

Safe Neighborhoods News

Safe Kids Now Network, LLC MAY 2025

Stephanie Mann, Director

Sher Graham, Editor



Making Neighborhoods Safer for Children and Families!

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

NEIGHBORHOOD BREAKING NEWS!

- INTENTIONAL GRATITUDE. Be in gratitude each moment of the day for each small success.
- Religion in schools is our feature article written by Stephanie Mann. The controversy is real. How do you show your sense of spirituality i.e.. kindness and joy in the school environment? What do our children need to succeed as they learn and grow in our public schools?
- High school graduation is a time of remembrance and marks the first of a child's educational journey. How do you guide your graduate to creating the next life path journey?

From the Director's Desk

May Day! Life goes by really fast, so make the most of each day. This month, we focus on religion in schools, high school graduation plan for parents and graduates, and mental health mindfulness reading for summer fun.

Take the Controversy Out of Religion in Schools

By Stephanie L. Mann

Did you know there are an estimated 4,200 religions in the world?

For centuries, humans have persecuted each other for their religion, while other people understood that God protects and looks out for us if we have faith and rely on Him. Humans are spiritual beings with feelings of love, happiness, anger, and hate. We also show empathy, envy, and have a need to be loved by caring people. Religion, in America, is a choice and a support system for the human spirit. Religion offers leaders who use rituals to remind us to pray and worship God. Houses of worship inspire us with songs, music, art, and prayer to help us be better people as we create community.

The dark side of religion can become a way for self-absorbed people to seek power and control because we are spiritual beings. According to the Associated Press, 1,700 priests and clergy have been accused of sexual abuse of children over the years. As we all should realize by now, an outward vow does not necessarily mean an inward change.

Abused and hurting people look for love and community, which was an opportunity for cult leaders Rev. Jim Jones, David Koresh, and Marshall Applegate to engage and control their followers. Many of these followers died by fire or suicide. A small group led by Charles Manson controlled young girls who killed innocent people, and they went to prison. We seldom discuss communities led by cult leaders like Warren Jeffs. In her book "Born in Polygamy," Rebecca Kimbel states, "I was born a slave, sold as a slave, and bred as a slave in the United States of America."

What would change if every living person understood that God's many blessings are within all of us?

We don't need religion in our public schools. If we teach "religion" in public schools, it may open the door to teaching many different religions, including Satanism. Just look at the facts: 1,453 mass shootings in schools from 1997 to 2022.

Human beings are not powerless. All humans are spiritual beings who are born with different degrees of talents and abilities. Everyone is born with an imagination, intuition, creativity, insights, instincts, a sense of humor, hidden talents, and a self-protective conscience that can protect us if we listen and ask for God's guidance.

We need our children to have a God-given, truthful spiritual understanding of themselves so they don't become victims or turn on each other to bully, victimize, or kill. Understanding our inner, God-given power can give youth the tools to forgive, rise above pain and anger, and become contributing community members, which leads to inner peace.

Finding a life of freedom and inner peace with compassion and real love is a do-it-yourself personal transformation project. Personal transformation is not legislated from the outside in; it starts from the inside out. It takes a combination of the heart and the head working together for our children's best life.

Regardless of hardships and difficulties, every child needs to understand the power of self-discipline, self-control, and self-determination and how to discover their inner potential. We can teach youth that they have the power to find inner freedom, excel beyond their limitations, and live a prosperous life. Cullen Hightower, a well-known quotation and quip writer from the United States, once stated, "Discipline without freedom is tyranny: Freedom without discipline is chaos."

To be or not to be. You decide.

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 six 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>

Navigating Your Child's High School Graduation Life Journey

By Sher Graham



Parents are happy that their child is finally graduating from high school. The next day they all wake up and the next life path begins. Or does it? What expectations do parents plan for their child? What expectations does your child plan for themselves? Sleep? Chilling? Working? Helping around the house?

For parents of 2025 high school graduates, the key is to be supportive and encouraging as your child navigates this new life chapter. Focus on open communication, supporting their independence and responsibility, and adapting to your evolving roles. Encourage them to explore their interests and embrace self-care.

Here are some tips for navigating with your high school graduate.

1. **Communicate Openly:** Maintain a consistent flow of communication with your child, whether it's about their post-high school plans or just general life updates.
2. **Support Independence and Responsibility:** Allow your child to take ownership of their decisions and choices, even if they differ from your own.
3. **Adapt to Changing Roles:** Recognize that you're transitioning from a parent who directs your child's life to a parent who provides guidance and support.
4. **Support Their Choices:** Be supportive of your child's career and education paths, offering guidance and encouragement as they explore different options.
5. **Promote Self-Care:** Help your child understand the importance of taking care of their physical and emotional well-being, especially during this period of change.
6. **Acknowledge Your Own Feelings:** It's okay to experience a range of emotions as your child graduates, so acknowledge your feelings and seek support if needed.
7. **Celebrate and Be Present:** Celebrate their accomplishments and be there for them, both during successes and challenges.
8. **Encourage Lifelong Learning:** Support your child's curiosity and encourage them to continue learning and growing throughout their lives.
9. **Model Good Habits:** Be a positive role model for your child by demonstrating healthy behaviors, such as self-care and stress management.
10. **Give Yourself A Hug:** You were the inspiration for your child's motivation to complete his/her high school education. YEY

About the Writer: Sher Graham began as a community activist at age 12. Her commitment to making life better for others began with the legacy inspired from her grandmothers. As an international best-selling author, speaker and workshop facilitator, she shares her personal journey of surviving parental substance abuse disorder, humiliation trauma, verbal/physical assault and being an unwanted child who had no voice through her speaking, writing, and workshops. She is an international best-selling anthology author of 14 mental health, spiritual and business books. Her journey has led her to advocate for mental health services for everyone, bring awareness of mental illness stigmas and to guide others to create heart calm within their chaotic environments. You can reach her at slgraham4969@gmail.com or <https://www.shergraham.com>.

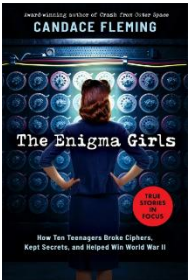
MENTAL HEALTH MINDFULNESS

Welcome to "Mental Health Mindfulness!" This new column focuses on stories of SKN's national network members, information on mental health, mindfulness, as well as topics and issues related to community health of our families and children. Children come in all ages. Each child is a unique individual, with gifts, talents and dreams of creating a peaceful world. What are your gifts and talents you can share with someone today? Sher

Reading is fun. What a great time to make learning fun this summer. Learn with your kids. Read and show your kids that it is something to do and it is fun. Take your children to the library and get them their own library card. Teach them how to choose books that are age appropriate to read. Check them out to take them home. Decide on 20 minutes daily to read together. Find a quiet place at home, a park bench or in the back yard.



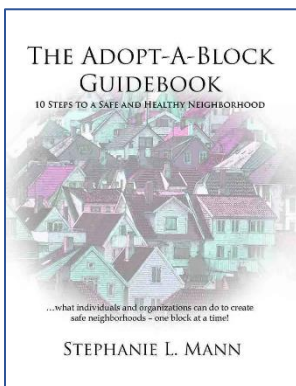
TEEN: A hilarious satire for when the world feels like it's falling apart. Jasper just wants to remember who he is, but solving his history is taking a back seat to stopping the demons coming out of the portal in aisle nine.



TWEEN: A group of young British women, from debutantes to math whizzes, who were recruited to work at Bletchley House, a sprawling mansion that had fallen into disrepair and became the headquarters of the clandestine efforts of cipher breaking during the war. These women have been largely left out of historic accounts surrounding the Enigma machine to date, and their stories are fascinating, not just what they witnessed during their years at Bletchley, but the lengths they went to keep their work a secret from families, friends, and sometimes one another.

LITERACY AND LEARNING

Reading is so important for learning. It is something that adults and children can do together, whether they read separately or together. This new column discusses literature for both adults and children. If you have a special book that has helped you or your family or community, email Sher and let her know at slgraham4969@gmail.com.



Stephanie Mann wrote this free guidebook based on her experiences in crime prevention and creating a plan that works for communities. If you care about your community, you can help make your city a safer, healthier place for families and children! CONNECTED CITIZENS can PREVENT CRIME!

The Adopt-A-Block Guidebook sends a message that we care about you, your family and children. When people get connected, they can reduce fear, instill hope and build relationships and trust. Share this resource with a local civic group, law enforcement agencies, schools, individuals, or religious organizations who help any community stay safe by helping to create a healthy environment for everyone.

Email safeneighborhoods@gmail.com and request a PDF.

SAFE KIDS NOW NATIONAL NETWORK MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Social, Emotional and Spiritual Life Skills for Kids & Their Grown-ups. New Life Skill Sessions Staying Safe: Safe Body, Safe Mind, Safe Spirit. Feeling safe is one of the most basic requirements we have as human beings. It is not easy for any of us to manage our behaviors when we feel unsafe, but this can be especially true for kids. While it is impossible to protect ourselves from everything dangerous, it is sensible for us to look at the many ways we can be proactive in caring for body, mind, and spirit so that we boost our feelings of well-being. 3 guided sessions: Safe Body, Safe Mind, Safe Spirit Check out our cool art activity: Build Your Safe House across sessions! Meditations, affirmations, and guided discussions Free during May: Visit their website: www.spiritualplaydate.com



Edits From the Editor

Note: The articles in Safe Kids Now News do not necessarily reflect the vision and mission of our organization. We provide a forum for our network members to express their thoughts on current topics related to children and families. If you have any issue with an article, please let us know.

YOUR NEWS: If you have relevant articles or announcements about important events aligned with our efforts to shed light on the issues related to families and kids, please email safeneighborhoods@gmail.com by the 1st of each month. If it is an event, email no later than 60 days lead time to promote your event.