



life | ines

information | for your life

PREVENT CYBERBULLYING

School's back in session—don't let your kids be bullied.

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using electronic technology. Examples of cyberbullying include mean text messages or e-mails, rumors sent by e-mail or posted on social networking sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, Web sites, or fake profiles.

Parents and kids can prevent cyberbullying. Together, they can explore safe ways to use technology.

- Be aware of what your kids are doing online.
- Establish rules about technology use.
- Understand school rules.

Be aware of what your kids are doing online.

- Talk with your kids about cyberbullying and other online issues regularly.
- Know the sites your kids visit and their online activities. Ask where they're going, what they're doing, and with whom they're doing it.
- Have a sense of what your children do online and in texts. Learn about the sites they like. Try out the devices they use.

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BEWARE OF HEALTH SCAMS

You see the ads everywhere these days—"Smart drugs for long life" or "Arthritis aches and pains disappear like magic," or even statements claiming, "This treatment cured my cancer in 1 week." It's easy to understand the appeal of these promises. But there is still plenty of truth to the old saying, "If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is!"

Health scams and the marketing of unproven cures have been around for many years. Today, there are more ways than ever to sell these untested products. In addition to TV, radio, magazines, newspapers, infomercials, mail, telemarketing, and even word of mouth, these products are now offered over the Internet—with Web sites describing miracle cures and e-mails telling stories of overnight magic. Sadly, older people are often the target of such scams.

The problem is serious. Untested remedies may be harmful. They may get in the way of medicines prescribed by your doctor. They may also waste money or keep people from getting the medical treatment they need.

FALSE HOPES

Why do people fall for these sales pitches? Unproven remedies promise false hope. They offer cures that appear to be painless or quick. At best, these treatments are worthless. At worst, they are dangerous. Health scams prey on people who are frightened or in pain. Living with a chronic health problem is hard. It's easy to see why people might fall for a false promise of a quick and painless cure. The best way for scientists to find out if a treatment works is through a clinical trial.

These scams usually target diseases that have no cures, like diabetes, arthritis, and Alzheimer's disease. You may see ads for products such as these:

Anti-aging Medications

Our culture places great value on staying young, but aging is normal. Despite claims about pills or treatments that lead to endless youth, no treatments have been proven to slow or reverse the aging process. Eating a healthy diet, getting regular exercise, and not smoking are proven ways to help prevent some of the diseases that occur with age. In other words, making healthy lifestyle choices offers you the best chance of aging well.

Arthritis Remedies

Unproven arthritis remedies can be easy to fall for, because symptoms of arthritis tend to come and go. You may believe the remedy you are using is making you

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feel better when, in fact, it is just the normal ebb and flow of your symptoms. You may see claims that so-called treatments with magnets, copper bracelets, chemicals, special diets, radiation, and other products cure arthritis. This is highly unlikely. Ads where people say they have been cured do not prove that a product works. Some of these products could hurt you, aren't likely to help, and are often costly. There is no cure for most forms of arthritis. Rest, exercise, heat, and some drugs help many people control their symptoms. Don't trust ads where people say they have been cured. This kind of statement probably doesn't tell the whole story. If you are thinking about any new treatment, such as diet, a device, or another arthritis product, talk with your doctor first.

Cancer Cures

Scam artists prey on a fear of cancer. They promote treatments with no proven value—for example, a diet dangerously low in protein or drugs such as laetrile. There is no one treatment that cures all types of cancer. By using unproven methods, people with cancer may lose valuable time and the chance to benefit from a proven, effective treatment. This delay may lessen the chance of controlling or curing the disease.

Memory Aids

Many people worry about losing their memory as they age. They may wrongly believe false promises that unproven treatments can help them keep or improve their memory. So-called smart pills, removal of amalgam dental fillings, and certain brain retraining exercises are some examples of untested approaches.

Dietary Supplements

Americans spend billions of dollars each year on dietary supplements. These supplements are sold over the counter and include vitamins and minerals, amino acids, herbs, and enzymes. Most dietary supplements do not undergo government testing or review before they are put on the market. While some vitamins may be helpful, supplements may be bad for people taking certain medicines or with some

medical conditions. Be wary of claims that a supplement can shrink tumors, solve impotence, or cure Alzheimer's disease. Talk with your doctor before starting any supplement.

Health Insurance

Some companies target people who are unable to get health insurance. They offer coverage that promises more than it intends to deliver. When you think about buying health insurance, remember to find out if the company and agent are licensed in your state.

HOW CAN YOU PROTECT YOURSELF FROM HEALTH SCAMS?

Be wary. Question what you see or hear in ads or on the Internet. Newspapers, magazines, radio, and TV stations do not always check to make sure the claims in their ads are true. Find out about a product before you buy it. Don't let a salesperson talk you into making a snap decision. Check with your health care provider first.

Remember the old stories about the snake oil salesman who traveled from town to town making wild claims for his fabulous product? Well, chances are that today's scam artists are using the same sales tricks. Look for red flags in ads or promotional material that:

- Promise a quick or painless cure
- Claim the product is made from a special, secret, or ancient formula
- Offer products and services only by mail or from one company
- Use statements or unproven case histories from so-called satisfied patients
- Claim to be a cure for a wide range of ailments
- Claim to cure a disease (such as arthritis or Alzheimer's disease) that hasn't been cured by medical science
- Promise a no-risk, money-back guarantee
- Offer an additional free gift or a larger amount of the product as a special promotion
- Require advance payment and claim there is a limited supply of the product

Two federal government agencies work to protect you from health scams. The Federal Trade Commission can help you spot fraud. The Food and Drug Administration protects the public by assuring the safety of prescription drugs, biological products, medical devices, food, cosmetics, and radiation-emitting products. If you have questions about a product, talk with your doctor. Getting the facts about health care products can help protect you from health scams.

National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Aging. (Updated 2013, October 17). Age page: Beware of health scams. Retrieved November 12, 2013, from <http://www.nia.nih.gov>



TOP 10 SLEEP MYTHS

Myth 1: Sleep is a time when your body and brain shut down for rest and relaxation.

No evidence shows that any major organ (including the brain) or regulatory system in the body shuts down during sleep. Some physiological processes actually become more active while you sleep. For example, secretion of certain hormones is boosted, and activity of the pathways in the brain needed for learning and memory is heightened.

Myth 2: Getting just 1 hour less of sleep per night than needed will not have any effect on your daytime functioning.

This lack of sleep may not make you noticeably sleepy during the day. But even slightly less sleep can affect your ability to think properly and respond quickly, and it can compromise your cardiovascular health and energy balance as well as the ability to fight infections, particularly if lack of sleep continues. If you consistently do not get enough sleep, eventually a sleep debt builds up that will make you excessively tired during the day.

Myth 3: Your body adjusts quickly to different sleep schedules.

Your biological clock makes you most alert during the daytime and most drowsy at night. Thus, even if you work the night shift, you will naturally feel sleepy when nighttime comes. Most people can reset their biological clock, but only by appropriately timed cues—and even then, by 1-2 hours per day at best. Consequently, it can take more than a week to adjust to a dramatically altered sleep/wake cycle, such as you encounter when traveling across several time zones or switching from working the day shift to the night shift.

Myth 4: People need less sleep as they get older.

Older people don't need less sleep, but they often get less sleep or find their sleep less refreshing. That's because as people age, they spend less time in the deep, restful stages of sleep and are more easily awakened. Older people are also

more likely to have insomnia or other medical conditions that disrupt their sleep.

Myth 5: Extra sleep at night can cure you of problems with excessive daytime fatigue.

Not only is the quantity of sleep important but also the quality of sleep. Some people sleep 8 or 9 hours per night but don't feel well rested when they wake up, because the quality of their sleep is poor. A number of sleep disorders and other medical conditions affect the quality of sleep. Sleeping more won't alleviate the daytime sleepiness these disorders or conditions cause. However, many of these disorders or conditions can be treated effectively with changes in behavior or with medical therapies.

Myth 6: You can make up for lost sleep during the week by sleeping more on the weekends.

Although this sleeping pattern will help relieve part of a sleep debt, it will not completely make up for the lack of sleep. This pattern will not make up for impaired performance during the week because of not sleeping enough. Furthermore, sleeping later on the weekends can affect your biological clock so that it is much harder to go to sleep at the right time on Sunday nights and get up early on Monday mornings.

Myth 7: Naps are a waste of time.

Although naps do not substitute for a good night's sleep, they can be restorative and help counter some of the impaired performance that results from not getting enough sleep at night. Naps can actually help you learn how to do certain tasks quicker. But avoid taking naps later than 3:00 p.m., as late naps can interfere with your ability to fall asleep at night. Also, limit your naps to no longer than 1 hour, because longer naps will make it harder to wake up and get back in the swing of things. If you take frequent naps during the day, you may have a sleep disorder that should be treated.

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TOP 10 SLEEP MYTHS

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Myth 8: Snoring is a normal part of sleep.

Snoring during sleep is common, particularly as a person gets older. Evidence is growing that snoring on a regular basis can make you sleepy during the day and more susceptible to diabetes and heart disease. In addition, some studies link frequent snoring to problem behavior and poorer school achievement in children. Loud, frequent snoring can also be a sign of sleep apnea, a serious sleep disorder that should be treated.

Myth 9: Children who don't get enough sleep at night will show signs of sleepiness during the day.

Unlike adults, children who don't get enough sleep at night typically become more active than normal during the day. They also show difficulty paying attention and behaving properly. Consequently, they may be misdiagnosed as having attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

Myth 10: The main cause of insomnia is worry.

Although worry or stress can cause a short bout of insomnia, a persistent inability to fall asleep or stay asleep at night can be caused by a number of other factors. Certain medications and sleep disorders can keep you up at night. Other common causes of insomnia are depression, anxiety disorders, asthma, arthritis, or other medical conditions with symptoms that become more troublesome at night. Some people who have chronic insomnia also appear to be more revved up than normal, so it is harder for them to fall asleep.

Patlak, M. (2011, August). Top 10 sleep myths. In *Your Guide to Healthy Sleep* (National Institutes of Health [NIH] Publication No. 06-5271). Retrieved August 7, 2013, from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute Web site at <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov>

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- Ask for their passwords, but tell them you'll only use them in case of emergency.
- Ask to friend or follow your kids on social media sites, or ask another trusted adult to do so.
- Encourage your kids to tell you immediately if they are, or if someone they know is, being cyberbullied. Explain that you will not take their computers or cell phones away if they confide in you about a problem they are having.

Establish rules about technology use.

Establish rules about appropriate use of computers, cell phones, and other technology. For example, be clear about what sites your kids can visit and what they are permitted to do when they're online. Show them how to be safe online.

Help them be smart about what they post or say. Tell them not to share anything that could hurt or embarrass themselves or others. Once something is posted, it is out of their control whether someone else will forward it.

Encourage kids to think about whom they want to see the information and pictures they post online. Should complete strangers see it? Real friends only? Friends of friends? Think about how people who aren't friends could use it.

Tell kids to keep their passwords safe and to not share them with friends. Sharing passwords can compromise their control over their online identities and activities.

Understand school rules.

Some schools have developed policies on uses of technology that may affect the child's online behavior in and out of the classroom. Ask the school if it has developed a policy.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Stopbullying.gov. (n.d.). In *Prevent cyberbullying*. Retrieved December 3, 2013, from <http://www.stopbullying.gov>



WHY TIME MANAGEMENT?

When asked to identify things that stress them, adults almost always list time as one of the top three. Children learn from adult-modeled behavior. Is it any surprise, then, that children, like adults, almost always list time as a major stressor? It is an even more certain truth that as children reach their teen years, time becomes even more limited. It is as if they have been taught the worst skills imaginable. The issue that stresses most adults today will go on to stress their children, and their children's children, and generations yet to come. There is a fundamental truth that has been ignored, and the ruse is up!

The simple reality and ultimate truth is that time is not manageable. Time is a finite, limited, predictable, but renewable resource. There are 1,440 minutes in a day, 7 days in a week, and 52 weeks in a year. All the time management in the world will never change that. It is not time that needs to be managed, but rather our utilization of that resource. Time spent today is forever gone, but tomorrow we get a new day and a new chance to manage our lives within the limited parameters of the minutes, hours, and days in our years. With limited time, how do you learn to do better with managing your time and teaching your children to do the same? The answer is that if you wish to help children with time and life management skills, you as an adult need to better model those things you would have your children do. You need to model good time and life management skills.

The single best teaching tool for time management is to model the desired behavior. Learn to be a time manager yourself. The best way for you as an adult to learn time management is to take a time management course and use a tool that will help you organize your life. There are many companies that manufacture time management planners and calendars. For a fee, some of these companies also offer time management programs. Enrolling in one of these, taking one of the many other time management courses, or retaking one of the courses, is an excellent way

to learn or to remind yourself of the things you can do to make yourself a better time and life manager. Consider using a system or a planner or enrolling in a course.

"But I don't have time to take a time management course." If that sounds like you, run, do not walk, to the nearest time management course! In your case it may be a matter of urgency, not just importance, but if you are having difficulty managing time, you may not understand that yet.

Time management is so important that many companies insist that their top performers take time management courses to improve the efficiency of those managers. But time management is not just about improving your efficiency at work. The efficient utilization of time gives individuals the opportunity to maximize their potential to do what it is they want to do with their time. The efficient utilization of time improves efficacy, productivity, and personal satisfaction. Learning to manage your time will improve your quality of life, by whatever definition you choose, to such an extent as to make time management a high priority for completion. Schedule it now.

Stephen Covey, author of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, believes in time management. Covey believes that to be successful, we must take charge of our lives. He has identified seven practices that lead to successful lives, and the foundations of his seven habits are the notions of time management.

SEVEN HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PEOPLE

1. Be proactive. Take responsibility for your life.
2. Begin with the end in mind. Define your mission and goals in life.
3. Put first things first. Prioritize, and do the most important things first.
4. Think win-win. Have an everyone-can-win attitude.
5. Seek first to understand, then to be understood. Listen to people sincerely.
6. *Synergize*: Work together to achieve more.
7. Sharpen the saw. Renew yourself regularly.

Of these seven habits, habits 1, 2, 3, and 7, or 57% of the seven, involve the better use of time. Enough of the argument? Take a time management course!

Adapted from Covey, S. (2004). *The 7 habits of highly effective people*. New York: Free Press.

U.S. Department of State. (n.d.). Why time management? Retrieved November 13, 2013, from <http://www.state.gov>