

justdream

e-news from your Children's Board

March 18, 2011

ACHIEVING THE DREAM



In this edition:

- School Board Chair Doretha Edgecomb
- 100 Best Communities Celebration
- North Tampa FSRC Success Story

[Click to Read More](#)

www.ChildrensBoard.org

Cover Stories Achieve the Dream

School Board Chair Doretha Edgecomb is a Longtime Achiever

From the Tampa Tribune: Doretha Edgecomb could have graduated from Middleton High at 15, but her father forbade it. Instead, the future teacher, principal and school board leader would have to wait until she was 16. She was Doretha Wynn then, dating her high school sweetheart and Middleton's student body president, George E. Edgecomb. The two stepped up during the civil rights movement, taking part in sit-ins and marches in Tampa, Atlanta and Alabama.

George would go on to become a lawyer and, at 31, Tampa's first black judge, with a courthouse eventually named for him. Doretha would become his wife, a third-generation educator and, too soon, a young widow left to raise their daughter alone. Today, more than three decades since her husband's death, Doretha Edgecomb, now the chairwoman of the Hillsborough County School Board, remains forever entwined with his legacy.

As a young widow, Doretha somehow persevered. She plunged into her new role as a single mom and educator, rising through the district ranks. As one of six assistant superintendents for the district, Clark, the former principal, got to work with Edgecomb when she became the district's parent intervention supervisor, targeting disadvantaged students. "That was an extremely important position," Clark said. "She did an outstanding job getting the parents involved."

In 1991, the district appointed Edgecomb as principal of Robles Elementary. One of the district's largest elementary schools, it had 1,000 students, most of them black, with some of the highest needs in the county. She persevered, once again, helping teachers and parents raise expectations for students and getting parents involved through the school's first PTA.

In 2004 she ran for the school board. "I was a principal," she said. "I am a parent. I've been a teacher and I'm the third-generation of four generations of educators. "It's in my DNA." Edgecomb beat two opponents for the District 5 seat.

In her first stint as chairwoman, Edgecomb helps ensure that the school board sticks to the rules during meetings as it sets policy for a district with a \$3.1 billion budget, more than 270 schools and 25,000 employees. "She is the consummate professional," said the newest board member, Stacy White. "She has let me know she is there for me when I need her."



Doretha Edgecomb, right, at her School Board swearing in in 2004, along with daughter Allison and mother Sarah Wynn. Photo by Tampa Tribune.

Edgecomb also earned a reputation as a consensus builder. During heated debates, she is often the one who breaks the tension with a little levity, said former board member Carolyn Brickley, who served with Edgecomb for two years. "She presents herself as such a lady," Brickley said, "with just a very dry wit."

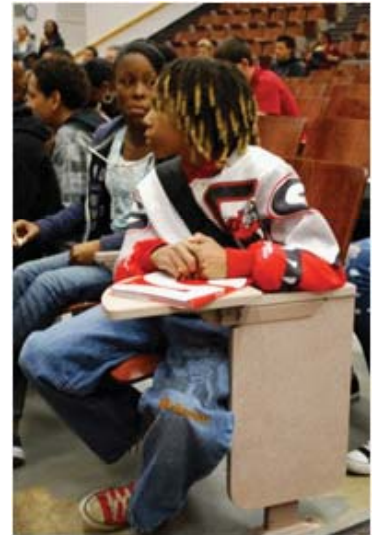
When she was first elected, she reached out to community activist Fred Hearn and other prominent black men to find ways to motivate young black males to succeed academically. Many of the older men became mentors in the community, said Hearn, who described Edgecomb as a bridge builder who has done a good job representing her constituents not only in East Tampa, but throughout Hillsborough County.

It will likely be a campaign topic for Edgecomb, (a member of the **Children's Board of Hillsborough County**) who says she will run again in 2012. That doesn't surprise her closest friends, who point to Edgecomb's past as a hint of her future. "She has gone on to do the great things she was destined to do," friend Arthenia Joyner said. "Even if George were still alive, she would have gone on to do great things."

See the full story at <http://www2.tbo.com/content/2011/mar/11/111420/doretha-edgecomb-still-an-achiever-as-school-board/news-breaking/>.

Partners Celebrate '100 Best Communities for Young People' Designation

On March 12 at Leto High School, civic and community partners celebrated with students the designation of Tampa/Hillsborough County being named one of America's Promise Alliance's 100 Best Communities for Young People in 2010. The 100 Best designation recognizes those communities that make youth a priority by implementing programs that help keep children in school and prepare them for college and the 21st century workforce. Leto was selected for the celebration because of its improved graduation rates. Pierce and Webb Middle School students also attended the event.



*Pictured, from left to right in the photo above left: Esther Berg of America's Promise Alliance; Betty Tribble of United Way; Santiago Corrada of the City of Tampa; Bobbi Davis of the **Children's Board**; MaryEllen Elia, superintendent of Hillsborough County Public Schools; Stephen Koch of Big Brothers Big Sisters; and Brad Baumgardner, president of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Tampa Bay.*

Pictured above right: students listen attentively.



Pictured above left, Esther Berg of America's Promise Alliance, speaks to students from Leto High School and Pierce and Webb Middle Schools.

Above right, Ginger Gadsden, local morning news anchor at CBS, served as emcee for the recognition event.

Julio Millan is Children's Board-Funded North Tampa FSRC Success Story

August 2002 marked Julio Millan's first year at Freedom High School in Tampa. Julio was then a teenager who just wanted to fit in, but with the wrong people. His behavior led him to being expelled that same year. Julio then began living a lifestyle which further hindered his progress. "I made bad decisions... I was in the streets," he said. That was until 2005, when Julio enrolled in Job Corp through the Tampa Bay Workforce Alliance. Sadly, however, he was expelled again.

With a new attitude, Julio began taking GED classes in 2008 at the **Children's Board**-funded North Tampa Family

Support & Resource Center, offered by Hillsborough County Public Schools Adult Education. His dedication this time around was undeniable. When he lived in Sulphur Springs, he walked to the North Tampa FSRC for class.

When he moved near Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. and 22nd Street, he rode public transportation for one hour to and from class twice weekly in addition to working. Julio appreciated school more at the North Tampa FSRC because he fit in; he felt people there were "like family... they were there to help."

In May 2010, after about one and one half years of preparation, Julio took his GED test at Brewster Technical Center. Twenty four year old Julio is now a proud recipient of a GED. He recently surprised his teacher, Dr. Jennifer Craythorne, and the FSRC staff to say thank you. He also encouraged students. "I'm living proof, if I can do it, you can do it. Keep studying; stay focused...", he told the class. Julio has come a long way from 2002 to now, and he has great plans, including studies at Hillsborough Community College.



Julio Millan with GED teacher Jennifer Craythorne at the North Tampa FSRC.

Customer Lauds Children's Board-Funded Positive SPiN Program

Following is a testimonial from Torusha Blount, a customer of the **Children's Board**-funded Positive SPiN (Support for in Neighborhoods) program:

Allow me to take you with me on what I call "My Journey of Life." My name is Torusha Blount. I am the mother to four handsome young men and one beautiful daughter. From the start of my interaction with Positive Spin, there has been nothing less than success.

To start my journey off, I will share with you on how Positive Spin helped me achieve stable housing for my family and me by paying off my debt with another organization, so that I could become a recipient of the housing program with the Tampa Housing Authority. This was the beginning path of stability. Shortly after that, my goal was to begin my search for employment. Positive Spin assisted me with another outreach program, "Dress for Success." This program assisted me by allowing me to pick my attire so that I could be marketable in the employment world.

As a CNA, for the last 12 years due to the struggle of just trying to get my family by again, Positive Spin extended out a helping hand and renewed my license as a CNA. Along with that, I was also referred to receive childcare to make my life a little easier with my goal to obtain my mission to become employed. I strive hard as I did when I began my search and I know that in due time my hard work will pay off because good things come to those who wait. I would like to share with you why I feel organizations like Positive Spin has big impacts on me and other families who are out here walking in my shoes, but in just a different path.

On the 19th of January, my family and I experienced what I like to call catastrophic. My house caught fire and we were left with the clothes on our back and by the good grace of God, Positive Spin came to my house immediately and was exceptional with help that very night. They contacted Red Cross and other resources to assist me and my family.

From January 19 on, both Positive Spin and I have been working hand and hand to get me back to the state where I could be better able to manage my family. They assisted me with numerous donations from pots, beds, washed clothes etc. I truly know without any doubts that this organization was my saving grace. If I had not been a part of the program, me and my children would be in a world of a mess. So with this being said, I would like to thank you for allowing Positive Spin to be a part of my life and Hillsborough County, so that other families can hear my story and know that help is only a phone call away. Thank you and God bless!

Children's Board Links to Jobs, Events, Facebook, Twitter

Go to www.facebook.com/MyCBHC and see the latest **Children's Board Facebook** postings. Follow the **Children's Board** on **Twitter** at www.twitter.com/MyCBHC.

Jobs & Volunteer Opportunities - Go to http://www.childrensboard.org/jobs_volunteer_opportunities.aspx and click on the top link for updated postings in Hillsborough County.

Calendar - Go to <http://www.childrensboard.org/calendar.aspx> to access the upcoming community and provider calendar.

Local News

Children's Board Hosts Symposium on Children of Incarcerated Parents

If you are one of 6,000 children in Hillsborough County with a parent in jail or in prison, you are more likely to experience depression and have behavior problems, poor academic performance and low self esteem. That's what Florida Kinship Center at University of South Florida expert LaSandra McGrew told attendees at a daylong symposium, "Doing Time on the Outside: the Invisible Consequences for Children of the Incarcerated," at the **Children's Board** on March 11.

The symposium, sponsored by CHIPS (a collaborative for Children in Hillsborough of Incarcerated Parents), headed by the **Children's Board**, Big Brothers Big Sisters and Hillsborough County, featured national and local speakers on the impact on children when a parent is imprisoned. Florida has the third largest number of people incarcerated in the nation, and Hillsborough County leads the state in number of children (close to 6,000) with at least one incarcerated parent.

Among the more compelling speeches was one given by the mother and son team of Kimberly Porter and Zachary Campbell. Campbell, now 17 and a junior in high school, said his mom's imprisonment five times and his spending 18 months in foster care starting at age 10 or 11 negatively affected his two brothers and his two brothers.

"My brother Jake would act out in day care," Campbell said. "My fraternal twin, Mac, was very mean to others. I would have liked to be able to talk to a counselor and let some of the anger out. It took my mom getting out of prison and going to church with her to help me get my anger out in a healthy way."

Porter, who now works as outreach director at the Cypress Initiative's Center for Human Resiliency, acknowledged drug addiction was her downfall, but she offered helpful advice for anyone in a troubled situation. "One kind word spoken into a person's life can change their whole direction," she said.

Yvette Harris, Ph.D., associate professor of psychology at Miami University of Ohio, noted that reunification of a child with a parent who has been incarcerated involves conflicted feelings, including an idealized fantasy of the parent, unresolved anger and abandonment issues. She called for review and evaluation of the prison parenting program and more research about mandating attendance in parenting programs during and after incarceration.

Symposium experts said the best way to help children of incarcerated parents is to get appropriate services and support such as mentoring, counseling and support groups. Campbell offered yet another example of a positive connection. "I would tell other kids in the same situation I was in to find an upstanding adult to idolize as a role model," he said. "I had a teacher who was always calm and knew how to handle situations."

Sandra Lafleur of Big Brothers Big Sisters of America said that organization knows that the longer the match of mentors with children, the stronger the match. Big Brothers Big Sisters' Amachi program, specifically for children of incarcerated parents, has matches that last an average of 19 months, well over the federal requirement of 12 months for mentoring matches with any children. However, challenges loom for continued federal funding for mentors, she said. "The President's budget would cut funding for mentoring children of prisoners by 50 percent," Lafleur said. "Continuing Resolution H.R. 1, passed by the House of Representatives, would cut funding for mentoring children of prisoners a full 100 percent."



Zachary Campbell and Kimberly Porter



Sandra McGrew



Robert Blount

Robert Blount, president and CEO of Abe Brown Ministries, said he knows from experience working with prisoners that what their children view as normal is what most people view as abnormal, and vice versa.

"If daddy has a probation officer, I need a P.O. too," he said. He quoted Frederick Douglass, who said, "It's easier to build strong children than repair broken men." Blount added, "We just want to be able to help a unique group of children."



Gorski Column: Take on Bullying Before it Takes Hold

Dr. Peter Gorski, child development expert at the **Children's Board**, offers tips for parents on dealing with bullying of children. Read his column in the St. Petersburg Times at <http://www.tampabay.com/features/parenting/take-on-bullying-before-it-takes-hold/1156582>.

You can also read his commentary on bullying at www.childrensboard.org.

Children's Board Will Have TA Applications, Funding Workshops in April

The **Children's Board** will be accepting applications for Technical Assistance (TA) and Match Funds effective April 1, 2011. These funds are available to any non-profit service providers, community-based organizations and governmental entities serving children and families in Hillsborough County.

Funding workshops will be held to explain the application process at:

- 2-4 p.m., Thursday, April 14 at the Children's Board Boardroom, 1002 E. Palm Avenue, Tampa.
- 9-11 a.m., Wednesday, April 20 at the Children's Board Boardroom, 1002 E. Palm Avenue, Tampa.
- 10 a.m. to noon, Thursday, April 21 at the Town 'N Country Family Support & Resource Center, 7520 W. Waters Avenue, Suite 8 (corner of Waters and Hanley Road).

Workshops will be identical and attendance is not mandatory but highly recommended. A copy of the presentation will be available on the **Children's Board** website at www.childrensboard.org after the first scheduled workshop.

Technical Assistance funds are intended to assist organizations build their capacity through strategic activities that strengthen their ability to operate effectively over the long term. Appropriate capacity building activities are those that address governance, management, finance and fund development. Grants will be limited in size to \$5,000. Organizations serving the neighborhoods surrounding Just Elementary School in West Tampa, Potter Elementary School in East Tampa and Sulphur Springs Elementary School will receive special consideration.

Applications for Technical Assistance must be submitted using the **Children's Board's** online Universal Application, available at www.childrensboard.org/universal_application.aspx. Contact the **Children's Board** resource development team before starting an application to discuss your idea. Resource development team staff can be reached by email or telephone during normal business hours. Contact Irene Hill at (813) 204-1758, ihill@childrensboard.org or Bobbi Davis at (813) 204-1752, bobbid@childrensboard.org.

Healthy Start Coalition of Hillsborough County in the News

In a Channel 10 report that ran on March 4, the Healthy Start Coalition of Hillsborough County's Maria Negrón said parents can find emotional assistance at the FSRCs (funded by the **Children's Board**).

See <http://brandon.wtsp.com/news/crime/sympathy-schenecker/48524>.

The Tampa Tribune carried a story, "Task force touts breastfeeding in Hillsborough," which acknowledged the Healthy Start Coalition (funded by the **Children's Board**) as one of the organizers of the County Breastfeeding Task Force.

See <http://www2.tbo.com/content/2011/mar/07/task-force-touts-breastfeeding-in-hillsborough/news-breaking/>.

Check Out This Week's Schedule of Programming on CBHC Radio

Be sure to check out the new schedule of programs that are uploaded each week on CBHC Radio, the Internet radio station of the **Children's Board**. Six-hour blocks of programming are repeated four times each day.

To listen, go to http://www.childrensboard.org/cbhc_radio.aspx and click on "Launch Player" at the bottom of the page, after the listing of programs and air times.

Children's Board Heart Gallery of Tampa Raises Awareness at Oscar-Time

When Laura Cipriani, owner of the L-Train, heard the Oscar Awards were coming up, she immediately began brainstorming. The spread at the L-Train gave her endless options for possible events, with its very own personal theatre as well as a bar with a stellar wine selection and over 42 different kinds of beer. "I wanted to do something different" said Cipriani. The final decision was to hold a red carpet event, housing their own Oscar Awards Show. Admission was \$5 and with that, patrons received a glass of champagne and a raffle ticket. What's a good event without giving back? All proceeds from the raffle were to go directly to the Heart Gallery. "We need to raise awareness" Cipriani said.

For Jesse Miller, director for the Heart Gallery, awareness is key for the organization. The Heart Gallery is supported by the **Children's Board** and was started roughly eight years ago. One goal exists for those involved: recruitment of adoptive parents for foster children in the Tampa Bay area. Through photographic and audio exhibits, the group is able to find permanent homes for foster children by showcasing their unique stories.

See <http://oldnortheast.patch.com/articles/heart-gallery-of-tampa-is-an-oscar-winner-among-charities>

Commentary: Helping Your Children Become 'Drown-Proof'

A commentary in the Tampa Tribune by Laura Dye of the Tampa Metropolitan YMCA promoted water safety tips and swimming lessons for children and families:

The Tampa Metropolitan Area YMCA works with many different partners to educate parents and children, heighten community awareness and save lives. For instance, the Y recently provided water-safety curriculum and classroom materials for all K-5 physical education teachers in Hillsborough County Public Schools. The curriculum was designed to meet the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards and ensures students have the necessary tools to protect themselves and their families.

The Y also works with the Tampa Housing Authority, the Hillsborough Water Safety Team and **The Children's Board of Hillsborough County** to provide free lessons to children who otherwise wouldn't have the opportunity for instruction. These lessons incorporate life-saving water safety skills, foundational swimming techniques and character-building activities.

To read the full commentary, go to <http://www2.tbo.com/content/2011/mar/12/MEOPINO2-helping-your-children-become-drown-proof/news-opinion-commentary/>

Check Out the March Hillsborough Kids Foster Parent Connection Newsletter -

http://www.hillsboroughkids.org/docs/2011_FPCConnection_03.pdf.

Neighborhood News

March Sunglasses Giveaway for Ages 2-4 at Family Support & Resource Centers

Prevent Blindness Florida will be providing the **Children's Board**-funded Family Support & Resource Centers with free sunglasses for children ages 2, 3 and 4 throughout the month of March, while supplies last. Sunglasses help in two important ways. They filter light and they protect your eyes from damaging ultra-violet (UV) rays. Evidence shows that exposure to UV rays can damage your eyes. Long-term exposure to UV rays can lead to cataracts, macular degeneration, or skin cancer around the eyelids. Sunglasses should be worn when you are outdoors so you can protect your eyes.

Do children need sunglasses? Yes. Children are at special risk from the harmful effects of ultraviolet rays, since their eyes do not have the same ability as adults to protect from UV radiation. Prevent Blindness Florida is a non-profit agency dedicated to preventing blindness and preserving sight. Family Support & Resource Center locations are:

Brandon, 1277 Kingsway Road, Brandon, FL 33510. (813) 740-4634

Central Tampa, 1002 E. Palm Ave., Tampa, FL 33605. (813) 204-1741

North Tampa, 1401-A E. Fowler Ave., Tampa, FL 33612. (813) 558-1877

South County, 3030 E. College Ave., Ruskin, FL 33570. (813) 641-5600

Town 'N Country, 7520 W. Waters Ave. #8, Tampa, FL 33615. (813) 356-1703

Preschoolers Collect Ton of Rice for Good Samaritan Mission -

<http://brandonnews2.tbo.com/content/2011/feb/23/BRNEWSO9-students-learn-doing/>.

Boy Scouts Seek Food to Fill Pantries in Southeast Hillsborough -

<http://brandonnews2.tbo.com/content/2011/mar/02/BRNEWSO3-boy-scouts-seek-food-to-fill-pantries-acr/>.

Artist Depicts Life in East Tampa at Police Station on 22nd Street -

<http://www2.tbo.com/content/2011/mar/04/PMNEWSO1-intramural-activity/>.

Advocacy

Latest Issue of 'Capitol Connection' Has State Legislative Updates -

http://www.floridacsc.org/advocacy/capitol_connection.php

State News

Schools Staring at a 'Grand Canyon' of Cuts in Funding

After looming in the offing for two years, a long-expected education funding cliff is about to hit Florida. School district officials are bracing for major cuts on top of cuts they've already made thanks to shrinking local revenue, declining state resources and the loss of federal stimulus funds. Potentially making matters even worse: Gov. Rick Scott's proposal to slash school funding by even more. School leaders have pinned their hopes on lawmakers being more friendly to schools than Scott.

It's not a matter of whether districts will have to cut spending. Rather, it's a matter of scope. Hillsborough, the nation's eighth-largest school district, is looking at reductions of more than \$100 million. In Pasco County "the funding cliff we're on is huge," bemoaned school superintendent Heather Fiorentino. "It's more like the Grand Canyon."

Even the best-case scenarios aren't pretty. The general expectation is that lawmakers will cut education funding by about 5 percent for 2011-12, and that's after several years of reductions in actual funding (as opposed to paper projections). And no one in Tallahassee has announced a plan to restore lost stimulus funds with state revenue, which the stimulus replaced two years ago. School districts used that \$1.3 billion in federal funds over those two years to prevent layoffs and keep pay rates stable as many in the private sector endured furloughs, pay cuts and job losses.

See <http://www.tampabay.com/news/education/k12/schools-staring-at-a-grand-canyon-of-cuts-in-funding/1155013>.

Editorial: Medicaid Reform is a Priority

From the Tampa Tribune editorial page: The cost of Medicaid, the health care program for low-income and disabled Floridians, is growing at an unsustainable rate. That's not news. Lawmakers have spent years debating how to contain the costs while still offering quality care and convenient access to medical services for our most vulnerable residents. Some 3 million Floridians, the majority children, depend on Medicaid, but the cost is spiraling northward of \$20 billion annually - that's 30 percent of the state budget. The state doesn't have the money to keep going at this rate without sacrificing other key programs.

During the legislative session that convened March 8, Medicaid reform may be lawmakers most important task. Legislators can't abandon the poor, but they must make difficult decisions about which medical services the state can afford. Indeed, this session promises many contentious debates, with public-employee pension reform, cuts in education and attacks on environmental programs, as well as agency consolidation, all on the radar. And Gov. Rick Scott's austerity budget would whack \$5 billion across the board, potentially costing 8,600 state workers their jobs.

But what are conceivably the most controversial budget cuts will come with Medicaid, because the program costs even more than education. Moreover, as the new federal health care plan is implemented, 2 million more Floridians will become eligible for Medicaid. See <http://www2.tbo.com/content/2011/mar/06/PVWOPINO1-medicaid-reform-a-priority/>

1,608 State Health Jobs May Be Cut

Under fire from lawmakers, the Florida Department of Health has proposed a sweeping plan to reorganize — and shrink — its operations. Among other things, it would move the state out of the primary care business. The recommendations call for cutting 1,608 department jobs and consolidating dozens of divisions and bureaus. One of the proposals would buck the powerful doctors' lobby by lifting a requirement that the department secretary be a physician.

The reorganization would lead to many department duties being shifted to other state agencies, privatized or eliminated altogether. In one major change, the report calls for the state to stop paying for primary care services at county health departments. The proposal would save about \$22.3 million and comes as some state officials want to rely more on federally qualified health centers to provide primary care.

See <http://www.tampabay.com/news/health/state-department-of-health-plan-would-cut-1600-jobs/1154994/>.

Florida Hospitals See Rise in Drug-Addicted Newborns -

<http://www.tampabay.com/news/health/florida-hospitals-see-rise-in-drug-addicted-newborns/1152023>.

Editorial - Learn to Protect Children from Maltreatment Deaths -

<http://www.theledger.com/article/20110309/EDIT01/103095009/1036>.

National News

Youth Charities Protest U.S. House Spending Cuts Plan -

A coalition of youth charities rallied in Washington on March 9 to protest billions of dollars in proposed federal budget cuts to youth and education programs, including Head Start, Pell Grants, and Community Services Health Block grants.

Included in the proposal are more than \$1 billion in cuts to Head Start, another \$5.7 billion in cuts to the Pell Grant program for low- and moderate-income college students, and \$50 million to the Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant Program, which provides health services to children and mothers. The plan would also reduce by more than \$340 million the amount of money provided to help address poverty through Community Services Block Grants.

See <http://philanthropy.com/blogs/government-and-politics/youth-charities-protest-house-spending-plan/28102>.

60 Minutes Program Features 'Hard Times Generation: Homeless Kids' -

<http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=7358670n>.

Pregnancy Drug To Prevent Premature Births Goes from \$10 to \$1,500 -

http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5jCfX0J7bSvYIQ_nQ29gl1XqJEI_A?docId=3ed07e15962b4fbaad9a916d7fc3e249.

Nearly 10,000 Babies Suffer Crib Injuries Yearly -

<http://www.tampabay.com/incoming/nearly-10000-babies-suffer-crib-injuries-yearly/1152129>.

Big Drop Reported in Kids' Ear Infections -

http://today.msnbc.msn.com/id/41908801/ns/today-today_health/.

Smartphone Pictures Pose Privacy Risks for Kids -

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N2vARzvWxwY>.

Teen Dating Violence Facts from the Clothesline Project -

<http://www.clotheslineproject.org/teendatingviolencefacts.pdf>.

President Obama to Bullying Victims: I Was Picked On as a Kid -

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=134388439>.