

# Muscogee County School District's

## School Social Work Department



### Dates to Remember:

**April 19**

Progress Reports

Dear Parent,

April is here and that means it's time for state testing. Please be informed of when your student will be testing and make efforts to ensure that they are at school on time and prepared for testing each day. April is also Child Abuse Prevention Month. As social workers, it is very important to our department that we provide you as parents with information on child abuse, what to look for in your child, and ways that you can help prevent child abuse, not only with your own child, but other children as well. Please educate yourself and your child on ways to ensure their safety. We hope that you have a great and successful month. One more month and then summer is here!!

#### Child Abuse Prevention Month

April is child abuse prevention month and with that focus, we would like to provide information on signs of child abuse to look for in your child and other children, and ways that you can help prevent child abuse. Education is the biggest step in helping to prevent child abuse. Many of us do not like to think about children being harmed. However, child abuse is occurring around us and knowledge is crucial to ensure a child's safety. You might be the only person that is able to step in and ensure that a child is not harmed or that the abuse stops. Be prepared to take action if you are ever presented with child abuse. It is important to be aware of how to report child abuse. You can make an anonymous report if you believe that a child is being abused. To make a report, you would contact the Department of Family and Children Services county's office, depending on which county the child resides in. Educate yourself; awareness makes a difference in preventing child abuse!! By Lauren Penton

## Signs of Child Abuse

The following are a few of the physical and behavioral signs of child abuse and neglect. Please note that the listed signs of child abuse in each category may pertain to more than one type of abuse or neglect.

#### Physical Signs of Child Abuse

1. Unexplained burns, cuts, bruises or welts in the shape of an object.
2. Bite marks.
3. Anti-social behavior.
4. Problems in school.
5. Fear of adults.

#### Emotional Signs of Child Abuse

1. Apathy
2. Depression
3. Hostility or stress
4. Lack of concentration
5. Eating disorders

#### Sexual Signs of Child Abuse

1. Inappropriate interest or knowledge of sexual acts.
2. Nightmares and bed wetting.
3. Drastic changes in appetite.
4. Overcompliance or excessive aggression.
5. Fear of a particular person or family member.

#### Signs of Neglect

1. Unsuitable clothing for weather.
2. Dirty or unbathed.
3. Extreme hunger.
4. Apparent lack of supervision.

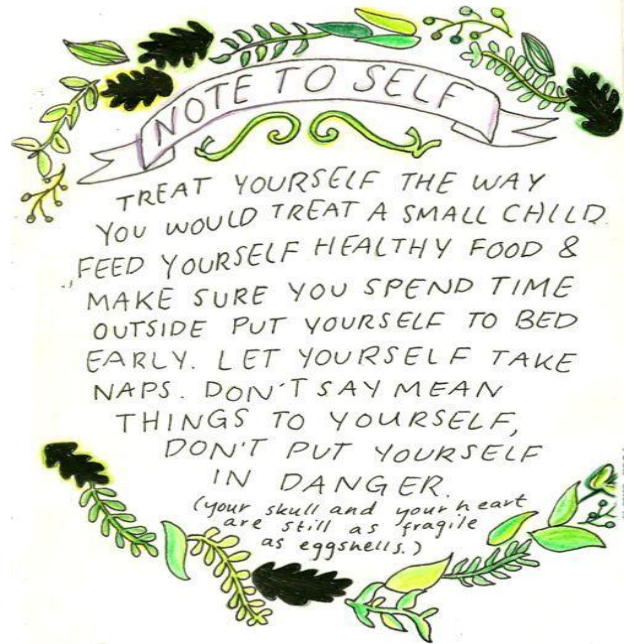
For a more extensive list of the signs of child abuse, call the  
Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline:  
**1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453)**

20 Foster Care Statistics from a Former Foster Child. (2016, April 30) (web blog post)  
Retrieved from <http://hubpages.com/family/20-Random-Foster-Care-facts>

## Easy Mom and Me Date Ideas

Nowadays, our world can be hectic and always on the go. It is important for our child to get some one on one time with their parents, when/ if possible. Some families have implemented date nights with one parent and one child, making sure to get their child that individual time. This can be a small gesture, but the importance is making sure that you help your child feel special and important in your life. Here are a few ideas for a date night with mom. No worries dad, our May newsletter will have some fun date night ideas for you!!

- Go catch the latest movie. Low on funds? Grab some popcorn and one of your favorites. Make it a movie night for you two at the house.
- Build a tent and grab some great books. Have a sleepover in the living room.
- Have a birthday party for their favorite doll/ stuffed animal. Help them decorate for the party and dress up their animals.
- Organize a scavenger hunt. As you can see, it's not about the money you spend, but the time. Have some fun and make memories. By Lauren Penton



# My Body Safety Rules

## My body is my body and it belongs to me!

I can say, 'No' if I don't want to kiss or hug someone.  
I can give them a high five, shake their hand or blow them a kiss.  
I am the boss of my body and what I say goes!



## I have a Safety Network

These are five adults I trust. I can tell these people anything and they will believe me.  
If I feel worried, scared or unsure, I can tell someone on my Safety Network how I am feeling and why I feel this way.



## Early Warning Signs

If I feel frightened or unsafe I may sweat a lot, get a sick tummy, become shaky and my heart might beat really fast.  
These feelings are called my Early Warning Signs. If I feel this way about anything, I must tell an adult on my Safety Network straightaway.



## Secrets

I should never keep secrets that make me feel bad or uncomfortable. If someone asks me to keep a secret that makes me feel bad or unsafe, I must tell an adult on my Safety Network straightaway!



## Private Parts

My private parts are the parts of my body under my bathing suit. I always call my private parts by their correct names. No-one can touch my private parts. No-one can ask me to touch their private parts. And no-one should show me pictures of private parts. If any of these things happen, I must tell a trusted adult on my Safety Network straightaway.



Original concept The Momo Bear Effect  
© Upload Publishing Pty Ltd For Body Safety resources go to [www.somesecrets.info](http://www.somesecrets.info)

## Finding Balance

By Lauren Penton

Spring is in the air and this is usually the time when people start getting outside more, working on that neglect winter yard and staying busy with lots of fun spring sports that the kids are into. With that said, it is important to remember to make time for yourself and find little ways to treat and care for yourself. You have to care for yourself to be able to care for others well. Here are a few tips to help you care for yourself this month.

- Grab a good book or magazine and unplug for a little while. Use this time to forget your problems. I promise, they will still be there when you get back!!
- Why wait for someone to take you on a date? Take yourself on a date and spend some time doing something you like.
- Buy or pick yourself some flowers. Just a small gesture to lift your spirit.
- Get coffee with an old friend.
- Put on one of your favorite radio stations and relax, dance, whatever you feel like.
- Delegate! I have found this to be a huge self-care tip. Don't try to do everything yourself. You will only make yourself bitter, frustrated, and exhausted. Whether its work or home, find small things that others can help with and this can help you take some of the pressure off of yourself.