

## **April 2016 Bulletin Inserts**

### **Child Abuse Prevention Month**

**April 3, 2016**

**Bullying Part I**

*Excerpt from Virtus bulletin by Deacon Anthony P. Rizzuto, PhD*

First, let's define what we're talking about...bullying happens when someone keeps hurting, frightening, threatening, or leaving someone out on purpose. Bullying is unfair and one-sided, and may consist of hitting, teasing, taunting, spreading rumors and gossip, stealing, or excluding someone from a group. It is carried out with the intent to harm someone. It is often a repeated activity, but may also occur as a one-time event. Bullying always involves a power imbalance. The person bullying has more power due to factors of age, size, strength, support of friends, or access to resources (such as toys and other belongings), and uses this power in a deliberately hurtful way...Although national surveys indicate that childhood violence and abuse (including bullying) have declined in recent years, research continues to illustrate that, even while declining, bullying remains a highly prevalent behavior.

*April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. The Archdiocese of Miami runs one of the most robust awareness and prevention programs in the country. For more information contact the Safe Environment Office at 305-762-1250.*

**April 10th**

**Bullying Part I**

*Excerpt from Virtus bulletin by Deacon Anthony P. Rizzuto, PhD*

So...what can we do to keep our children safe?

- Encourage young people to talk about bullying. Assure them you will listen and take action if they come to you.
- Look for signs that children and young people are being bullied, such as requests to stay home from school, unexplained mild illnesses, and problems sleeping.
- Advocate for clear policies about bullying in School settings and for bullying prevention to be addressed in the classroom.
- Empower young people to speak up when they see someone being bullied by saying something like, "You know what, I don't think that's funny," and walking away. This changes the dynamic by depriving the one who bullies of an audience.
- If you are concerned about bullying in a school setting, talk to the principal.

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## **April 17th**

### **Cyber-Bullying: Protecting Young People from Technology Dangers Part I**

*Excerpts from Virtus bulletin by Robert Hugh Farley, M.S.*

With the pervasiveness of ever changing electronic technology, the home is no longer the refuge from all bullies as it once was. Today, a bully using an electronic device can anonymously bully and invade the safe and secure territory that the home historically provided to avoid teasing and harassment...Cyber-bullying is defined as when the Internet, cell phones, or other electronic devices are used to send or post text messages or visual images intended to hurt or embarrass another person...Schools can be very effective in working with parents to stop cyber-bullying situations.

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## **April 24th**

### **Cyber-Bullying: Protecting Young People from Technology Dangers Part II**

*Excerpts from Virtus bulletin by Robert Hugh Farley, M.S.*

What can you do? A caring adult should always refrain from the knee jerk reaction of immediately banning a victim's access to instant messaging, e-mail, social networking sites, a cell phone, or the Internet. This strategy neither addresses the underlying conflict, nor does it eliminate current or future instances of cyber-bullying victimization. It also punishes the victim and not the offender. I may also close the open lines of communication that a parent has with their child. (Rather) talk with your children and encourage them to be cautious opening any emails unless they are familiar with the sender... If your child receives ...message that is hurtful...tell them to never respond to it. Responding...frequently only causes the bullying to escalate. (Instead it should be saved and tell a trusted adult.) If a child feels threatened with harm, the police should be notified immediately.

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