

School Year

**Mobile
Phones**
and the
classroom

**Food
Allergy**
Fast facts

How to identify
and stop
**Cyber
Bullying**



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Treat kids to lunches that meet all needs

School lunch may seem like a relatively easy concept for parents to master. However, day in and day out, enterprising moms and dads grow anxious over what to put into kids' lunch boxes or bags. Parents have foods they want their kids to eat, and then there are foods their grade-schoolers will actually consider. Schools may also place limitations on what kids can bring to school due to allergies or school rules on sweets versus healthy foods. Then there's the packaging itself. Parents may weigh the benefits of everything from clever accessories to eco-friendly materials. Removing school lunch stress is easy. Once

these steps are conquered, sending children off to school with acceptable meals becomes that much easier.

Foods

Keep a running list of must-have foods to stock the pantry. This will make it easier when it's time to go shopping. Picky eaters may return again and again to familiar comfort foods. As long as the child is getting enough vitamins and growing, there should be little issue in letting him and her eat the same foods day in and day out. Because parents cannot police what their children eat at school, it's better to devote time to introducing new foods during breakfast or dinner.

Involve kids in some of the food decisions, especially since they are the ones eating the lunch at school. Certain foods may not keep well or become less appealing after

The school lunches parents enjoyed are being replaced with fresh ideas that accommodate today's kids and schools.



sitting in backpacks until lunchtime. Respect kids' input and try to make some changes accordingly.

Restrictions

Researchers have estimated that food allergies affect one in every 13 children under the age of 18 in the United States alone. That equates to two in every

classroom. The group Food Allergy Research & Education says eight foods account for the majority of all reactions: peanuts, tree nuts, soy, milk, eggs, wheat, fish and shellfish. Parents should be cognizant of common food allergies and be considerate of other kids in the classroom who may have allergies by limiting some of the most common allergy-associated foods in their children's lunches.

Packaging

The way foods are presented can improve the dining experience. Just ask professional chefs who go to great lengths on creative "plating" in restaurants. Children who are fussy about foods touching might enjoy one of the economical (and eco-friendly) designs of reusable bento boxes, which separate foods into different sections. They also help parents pack perfect portion sizes for healthier eating habits.

Snack and food containers now come in colorful and clever designs that appeal to the toy-lover in most kids. Also, lunch gear manufacturers are thinking outside the sandwich to offer pouches and baggies that are leak-proof so that smoothies, soups and yogurts can be enjoyed during lunch, too.

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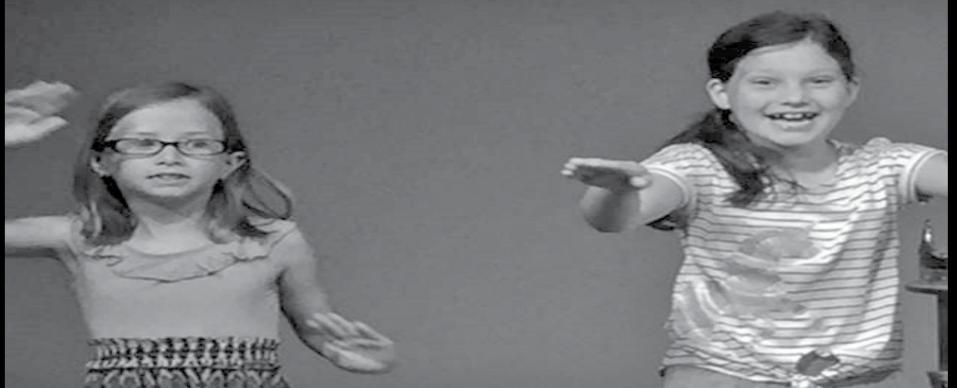
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How to identify and stop cyberbullying

Today's students have many new things to contend with as they navigate the school year. As a greater number of schools transition to providing lessons, homework and tests on digital devices, students spend much more time online. This connectivity can have many positive results. However, the same availability also opens up students of all ages to various dangers. One of these dangers is a more invasive form of bullying called "cyberbullying." The global organization DoSomething.org says nearly half of kids have been bullied online, with one in four saying it has happened more than once.

Cyberbullying has grown as access to computers and devices that offer an online connection has grown. Bullying is now just as likely to occur online as it is on the playground. Cyberbullies may bully classmates through email, social media, instant messaging, and other social applications. Since cyberbullying tends to target emotions and mental well-being, and reaches beyond the school campus into a student's home, its impact can be even more serious.

According to the Megan Meier Foundation, which campaigns against bullying, peer victimization during adolescence is associated with higher rates of depression, suicide ideation and suicide attempts. In the United States, suicide is the second leading cause of death for individuals between the ages of 15 and 24, according to data compiled from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Center for Behavioral Health Statistics, and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Cyberbullying occurs in many different forms. Here are some types of cyberbullying educators and parents can look for if they suspect their students or children are being bullied.

Flaming: This is a type of bullying that occurs in an online forum or group conversation. It's achieved by sending angry or insulting messages directly to the person. Flaming is similar to harassment, but harassment



usually involves privately sent messages.

Outing: This type of bullying is a sharing of personal and private information about a person publicly. When information has been disseminated throughout the internet, one has been “outed.”

Fraping: Fraping occurs when someone logs into another's social media account and impersonates him or her. This could be a child or an adult impersonating the person and posting inappropriate content in his or her name. Sometimes this type of bullying is also called "posing" or "catfishing."

Masquerading: Masquerading occurs when bullies create fake profiles so they can harass someone anonymously. The bully is likely someone the person being targeted knows well.

Exclusion: Sometimes direct targeting is not necessary. Students can be bullied simply by being deliberately left out, such as not being invited to parties or encouraged to participate online conversations.

Securing privacy online is one way to prevent cyberbullying attacks. Students also can be selective about who they share personal information with or whose social media friendships they accept. Thinking before posting and paying attention to language and tone can help curb cyberbullying as well. Students should stick together and report instances of cyberbullying if it becomes an issue.



Student physical examination tips



Prepare for school by getting students' medical information in order during summer vacations.

School time requires having all of the necessary supplies, clothing and gear ready for the year. In addition, preparing for a new school year often involves providing updated physical health information to the school administration. The requirements for health screenings and reporting may vary between school districts. Some physical examinations need to be conducted annually, while

others may only need updating at certain intervals, such as when kids transition from elementary school to middle school or middle school to high school. Updated physical forms also may be required at the start of a sports season.

Health screenings are intended to detect problems that may interfere with learning. Physical exams may indicate issues that

can hamper progress or shed light on undiagnosed problems that may require further assessment and necessitate customized learning plans to help students succeed. Physical exams are also a way to ensure students' immunizations are up to date.

According to the Pennsylvania Department of Health, physical exams typically are completed by students' primary care providers. Some school districts offer free or low-cost health assessments through school providers as well.

Students who will be traveling for school may be required to meet the health requirements of their destination country. For example, medical students admitted to a Canadian university may be required to get a medical exam, according to the Government of Canada.

Visiting the doctor, nurse practitioner or a school-provided medical professional may not make school-aged children too happy. To make the process go smoothly, consider these suggestions.

Work with physicians who have access to electronic health records. EHRs are secure technology that provides easy access to vaccination records, health

history, appointment reminders, and even prescription information. Some providers even make it possible for patients to directly access their health information through a secure login, helping save time.

Make appointments during school hours. After-school appointments are peak times for pediatric offices and medical clinics. Sign students out of school early to visit the doctor for medical exams. The staff likely will be less harried, and you can spend more time asking questions and completing forms. Schools may not count the absence if a doctor's note is provided.

Don't forget the forms. Bring the right paperwork so that the staff can fill out what is necessary for the school, camp or sports league.

Know your insurance guidelines. Physical exams may be part of routine well visits. Insurance companies institute their own policies regarding how frequently physicals can be conducted (usually annually). Be sure to schedule the appointment accordingly.

Physical examinations are on many parents' back-to-school to-do lists. Certain strategies can make physicals easier for adults and children alike.

GOOD LUCK STUDENTS!



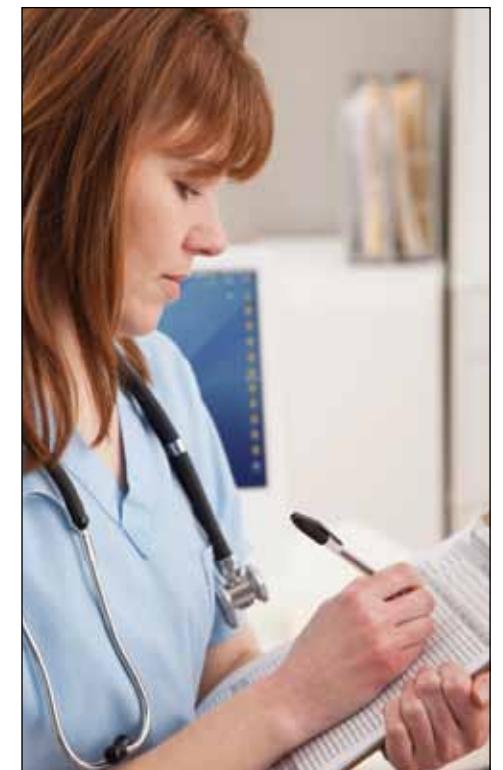
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Teachers can look at ways to harness the power of mobile phone technology in the classroom.

Mobile phones and their place in the classroom

Mobile phones are ubiquitous. Most people would admit that they'd rather leave home without their wallets than without their phones. According to statistics provider Smart Insights, 80 percent of internet users own a smartphone, while more than 50 percent of mobile phone users admit to reaching for their phones first thing when they wake up.

Since more than 90 percent of today's teenagers own a phone, schools are forced to find ways to include mobile phones in the classroom without having them overshadow lessons or distract students.

A 2013 University of Nebraska-Lincoln study of 777 students at six American universities found that the average respondent used a digital device for nonclass purposes 10.93 times during a typical school day. Students' activities included texting, social networking and emailing. Many respondents cited boredom and staying connected to the outside world as motivating factors.

Until recently, many schools implemented strict policies regarding mobile phones in school. Some forbade students from carrying them on campus or mandated that students left them in lockers. Many schools are now realizing the ways students can

harness the technology of mobile phones in creative and innovative methods. Plus, as smartphone capabilities continue to evolve, educators are increasingly recognizing the potential of educational apps and how they can be used in the classroom.

Using mobile phones in the classroom for educational purposes also may cut down on how much the phones are used for nonschool purposes, such as texting or checking social media. According to data published in the journal *Computers & Education*, 80 percent of students admit that mobile phones can hinder their ability to pay attention in school when phones are not being used in conjunction with their lessons. Schools vary in their rules regarding mobile phone usage in the classroom. Some schools let teachers decide, while others have more liberal policies. The following are some ideas for broaching the subject.

- **Research educational apps.** A number of apps and websites are educational. Whether students are connecting via a phone, laptop or tablet, these applications can encourage class participation. Some apps can report students' progress to teachers in real time. Remind101 is an app that can text reminders for assignments and



tests to students.

- **Teachers can monitor diligently.** The image of teachers standing in the front of the classroom lecturing is becoming more and more obsolete. It's easier to guide students to stay on task while on mobile phones when the teacher roams the classroom to keep an eye on phone activity. It's more difficult for students to engage in negative behaviors when their phones are out in the open.

- **Cut down on tech expenses.** Not every school can afford to give each student a laptop or have 20 to 30 tablets in the classroom. When students embrace BYOT (Bring Your Own Technology), teachers can maximize resources. Mobile phones are not going anywhere soon, and schools are trying to find ways to make them more useful and less distracting in the classroom.



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Maintain a safe school bus stop

School buses are safe modes of transportation for children. Statistics from Transport Canada indicate that transportation by school bus is safer than by passenger car. School buses are large and heavy vehicles that protect riders during collisions. School buses also help keep a greater number of passenger vehicles off of the roads during high-traffic school times.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration says that each year approximately 450,000 public school buses transport 23.5 million children to and from school and school-related activities around the United States. Although safety is enforced while students are on the bus, it is also vital for students to remain safe before they board. Ensuring a safe bus stop requires diligence.

Safety starts with students and parents. Students are under the authority of the bus driver while they are on the bus. But before they board the bus, students typically are not supervised. Chaperoned bus stops can help deter rowdy actions, particularly at crowded bus stops. Parents can rotate standing watch and keeping tabs on bus stop behavior.

Arrive early at the bus stop. Accidents can happen when people are rushing and not paying attention. NHTSA advises getting to the bus stop at least five minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive.

Stand at a safe distance. Children should remain no less than six feet away from the curb or roadway while waiting for the bus to arrive. Parents should routinely remind students not to run and play at the bus stop.

Lobby for safe bus stop locations. District transportation directors are often

tasked with choosing school bus stop locations based on local policies and attendance. Only basic requirements may be addressed, such as distance between stops. Parents and community members might be able to offer feedback regarding roads with low traffic volume and spots that offer maximum visibility during all seasons.

Minimize street crossings. Parents can drop children off on the side of the road where the bus will stop so the kids do not have to cross roadways unattended.

Use traffic assistance whenever possible. Children who walk to bus stops are urged to walk in crosswalks and on sidewalks and obey traffic controls. Parents can work with their children to find the safest routes to the bus stop, such as on residential streets rather than high-traffic roadways.

Familiarize yourself with the route to the bus stop. Parents are urged to research the area and know where potential hazards on the route to the bus stop may lie. This includes potential human hazards. According to BusBoss, a school bus routing and tracking company, it's important for parents to know where registered sex offenders live and ensure kids avoid these homes on the way to the bus stop. Other hazardous areas include spots where drug activity or other illegal behavior occurs.

Drive cautiously during school hours. Drivers should exercise extra caution and reduce speeds when schools are opening and closing. There will be lots of students on the roads between 8 and 9 a.m. and again between 2 and 4 p.m. Maintaining school bus safety is of the utmost importance. Students, parents and the school district can work together to make security a priority.



Being safe while en route to and at the bus stop is just as important as staying safe while riding on the school bus.

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Food allergy fast facts

Food allergies can develop from birth, and some last a lifetime. Others are developed at different ages and may be outgrown. No matter when allergies stop or start, they can be a life-threatening problem for children.

Although food allergies may be managed more easily at home, they present different challenges for school-aged children. School nurses and administrative officials should be informed about food allergies, especially if they are severe enough to warrant medical intervention, such as medication. Food allergies are quite common. Consider these allergy facts that can help parents better understand any issues their children might face.

- The Food Allergy Research and Education network says nearly 15 million people in the United States, many of whom are children, are affected by food allergies.
- One in 13 Canadians, or roughly 2.5 million people, are affected by a food allergy, according to estimates from the Allergy, Genes and Environmental Network.
- Around 7 percent of Canadian children under the age of 18 report having at least one food allergy.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says children with food allergies are two to four times more likely to have other related conditions, such as asthma and other allergies.



- Food allergies are an immune system response to the food, not a case of digestive intolerance.
- Among food allergic children, peanuts are the most prevalent allergen, followed by milk and shellfish, says the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology.
- Food allergies can cause everything from mild reactions, such as itchiness or hives, to anaphylaxis, a severe and potentially deadly reaction.
- Risk of food allergies increases when there is a parent who suffers from any type of allergic disease — even those beyond food allergies.
- A recent study conducted by researchers at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine found that children are taking longer to outgrow milk and egg allergies.
- Food avoidance remains the best way to prevent symptoms of food allergies. That is why reading product labels is vital.

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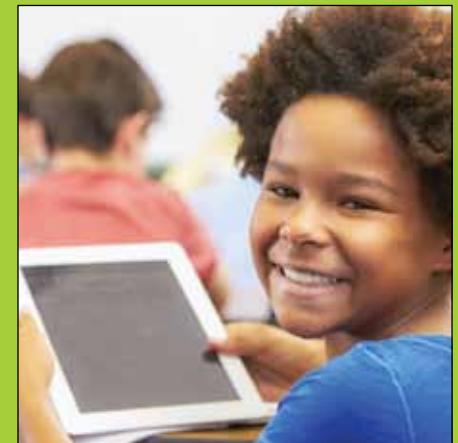
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Did you know?

Modern technology has forever transformed the classroom. As calculators replaced abacuses, mobile phone apps have now replaced calculators, and such advancements continue to change how students learn. One way schools are notably different from those of the past is through the absence of a once major component of the classroom layout. Chalkboards are either missing or completely retrofitted in modern learning environments. In the 1800s, slate blackboards were the new technology, replacing handheld tablets of wood or slate.

Within the last few years, schools have increasingly opted for cleaner “white boards” or “smartboards,” which are digitally connected to computers and offer touch interfaces similar to those on tablets and smartphones. As ebooks replace textbooks and more assignments are handed in via digital documents, lockers may be the next to vanish.



Backpack Tips



15% of child's body weight

For a 48-pound child, 15% is 7 lbs.

For a 59-pound child, 15% is 9 lbs.

For a 76-pound child, 15% is 11 lbs.

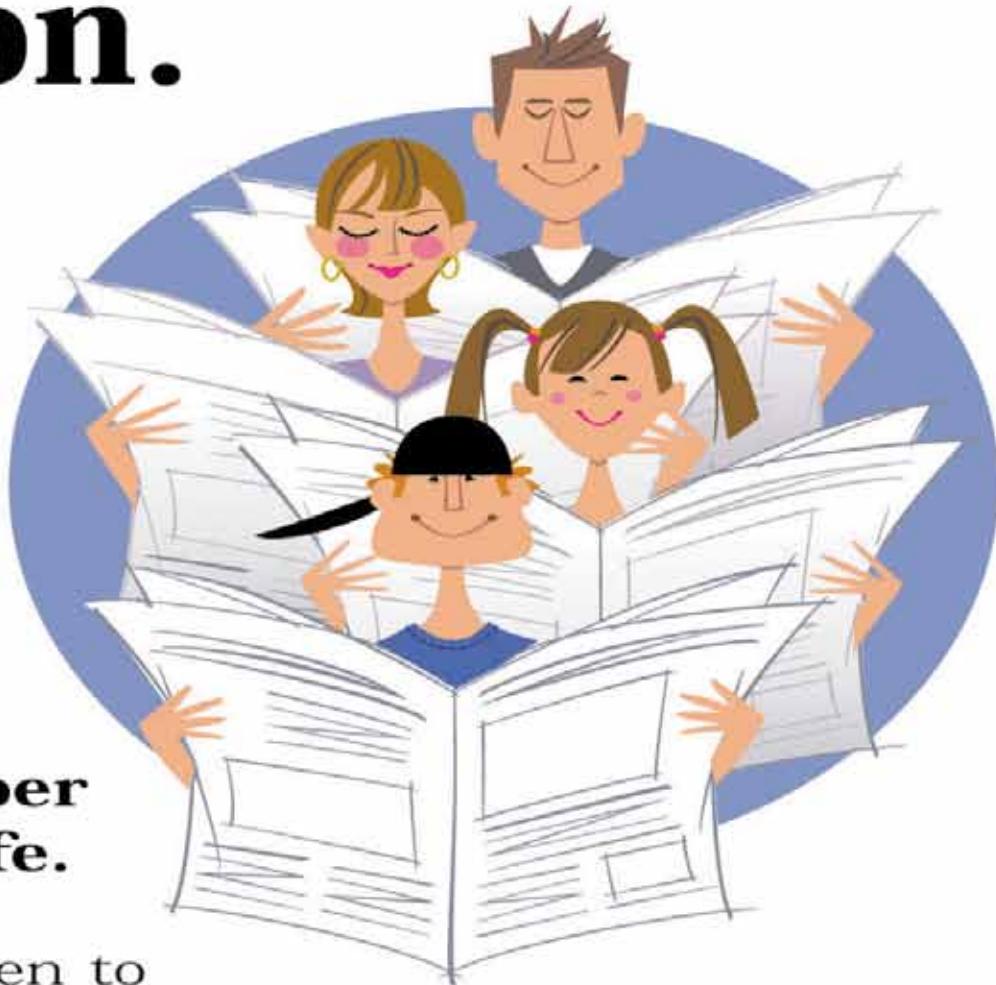
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