

FREE

# School News

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Covering the Bellflower Unified School District

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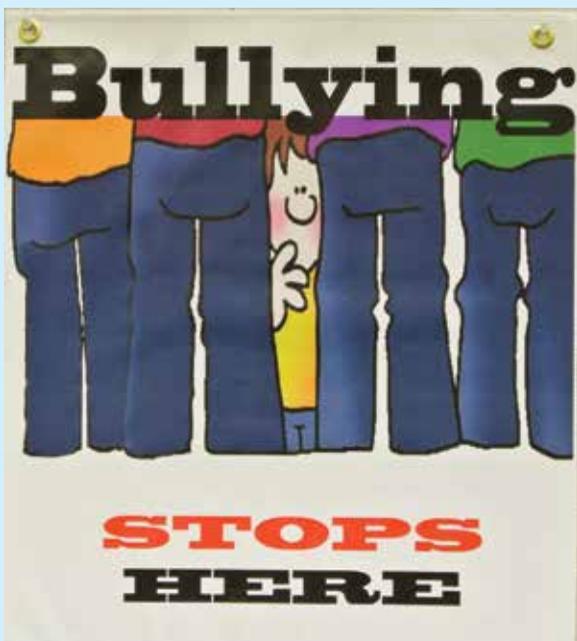
## SUPERINTENDENT



### Is Your Child Being Bullied, and If So, What Can You Do About It?

One day your child comes home from school and something seems different. Your child may be a Kindergartener, a Sixth Grader or even in High School, but he/she just looks or sounds different than the last time he/she came in that door. You ask them how school was today and they say, "Fine" and walk past you like you were a shadow. You may continue to question your child, "So Ben, anything interesting happen at school today?" "Nope."

Brian Jacobs, Ed.D.



It's clear your child does not want to talk about something, but you surmise that there must be a good reason. However, as the evening progresses you think about how your child acted when he/she came home from school and you wonder if there is something wrong. You are aware when your child is studying for a test so if he/she had flunked a test, that would be the first thing out of their mouth when he/she came through the door. "I blew it! I got a D- on my History test!" ...And as a parent we comfort them. If this pattern of behavior were to continue, it could be an early sign that your child may be having problems with bullying in school.

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## Bullying Stops Here!

By Dina Hernandez, Principal Thomas Jefferson Elementary

Safety is a priority at Thomas Jefferson Elementary School. We are constantly working together to create awareness and empower our students to act against bullying.

There are several things we do at Jefferson to ensure that our students have the necessary lifelong skills they will need to stand up for themselves, build good character, and become peace builders. Our guidance intern, Ms. Dadlani, heads our Schoolwide Character Counts Program that focuses on trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. In collaboration with our community, we also have programs such as STAR (Success through Awareness and Resistance), which includes a deputy from Los Angeles County working closely with staff and students to discuss topics that include bullying. We also have the Project LEAD (Legal Enrichment and Decision Making) program, which is a law-related



Students "Drummin' for Peace" interactive assembly presentation.

education program. In addition this year, Thomas Jefferson had the "Drummin' for Peace" presentation, an interactive assembly that included small-group activities that provided students the opportunity to learn about peace building and how to stand up against bullying.

At Thomas Jefferson, bullying stops here!

## BOARD OF EDUCATION



Laura Sanchez-Ramirez, President

### BUSD: A Safe and Great Place to Learn

I am honored to serve all three of our communities as a Board Member, and especially now as the newly elected president for 2013. I would like to share some things we are very proud of as a school district.

As you may or may not know, the Bellflower Unified School District (BUSD) currently serves a student population of just under 13,000 K-12 students, within an eight-square-mile area in southeast Los Angeles County. It includes most of Bellflower, a large portion of Lakewood, and a small portion of Cerritos. Several of our schools have been recognized as California Distinguished Schools, three have been honored as National Blue Ribbon Schools, and two were acknowledged as Title I Achievement Schools. Somerset Continuation High School has recently

received its fifth commendation as a California Model Continuation High School. The district also includes an alternative education program and a new Home Education/Independent Study Program, while also serving pre-school students in Head Start.

BUSD continues to offer quality programs and services within safe and clean facilities. It is because of the efforts of the certificated and classified staff that our classrooms are engaging and in well-kept condition for our students to enter each and every day. Many of the school facilities have been in need of upgrades and improvements to keep pace with the "Standard of Excellence." With the passage of Measure BB in November, I along with the Governing Board look forward to making such improvements that provide an even higher quality of school learning environment for all of our children. Thank you for your support in

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**Kay Coop**

Founder / Publisher



In this issue Superintendent Dr. Jacobs addresses the serious topic of bullying. I was never bullied until I was an adult in business. The feeling of being bullied is sickening, discouraging, depressing and deplorable. As an adult you know that the person doing the bullying is really the one to be pitied as they are in need of help; however, even knowing that it is very difficult to not feel helpless. I can't imagine how a child must feel being bullied and it is important to know where to turn for help. In the BUSD, Bullying Stops Here!

Our next issue is May 1. Thank you for reading *School News*.

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[www.schoolnewsrollcall.com](http://www.schoolnewsrollcall.com)

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For fun tips on how to be bike safe, visit us at [MillerChildrens.org/kohls-cares](http://MillerChildrens.org/kohls-cares)



[MillerChildrens.org/kohls-cares](http://MillerChildrens.org/kohls-cares)

# Intensive Learning Center

4718 E. Michelson St., Lakewood, CA 90712 • 562/804-6513 • www.busd.k12.ca.us/ilc.htm



**Isel Taylor**  
Principal

## The Six Pillars of Character

At the Intensive Learning Center, we pride ourselves in providing a physical learning environment and school climate that are student centered, safe and orderly, and that foster attitudes and behaviors that are respectful and supportive. ILC students strive to exemplify the six pillars of the Character Counts Program.

The Character Counts Program focuses on reinforcing the values of character. Character is what defines us as a people. Character Counts incorporates six character values that are referred to as the Six Pillars of Character. The character pillars include the following:

**Trustworthiness:** Be honest, be reliable, do what you say you'll do, have the courage to do the right thing.

**Respect:** Treat others with respect; follow the Golden Rule, be tolerant of differences, use good manners, be considerate of the feelings of others.

**Responsibility:** Persevere—Keep on trying! Always do your best, use self-control, be self-disciplined, think before you act—consider the consequences and be accountable for your choices.

**Fairness:** Play by the rules, take turns and share, be open-minded, listen to others.

**Caring:** Be kind, be compassionate and show you care, express gratitude, forgive others, to help those in need.



**Citizenship:** Do your share to make your classroom, school and community better; cooperate; get involved in community affairs; be a good neighbor; obey laws and rules; respect authority; protect the environment.

To build character in these six areas, we must model positive behaviors and attitudes at all times, including at school and at home. Each month, we focus on a specific character pillar, and at our monthly Student of the Month award assemblies, we honor students who have demonstrated themselves to be role models as they exemplify the month's character pillar.

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# Bellflower Alternative Education Center

16703 S. Clark Ave., Bellflower, CA 90706 • 562/866-9011

## Bullying

Robert Fulghum, author of *All I Ever Really Needed to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*, recalled his first year in school and things he had learned. He wrote, "Share everything. Play fair. Don't hit people. Put things back where you found them. Clean up your own mess. Don't take things that aren't yours. Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody. Live a balanced life. Follow the Golden Rule. Love and be aware of wonder. Think and do your best to learn, play and work, think of what a better world it would be...when we go out into the world and hold hands and stick together."

At the Bellflower Alternative Education (BAE) Center, we understand that these values are true no matter the grade level. Instilling good moral character—trustworthiness, cooperation, responsibility, caring, honesty, respect, dependability and patience—complements our school's mission of high expectations for student performance and behavior. This approach creates a school culture in which bullying is not accepted and not tolerated. Bullying, or even standing by idly while it happens, is just not something a person of character does. Insults, name calling, relentless teasing and malicious gossip often inflict deep and enduring pain. It's not only the prevalence of bullying and victimization that's troublesome—the Internet has intensified the injury. What's posted on the Internet is permanent, and it spreads like a virus—there is no refuge.

## Laying Their Own Foundation

The school has made a concerted effort to raise awareness of bullying. Our students understand that they cannot benefit fully from an educational program unless they attend school regularly in a school environment that is free from physical and psychological harm. They understand the forms of bullying—physical, verbal and psychological—and the harm it causes. They understand that before they click a mean text message, send an e-mail, or post on social networking sites that they must think of the short- and long-term effects. More importantly, they understand that the social experience of inclusiveness at school will become the foundation for them to assume future social roles and responsibilities in life.

Most students will learn and behave appropriately in almost any school environment. Other students, however, require some level of support to help them realize high academic and behavioral standards. The BAE Center provides individualized attention to those students with behavioral issues. Students benefit from the learning-support services that include a guidance intern and school psychologist, paraprofessionals and collaborative services that work with at-risk youth to enable them to learn prosocial skills, receive help with anger management, and gain the knowledge of how to resolve conflicts with whom they interact with at school.

As Robert Fulghum said about the things he learned in kindergarten in the excerpt above, the world would be a better place when we are all kind and respectful of others.

# Instructional Personnel & Programs

16703 S. Clark Ave., Bellflower, CA 90706 • 562/886-9011 • www.busd.k12.ca.us



**Lisa Azevedo**  
Assistant  
Superintendent

## Taking a Stand Against Bullying

The Bellflower Unified School District's Instructional Personnel and Programs Division supports school sites in educating students within a safe, supportive learning environment. Bullying is unacceptable and should never be part of a student's school experience. At the elementary level, various programs provide education regarding bullying, such as Character Counts and Peace Builders. The elementary choral music program designed a musical piece this past year entitled "Agents of Change," which addressed the issue of bullying.

Elementary choral music staff members Ronn Williams and Kathy Smith noticed teachers were working hard to help students understand and deal with bullying issues at each site. Both Ronn and Kathy attended a summer workshop for choral music teachers and came across a small musical piece on the topic of bullying. It provided a great start for them to develop a musical for our students that tackled the issue of bullying in an appropriate and entertaining way. The challenge for them was to create a script that showed students how to deal with bullying without giving attention and glory to the bully characters in the play. They worked together to find the right music and wrote a meaningful, sensitive script. Kathy worked on appropriate costuming and created sets for a bully-intervention scene.

Every elementary site viewed the musical performance. At the conclusion, each audience member received a small card. The card provided instructions reminding students what to do if they or someone else is being bullied. We look forward to this year's elementary spring musical, which will focus on the theme of self worth.

At the middle school level, site counseling staff members present anti-bullying material to students. Students discuss the various types of bullying, such as physical, verbal, social, emotional, or cyber bullying. Lessons provide focus on recognizing the behavior of a bully, understanding why people bully, and the effect bullying has on others. Counselors provide students with suggestions regarding what they should do if being bullied, such as distract the bully, stay calm, walk away, recruit a friend, speak with an adult, or assert yourself. Students are also reminded of school consequences for bullying.

High school classes focus much of their anti-bullying message on cyber-bullying. The Internet has drastically changed the way that students interact with the world around them. They have immediate access to knowledge, tools, and people through texting, Facebook, e-mail, Google, and other social networking and Web-based media. Unfortunately, inappropriate use of technology has also provided another avenue for bullying. Teachers, counselors, and administrators warn students that cyber-bullying, threats, and the use of obscenity are unacceptable behaviors that have negative consequences.

School staffs at all of our sites remind students that growing up is about making good choices and understanding that actions have consequences. A decision to bully or to allow oneself to be bullied is a poor choice that may lead to severe immediate and long-term consequences. In addition, staff members are proactive and vigilantly monitor students' behaviors in order to minimize bully incidents.



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# Educational Services

16703 S. Clark Ave., Bellflower, CA 90706 • 562/886-9011 • www.bUSD.k12.ca.us



**Joe Perry**  
Assistant  
Superintendent

## Bullying Stops Here!

School is more than the impact of the academic instruction that occurs in the classroom. Our students' education also depends on an environment that supports learning. The Bellflower Unified School District is committed to a safe and civil educational environment for all students that is free from harassment, intimidation or bullying. The Board of Education policy defines harassment, intimidation, or bullying as "any intentionally written message, including those that are electronically transmitted, a verbal, or physical act, including but not limited to one shown to be motivated by race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, including gender expression or identity, mental or physical disability, or other distinguishing characteristics, when the act:

- Physically harms a student or damages the student's property; or
- Has the affect of substantially interfering with a student's education; or
- Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening environment; or
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school."

The Bellflower Unified School District will not tolerate behavior that infringes on the safety of any student and expects immediate response of incidents of bullying. All schools, therefore, have adopted a Student Code of Conduct to be followed by every student while he or she is on school grounds, when traveling to and from school, or at a school-sponsored activity whether on or off campus. Students, who bully, in any form, are in violation of district policy and are subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

The slogan that "Bullying Stops Here!" sends a clear message that it is everyone's personal responsibility to intercede in bullying whether a person is a target of bullying or an innocent bystander. To promote mutual respect among all students, schools have developed a comprehensive Safe School Plan that identifies appropriate strategies and programs that will prevent bullying, respond to destructive behaviors, and support and protect the victim. Some of these include:

- All schools have raised awareness and communicate the no-bullying policy.
- The faculty and staff supervise on the playground and recess, monitor at snack and lunch periods, and conduct schoolwide assemblies to discuss the issue.
- Through classroom instruction, teachers connect learning to social skill development. Teachers discuss bullying and help students understand its harm.
- Students can report bully/victim incidents to the principal or other site administrators, classroom teachers, and support staff. The school will investigate and take appropriate actions.
- Staff recognizes, prevents, and effectively intervenes with bullies. Parent meetings are held to ensure that the bullying stops.

At Bellflower Unified School District there is no greater concern, no deeper commitment, nor any higher interest from the governing board and all educational professionals – administrators, teachers, counselors, and support staff - than providing a strong emphasis on the well being of all students, that they can achieve, and that their schools are safe.

For further information on bullying protocols/policies visit the Bellflower Unified School District's website at [www.bUSD.k12.ca.us](http://www.bUSD.k12.ca.us)

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# Albert Baxter *Elementary*

14929 S. Cerritos Ave., Bellflower, CA 90706 • 562/531-1602 • www.bUSD.k12.ca.us/baxter.htm



**Sue Curtiss**  
Principal

## People of Character

At Albert Baxter Elementary School, students learn character traits through Character Counts, a program that teaches students the habits and attitudes for successful living. Throughout the school year, students are taught the Six Pillars of Character: respect, trustworthiness, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship.

One character trait is taught per month at flag salute by our student council representatives. The students participate in role plays to demonstrate how to stop bullying and be a person of character. At lunch time, students are able to complete fun, character-building activities introduced by student leaders. Students are recognized each month for displaying that month's trait and their names are displayed on the pillar in the front office for everyone to see.



At our school, everyone reinforces the universal values we all cherish and which we hope our children will demonstrate when we are not around. Because of these efforts we are well on our way to being a bully-free and respectful school zone.

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# Stephen Foster *Elementary*

5223 E. Bigelow St., Lakewood, CA 90712 • 562/804-6518 • www.busd.k12.ca.us/foster.htm



**Deirdre Reyes**  
Principal

## Student Safety is a Team Effort

Student welfare and safety is of the highest priority at Stephen Foster. To help in this effort, a group of upper-grade students have recently been trained as conflict mediators.

These conflict mediators are easily identified by their bright red "Lightning Bolt" T-shirts and clipboards, and can be seen carrying out their duties every day. They have been trained to help their peers with any personal conflicts that might be occurring in their lives. They also make sure that everyone is being treated with respect, and are living by the "pillars" of character.

This program has been extremely successful. Our students feel very comfortable working with these helpful conflict mediators to peacefully solve problems and make sure that our playground is a happy and safe place.

Each month we focus on one of the pillars of character. Responsibility, trustworthiness, respect, fairness, caring and good citizenship are the main traits that are emphasized. We reinforce them daily by recognizing students at flag salute. The Student Council members also share information about each character trait with the student body.



In keeping with the BUSD anti-bullying policy, Foster hosted an assembly called "The Power of One" at the beginning of the school year. This was a series of skits that portrayed what bullying is and what can be done about it. After the assembly, the entire student body pledged to stand up to bullying and let an adult know when they are being bullied or witness any bullying.

At Foster, we are committed to the safety of our students. We are very proud that our campus is a happy and bully-free zone.

# Thomas Jefferson *Elementary*

10027 Rose St., Bellflower, CA 90706 • 562/804-6521 • www.busd.k12.ca.us/jefferson.htm



**Dina Hernandez**  
Principal

**Bullying Stops Here!**  
(Please see our article on the front page)

# Esther Lindstrom *Elementary*

5900 N. Canehill Ave., Lakewood, CA 90713 • 562/804-6525 • www.busd.k12.ca.us/lindstrom.htm



**Deborah Apple**  
Principal

## No More Bullies

Some people think that bullying is just a part of growing up. It's not. Bullying isn't harmless and it isn't just "kids being kids."

Being the victim of bullying has serious consequences. And it is something that won't go away if we tell our children just ignore it. Instead, we must teach them how to respond to bullying, whether they are the victim of it or just a bystander who is watching someone else being bullied.

At Lindstrom we work hard every day to provide a safe environment where our students can learn. When children feel safe they can grow emotionally as well as academically. All year we have been urging our students and staff members to take a stand. Through the use of Character Counts and various presentations on role playing we are now empowering everyone with the skills they need to deal with bullies.



Our guidance intern also recently provided a staff in-service on what we can do to combat bullying on campus. The teachers now use these tools to talk to their students about how to report bullying as well as how to work together to prevent it.

Together we can make a difference. No more bullies!

# Ernie Pyle *Elementary*

14500 S. Woodruff Ave., Bellflower, CA 90706 • 562/804-6528 • www.busd.k12.ca.us/pyle.htm



**Lisa Paioni**  
Principal

## A School with Character!

Antibullying efforts at Ernie Pyle begin with a focus on building strong positive character traits with our students.

Each month at Ernie Pyle, classroom teachers focus lessons and discussions on one of the pillars of character: responsibility, caring, respect, fairness, citizenship and trustworthiness. Students who demonstrate aspects of the focus trait are considered for selection as Student of the Month.

Our focus on character and bullying prevention is supported through our guidance intern, who works individually or in groups, with students who are experiencing issues related



**Student Council performed a skit on fairness and the importance of speaking up against bullying behavior.**

to bullying either as the target of bullying behavior or as the bully. Members of our student council work with the guidance intern to write and present a skit that illustrates how the month's character trait is related to bullying prevention.

At Ernie Pyle, we know that helping our students develop positive, prosocial behaviors is essential to fulfilling our mission to be a premier learning community that builds bright futures.

# Bellflower *Middle School / High School*

15301 McNab Ave., Bellflower, CA 90706 • 562/920-1801 • [www.busd.k12.ca.us/bellflower-high.htm](http://www.busd.k12.ca.us/bellflower-high.htm)



**Michael Lundgren**  
Principal

## A Safe Learning Environment

Bellflower Middle/High School is a safe and nurturing place for all of our students, teachers, counselors and administrators. We are dedicated to making sure that our school remains a safe learning environment.

Because of this, we take bullying and harassment issues very seriously. We are always making an effort to reduce and prevent incidents of bullying between students. We also intervene with and correct behavior that is determined to be in violation of state, district and school policies.

Our middle school counselors recently provided an in-service entitled, “Be a Buddy, Not a Bully.” This is where our students learned about what bullying is as well as tips and strategies on how to deal with it.

The counselors gave the same in-service to our parents during their January Parent Connection meeting. During this event the parents were also educated about the characteristics of bullying as well as its consequences and signs.

Bellflower Middle/High School seeks to enlist the support and cooperation of each parent in our school community. Together we can continue to make our school a safe learning environment.



# Ramona *Elementary*

9351 Laurel St., Bellflower, CA 90706 • 562/804-6532 • [www.busd.k12.ca.us/ramona.htm](http://www.busd.k12.ca.us/ramona.htm)



**Bonnie Carter**  
Principal

## Saying No to Bullying

When you walk the main hall of Ramona Elementary you also walk past colorful poles that are labeled with all of the “Character Counts” positive character traits: respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, fairness, caring and citizenship. These values are infused into every part of the school day to help our students make good choices and learn how to get along with each other.

Each morning our students and teachers also recite the Ramona pledge. This sets the tone for the rest of the school day. It reminds everyone that they should rely on positive character traits whenever they make decisions.

Our teachers also incorporate character education into their lessons. For instance, our students study the various heroes in history that embody these positive character traits. The students are also supported at recess and lunch by a full-time guidance counselor who helps them solve problems and build friendships.

The Ramona Student Council and PTA also encourage our students to say “No!” to bullying by providing character education assemblies and poster and writing contests. The staff at Ramona believes that if our students learn how to make decisions based on positive values then they will be less likely to bully others, and are more likely to be successful in the future.



# Somerset *High School*

9242 E. Laurel St., Bellflower, CA 90706 • 562/804-6548 • [www.busd.k12.ca.us/somerset-high.htm](http://www.busd.k12.ca.us/somerset-high.htm)



**Patrick Dixon**  
Principal

## Supporting a Positive Campus Environment

Somerset High School takes great pride in the relationships we build between students and staff, and we have policies and practices in place to ensure that students feel safe and connected to the school. This process begins with a parent-and-student-enrollment meeting led by the principal, who gives an overview of the school, program requirements, schedule and student expectations as they transition into Somerset. The topic of bullying is highlighted, and specific education code related to bullying, harassment and discrimination is discussed along with procedures for reporting and the consequences associated with any violation of the education code and board policy.

The parents and students are introduced to the Orientation class. Its purpose is to build relationships and embrace the uniqueness and individuality of all students at the school. During the four-week Orientation class, students participate in lessons on prejudice, acceptance and developing personal character. They also learn strategies to use in dealing with peer pressure in their personal lives and social situations relating to alcohol, drugs, tobacco and violence. Somerset also has community-based organizations that work with individual and specific groups of students, focusing on gang prevention and gender-specific topics such as females and dating.

Somerset has adopted the Three Cs: Communicators, Citizens and Critical Thinkers as the schoolwide learning outcomes and strives to develop all students into positive and productive citizens. These components of the school are exemplified with the student leaders serving in student council and with the Somerset instructional aides assisting in classrooms and on the playground at Ramona Elementary School. Graduates of Somerset High School will have the foundation of the Three Cs by being effective communicators, responsible citizens and critical thinkers.

# Mayfair *Middle School / High School*

6000 N. Woodruff Ave., Lakewood, CA 90713 • 562/925-9981 • [www.busd.k12.ca.us/mayfair-high.htm](http://www.busd.k12.ca.us/mayfair-high.htm)



**Matt Eeles**  
Principal

## Bullying Stops Here!

Bullying is and has been an area of concern at Mayfair Middle/High School for many years, and this year was no different. The anti-bullying message was never as strong at Mayfair as it was in October, National Bullying Prevention Awareness Month.

Our middle school counselors utilized more than a week giving class presentations to educate our students about bullying. Students learned to identify behaviors associated with bullying and learned that they can go to any adult staff member on campus and report confidentially any form of bullying they see. Our staff and students were encouraged to wear their blue anti-bullying shirts October 1 and every Monday in October. Staff and students can still be seen rocking these shirts to show their opposition to bullying on spirit Fridays.

Efforts like these and many other student and staff activities and classroom lessons reinforce the district mantra of "Bullying Stops Here!"



Staff and students taking time to stop for a photo to show their support of anti-bullying.

# Washington *Elementary*

9725 Jefferson St., Bellflower, CA 90706 • 562/804-6535 • [www.busd.k12.ca.us/washington.htm](http://www.busd.k12.ca.us/washington.htm)



**Sulema Holguin**  
Principal

## Being Proactive About Bullying

By Sulema Holguin, Principal  
and Priscilla Miranda-Sanchez, Guidance Intern

Here at Washington Elementary School, we work together to ensure our school climate is a safe, conducive learning space for everyone. We have taken numerous steps to be preventative in our efforts to reduce bullying on campus.

Currently we are running four Second Step counseling groups to work with students who may show signs of social difficulties. Each group is carefully selected, and the material is developmentally appropriate for their age; but most importantly it is a fun, engaging, safe space that relies heavily on positive reinforcement to teach valuable social skills so students become empathetic, socially-responsible individuals.



Our school also provides in class presentations delivered by the principal and guidance intern to educate students on the topic of bullying. We prioritize teaching our students what bullying is and what bullying is not. In addition, we collect student data to determine where our efforts should be focused.

Student mediations are conducted to provide a safe place where individuals can bring up their concerns or difficulties they are having with others on campus. The purpose is to allow students to share their perspectives and develop a solution-focused plan of action to move forward. A student mediation contract is drafted and signed by each party as a symbol of each individual's efforts to move towards improving the relationship.

Finally, our sixth-grade student body, composed of 115 students, participated in a six-week Second Step program. Students learned about communication, empathy, and friends versus allies. This program was delivered to ensure sixth-grade students had the opportunity to learn and reflect about their roles as socially responsible student leaders.

Because of these efforts, and the efforts of all of the teachers at Washington, our campus provides the comfort of safety and concern for all.

# Contest!!

Dr. Seuss' hat is hidden somewhere in this publication.

When you find it, email the **page number** to:

[Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com](mailto:Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com)

(Please put Bellflower in the subject line)



Your entry must be received by April 15, 2013.

From the correct entries, we will draw a winner to receive a \$20 gift certificate redeemable at Barnes and Noble.

**Congratulations Shannon Rodriguez**  
winner of our January Contest

## Craig Williams *Elementary*

6144 Clark Ave., Lakewood, CA 90712 • 562/804-6540 • www.busd.k12.ca.us/williams.htm



**Keisha Sawyer**  
Principal

### Character Education is a Priority

A key component in the mission at Craig Williams School is to “foster positive character traits and encourage students to be productive citizens, lifelong learners, and to contribute positively to the community and global society.” We know that ensuring that students are becoming productive citizens requires instruction and guidance. Character education receives the same priority as any academic subject at our school. Through curriculum-embedded strategies and various student activities throughout the year, we bring action to the vision we have for our students and our school.

Our primary source of character education at Craig Williams is our schoolwide PeaceBuilder program that is ingrained in the culture of our school. Each morning, staff, students and parents affirming their commitment to be peaceful by praising people, giving up put-downs, noticing and speaking up about hurts we have caused, and making our wrongs right. To enhance our program this year, we added an instructional component in which teachers are using lessons to give direct instruction in character development by using examples from real life and in literature.

As an extension of our PeaceBuilder program, we developed activities to take a strong stand against bullying. We designate a week as No Bullying Week. Students pledge to not be bullies. They learn strategies for resisting bullies to make our school a “No-Bully Zone.” Staff, students and parents get involved to make sure that we have a Bully-Free School.

We are all committed to giving students the tools they need to be ambassadors of peace for themselves and others. We consistently encourage them to ask the question, what would a Peace Builder do?

Each day, we work to make sure that students can answer that question. Not just for today, but for a lifetime.

## Alana’s Book Review

### Cherry the Cake Fairy



**Alana F.**

*Cherry the Cake Fairy* by Daisy Meadows is a book about two best friends, Kirsty and Rachel, who go on many fairy adventures together. In this book, the evil Jack Frost is planning to have his own party, but is banned from doing magic as a punishment for his previous mischief with the Weather fairies. He sends his goblins to go ruin parties so that the fairies will show up to fix them. Once the

fairy arrives, the goblin plans to steal her bag of magic fairy dust. The girls find out about what Jack Frost is trying to do when a goblin ruins Kirsty’s birthday cake twice. Unless Kirsty and Rachel stop the goblins, the fairies will have no magic left to create the king & queen’s 1000th anniversary celebration!

I would rate this as a five star book because there’s a lot of action, and a perfect solution for Kirsty’s cake.



Alana F. is a student at Intensive Learning Center. Alana is our newest syndicated columnist and will begin by reviewing the Daisy Meadows Series. She will be rating the books on a scale of 1–5.

## Frank Woodruff *Elementary*

15332 S. Eucalyptus Ave., Bellflower, CA 90706 • 562/804-6545 • www.busd.k12.ca.us/woodruff.htm



**Beverly Swanson**  
Principal

### Beating Bullying

Thanks to our Special Day Class (SDC) teacher, Cindy Weeks, and our guidance intern, Bonnie Choi, Woodruff Elementary School has focused on anti-bullying behavior and making our school a safe place for all students.

Mrs. Weeks tours classes with an anti-bullying Power Point presentation. It focuses on what a bully is, discussion of how students have been bullied, and bystander behavior when observing bullying. Mrs. Weeks has a school-age picture of herself and explains how she was bullied as a child. As she says each negative comment, she tears away a piece of the picture.

When Mrs. Weeks has just a fraction of the picture left she asks, “Do you want the responsibility for changing who a person was meant to be in this world?” This has had a huge impact on our students. A follow-up activity has students wrinkle a paper doll and then attempt to smooth out the wrinkles. Each wrinkle represents a harsh word or phrase. Students then decorate the paper doll at home and write an anti-bullying poem.

If students have a specific issue with bullying, they meet with the guidance intern. Miss Choi helps students see one another’s perspectives and “walk in the other person’s shoes.” She also assists students with conflict mediation and making better choices. The concept of following the “Golden Rule” helps teach empathy and the importance of being kind to one another.

## Las Flores *Educational Center*

10039 E. Palm St., Bellflower, CA 90706 • 562/804-6565 • www.busd.k12.ca.us/homeEducation.htm



**Tamara Zylla**  
Program  
Administrator

### Home Education Independent Study Academy

Students who are enrolled at Las Flores Educational Center can rest assured that they will not be bullied! As part of this year’s Comprehensive School Safety Plan, our students have embarked on a journey to learn more about how to collaboratively ensure that their school climate is one that promotes fairness and respect and vehemently opposes harassment of any kind.

The journey began with the implementation of a character-development program through which students learn about a variety of positive character traits. Each month, a new trait is spotlighted, and students are asked to create a project that demonstrates an understanding of the attribute as part of their required monthly assignments and goals. In addition, two students every week who are known to exemplify the trait of the month are selected as Students of the Week. These students are considered to be role models to help others learn to exhibit such behaviors. Students with strong character are those who will not allow themselves or others to be victims of bullying.

Students also had an assembly that enabled them to further their understanding of how to prevent bullying. The presentation, titled “Be a Buddy, Not a Bully,” was conducted by Carla Calderon, a counselor from Bellflower Middle School. It provided students with a definition of bullying as well as various examples of it. The presentation also taught students a multitude of things to do if they personally witness or experience bullying. During the assembly, students were able to express their feelings about bullying, view cartoons on the topic, and role-play to better help themselves address any situations of harassment in the future.

As the students of Las Flores Home Education Independent Study Academy continue to delve into this topic over the course of the year, they will most assuredly become positive role-models in society who strongly promote an antibullying atmosphere.



Brian Jacobs, Ed.D.

Here are some potential signs to be aware of that could relate to some form of bullying.

**1. Your child may refuse to talk about what's wrong**

Why wouldn't your child tell you they are being bullied in school?

There are at least four reasons why your child may not talk.

- Fear of retaliation – Your child has been threatened in some way
- Your child believes they are at fault – They believe that they deserve to be bullied
- Your child doesn't believe adults will listen, understand, do anything, or can't do anything about the bullying
- Your child did talk to you or someone at school about the bullying – Unfortunately, it might not have been taken seriously – “Oh Ben, that's just part of growing up. You can handle it.”

**2. Your child may be frightened of walking to and from school - Your child may change their usual route**

If your child never complained about walking to school and never deviated from their usual route, something is causing that concern. It's okay to ask your child why they are afraid. They may not tell you what is really going on during that walk to school but at least they will know that you are concerned.

What to do? If you have some friends that live in some of the houses along the route, why not ask them a favor, to watch and see if anything is happening to your child along the path to the school and report back to you. It is human nature for people to want to help if they can.

**3. Your child may not want to go on the school bus or may ask someone to drive them to school**

Ask your child if there is a reason they don't like riding the bus anymore. If they tell you that someone is bothering them on the bus then agree to drive them to school until the problem is resolved. What to do? Call the school administrator to discuss the concern. Remember this – bullies bully because they can and because they can get away with it. When the bully is caught and given consequences, then it will be ok to put your child back on the bus.

**4. Your child may be unwilling to go to school (or become 'school phobic')**

Bullying might be one of the reasons your child might be unwilling to go to school. Be aware that your child might have had any number of bad experiences that might have caused a “school phobia” to develop. Keep asking the question, “why” and don't let your child off the hook with avoidance answers.

**5. Your child may feel ill in the mornings**

The first determination you will need to make as a parent is whether your child is emotionally sick or physically sick. Both are real. Both can be damaging. Ask your child, again, if something is going on at school that you need to know about. Sometimes, in a weak moment, this is the time a child will talk. Be calm and listen. If bullying is the cause, then be sure to discuss the concerns and make time to meet with the proper school personnel.

**6. Your child may do poorly in their school work**

If your child has had no problems in the past and then suddenly begins to do poorly, some specific problems are not being resolved. It is our duty as parents to find out what is going on in your child's life. Bullying could be one problem to consider. Has your child been on medication? Was there a death in the family? If bullying is the problem and not solved, in the emotional long run, your child could experience some negative academic effects such as truancy, decreased class participation, poor concentration and dropping out of school early. Imagine how stressful it is for a child who is abused by his/her peers every day and on top of that, cannot keep up or perform well in their classes. Kids just simply give up and choose the less stressful road.

**7. Your child may come home regularly with clothes or books destroyed**

This is a sure sign that bullying is going on at school. Tell your child that if they will not tell you what is going on you are going to call their teachers,

administrators, friends and all your neighbors to find out if anyone knows, or has seen anything. They may decide to talk rather than have you “investigate” what happened.

**8. Your child may come home seemingly starving (bully is taking or extorting lunch money, or even the sack lunch)**

Bullies love to exert power over others. Bullying is always about power and control. Taking away something from their victim is part of exerting power. Bullies won't see it as stealing, but part of the control they want to take on their victim. What to do? An easy way to solve this problem is to take the lunch money into the school office yourself and ask how you might be able to pay for lunches a month ahead of time.

**9. Your child may have their possessions go missing, ask for money or start stealing (to pay the bully)**

If this is happening, have a sit-down, eye-to-eyeball talk with your child until the whole truth comes out. Do not delay or let your parenting responsibilities relax. What you do here can make the difference between a child who grows up with strong moral and social values or one who may go into the juvenile system all because they are being extorted themselves.

**10. Your child may become withdrawn, start stammering, lack confidence, become distressed and anxious**

Some children and young adults will turn their anger (for being bullied) inside and become withdrawn, distressed and anxious about everything, even the smallest of things. Becoming withdrawn, lack of confidence, becoming distressed and anxious are all possible signs of depression.

**11. Your child may stop eating – or eat too much**

If your child is being bullied and has a (real or perceived) weight problem, the bully is targeting your child because of that weight problem or because they know which buttons to press to upset your child. Your child may react in several different ways:

- Eat like there's no tomorrow because food is the only comfort they are getting
- Stop eating in public – or pick at food and pretend to eat
- Stop eating in public but overindulge when alone
- Stop eating to lose weight, becoming bulimic or anorexic

All of these are dysfunctional eating behaviors and some, like bulimia and anorexic disorders can cause some long-term health problems.

**12. Your child may cry themselves to sleep**

No one cries himself or herself to sleep as a normal part of sleep pattern. There is something wrong and it needs to be dealt with. If your child will not talk about what is going on in school then make an appointment with your school principal or your health care professional.

**13. Your child may have nightmares**

Nightmares are not a normal part of sleep behaviors. Again, there is something wrong and it needs to be brought to the forefront. Ask your child about their dream and surmise if your child is feeling unsafe as a part of their nightmare. Common “unsafe” dreams might encompass “chasing,” “running away,” or even “dying” nightmare/episodes. Sometimes a child's problem with sleep patterns, such as waking up at all hours of the night and noting the time, can create anxiety and show distress about the upcoming day's events.

**14. Your child may have unexplained bruises, cuts, scratches**

Your child might have all kinds of excuses for these unexplained bruises, cuts, and scratches, but again, sit down and have a heart-to-heart about what is truly going on. If your child is being harassed in school, this needs to be reported to school officials and possibly the police. The police may or may not do anything but what you want is a written record made and a copy of the report. Then send a copy of that report to your principal for their records. That puts your administrator on notice that your child is potentially being bullied at school.

**15. Your child may become aggressive and unreasonable – out of character**

As a parent, you have a responsibility to create a safe environment in your

home. All members of the family must feel safe. If your child begins to bully or hit/assault other family members, including you (father or mother), have a sit-down talk with your child about why he/she is acting this way. Do not put it off, delay or let your parenting responsibilities relax. What you do here can make the difference between a child who grows up with strong moral and social values or one who may go into the juvenile system all because they are being bullied at school themselves. Becoming aggressive, unreasonable and out of character can be signs of depression, an even bigger reason to get your child the help they might need.

**16. Your child may attempt or threaten suicide**

If your child talks about suicide, you have some real issues that must be solved immediately. The cry for help must not go unanswered. If your child feels that the bullying is serious enough to end his/her life, you must take immediate action. If you believe your child's attempt was meant to be a cry for help and not a suicide, (and its risky trying to decide) then make an immediate appointment with a professional health care provider or therapist.

In closing, it is important to not be embarrassed about talking with others about what your child is going through. The Bellflower Unified School District has many programs and staff to support you through a situation like bullying. As you read this month's special School News, you will see just how each of the schools have in place school-wide anti bullying programs, as well as character education to offset the aspects of bullying. Just make sure to take the time and listen to your child when they tell you what is going on in school. Then put your heads and hearts together to come up with solutions that will make school a great place to be and a safe place to learn.

**BOARD OF EDUCATION • From Page 1**



**Laura Sanchez-Ramirez**  
President

passing such a valuable bond measure.

The clean and attractive appearance of our campuses and the safety of our students continue to be top priorities. Each of our schools has a comprehensive Safe School Plan that is updated annually, anti-bullying themes, and character education programs. Each of these creates and sustains a positive and safe learning environment conducive to excellence.

The Board of Education consistently enforces a zero-tolerance policy for drugs and weapons. With Content Standards at every grade level, a strong curriculum, and textbooks for every student, we are teaching fundamentals that will empower students to become active, lifelong learners. We provide opportunities for support services for students at risk to further enable them to become informed, productive, independent, and contributing citizens in today's diverse society.

The Board of Education is committed to maintaining these high-quality programs and beautiful facilities while continuing to keep a balanced budget. We are continually looking for ways to strengthen our services and support programs in order to improve student learning.

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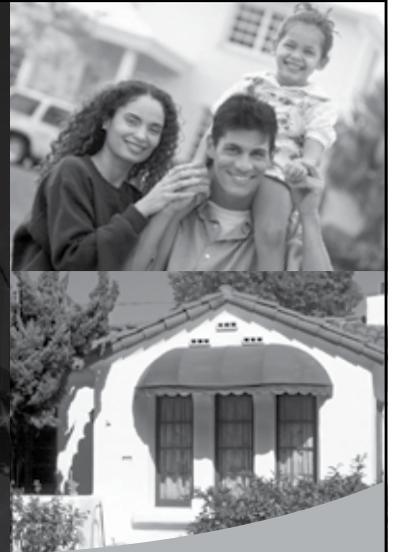


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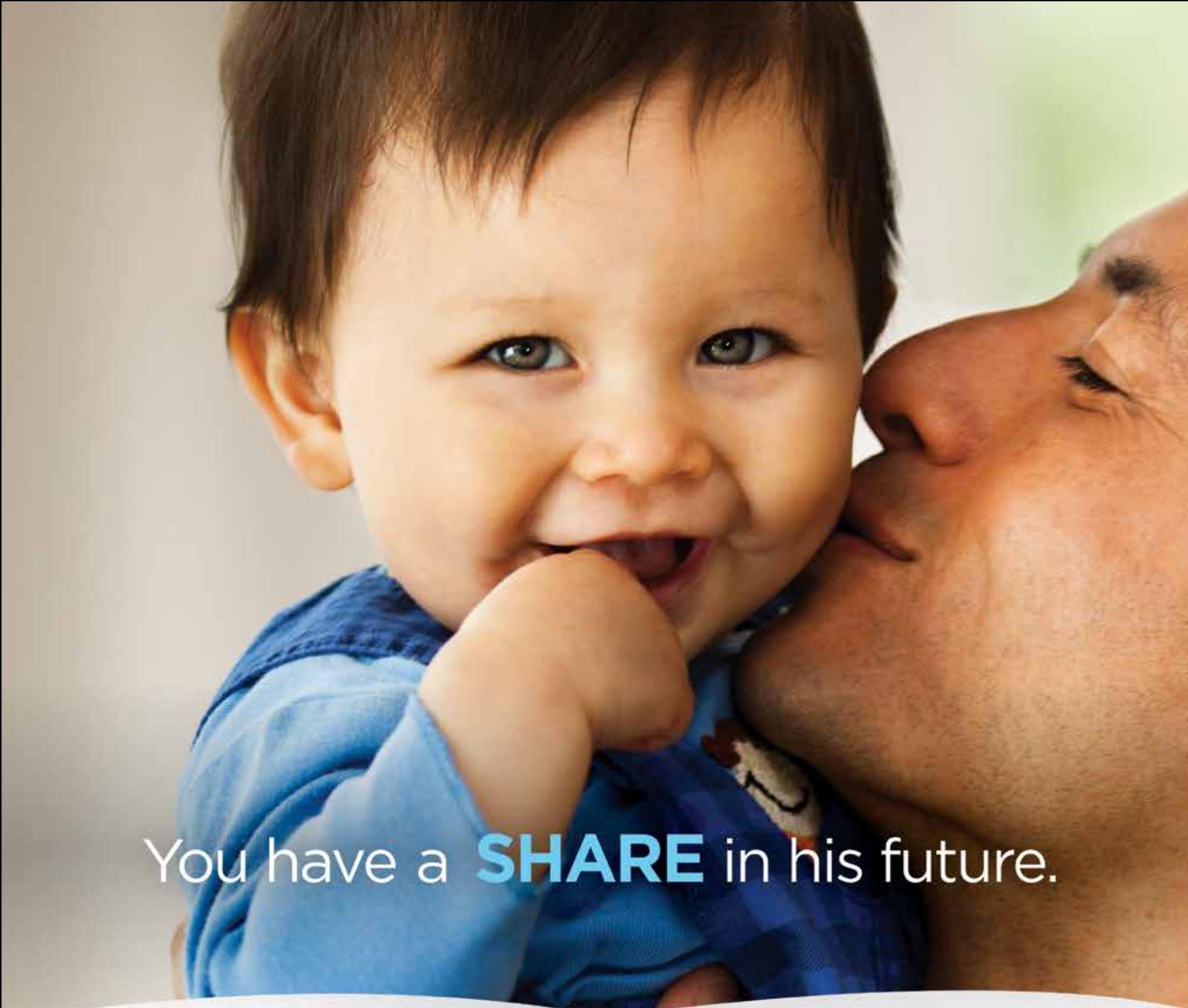
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