

Keeping our Kids Safe:

EVERY HOUR COUNTS: THE CASE FOR BUILDING OUT-OF-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

**"Why are after-school programs so important?
Because children's minds don't close
down at 3:00 p.m. and neither should their schools."**

-- Richard Riley, former U.S. Secretary of Education

Did you know that kids spend only about 20% of their waking hours in school?

In fact, one study showed that children average 33.6 hours per week watching television and playing video games - about one hour more than the total time spent in school in a typical five-day week (32.5 hours).

Now imagine what might happen when that out-of-school time is made more productive...

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

When we hear the term "education reform," our minds instantly turn to the work going on **in schools** to raise student achievement and promote healthy development of our youth. Indeed, Massachusetts has invested **billions of dollars** in the schools in the last decade, in an attempt to raise the standards and, in turn, the achievement of those standards for all kids. The failure rate on the state's high-stakes achievement test (MCAS), however, remains disturbingly high. The schools seem to have a long way to go to fulfill the promise of higher achievement of all students.

Perhaps the answer to this conundrum of how to raise academic achievement lies in the simple matter of how students use their time. If we demand that kids use only 20% of their time in productive learning activity, can we really expect this small proportion of time to make 100% of the difference? It is clear that if we want to raise educational achievement, we must commit the same energy and high expectations to students' out-of-school time as we do to changing the schools themselves.

Indeed, research has shown that time spent in out-of-school programs leads to definitive improvements in academic achievement. Studies conducted in such states as Ohio and North Carolina report that students who participate in after-school programs achieve higher test scores, complete homework more often, and improve their grades more frequently than those who do not attend these programs. Moreover, a growing body of research indicates that kids in after-school programs have higher attendance rates at school, enjoy school more, and are less likely to drop out.

CRIME REDUCTION

According to the FBI, the percentage of serious violent incidents committed by juveniles **triples** in the hours from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Further, a majority of these crimes are committed **on school days**. It is during those same hours that children under 18 are most likely to be the victims of a violent crime. Should it come as a surprise that kids are more likely to commit crimes and become the victims of crimes during the times when they are least likely to be supervised?

Perhaps this is why, according to 69% of police chiefs in a recent poll, **the most effective way** to fight juvenile crime is to provide children and teenagers with more after-school programs. As one sheriff in Colorado put it, "We'll win the war against crime when we're as ready to guarantee a kid a place in an after-school program as we are to guarantee a felon room and board in a prison cell."

Study after study shows that the police know what they are talking about. One program, Quantum Opportunities, tracked its participants in four cities against a control group from the same neighborhoods and found that its participants were **six times** less likely to be convicted of a crime. In Baltimore, a police-sponsored after-school program decreased juvenile arrests in one neighborhood by 10% in just a few months. And in Canada, researchers tracked one housing project with an after-school program and found that juvenile arrests **dropped** by 75%, while in a comparable housing project with no such program the number of arrests **rose** 67% in the same period.

CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING

In a study released in September 2000, the Urban Institute estimates that four million children ages 6 to 12 are home alone in the after-school hours. Tacking on the number of unsupervised children aged 13 to 14, the total jumps to eight million. In Massachusetts, 73% of the state's children (ages 6 - 17) live in two-parent or single-parent homes where all parents are employed. This is one of the highest rates in the nation. This "latchkey kid" phenomenon cuts across socio-economic class to impact the lives of hundreds of thousands of families in every community in the commonwealth.

This is not merely a child-care issue. As you might expect, the more time children spend unsupervised by adults, the more likely they are to engage in risky activities. A national survey of 10th graders found that, in comparison to students who spent 5-19 hours weekly in school-sponsored activities, students who spent no time in these activities were 75% more likely to smoke or do drugs and 37% more likely to become teen parents. Another study showed that children who begin taking care of themselves by elementary school age were significantly more likely to report higher use of alcohol by 8th grade.

In addition to providing supervised space that might curb dangerous behaviors, after-school programs also have been shown to imbue participants with a greater sense of self-esteem, more developed social skills, and more positive feelings about the future than those who do not participate. Teachers in Manchester, New Hampshire, for example, reported that nearly 50% of the children in one after-school program had fewer behavioral problems and nearly 40% learned to handle conflicts better than before they enrolled in the program. Research on welfare families with teenagers found that those in programs were almost three times as likely to attend post-secondary school and less than half as likely to drop out of high school than those not enrolled.

WHY KEEPING KIDS ON TRACK?

Putting these facts together, it becomes clear that the key to resolving a whole range of social ills that shape the lives of children lies in how well we, as a society, can address their needs during those many thousands of hours when they are not in school. Only when our state and country put more resources and effort into expanding, improving, and funding quality after-school and summer programs for kids of all socioeconomic backgrounds can we claim that "we are doing all we can" to promote the healthy development of the next generation.

HOW CAN I HELP?

Now is the time for you to take action. Write or call your [legislators](#) and ask that they consider increasing the funding given to after-school and summer programming. Contact your local [United Way](#) or [school district](#) to find out how you can support or volunteer for a program near you. You could also [contact KKOT](#) directly to find out how you can help.

Perhaps most important, ask your friends and neighbors this simple question, "What percentage of kids' waking hours do you think they spend in school?" After they recover from the shock of the answer, tell them to log on to this site, so they, too, can learn more about how to get involved in **Keeping Kids On Track**.

RESEARCH LINKS

Check out the following reports for more detailed information about the needs and benefits of providing quality out-of-school time programming.

- [After-School Programs: An Analysis of Need, Current Research, and Public Opinion](#) **The After-School Corporation (PDF file)**
- [Afterschool Issue Briefs](#) **Afterschool Alliance**
- [America's After-School Choice: The Prime Time for Juvenile Crime, or Youth Enrichment and Achievement](#) **Fight Crime: Invest in Kids**
- [Fact Sheet on School-Age Children's Out-of-School Time](#) **National Institute on Out-of-School Time (PDF file)**
- [Working for Children and Families: Safe and Smart After-School Programs](#) **U.S. Department of Education/U.S. Department of Justice**

We are proud supporters of CHANCE, a non profit working with parents on the issues of parenting in the aftermath of violence.

303-696-SAFE for help and information on her new book for re-parenting!!

CHANCE is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping adults understand the impact family violence has on children and what we must do to ensure that their childhood remain healthy and violence-free.

The organization was founded in 1996, when it became apparent that there weren't enough services for children who had experienced or witnessed family violence. Since that time, **CHANCE** has become a voice for children in schools, at home and in the social service system.

In the pages to follow, you will learn more about the work we do. We provide a unique perspective that encourages behavior changes in adults, rather than children. We believe that when children from family violence are approached differently, they respond more effectively to the environment around them. And, as adults model more effective behavior, children learn nonviolent alternatives as responses to the frustrations and stresses that can undermine the family's social health.

At **CHANCE**, we take a positive approach to the very sensitive issue of family relations. Our outreach programs support an environment conducive to learning empowerment, conflict resolution, preventive maintenance, good parenting, better communication and safety awareness for children and their families.

In short, we believe that we can all help break the cycle of violence in our families by modeling the behavior that acknowledges our children's special needs, validates their self-worth, and ultimately, gives our children the **CHANCE** for a better life.

Christina Dalpiaz
Director

CHANCE is dedicated to making family violence socially unacceptable for the sake of the children.

Domestic Violence is Family Violence

No longer can society consider assaults against women as an intimate relationship issue. Learn more about how the entire family is affected in our [Frequently Asked Questions](#).



CHANCE founder and director Christina M. Dalpiaz is an accomplished speaker with degrees in psychology

and early childhood education. A retired Lt. Commander in the US Naval Reserves, Ms. Dalpiaz also has served as victim's advocate, trainer, mediator, counselor and parenting strategist. Author of several books, CDs and workshops, Christina has dedicated her life to helping adults understand the impact family violence has on child development. She currently provides tools and techniques for parents and professionals who seek innovative ways of



Changing How Adults Nurture Children's Egos

Teasing and Bullying

Another form of Power and Control Behavior

By James U. Scott, MD, Kathleen Hague-Armstrong, PhD, and Kathyryne L. Downes

Teasing and bullying harm both victim and perpetrator. Pediatricians are in a good position to address these destructive behaviors and reduce their toll.

The number of children in the United States who suffer as a result of teasing and bullying is staggering. Roughly 20% of children in elementary and middle school—5 million youngsters—have reported being a victim of teasing or bullying.¹ Forty percent of high school students reported that they either witnessed bullying or were the victim of it *daily*.² More troubling than the numbers are the behavioral, health, and social consequences of teasing and bullying. Not only do these behaviors compromise healthy child development, but they may also lead to a tragic loss of lives through acts of violence or suicide.

The heavy toll of teasing and bullying

In response to the shootings at Columbine High School in Colorado and at other schools, the US Secret Service and US Department of Education conducted a study in 2002 to discover elements common to the shootings so that schools and communities can plan to take preventive action.³ Although no one common element was found, more than two thirds of the shooters reported that they had been victims of chronic bullying. Rejection and persecution by peers also has been linked to youth suicide, the third leading cause of death for adolescents.^{4,5}

Although not all teasing and bullying incidents lead to a tragic outcome, both behaviors can cause significant and long-lasting health and mental health problems. The consequences may be especially damaging for children with an unstable family situation. School avoidance and failure, social problems, and somatic complaints have been linked to teasing and bullying among children as young as 5 years.⁶ Later problems related to teasing and bullying include substance abuse (smoking, alcohol, illegal drug use), gang affiliation, depression, and conduct disorder, often beginning by middle school, and poor academic performance that leads adolescents to drop out of high school.^{6,7,8}

Whether a child is a victim of teasing and bullying, a bully, or a victim and a bully, peer relationships are affected. Peers tend to reject children whom they see as a victim.⁹ Bullies, especially those who are aggressive at an early age, remain at risk for poor relationships as adolescents and adults.^{10,11} Bullies who are themselves bullied are at

highest risk for peer rejection, behavior and mental health problems, and school failure.^{7,8,12}

The American Medical Association (AMA) has recognized teasing and bullying as both health and social issues and has called upon physicians to take the lead in prevention efforts.¹³ The AMA report recommended that physicians be vigilant for warning signs that a patient is being bullied, such as psychosomatic and behavioral symptoms, expressions of self-harm, or thoughts of suicide. It charged physicians to work with parents, teachers, and others in their communities to develop programs to treat both bullies and their victims.

While both teasing and bullying can be painful experiences for children, severe bullying that involves physical aggression may cause the most trauma. (For more on the distinction between teasing and bullying, see "[Teasing and bullying: What's the difference?](#)".) When a power differential exists between bully and victim,¹⁴ children cannot escape unless adults intervene in a meaningful and proactive way.^{15,16}

Recognizing and addressing the problem

Teasing and bullying harm both the victim and the bully. Before those roles become entrenched, it is essential that children receive the support they need. The pediatrician may be the first to recognize clues to a child's distress (Table 1), such as unspecified somatic symptoms (stomachache, insomnia, enuresis)⁶ or sleep problems. Behavioral changes, including irritability, poor concentration, and school refusal, are other clues. Drug or alcohol abuse, school failure, self-mutilation, and violence are among the more serious presentations that may be related to being victimized.

TABLE 1
Warning signs that a child is being bullied

Somatic

Stomachache
Insomnia
New-onset enuresis

Behavior changes

Irritability
Poor concentration
Refusal to attend school

Serious problems

School failure

Drug and alcohol abuse
Violence
Self-mutilation

Asking a few simple questions can help determine whether further assessment is needed. Useful strategies for interviewing children include descriptive comments ("Things seem to be tough for you at school"), reflection ("So you felt pretty angry when Josh called you that name"), encouragement ("I know that it's not easy to talk about this problem"), and clarification ("So tell me about a time when you were afraid to go to school"). Open-ended questions, such as "What is it like for you at school?," help children express their thoughts and feelings about the problem.

Crayons, puppets, and clay can help younger children tell their story. Adolescents who cannot articulate their feelings clearly and reflect on their experiences may be helped by a direct, explicit approach—"Do you have friends at school? Any enemies? Tell me about them. What makes you see them as enemies?"¹⁷

Pediatricians need to know what resources are available to assist children who are bullies or victims of bullying, and they should help children connect to adults who can support them in their everyday lives, such as extended family members, school psychologists and counselors, and coaches. In more extreme cases—in which a child expresses angry or rebellious behavior, thoughts about suicide, a wish to carry out vengeance, or signs of alcohol or drug abuse—the pediatrician must notify the parents and refer the child and family for mental health counseling and crisis intervention. Parents need to be encouraged to reach out to their child through increased supervision and communication. Tables 2 and 3 summarize ways in which pediatricians can help victims and bullies, respectively.

TABLE 2
How you can help victims of teasing and bullying

- Listen to both the parents' and child's perception of the problem. Listening to the parents empowers them to help the child.
- Ask children about teasing as early as 5 years of age because children in groups can make cruel remarks. Using open-ended questions can help children to speak in their own words. Using art materials can help when a child has difficulty communicating. At this young age, the parents'

participation is crucial to reassure and protect the child .

- If parents choose to attempt conflict resolution between children, suggest that teaching the child about apologizing, asking forgiveness, shaking hands, and other culturally appropriate measures can help promote conflict resolution.
- Children older than about 8 years can be taught to cope with teasing by ignoring it. Introduce this technique for parent and child to practice in role play before using it in actual situations.
- Encourage parents to be proactive if the teasing is occurring outside the home. Suggest that they attempt to talk to witnesses to the teasing to obtain accurate firsthand information and that they seek to resolve conflicts by involving the parents of the teaser and other caregivers responsible for the teaser and victim, particularly when the teasing is repetitious, public, and obnoxious.
- Encourage the family to approach the school or, if appropriate, law enforcement authorities, to intervene if the bullying is occurring on school grounds or at school functions. Helpful people to talk to might include the school principal, guidance staff, and individual teachers, especially if bullying occurs consistently in the teacher's sphere of supervision.
- Consider encouraging school staff to arrange a meeting between parents to help solve the problem. Communicate by phone or letter with school personnel if cooperation does not occur.
- Offer to speak about teasing and bullying to school staff and students.
- If the child expresses thoughts about suicide or a wish to carry out vengeance, make an immediate referral for further mental health intervention and crisis management.
- Support the parents' involvement in seeking help for their child.

TABLE 3
How you can help bullies stop

Emphasize the seriousness of the problem.

Express concern about bullying actions and make an effort to determine why the child acts in that manner. Assume an interested yet mildly confrontational style that reflects disapproval of the action but not the bully.

Advise parents of bullies to express disappointment rather than anger. This approach often has more impact in dealing with the problem.

Encourage disclosure of bullying acts by the child. Encourage accountability of the child to parents and teachers, guidance counselors, or other trusted adults with parental and child permission.

Refer the child to a mental health counselor to explore ways to understand the bullying behavior, its origin, and ways to curb the behavior and express anger in a more appropriate, nonhurtful manner.

Counseling parents

The parents of both victims and bullies are often anxious or upset, and feel unable to help their child. Using active listening strategies such as reflection ("I hear that you are upset about children teasing Allie") and open-ended questions ("How well do you think your child is doing?"), the pediatrician can help parents gain a clearer understanding of the problem and often guide them toward a solution. The parents must be asked to describe the presenting problem, what happens before the behavior occurs, what happens after the behavior has occurred, and strategies they have used to deal with the problem.^{11,17}

Enhancing parental knowledge of child rearing can help parents use more proactive strategies to solve problems. For example, if the problem occurs at school, encouraging parents to become more involved with the school by collaborating with their child's teachers may strengthen the bullied child's sense of security. The pediatrician could also suggest that parents of a bully monitor the child's television time or restrict opportunities to play violent video games. Garrity and Baris's 1996 article in *Contemporary Pediatrics* includes a helpful guide for parents on how to deal with bullying.¹⁸ The [parent guide](#) is reproduced below.

Working with school staff

Because teasing and bullying often occur at school or on the way to school, the school staff is an essential partner in prevention. Schools have become more aware of their role in addressing the problems associated with teasing and bullying and may be open to collaborative problem solving with physicians and parents.

The number 1 strategy known to deter teasing and bullying is increased supervision of students.^{11,14} Teachers, parent volunteers, and other students can help to safeguard children from mistreatment. Adult mentors in the schools and community have been successful in supporting children and adolescents, buffering the impact of teasing and bullying. Pediatricians can help schools develop programs that teach children appropriate social skills and peaceful methods so that they can resolve their conflicts by negotiation, mediation, problem solving, and alternatives to violence.^{11,19}

A critical role

Teasing and bullying are age-old problems that continue to shape child development. In today's world, they may lead to deadly consequences. The degree of damage to development may vary significantly from one child to the next, often depending on the severity, duration, and timing of the teasing or bullying and the effects of coexisting life influences. Children who lack effective coping skills and adult support may respond in ways that endanger their own safety and well-being or the safety of others.¹⁰ Social and behavioral problems, health problems, school failure, depression, suicide, and homicide are outcomes that might be avoided through the efforts of caring adults.

Because pediatricians are often the first point of contact for children experiencing problems resulting from teasing and bullying, they can play a critical role in helping to find solutions. Perhaps more than anyone, they are aware of the painful experiences children encounter in growing up and the supports needed to protect children and ensure their healthy development. Moreover, pediatricians can use their influence as health-care providers to rally support for effective prevention and intervention efforts in schools and communities.

The parent guide on teasing and bullying may be photocopied and distributed to families in your practice without permission of the publisher.

Victims Rights In Colorado

What you need to Know from Victim Services 2000

If you are in crisis and need immediate help, please call one of the 24-Hour Hotline numbers listed below:

Emergency Denver Police Department	911
Asian Pacific Development Center	303.393.0304
Colorado Anti Violence Program	303.852.5094
The Denver Center for Crime Victims	303.894.8000
Family Crisis Line: Denver Department of Human Services: Youth/Family/Children's Services Adult Protection Services Child Abuse	720.944.3000
Rape Assistance and Awareness Program	303.322.7273
Safehouse Denver	303.318.9989
Servicios de la Raza	303.458.7088
24 Hour Nurse's Line: Denver Health Medical Center	303.739.1211

If you or someone close to you has been a victim/survivor of crime, you have experienced something that can be very traumatic. Crime comes in many forms. Whether you have been physically hurt, your car or house broken into, or a victim of fraud, you have had something happen to you that is out of your control.

You may be having thoughts and feelings you don't understand. It is normal and natural to feel angry, vulnerable, sad. It's okay to feel a variety of emotions, they are normal reactions to an abnormal experience.

You may feel these emotions for only a short while or for a long time. People around you may be feeling different things than you, and that is okay. Everyone reacts uniquely to traumatic experiences.

We are sorry this happened to you. We want to help you to take steps toward re-establishing trust and a sense of well being. Whether you are involved in the criminal justice system or not, there are people who want to help.

Victim's Rights in Colorado

Victims of crime in Colorado are guaranteed certain basic rights by the Victim Rights Act in the Constitution of Colorado [24-4.1-302(1) C.R.S.]. Below is more information on what those rights are, what crimes are covered by the Victim's Rights Act, and the role of various criminal justice agencies in insuring those rights.

Your Rights as a Victim

The following is a summary of the rights guaranteed by the Victim Rights Act (For a complete listing of your rights, please refer to Colorado Revised Statutes § 24-4.1-101 through § 24-4.1-304.)

- To be treated with fairness, respect and dignity;
- To be informed of and present for all "critical stages" of the criminal justice process;
- To be free from intimidation, harassment, or abuse, and the right to be informed about what steps can be taken if there is any intimidation or harassment by a person accused or convicted of the crime or anyone acting on the person's behalf;
- To be present and heard regarding bond reduction, continuances, acceptance of plea negotiations, case disposition, or sentencing;
- To consult with the district attorney prior to any disposition of the case or before the case goes to trial and to be informed of the final disposition of the case.
- To be informed of the status of the case and any scheduling changes or cancellations, if known in advance.
- To prepare a Victim Impact Statement and to be present and/or heard at sentencing.
- To have restitution ordered and to be informed of the right to pursue a civil judgment against the person convicted of the crime;
- To a prompt return of the victim's property when no longer needed as evidence;
- To be informed of the availability of financial assistance and community services;
- To be given appropriate employer intercession services regarding court appearances and meetings with criminal justice officials;

- To be assured that in any criminal proceeding the court, the prosecutor, and other law enforcement officials will take appropriate action to achieve a swift and fair resolution of the proceedings;
- Whenever practicable, to have a safe, secure waiting area during court proceedings;
- Upon request, to be informed when a person accused or convicted of the crime is released from custody, is paroled, escapes or absconds from probation or parole.
- Upon written request, to be informed of and heard at any reconsideration of sentence, parole hearing, or commutation of sentence;
- Upon written request, to be informed when a person convicted of a crime against the victim is placed in or transferred to a less secure correctional facility or program or is permanently or conditionally transferred or released from any state hospital;
- To be informed of any rights which the victim has pursuant to the constitution of the United States or the State of Colorado.
- To be informed of the process for enforcing compliance with the Victim Rights Act.

Additional rights and services are provided to child victims or witnesses. Law enforcement, prosecutors, and judges are encouraged to designate one or more individuals to try to assure the child and their family understand the legal proceedings and have support and assistance to deal with the emotional impact of the crime and the subsequent criminal proceedings.

Ensuring Your Rights

If, for some reason, you do not feel that you have received your rights explained above, please contact:

The Governor's Victims' Compensation and Assistance Coordinating Committee

Department of Public Safety, Division of Criminal Justice

Office for Victims' Programs

700 Kipling Street, Suite 1000

Denver, CO 80215-5865

303.239.4442

1.888.282.1080 Toll Free

<http://cdpsweb.state.co.us/ovp/vra.htm>

Abduction: Playing it Safe with your Kids

Your kids are never too young to talk about safety and stranger danger. If you are involved in a relationship that is violent, spend a few moments with your kids and pass along these tips.

Tools for young Children

- Never say they are home alone when answering the phone. Teach your child to take a message and say their parents will phone back.
- Never answer the door. Whether home alone or with another adult, a young child is no match for someone trying to gain entry into the home or abduct the child from the entryway.
- Never invite anyone into the house without the permission of a parent or other responsible party within the home, like a babysitter.
- Never go into other people's houses without letting parent's know where they are.
- Never get into anyone's car without a parent's permission.
- Never take gifts or food from strangers or anyone else without asking a parent first.
- Never play in deserted buildings or isolated areas.
- Move away from a car that pulls up beside them if they do not know the driver. Run in the opposite direction the car is driving. Remember, get away...right away.
- Say 'no' to anyone that wants them to do something you've taught them is wrong. Give your children permission to break the rules if they feel their safety is at risk.
- Tell you, school authorities or a police officer about anyone who threatens them.
- Never to keep secrets from you. Teach them to tell you if someone has asked them to keep a secret from you.
- Go to the nearest cashier if lost or separated from you in a store or mall.

- Know how to dial 911 and explain their emergency. If using a pay phone under pursuit or if detained in a strangers home...DO NOT HANG UP THE PHONE. Police can use the phone to track the child.
- Never to hide from parents in a store.
- Scream and kick if someone grabs them and tries to take them forcefully. Teach them to yell, "Help, this is not my Dad/Mom!"

Tools for Teens

- Tell you where they are at all times or leave a written or recorded message at home.
- Never hitchhike.
- Avoid shortcuts through empty parks, fields, laneways or alleys.
- Go quickly to the nearest occupied public place (malls, stores, fire stations, gas stations) and scream for help if they are being followed.
- Learn to recognize suspicious behavior and remember a description of the person or vehicle to give the police. Write the plate number in the dirt or snow if nothing else is available.
- If approached for money, jewelry or clothing give it up rather than risk injury.
- Feel that they can talk to you and call you to pick them up any time, any place.
- Never operate a car under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Never get in a car as a passenger if the driver is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Scream and kick if someone grabs them and tries to take them forcefully.

Know that all rules change when they are physically threatened.

Contact Dignity Memorial Safe School on the web for ore information.

Also, remember that you can contact the State Department and ask for a passport block if you think a parent is planning on leaving the country with your child.