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## Newsletter



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## Whooping Cough: Information and Resources

The following information is from the September issue of [Education Update](#) by the Oregon Department of Education



The Pacific Northwest, along with many other places in the United States, is currently experiencing a dramatic increase in cases of whooping cough (pertussis). Nationally, in 2012, there have been 18,000 cases of pertussis and 9 deaths. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has estimated that 2012 might be the worst year for pertussis out of the last 50 years. [Click here](#) for a flier on pertussis.

There is a vaccine for pertussis which came on the scene in 1948 and drastically decreased the cases of this highly infectious disease. Vaccination is still the single most important way to prevent pertussis. After a person is vaccinated, the protection against pertussis lessens in about 5 to 10 years. This means that children who are 5-10 years past their last pertussis injection need to be re-vaccinated. Adults may also need to be vaccinated.

Pertussis is a restrictable disease under Oregon law and exclusion from school is managed under Oregon Regulatory Statute. Please contact your personal health provider for more information regarding immunization for yourself and your family.

## Back to School Safety: Bullying

The National Safety Council (NSC) wants you to know that every adult plays an important role in making school a safe, caring and respectful place for children.

What can you do if you suspect your child is being bullied?

Learn the warning signs of bullying:

- ▶ Child dislikes or has lost interest in school work;
- ▶ Has few, if any, friends;
- ▶ Appears sad, anxious or moody when talking about school;
- ▶ Complains of headaches, stomach aches;
- ▶ Has unexplained cuts, bruises, and/or scratches;
- ▶ Appears afraid of going back to school;
- ▶ Returns from school with torn, damaged or missing clothing, books or belongings; and/or
- ▶ Has trouble sleeping and/or has frequent nightmares

NSC recommends that parents never think of bullying as just "kids being kids". It is a serious problem and should be treated as such. NSC suggests taking the following steps if you suspect your child is a victim of bullying:

1. **Empower your child.** Children are often reluctant to tell adults about bullying. It is important to praise them for being brave enough to speak up. Practice with your child what he or she can say if being bullied, or how to report a situation to a teacher or bus driver.
2. **Ask questions.** By asking questions, you can find out **who** was involved, **what** occurred, and **when** it happened. Comforting the child by offering support and encouraging him or her to go on will help to fully understand the situation.
3. **Assess the situation.** Is the bullying still happening? Do they fear what will happen if they report it? Talk with the child about what he or she needs to feel and be safe. Explore possible actions your child may take to be safer, such as eating lunch with another child.
4. **Inform your child's school.** Your child should never be fearful of another child or going to school. Take proper actions to prevent any further harm. Work with the school authorities or your child's teacher to address the

bullying. School authorities need to know about the problem to properly address it and create a solution.

For detailed information and more suggestions on how you can help keep your child safe in school, visit these sites:

[National Safety Council - Back to School Safety](#)

[Bullying Safety Information Sheet](#)

[Stop Bullying: What Parents Can Do Video](#)

### **In case of emergency...is your exit clear?**

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A blocked exit is never safe!

It's always a good time to be prepared for an emergency. Do you have an emergency escape plan for your home and family in case of fire or other danger?

Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue (TVFR) would like to remind everyone that now is a great time to:

- Remove items that are stored around your doors and windows so you have a clear escape path.
- Test smoke alarms.
- Determine at least two ways out of each room in your home and practice them with family members.
- Get an escape ladder if you do not live on the ground floor.
- Have a designated meeting place for your family, in case you are separated.
- Remind everyone to call 911 from a neighbor's house.

For more information, please see TVFR's [Monthly Fire Safety Tip](#) sheet.

### **Homework Help (and more!) from your Local Library!**

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Parents: did you know that Washington County Cooperative Library Services offers homework help?

Teens can access newspaper and magazine articles to help with homework, college prep and job searches. Visit the [Teen Homework Help](#) page for more information.

Kids ages 6 - 12 can also find homework help, games, and story times on the [Big Kids](#) page.

There are also online [resources for children from birth to age 6](#), as well as [parents and caregivers](#). Get tips on getting kids ready to read, toddler and preschool story times, Internet safety and more.

### **Spay & Save!**

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If you have a pet cat, you know that it is important to spay or neuter your cat.

Some spay and neuter facts:



It lengthens a cat's life, probably by years! Females will have less stress on their bodies and a lower cancer risk. Males lose the urge to roam and will not be hormonally driven to fight over territory. This means less infections, scratches and bites - which can be life-threatening.

It is a quick surgery. The incisions are small and since the surgery doesn't take long, the risks of anesthetics are low.

Your cat will be happier, especially males. Neutered male cats tend to be calmer and more affectionate.

You will not be contributing to over crowding in cat shelters and rescues.

The benefits of spaying/neutering your cat are huge! [Spay & Save](#) offers reduced cost spays and neuters for low-income cat owners throughout the year. But during the last week in September (9/24/2012 - 9/28/2012), Spay and Save is offering to spay/neuter every cat in a low-income cat-owner's household **for free** during their **Spay Kaboodle**.

For an appointment, call (503) 802-6755 or 1-800-345-SPAY.



## September is National Preparedness Month

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Throughout September there will be activities across the country to promote emergency preparedness. More than 3,000 organizations – national, regional, and local public and private organizations – are supporting emergency preparedness efforts and encouraging all Americans to take action.

Join the effort! Visit the Center for Disease Control's [Emergency Preparedness and Response](#) site and follow these four steps:

1. [Get a Kit.](#)
2. [Make a Plan.](#)
3. [Be Informed.](#)
4. [Get Involved.](#)

Homeland Security promotes emergency preparedness all year round via the Ready America campaign. Checklists, brochures, and videos are available in [English](#) and in [Spanish](#) online and by phone (1-800-BE-READY and 1-888-SE-LISTO).

### CONTACT HOUSING

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