

Help prevent abusive dating

ALL ABOUT FAMILIES



ALICE MCCARTHY

If your teen is old enough to date, you need to be able to recognize the characteristics of abusive relationships, which are not always violent. Many times, the abuse takes the form of verbal, emotional and sexual behavior designed to intimidate and control the victim.

If a problem exists, clearly communicate your displeasure about the abuse in the relationship instead of saying you dislike your teen's friend. Your direct verbal attack on an abuser may make your teen defensive and make him or her want to stay in the relationship because you disapprove.

Families of teen-age girls should be wary of boys who seem violent, excessively jealous or show signs of abusing alcohol or drugs. You can be very direct and ask your daughter what it is that makes a person attracted to someone who makes them feel

bad. Early warning signs of trouble are:

- Isolation. Keeping a person from other social activities, friends and even family, is really the first step into an abusive relationship. The abuser seeks control.
- Fear. A victim may be subjected to almost constant criticism and made to feel accountable to the abuser for every action as a means of intimidation.
- Bruises or injuries. You have the right to ask your teen about bruises or injuries that you see. Your teen may try to hide bruises with clothing, long sleeves, slaps or turtlenecks, or sunglasses or excessive make-up. He or she may try to avoid being seen by you for several days after an abusive incident.

Pay special attention if your son or daughter is involved in a relationship that is frequently "stormy." The classic pattern for a battering relationship involves cycles of tension and emotional or physical "explosions," followed by apologies and attempts to win the partner back. The danger is that the level of violence may increase with each succeeding

cycle

GETTING YOUR TEEN OUT

Victims of abuse are usually the last to see the abuse and frequently the least able to stop it. Your role as a parent or caregiver is to put an end to the relationship and to protect your teen. You or your teen can report abuse at any time. A good first step is talking to your religious leader, your teen's counselor or school official, a crisis counselor, or a nurse at the health department. The police can help, if necessary, and they will treat the abuse as a crime.

TO THE FAMILIES OF YOUNG MEN

Families, schools and law enforcement agencies are increasingly holding young men accountable for aggressive or violent behavior. Many families today are teaching their teens and young children that violence is never the solution to a problem. If you suspect that your son is the abuser in a relationship, the first step is putting an end to the abusive relationship. The second step is getting him some professional help.

FOR HELP:

National help line: 1-800-

799-SAFE (1-800-799-7233)

Michigan Family Violence

help line: 1-800-99-NO-ABUSE

(1-800-996-6224)

Common Ground Crisis

Line: (810) 466-0909

The Haven: (810) 334-1274

Modified with permission from "Healthy Teens: Success in High School and Beyond" by Alice R. McCarthy, Ph.D. Published by Bridge Communications Inc., 1996, \$8.31 (\$5.95 plus \$2 plus 36 cents Michigan sales tax). Call (810) 646-1020 between 8:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. for more information.

All About Families runs every other week in The Eccentric Newspapers. Birmingham resident Alice McCarthy, Ph.D., is a nationally known parent educator, writer and editor. She is the mother of five children and grandmother to seven young children.

McCarthy's past columns may be accessed on the Internet via Ode Online at <http://odeonline.com/emory/dm/ccmcindex.html>.

Blake William Edwards

Marey and Scott Edwards of West Bloomfield announce the birth of their son, Blake William, on May 30 at Beaumont Hospital.

His grandparents are Patricia Durella and Donna and Bill Edwards. His great-grandmother is Mary Krzyzak.



Send us your requests on items for the needy

Community organizations that are collecting food, clothing, other articles or cash, for the needy during the holiday season, will be listed in an article in The Eccentric on Thursday, Nov. 28.

Letters went out this week to many area groups, asking them what items they want, for donations to families and individuals. Organizations that do not

receive a letter but would like to be listed many send their "wish list" to:

Ethel Simmons, Suburban Life Editor, The Eccentric Newspapers, 806 E. Maple, Birmingham 48009. For more information call Simmons at (810) 901-2576 or fax at (810) 644-1314.

Responses are due by Friday, Nov. 15.

Newsletters receive health information awards

Bridge Communications Inc. of Birmingham has been selected as a winner in the recent third annual National Health Information Awards program, sponsored by the Health Information Resource Center in Libertyville, Ill.

This program recognizes the nation's best in consumer health information materials and programs. Bridge Communications received National Health Information awards in 1994 and 1995.

Bridge Communication's three Healthy Newsletters for parents reach 600,000 families twice yearly. Healthy Beginnings is for parents of children in pre-kindergarten through grade 3; Healthy Growing, for grades 4-5; and Healthy Choices, for grades 6-8. The newsletters are designed by P.S. Abrams in Troy and edited by James McCarthy

of Pacific Grove, Calif.

"We were delighted to participate in the National Health Information Awards Program for the third year, and we are honored to receive the Silver Award," said Birmingham resident Alice R. McCarthy, president and executive editor at Bridge Communications. "Our winning newsletters were among the more than 700 entries judged by a national panel of health information experts. Only one-half of the 700 entries received any recognition at all. Out of 16 newsletters entered by national health promotion organizations, the Healthy newsletters were one of two to earn the Silver Award, the top award given in the Health Promotion/Disease and Injury Prevention Information category," McCarthy said.

The Healthy Newsletters, published since 1992, specifically

reinforce for families the health lessons taught in national, comprehensive, school health programs. The Healthy newsletters were the only four-color newsletters to win the Award of Excellence (top honor) in the 1994, 1995 and 1996 Renaissance Awards programs sponsored by the Detroit Chapter of the International Association of Business Communicators.

"Next year, we will submit 'Healthy Teens: Success in High School and Beyond' for an award," McCarthy said. "Healthy Teens," published by Bridge Communications in September, is already a winner.

"We sold 15,000 copies in 30 days to school systems and parents. We are headed toward a new printing in January, 1997, with a few additions (sexual harassment and some extension

of chapters)," she said.

Before 'Healthy Teens' was published, McCarthy asked the book's 48 collaborators to send her their suggestions for improving the 16 chapters on such subjects as depression, development, nutrition and physical health, sexual issues (including abuse and assault), safety and crime prevention, violence, the world of work, and how parents can foster positive assets in teens.

She said substantial discounts (up to 62 percent) are offered on quantity orders of 'Healthy Teens.'

Bloomfield Hills resident Diane Berg has found a sentimental use for old mink teddy bears.

Berg is a member of the Birmingham Branch of the American Association of University Women, which will hold its Christmas Boutique 4-8:30 p.m. Tuesday and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesday at the First Methodist Church of Birmingham, 1889 W. Maple, west of Southfield Road.

The mink teddy bears are being featured at the boutique and sell for \$90. Berg also has

made tapestry teddy bears for sale.

The boutique is held every other year to support higher education. All articles are the handwork of AAUW members. Prices range from \$1 to \$150. There is a large assortment of articles for children to give as gifts, as well as gifts for them, such as folk art dolls and chapel dolls.

Other items include wooden bird houses, papier-mache reindeer and Santas, hand-painted flowerpots, miniature Christmas trees, and large and small wreaths.

The voice of public education

The Durant case—the high cost of broken promises

Almost 20 years ago, the citizens of Michigan made a promise to our public school children.

We vowed that we wouldn't sacrifice key areas of their education in the name of cutting costs. The state, we said, would always pay a fair share for programs it required, such as special and bilingual education.

And yet, every year since voters approved the Headlee Amendment in 1978, the Legislature has broken that promise.

Now state officials may finally have to be true to the word.

The Michigan Supreme Court so far has refused to hear the latest appeal on a lawsuit brought almost a generation ago by Donald Durant, a school board member from Warren's Fitzgerald Public Schools. The decision on the case would require the state to pay from \$500 million to \$3.5 billion in back payments for programs it has mandated and to make good on future obligations.

That should be a huge victory for Michigan's 1.6 million public school children. But, instead, it may serve as yet another painful reminder that, despite recent attempts to fix it, our school funding system is still broken.

The court ruling revolves around a section of the Headlee Amendment to the Michigan Constitution. Voters approved the amendment to put a cap on the rising tax rates. But they did so with the understanding that it protected mandated school programs by requiring the state to continue paying the same proportion of the cost of those programs as it paid in 1978.

Over the years, however, the state's commitment to required programs—and to our children—dropped from more than 30 percent to a mere 8 percent today. At the same time, costs for some programs, particularly special education, increased dramatically.

That forced many school officials to play shell games. In some cases, school officials hid special education students against regular education students—and their parents—in a virtual tug-of-war over scarce resources.

Often school officials tried to make up for the state's negligence by tapping taxpayers for extra millage. When that failed, they cut programs and denied children opportunities to learn.

Whether it is the chance to study French, take an advanced placement math course or sing in a school musical, most of our children won't get another shot at those opportunities.

But thanks to the high court's decision, we have an opportunity to do better for the next generation. We must seize it. We cannot let the state abandon our children again.

However, some in the Legislature are already looking for a way out. They are considering raiding other areas of the education budget, such as funds dedicated to children

at risk, to pay the bill. And there's talk of eliminating the state mandate for special education—one of the few remaining school requirements.

They've taken that easy way out before. Earlier this year, the Legislature wiped out mandates for driver and bilingual education. Now, most students who need those services must fend for themselves.

Adding special education to the list of programs no longer required by the state would send a devastating message to the most vulnerable among us—the physically, emotionally or learning impaired—and significantly reduce the quantity and the quality of services for those students. The federal government would still force school districts to provide special programs for handicapped students. But students would get fewer years of service and the state would no longer regulate class size or teacher qualifications.

The Durant case has created one of our most serious funding crises yet. We cannot say how the state should fund this enormous debt.

We can say that wiping out important programs or shifting resources away from children at risk without seeking input from those who are most affected isn't the answer. Our children must be a higher priority.

Surely we can find a way to work together—educators, parents, politicians and the community—to make good on our constitutional responsibility to "maintain and support" public education.

We need solutions that offer hope and opportunity for our public school children instead of despair and division. We need to offer our children the promise of a better future. And, this time, we need to keep that promise.



Julius A. Maddox
MEA president

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