

Safe Neighborhoods Newsletter
A Safe Kids National Network Publication
Month: 2/27/24

Note from Stephanie Mann:

Welcome to February! Making Neighborhoods Safe for Kids & Families! Our newsletter share information to empower and keep children, families, and neighbors safe, and provide steps to make neighborhoods, communities and cities safe, healthy places to work and live.

Children are God's love gift; they are Heaven's generous reward - Psalm 127:3

From Dennis Jamison, Editor: *As we begin this week, Monday has become thought of more to be "President's Day." However, it is yet another example of confusion within our nation and the desire of people to do whatever they want. Congress designated the third Monday of the month of February to be a federal holiday to remember George Washington's birthday. Contemporary calendars will designate either. Yet, most calendars depict this third Monday as "President's Day." To make it more confusing, other calendars refer to this day as "Presidents' Day" (Note the apostrophes). The punctuation is simply a reflection of the misunderstanding of the purpose of the day. Long ago, businesses and states took it upon themselves to celebrate the holiday to increase sales or raise political awareness to raise money for political coffers. Originally, the day was established by Congress to honor the Father of the Country: George Washington. Since it is an election year, it may be good to reflect on a leader who willingly sacrificed so much to help give birth to a land where freedom could grow. Such reflection may serve as a way to measure those who claim to be leaders today. It is not too much to wish Washington "Happy Birthday," despite the confusion and corruption.*

Are American leaders failing Us?

By Stephanie Mann

Americans who are based in the Middle East have been attacked 165 times since the devastating ambush of Israeli citizens on October 7th. Has America's response worked or failed?

As a crime and violence prevention specialist for 40 years, I don't have experience in national policy, but I do know how to keep the peace in families and neighborhoods, which makes cities safer for everyone.

Our leaders need to be more knowledgeable about bullying behavior and how to stop it. The first step to becoming a bully is teaching children to hate others who don't believe the way you do.

The question is: how do we handle a bully nation like Iran? According to Iran International, "Biden has allowed access to another \$10 billion since the Gaza War." Some leaders say they don't want war to escalate, but money is power for people who thrive on hate. Former leaders express concern that today's leaders are trying to appease Iran in hopes that they will stop attacking U.S. forces in the Middle East. That policy failed, as we learn that three Americans died and 40+ were wounded on the Jordan border by Iranian backers.

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Today's government leaders need to understand the mentality of bullies and what it takes to stop them. Bullies are attracted to human weakness. They look for victims who are easily intimidated and show fear, which empowers them. If a victim cowers in the corner, the bully gets stronger and more aggressive. Today, we see young bullies attacking victims in our schools, intimidating youth on the internet, and spousal bullies destroying families, which can turn into murder. If individuals allow themselves to be victimized and fail to grow strong and resilient, a bully can destroy a person's self-confidence, self-esteem, and free will.

Iran's tactics are ancient! The conquerors of the past, like Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin, were bullies and surrounded themselves with evil bullies willing to join them to dominate and rule their people and other nations. Today, Russian Vladimir Putin's goal is to control Ukraine, and it doesn't matter that thousands of people are dying on both sides.

Freedom in America is being tested to see how far we will allow godless bullies to prosper. They want us to weaken as we spend taxpayers' money and use up our resources. So, what needs to happen for nations to succeed?

Spiritually centered leaders can turn to God for wisdom, not men who seek power, because they can be corrupted. People with courage ignore the bully and walk away, challenge the bully with facts, or punch him in the nose, figuratively speaking.

We are witnessing spiritual warfare between good and evil! What America needs are strong, independent leaders who have faith in God, know right from wrong, and will not tolerate community or world bullies. It takes strong, spiritually centered men and women to stand up to bullies on the home front and in the world. If we are going to survive as a free nation, we need to understand bullying behavior. It takes resilient and courageous American leaders who will challenge global bullies. Do we have strong leaders in today's America? That will be up to you to decide because this is an election year. Let your voice be counted!

STEPHANIE L. MANN Author, Crime and Violence Prevention Consultant, Founder – Safe Kids Now National Network, is the author of “Empowerment Parenting: How to raise resilient children who become happy, self-reliant adults. She co-authored, “Alternative to Fear: Guidelines to Safer Neighborhoods,” in 1975. With the help of California’s first lady, Nancy Reagan, the CA Youth Authority funded the guide and thousands were sold to law enforcement agencies, state and government agencies around the country, including the FBI. “Alternative to Fear” helped educate police about the potential of involved citizens and popularized the “Neighborhood Watch” Programs. Author of six books on home, family, neighborhood, and city safety Visit www.safekidsnow.com

A PARENT’S PRIORITY: 5 Minutes of Self-Care

By Sher Graham

As communities move with the shift that occurs each day in the global community, it is important to focus on the perspectives of your community as it shifts each day. Yes, what incident occurs in another part of our country or continent impacts the community health in your community, and your neighborhood.

So must the choices you as a parent consider and choose relative to each morning you wake up. Do you find you take care of yourself after you take care of others? Parental Caregiving to others is a gift you share with others. However, it is not a gift if you only share part of yourself. A gift given at 100% is so much more effective.

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There isn't an excuse that I have not heard from parents or colleagues throughout the 50 years as an educational coach or behavioral health specialist. Any email you write to tell me how challenging your life is or that there is NO TIME for you does not bring sympathy to my heart. Parents and general caregivers use the 'no time' as an excuse thinking that they can gain empathy from others. Not here. The choice you make as a parent will model the behavior of your children's choice in making decisions, or how they communicate with themselves and others. A parent's behavior is what they see every day; it overrides the hearing that parents embrace upon their children to listen. ***ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS.***

Distress makes It a priority in your daily life if you allow it to become so. How you react and respond to the distress issue(s) can trigger negative emotion, depending on your mindset choice. That is a choice YOU and only you as a parent or caregiver make, from wake up to how you manage daily activities to what you think about before you go to sleep. Your parental mindset can change each day beginning with 5 MINUTES! You must become a priority on your calendar to make those 5 MINUTES count each day. Just think of how this one small choice will impact your children, your spouse/partner, your friends and family, each day. You **MUST BE YOUR PRIORITY.** It only takes 5 minutes or less to make a difference in making a choice and modeling positive self-care behavior.

Self-care is NOT selfish! For you as a parent to be your best and fully able to care for others, it is important to make YOU a priority. Engaging in self-care shows your children, family, friends, work colleagues and anyone else you encounter that you value yourself.

Here are some fun ways to use those 5 MINUTES. Choose 1 or more of these fun activities and enjoy. Find a quiet space for your retreat- yard, bathroom, closet or car. These are also activities you can a post on the refrigerator door or bathroom mirror and do with your children. They are adaptable to all ages, even intergenerational families where the guardians and caregivers are grandparents or senior family members. **Take 5 MINUTES and try ONE.**

- Wiggle your toes, rotate ankles and legs.
- Stretch your hands and fingers high in the air. Take a breath in and out. Smile. Laugh, Repeat.
- Dance or twirl as if everyone is watching you.
- Read a book or poem aloud to the trees or flowers or your animals.
- Write three things down that you appreciate or are in gratitude.
- Sit in the silence and let your mind think of nothing. Listen to the sounds around you.
- Say your daily intentions aloud.
- Repeat 5-4-3-2-1 as many times as needed to refocus your mind to think of something else.
- Look in the mirror and say "I Love You" while you hug you.
- Being 100 percent good to yourself allows you to give 100 percent of yourself to others.
- YOUR IMAGINATION CHOICE!

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Action Items...



2nd Call to Action: Compelling Videos & Podcasts...

- From Fox Business News: Teachers Unions Destroyed The Educational System In America: Rebecca Friedrichs – 2/13/24
- From Children’s Health Defense (w/ video): Measles Mandate Fight – 2/7/24
- From Children’s Health Defense (w/ video): Teen Dangers – 2/5/24
- From Panorama News Network: CEOs of Meta, TikTok, X testify before Senate on children's safety – 1/31/24
- Focus on the Family Parenting: Parenting Tips About Tech and your Kids – 1/4/24
- ICYMI > From ABC News: Keeping kids safe online – 1/20/24
- ICYMI > From Epoch TV: Chinese Company Buys Control of US Schools – 11/3/23