



Special points of interest:

- > Trend of the month
- > C.H.O.I.C.E.S Club
- > Cyber Bullying

From the Desk of the SRO

Love Bites!— November's Trend of the Month

BIZARRE TEEN TRENDS HAVE BEEN HORRIFYING PARENTS FOR GENERATIONS, BUT HEALTH OFFICIALS ARE WARNING THAT A VAMPIRE-INSPIRED BITING FAD COULD BE DANGEROUS, NOT TO MENTION DISGUSTING. TEENAGERS OBSESSED WITH THE "TWILIGHT" VAMPIRE SAGA, OR THOSE SIMPLY FASCINATED



WITH FANGS, REPORTEDLY HAVE BEEN BITING EACH OTHER -- HARD - AND THEN LICKING OR SUCKING THE BLOOD. "THESE ARE KIDS WHO THINK THEY ARE REAL VAMPIRES," SAID DR. ORLY AVITZUR, THE MEDICAL ADVISOR TO CONSUMERS UNION, THE AGENCY THAT PUBLISHES CONSUMER REPORTS MAGAZINE. AVITZUR SAID CONVERSATIONS WITH TEENS AND SESSIONS SPENT TROLLING VAMPIRE-RELATED TEEN WEB SITES CONVINCED HER THAT THE TREND WAS TAKING HOLD. INDEED, GROUPS LIKE "I DRINK BLOOD,"

A CATEGORY AT WWW.EXPERIENCEPROJECT.COM, AND "I WANT TO BE A VAMPIRE" AT THE SITE WWW.43THINGS.COM ARE FILLED WITH APPARENT POSTS FROM YOUNG PEOPLE WITH A YEARNING FOR BLOOD. "HAVING THAT THICK, WARM COPPER-TASTING BLOOD IN MY MOUTH IS THE BEST THING I CAN THINK OF!" WROTE A TEENAGER IDENTIFIED AS "GOTHICGIRL10" THIS YEAR. "SOMETIMES MY BOYFRIEND LETS ME FEED OFF HIM. I LET HIM FEED OFF ME AS WELL." SUCH TALK ALARMS MEDICAL EXPERTS, WHO WARN ABOUT THE DANGERS OF BLOOD-BORNE DISEASES SUCH AS HEPATITIS AND HIV, AS WELL AS THE RISK OF NASTY INFECTIONS. TYPICALLY, 10 TO 15 PERCENT OF HUMAN BITE WOUNDS BECOME INFECTED. "IF YOU BREAK THE SKIN, YOUR MOUTH IS PRETTY DIRTY," SAID DR. THOMAS ABSHIRE, A PEDIATRIC BLOOD AND CANCER SPECIALIST AND SPOKESMAN FOR THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS. "THE HUMAN MOUTH FLORA IS DIRTIER THAN A DOG OR CAT'S." EQUALLY WORRISOME IS THE MOTIVE BEHIND THE ACTS, THE IDEA OF BRANDING OR OWNING

ANOTHER PERSON, THE EXPERTS SAID. "IF YOU THINK ABOUT IT, THERE IS SUCH GLAMORIZATION IN THOSE TEEN VAMPIRE MOVIES, THEY MAKE IT SEEM SO SEXY AND APPEALING AND INTRIGUING," AVITZUR SAID. "IT'S ALL MIXED UP WITH PASSION." BUT AT LEAST ONE TEEN WHO LIKES TO BITE SAYS ADULTS HAVE GOT IT ALL WRONG. MICHAEL KAPLOR, 16, OF DALLAS, SAYS HE WAS BITING HIS GIRLFRIEND INTERMITTENTLY FOR MORE THAN A YEAR BECAUSE THE INTIMACY OF IT, NOT FOR ANY GOTHIC OBSESSION. "IT'S REALLY GOTTEN A BAD RAP BECAUSE OF THIS WHOLE VAMPIRE THING," SAID KAPLOR. IN REALITY, HE SAID, A LOT OF TEENS BITE - AND LEAVE MARKS - FOR THE THRILL OF IT. "YOU FEEL IT FOR A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF TIME AFTERWARDS," HE SAID. "IT'S THE WAY YOU RECEIVE HAPPINESS." SOME PEOPLE DO DRAW BLOOD, BUT THAT'S WHERE KAPLOR DRAWS THE LINE. "KIDS DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW DANGEROUS BLOOD IS," THE HIGH-SCHOOLER SAID, "ESPECIALLY IF IT'S NOT YOUR OWN BLOOD."

C.H.O.I.C.E.S Club at the ACSSS

This month, Officer Erskine hopes to have the C.H.O.I.C.E.S club up and running at the Special Services School! CHOICES is an acronym that stands for Community, Honesty, Opportunity, Integrity, Commitment, Etiquette, Self and teaches teen age girls and boys how to be ladies and gentlemen. It teaches them life skills like

interviewing for a job, proper etiquette, proper social interaction and much more. Officer Erskine created this program as a need to address the issues kids face today due to the lack of mentorship.

Stay tuned for additional information. If you have any questions you can contact Officer Erskine from

the information at the right.

Quote of the month:

Live up to the best that is in you: Live noble lives, as you all may, in whatever condition you may find yourselves.
Henry W. Longfellow

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Cyber Bullying.... What is it?

Cyber bullying is bullying through email, instant messaging (IMing), chat room exchanges, Web site posts, or digital messages or images sent to a cellular phone or personal digital assistant (PDA) (Kowalski et al. 2008). Cyber bullying, like traditional bullying, involves an imbalance of power, aggression, and a negative action that is often repeated.

Cyber bullying has some rather unique characteristics that are different from traditional bullying:

- **Anonymity:** As bad as the "bully" on the playground may be, he or she can be readily identified and potentially avoided. On the other hand, the child who cyber bullies is often anonymous. The victim is left wondering who the cyber "bully" is, which can cause a great deal of stress.
- **Accessibility:** Most children who use traditional ways of bullying terrorize their victim at school, on the bus, or

walking to or from school. Although bullying can happen elsewhere in the community, there is usually a standard period of time during which these children have access to their victims. Children who cyber bully can wreak havoc any time of the day or night.

- **Punitive Fears:** Victims of cyber bullying often do not report it because of: (1) fear of retribution from their tormentors, and (2) fear that their computer or phone privileges will be taken away. Often, adults' responses to cyber bullying are to remove the technology from a victim - which in their eyes can be seen as punishment.

- **Bystanders:** Most traditional bullying episodes occur in the presence of other people who assume the role of bystanders or witnesses. The phenomenon of being a bystander in the cyber world is different in that they may receive and forward emails, view web pages, forward images sent to cell phones, etc. The number of bystanders in the

cyber world can reach into the millions.

Disinhibition: The anonymity afforded by the Internet can lead children to engage in behaviors that they might not do face-to-face. Ironically, it is their very anonymity that allows some individuals to bully at all.

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What are the Warning Signs of Cyber Bullying?

The warning signs of cyber bullying are similar to those for traditional bullying in terms of emotional effects; however, there are some differences. For example, a bruise or torn clothing is not expected as a sign that a child is being cyber bullied, but it is also important to keep in mind that some children who are cyber bullied may also be experiencing traditional bullying at school.

A child may be experiencing cyber bullying if he or she:

- appears sad, moody, or anxious
- avoids school
- withdraws from or shows a lack of interest in social activities
- experiences a drop in grades or decline in academic performance

- appears upset after using the computer or being online
- appears upset after viewing a text message on a cell phone

If a child shows any of these warning signs, it is important to talk with the child and investigate his or her online presence to determine whether cyber bullying is occurring and to offer help when needed



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Cyber Bullying.... What's the Law?

September 1, 2011; P.L.2010, CHAPTER 122; "Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act." Bills/A4000/3803_R1.PDF

"Harassment, intimidation or bullying" means any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents ... that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function [or] on a school bus, or off school grounds that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students, http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/2010/Bills/AL10/122_.PDF

S.B. 993, 2007: New Jersey Statutes §18A:37-14; Nothing said about the punishment other than it's up to the School District and the "electronic Communication" is added to the policy of Harassment in Schools. Examples could range from expulsion to detention; http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/2006/Bills/PL07/129_.HTM; <http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/2006/>

Next Month....

In December's News Letter, I will cover Internet Safety, Links to know. Holiday safety, Monthly Trend

If anyone has any input, questions or anything they would like to discuss in any of the news letters, email me at aerskine@acsssd.net I am looking at possibly posting an anonymous question and answer section. Who knows,

many people may have the same questions!