a brain. Dorothy asks him, "Well how can you talk if you don't have a brain?" He replied, "I don't know, but some people without brains do an awful lot of talking!" This is your key. Get silent in your mind. The answer will be revealed and the direction to take will be clear.

Cancer (June 22 - July 22)

Tensions on the home front have been rising for months. A culmination point has been reached, releasing undercurrents that have been brewing like a volcano. You may find the atmosphere raw with devastation. In a way, the Universe has hit the "reset" button for you. You must now build toward a new foundation as your days of coping are over.

Leo (July 23 - August 22)

That special someone you've had your attention on is also thinking of you. They have started to view you in a different light ever since you hinted at something more recently. You desperately fear rejection but, do not believe your fears for one second. They are afraid too, but not of the same things you are. A heart-to-heart chat over drinks will put you both on the same page. Together, you'll write toward the final chapter in a happily ever after.

Virgo (August 23 – September 23) We know how devoted you are, Virgo. But life is showing you to be more selective where you direct your devotion. Not everyone is worthy of your generosity and availing service. Be careful of casting your pearls before swine. There are plenty others who would genuinely appreciate you and your gifts and never dream of taking you for granted. Find your tribe.

by Julie Antoinette



Libra (September 24 – October 23) Feelings of nostalgia wash over you as you reminisce privately about times passed. If you are honest, you miss the person you were. The world you used to live in was far less complicated. You thrived in the environment of simplicity and ease. Life is showing you a lost part of yourself that you long to have back. Send the invitation and prep your space.

Scorpio (October 24 – November 22)

Time to cool your jets, Scorpio. Your engines have revved on end and your vehicle is near exhaustion. You finally had the release you needed to neutralize your tensions. Let's hope when the dust settles and the smoke clears, that when you turn that key to start again, all will run smoothly.

Sagittarius (November 23 - December 21) Have you developed a particular craving for comfort food recently? You may be experiencing a bout of "emotional eating". If it's comfort you're seeking, ask yourself what needs to be comforted? Take it from there, either straight to a trusted friend, poured out into a journal or to a therapist if necessary.

Capricorn (December 22 – January 19 Remember that piece of advice your mother would repeat ad nauseum? Well, now is the time to use it. The situation you find yourself in right now could use a little timeless wisdom from mom. Once all is said and done and put to right, send a little thanks her way for having your back yet

Aquarius (January 20 - February 19) You've acquired a taste for simplicity and elimination of sensory pollution. The pace of life has left you in a state of nearburnout. While once stimulating, you're craving the other end of the spectrum where life trots at a more leisurely pace. A regular long drive in the country will reset your

Pisces (February 20 - March 20) A childhood wound keeps knocking at your door. You may think that phase is over, or that time heals all wounds, but you're mistaken. If you examine your present issues, you'll find that old familiar feeling is ever-present. You're the adult now and can set things to right. Sometimes, we have to parent ourselves.

Written by Julie Antoinette. Julie is a Sociology and Psychology graduate. In her free time, she is a crochet adventurer and musical muse. In this horoscope, she relays intuitive messages of guidance from the collective astrological archetypes. As above, so below.

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