

Safe Neighborhoods Newsletter

Safe Kids Now Network, LLC SEPTEMBER 2024

Making Neighborhoods Safer for Kids & Families!

Safe Kids Now Network LLC (www.safekidsnow.com) shares information to empower and keep children, families, and neighbors safe throughout the global communities.



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

NEIGHBORHOOD BREAKING NEWS!

- ✓ Safe Kids Now Network is in its 4th campaign month to create stronger neighborhoods with a free download 10-step blueprint on protecting your children. Safe neighborhoods have always been a way for families to protect their children. Help us reach our goal of 1 billion people all over the globe. (www.safekidsnow.com)
- ✓ Abstinence-Centered Education is topic of main article in this issue.
- ✓ Fentanyl is a serious drug crisis in the United States. From 2017 to 2019, the number of deaths declined to 14,139. This was followed by a slight increase in 2020, with 16,416 reported deaths. In 2022, the number of deaths declined to 14,716. Fentanyl involvement in fatalities that also involved prescription opioid drugs has steadily increased since 2014. In 2022, fentanyl was responsible for 200 deaths every day. Over a quarter of a million Americans have died from a fentanyl overdose since 2018. Fentanyl deaths have increased by 4,900 percent since 2015.

From the Director's Desk

Greetings from the Director's Desk! This month, we are sharing several articles from our network members on topics that are important to the safety of our children and communities. If you have an article you would like to share, please email to safeneighborhoods@gmail.com by the 10th of each month.

This month, Richard Urban (drichardurban@urbangrocery.com) shares his thoughts about Abstinence-Centered Education.

YOUR NEWS: If you have relevant announcements about important events aligned with our efforts to shed light on the problems that kids, their families, please email safeneighborhoods@gmail.com by the 10th of each month prior to our monthly newsletter emailed around the 15th-20th of each month. If it is an event, we need 60 days lead time to promote your event.

About the Director: Stephanie L. Mann, Crime and Violence Prevention Consultant and founder of Safe Kids Now National Network LLC. Her experiences in crime prevention has given her the insight, wisdom, and vision to advocate for safe communities and neighborhoods for all children around the world. She is the author of five books on family, home, neighborhood and city safety. Stephanie conducts workshops and keynote speeches as a professional speaker on crime prevention and safety. You can reach her at safeneighborhoods@gmail.com or visit <https://www.safekidsnow.com>.

From the Editor

My apologies for the lateness of this issue. Sometimes in one's life journey, you get overwhelmed with daily life challenges. Enjoy the issue on the last day of September.



**Life is beautiful. Always look up
for guidance. Ask for help.**



We Need a Revolution of Abstinence-Centered Education

By Richard Urban

As of 2021, forty percent of births in the United States were outside of marriage. However, this does not tell the whole story. For white women, the rate of out of wedlock birth is twenty-eight percent, for Hispanic women, fifty-three percent and for black women seventy percent (<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/unmarried-childbearing.htm>). Arguably, this is the greatest factor causing racial disparities in child welfare and overall family well-being.

To break the generational cycle of outside of wedlock birth, we need a revolution of abstinence-centered education. Parents should present the expectation of sexual abstinence before marriage to their children, regardless of whether or not they abstained themselves. They should think about what is best for their children's future and speak honestly about their own situation.

School and community-based programs can back up parents in making this revolution. In one generation this can break the cycle of outside of wedlock births, and all of the related personal and societal consequences.

According to the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System, about 2 in 10 9th grade students have had sexual intercourse, with an estimated 6 in 10 12th grade students having had sexual intercourse. Obviously, this is very concerning. What is happening in the family, school and social environments that is influencing so many youth to become sexually active?

Certainly, a major factor is the failure to present sexual abstinence in preparation for faithful marriage as an attainable goal. Many youth, especially in urban areas, may not grow up in homes with married parents. Furthermore, they may not know anyone in their community who is married.

Schools that present only so-called "comprehensive" sex education only pay lip service to sexual abstinence. There is no substantive discussion of the many benefits of sexual abstinence in this type of sexual health education. There is also little discussion of the dangers of being sexually active.

A positive alternative is to have abstinence-centered curricula, activities and peer counseling presented to 6th grade to 12th grade students, with abstinent youth opting in to be peer counselors for their fellow students. Clubs should also be formed for youth you are committed to remaining sexually abstinent, or who want to

return to sexual abstinence. This kind of education plus peer counseling and clubs is relatively inexpensive to implement when provided by third party providers.

Ideally, this would be the only type of sexual health curriculum taught. In any case, this must be presented as an alternative to all youth. It is extremely irresponsible and abusive to only provide youth with “education” that encourages them to be sexually active without explaining the risks of sexual activity and the benefits of abstaining.

We should educate our children on the benefits of sexual abstinence in preparation for faithful marriage. Simultaneously, we should point out the direct relationship between irresponsible sexual behavior and all kinds of societal chaos, such as increasing suicide rates among youth, poverty, sexual confusion among youth and young adults, and crime.

Our organization, Urban Life Training, provides abstinence-centered curricula and many other resources at urbanlifetraining.org. Here are two resources:

- Form a Chapter of Urban Life Training in your local area: <https://www.urbanlifetraining.org/index.php/chapters>.
- Resolution for Abstinence and Character Based Sexual Health Education for your Board of Education to Adopt: <https://www.urbanlifetraining.org/index.php/articles3/80-abstinence-education/436-school-board-resolution-for-abstinence-and-character-based-sexual-health-education>.

About the Writer: Richard and Stacey Urban founded the Urban Grocery that provides grocery stores and entrepreneurs a complete grocery delivery system that will help them make a positive contribution to their community by providing quality home grocery delivery service. The Urban Grocery Delivery System is affordable ecommerce and delivery software for Grocery Stores, Markets, CSAs/Farms & Grocery Delivery Services. Visit their website: <https://www.urbangrocery.net> or email drichardurban@urbangrocery.com.

Taking Care of Yourself is the Best Role Model for your Children

Do children and other people around you actually listen to what you say compared to what behavior choices they see you make and do? The answer is no. Children and others observe and watch what you DO before they listen to what you say. The saying “Do as I say and not as I do” does not work with children or others of any generation.

It is important to stop right now and reflect on what behavior patterns you are exhibiting to those around you and those people you serve. Do your choices reflect ethical values and beliefs? Do you say one thing and then do the opposite with the hope that people are not watching you? Are you listening to your children when they repeat points or words of your conversations or self-talk that they hear? Do you like what you are hearing from your children? Your words and behaviors are what they see the first on their life journey and see the most often, not that of their peers.

Growing up in a family culture where verbal abuse is a constant way of conversation is not a positive behavior that any child needs to experience. When parents are verbally abusive to one or more children, everyone else who sees this behavior consider it ‘open territory’ to be verbally abusive and bully the child or children. This is not acceptable behavior. Yet, it is typical behavior of many families in all cultures worldwide and where children do not feel safe in defending their safe space or their own sense of self to adults and other siblings who are empowered to be verbally abusive or a bully.

This is a family culture where safe communications is non-existent. The personality behaviors of parents, especially those who betray narcissism behaviors or are manipulative and use threats and physical abuse behaviors to ‘manage’ their children or other adults is a behavioral choice and needs to be stopped. It is

unacceptable behavior for any one in any culture to use verbal or physical threats, isolation, loss of food and personal hygiene access, etc.

Take time for you. Make you a priority. Make time with you and your children to take care of you. Be careful of what you say around others to yourself or to others. What you say to others can come back to be a part of decisions you might need to think about later on in life. Self-care is simple; it is you taking care of you first, not last.

About the Writer: Sher Graham is an international mental health advocate. As a workshop training expert and professional speaker, she shares her personal journey of surviving parental substance abuse disorder of prescriptive medications through her writing and speaking. A Neurobehavior Strategist, she is an international best-selling anthology author of 14 mental health and business books. You can reach her at slgraham4969@gmail.com or <https://www.shergraham.com>.

VIOLENCE IS OFTEN THE RESULT OF PARENTS NOT TEACHING CHILDREN about INNER POWER.

Neglecting to empower youth can lead to mental health problems later in life! A child who feels love, respected, supported and heard will choose not to abuse drugs, become violent or develop mental health problems. Today's society can confuse youth about sex and violence. Parents can drug and violence proof their children.

Stephanie Mann wrote "Empowerment Parenting" as a result of working in our inner cities. Most children, regardless of their environment, do NOT become sexual, violent or abuse drugs. This book is necessary for every parent to read and share with their children's teachers, and other family members. When parents have the knowledge to empower themselves, then their behavioral choices become empowerment action for their children. EMPOWER one child or a group of children! Empowerment Parenting provides parents, grandparents, teachers, coaches and educators the tools to help youth become centered, responsible and self-aware. Young people recognize the power of bullies and abusers. However, they need to know how to discover their inner power to handle the slings and arrows of life. Visit www.safekidsnow.com to order the book "Empowerment Parenting: How to Raise Resilient Children Who Become Happy, Self-Reliant Adults." www.safekidsnow.com



Safe Kids Now Recommended National Resources

Free Download on Safekidsnow.com

Gun violence devastates families and costs taxpayers \$557 Billion a year. We can cut crime in half within seven years, but there is a catch. (Chart \$557 Billion – Source: Time) Everyone has heard about city crime and violence in Chicago, San Francisco, New York, and other cities. Many Americans want more gun control, while others want more Police protection. These are Band-Aid approaches to stopping violence.

When communities DON'T have a healthy balance between citizens and Police, citizens can become angry, feel powerless, and blame the Police. As criminal activities increase, elected leaders may ignore or increase crime control. If citizens rely on the Police, they may become more aggressive. Police are people with families, and they experience fear as they become targets for street violence. It is important to note that the National average is two police officers per 1000 citizens. It is a myth that Police can keep you and your family safe. We need to focus on prevention.

Based on 40 years of crime and violence prevention, Safe Kids Now offers a no-cost way to make your family and city safer. We are starting a campaign to make neighborhoods safer for your children. Join us in this effort to reach one billion people. You can make a huge difference! Go to safekidsnow.com and check out our FREE 10-step illustrated blueprint, which can be downloaded to your email. You are powerful with the ability to bring people together. Could you give it a try and help spread the word? The life you save may be in your neighborhood. We all have a role in keeping our communities safe and healthy. www.safekidsnow.com