Making a Difference in Tarrant County

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service is unique in its approach to program development. The process of identifying and prioritizing issues helps AgriLife Extension remain relevant in meeting the needs of Texans. The involvement of local community leaders and clientele is critical in this and other aspects of the program planning process.

In order to address critical issues facing the individuals and families living in Texas, local people are involved in the program planning process to help chart the course of our educational outreach. These planning groups are instrumental in the implementation, evaluation and interpretation stages of AgriLife Extension’s program development process.

In this issue of Making a Difference, we recognize and thank those involved in this important process and in helping people improve their quality of life.
April 21 – April 27, 2013

Volunteerism is the essential ingredient that guarantees Extension’s successful completion of its mission and goals. 

Volunteer Week

Volunteers Rock!

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

75,792 hours of community service in 2012!

42 additional staff - that's the volunteer force equivalent!

$1,651,507.68 value of volunteer time!

984 Tarrant County residents participated as volunteers

Here are a few websites you might find helpful:

http://tarrant-tx.tamu.edu
Learn more about AgriLife Extension in Tarrant County.

Let’s give a warm welcome to our new County Extension Agent, Nutrition & Health

Markena Minikon
Making A Difference in Tarrant County

Livestock Enterprises for Small Acreages

Kenneth Johnson, Jr.
County Extension Agent - Agriculture & NR

Rural and suburban areas surrounding Tarrant County have definitely seen a resurgence in the amount of large properties being divided into smaller tracts, such as those comprised of 10-15 acres.

New landowners almost always want to maintain or obtain an ad valorem tax exemption, which is most often granted for agricultural use of the land. They often decide to start livestock enterprises to meet tax exemption requirements. However, most taxing authorities require that such an enterprise is economically viable. In other words, owning one animal as a family pet will not qualify property for the tax exemption.

Other considerations usually listed by the landowner in selecting a livestock enterprise include: can it be profitable (or at the very least break even), will minimal facilities (both in construction, expense and space required) be adequate; is minimal labor (both time and physical effort) enough to make it viable; and will limited animal husbandry expertise be a deterrent.

The most important concern of any landowner, big or small, is good stewardship of the land. Livestock enterprises almost always depend, at least to some degree, on having forage for the animals to eat. As a livestock producer, forage is your primary product. No livestock enterprise can be economically viable for long if grazing destroys the forage growing on the land.

Stocking rates are based upon animal units per acre. A good rule of thumb to follow is that one animal unit will consume about 26 lbs. of forage daily. Most small acreage landowners have a tendency to overestimate the carrying capacity (available forage) for their property and usually get into an overgrazing situation. It is much better to err on the underestimating side than the alternative. Some examples of 1 animal unit would be: a 1,000 lb cow, 8 - 80 lb sheep ewes or 7 - 100 lb meat goat nannies. So let’s say you have 10 acres and determine that it’s carrying capacity can handle 2 animal units. You then could have 2 cows, or 16 ewes or 14 nannies based upon the above animal unit equivalents.

Three livestock enterprises which are suitable for small acreages based upon all the criteria mentioned to this point would be: stocker cattle, hair sheep, and meat goats.

Stocker cattle are more desirable than a cow-calf operation due to the limited land available and the need for a bull. Weaned calves or heifers being developed as replacements could easily be managed on limited acreage resources. Which enterprise to choose is dependent upon marketing options at the end of the enterprise.

Meat goats are the second option, and are better suited to small acreages than cattle due to their small size and ease of handling. Goats prefer more “browse” type plants (woody species) in their diet than other livestock. So a good supply of these types of plants are needed. However they do not prefer juniper or mesquite, as such don’t include these plants in the potential diet.

Hair sheep are the third livestock group to be considered. They are produced for their meat, and are more tolerant of internal parasites than wool-type sheep. They prefer forbes (weeds) and grasses, but will not eat ragweed, broomweed, thistles or nightshade, to name a few.

Landowners contemplating entry into the livestock business should be fully prepared to do adequate research into these enterprises, and be prepared that profitability may be limited. For further information I suggest you go to Agrilifebookstore.org and download the publication “Livestock for Small Acreage Landowners”. Information in this article was derived from that resource, and it will give more detail into the three enterprises covered.

Direct Deposit for All Federal Benefit Payments

Marian Ross, M. S.
County Extension Agent
Family and Consumer Sciences

Beginning March 1, 2013, all federal benefits including Social Security benefits, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Veterans Affairs Railroad Board, Office of Personnel Management benefits and other non-tax payments will be made electronically only!

Those who are required to make this switch have the option of direct deposit to a bank or credit union account or the funds can be directed to a Direct Express® card, a prepaid debit card that can be used to pay for purchases and access cash at ATMs.

Why the switch?

- **Saves taxpayers money:** the Treasury estimates this will save taxpayers $1 billion over 10 years; no cost for postage, paper and printing;
- **It’s safer:** no risk of checks being lost or stolen;
- **It’s easy and reliable:** no need to wait for the mail or go to the bank to cash a check; and
- **It’s good for the environment:** it saves paper and eliminates the need for physical transportation.

Visit [www.godirect.org](http://www.godirect.org) to sign up or make plans with your bank or credit union, people who have not chosen an electronic payment option by March 1, 2013 will receive their money via the Direct Express® Card.


Set a Goal. Make a Plan. Save Automatically.

1. Pay off high interest debt.
2. Save for emergencies.
3. Save monthly through direct deposit or an automatic transfer from checking to savings.

Start now to teach your children to: Spend, Save and Share.
This year marks the 40th anniversary of National Nutrition Month – a nutrition education and information campaign created annually in March by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics to promote healthful eating along with physical activity. The theme for 2013 “Eat Right, Your Way, Every Day” encourages personalized healthy eating styles while recognizing food preferences, lifestyle, cultural traditions and health concerns all impact individual food choices.

Answer the following and find out how much you know about making choices for good health ...

**FACT OR FICTION?**

In a healthy eating plan, all the food I eat should be low in fat.

**FICTION**

Your goal should be to eat fewer foods that are high in solid fats. That doesn’t mean every single food you eat must be low in fat. Select lean cuts of meats or poultry and fat-free or low-fat dairy foods. Also switch from solid fat to oils when preparing food.

Snacking may keep me from becoming ravenously hungry and overeating at mealtime.

**FACT**

Healthful snacking, including carbohydrates and protein, can help your body stay fueled so you will be less inclined to overeat at your next meal, but don’t overdo it on the snacks. Keep portions small.

Eating too many carbohydrates causes weight gain.

**FICTION**

Although carbohydrates are an important energy source, eating too many calories of any source carbohydrate, fat or protein– combined with an inactive lifestyle will likely cause you to gain weight. Make at least half your grains whole and get 30 minutes of physical activity most days of the week.

Vegetarian diets are healthful.

**FACT**

Depending on the type of vegetarian diet, a healthful eating plan emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, fat-free or low-fat dairy or dairy alternatives, protein sources (which may include eggs, soy-based products, beans and nuts) and is low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, sat and added sugars. With planning, most people, including children, can healthfully follow a vegetarian diet.

**Eating sugar causes diabetes.**

**FICTION**

If you don’t have diabetes, eating sugar won’t cause you to get diabetes. Since foods high in sugar are oftentimes high in calories, overeating those foods can lead to weight gain. Being obese and inactive increases your risk for diabetes. Cut back on extra calories, by choosing foods and drinks will little or no added sugars.

Fat dieters work.

**FACT – but,** after losing pounds quickly on a fat diet, over the long haul you are unlikely to maintain that loss. Fat dieters often return to their old eating habits and regain the weight. Many fat diets require you to give up foods or entire food groups that most people need for good health.

The best way to reach and maintain a healthy weight is to develop an eating plan you can follow for life combined with regular exercise.

Frozen or canned fruits & vegetables are not as nutritious as fresh.

**FICTION**

In almost all cases, there is little nutritional difference between frozen or canned and fresh. In fact, canned or frozen produce is generally processed at its peak, so it may contain more nutrients than fresh produce.

It’s easy to find whole-grain products ... they are brown.

**FICTION**

Color is not a reliable method for identifying healthy food products. The most reliable information is on the food label. To get the full range of health benefits provided by whole grains, eat three or more servings of whole grains every day.

I should limit my daily salt intake to about one teaspoon.

**FACT**

Most people’s daily sodium intake should be 2,300 milligrams or less which is about the amount of sodium in one teaspoon of salt. Research shows limited sodium to less than 2,300 milligrams per day may reduce your risk of high blood pressure. Since most of the sodium eaten comes from processed foods, check the Nutrition Facts Label.

I’ll gain about 10 pounds a year by eating an extra 100 calories a day.

**FACT**

One hundred calories per day adds up to about a pound of weight gain per month. On the other hand, you can lose 10 pounds in a year by cutting 100 calories per day and increasing your physical activity with at least 30 minutes of exercise most days of the week.

We are approaching the spring season and you may be asking yourself where did the months go? To gear up for the season ahead and perhaps shed a few pounds you may have gained during the winter months make your calories count!

Over 66% of Americans are considered overweight or obese so it is not surprising that losing weight is one of the top “New Year’s Resolutions.” Setting reasonable goals and staying focused are two of the most important factors to shedding those unwanted holiday pounds.

The key is to make your calories count by first eating a majority of fresh fruits and vegetables. When you consume processed foods it is important to use the nutrition facts label to balance your calories as you work towards your goal.

Check the serving size and the number of servings you eat or drink because this is where extra calories add up. Keep in mind that if you double the servings you consume, you double the calories, too.

Here is a healthy tip to remember — when you consume a food that is high in calories you can balance it by selecting other lower-calorie food throughout the day. Use the General Guide to Calories to help you quickly size up calories in a single food item:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calories</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>LOW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>MODERATE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Make your calories count by sizing up your servings and calories, see what’s in it for you and judge if it is right for you!
If you’re like many Americans, you kicked off the New Year with a bang and a resolution! Did one of them happen to be losing weight? You’re definitely not alone but you want to be wary of the “get fit quick” schemes, also known as diets. I’m sure you’ve heard it many times before from doctors and registered dieticians that they don’t work. While it does sound very appealing to shed several pounds in just a couple of weeks, it’s not very realistic. Contrary to belief, being healthy starts with the mind rather than your mouth. If you don’t change the way you think about your diet and your overall habits, you will more likely fall back into the same bad eating habits that you had before you started the latest fad diet. Thus possibly leading to you gaining more weight than before! Here are some realistic tips and goals to help guide you to a healthier, happier you.

1. Keep a food journal. This way you will be able to see clearly what you’re actually eating so it will be easier for you to make the necessary changes to your diet.
2. Consult your doctor to be clear on how much weight you should lose and what necessary steps may be right for you specifically.
3. Set a realistic goal of 1 to 2 pounds per week.
4. Plan your meals ahead. This way you will be less likely to run to a fast food restaurant as a last resort when you’re crunched for time and hungry!
5. It’s important to choose a variety of foods that are colorful. Who wants to eat a dull and boring meal?
6. Substitute sweetened beverages and sodas for water, 1% or skim milk, unsweetened tea, or other unsweetened beverages.
7. Try to get at least 30 minutes of physical activity a day.
8. Remember to balance your “energy in” (calories from the foods you eat and drink) with your “energy out” (calories you burn during work and play). You don’t want to consume more calories than your body needs, causing you to have to do double time just to burn a fraction of the weight off.

Here’s a chart that can help you figure out the estimated amount of calories you should consume.

### Estimated Daily Calorie Needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender/Age</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Active</th>
<th>Sedentary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FEMALE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3 yrs</td>
<td>1,000-1,200</td>
<td>1,000-1,400</td>
<td>1,000-1,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-8 yrs</td>
<td>1,200-1,400</td>
<td>1,400-1,600</td>
<td>1,400-1,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-13 yrs</td>
<td>1,400-1,600</td>
<td>1,600-2,000</td>
<td>1,600-2,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-18 yrs</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>2,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-30 yrs</td>
<td>1,800-2,000</td>
<td>2,000-2,200</td>
<td>2,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MALE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3 yrs</td>
<td>1,200-1,400</td>
<td>1,400-1,600</td>
<td>1,600-2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-8 yrs</td>
<td>1,400-1,600</td>
<td>1,600-2,000</td>
<td>2,000-2,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-13 yrs</td>
<td>1,600-2,000</td>
<td>1,800-2,200</td>
<td>2,000-2,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-18 yrs</td>
<td>1,800-2,200</td>
<td>2,000-2,400</td>
<td>2,400-3,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-30 yrs</td>
<td>2,000-2,400</td>
<td>2,200-2,600</td>
<td>2,600-3,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-50 yrs</td>
<td>2,200-2,600</td>
<td>2,400-3,000</td>
<td>2,800-3,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>51+ yrs</strong></td>
<td>2,000-2,200</td>
<td>2,200-2,400</td>
<td>2,400-2,800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Remember, you didn’t gain the weight in a day so it’s not going to come off in a day. While it can be hard to be patient and you may come to a few road blocks, it’s important to stay with it. The overall pay off will make the journey worth it!

Resources: “How Many Calories Do You Need Each Day” Handout by EFNEP

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One public health epidemic on the rise is childhood obesity. In fact, childhood obesity has more than tripled in the past thirty years according to the CDC. Obesity is a result of a caloric imbalance when there are more calories consumed than burned off which results in weight gain. Childhood obesity has drawn a great deal of attention because of the devastating toll it has taken on our nation’s children. According to the National Institute of Health, childhood obesity reduces life expectancy, and is associated with stigma and discrimination. Obese youth are more likely to have risk factors for cardiovascular disease, such as high cholesterol or high blood pressure. Obese youth are more likely than youth of normal weight to become overweight or obese adults, and therefore more at risk for associated adult health problems, including heart disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke, several types of cancer, and osteoarthritis.

In Texas 16% of Texas youth (9-12th graders) were considered obese, 45% meet current physical activity requirements, and 40% watch three or more hours of television each day. Healthy lifestyle habits, including healthy eating and physical activity, can lower the risk of becoming obese and developing related diseases. With a focus on preventing childhood obesity, we can keep obese children from becoming obese adults. San Antonio, Texas is considered the fastest city in the U.S. with 31% of the population measured to be obese and 65% of the population to be overweight.

With the statistics so high in this state there has become a major concern that is being addressed by parents, health educators, and teachers alike. Childhood obesity and obesity in Texas is higher than the national average and continues to increase so there is a great need to change. The great news is that childhood obesity is a preventable disease.

Here are some tips to help reduce your child’s risk of childhood obesity:

- Model and encourage healthy eating habits.
- Look for ways to make favorite dishes healthier.
- Remove calorie-rich temptations from kitchen.
- Help kids stay physically active.
- Reduce sedentary time in front of screens (tv, video games, computers, etc.)
- Try not to use food as a reward when encouraging kids to eat.
- Limit the amount of saturated and trans fat in your family’s diet.
- Offer your child water or low-fat milk more often than fruit juice or sugary drinks.
- Make sure your child eats breakfast each day.
- Offer a new food to your child 10 times as it may take that long for them to determine if they like it.
- Buy and offer more fruits and vegetables.
- Include children in the planning of meals and shopping of groceries.

In the future Texas will not have as much water for landscape use. As Texas continues to grow and develop, water use in landscapes will have to be restricted because of population pressure on available water supply. By implementing the principles of Texas Earth-Kind, you will create a beautiful home environment; reduce your outdoor water use by as much as 50 percent and save money, time and water.

PLANNING AND DESIGN: Start with an accurate site plan, property lines, easements, underground utilities, existing vegetation, slopes and fences. Identify site problems, such as drainage and slopes. Identify areas by use. Think about creating outdoor rooms, walls but no roofs. Incorporate shade where possible, and develop your plan using appropriate plants.

SOIL ANALYSIS AND IMPROVEMENT: Evaluate the soil. Soil structure, texture, water holding capacity and drainage determine what soil improvements are required, what plants will grow and how much water is needed. Adding organic matter, such as compost, will enhance the growing environment by improving the water absorbing and water holding capacity of the soil.

APPROPRIATE PLANT SELECTION: Plant native and adapted plants. Select plants appropriate for the site and environmental stresses. There are many beautiful plants available for this area. Zone plants in the landscape according to their water requirements.

PRACTICAL TURF AREAS: Use the lawn area for function, aesthetics and design. Select a turf grass according to the maintenance time, cost and drought resistance. Use groundcover in narrow or difficult mowing areas.

EFFICIENT IRRIGATION: Make every drop count by watering efficiently to prevent runoff and evaporation. Water infrequently and deeply. Deep watering creates deep plant roots which are more drought tolerant. Adjust watering schedule by seasons. Drip irrigation will use 30 to 50 percent less water. Water between 8:00 p.m. and 10:00 a.m. to avoid evaporation and inefficient water distribution.

USE OF MULCHES: Mulch reduces the loss of water from the soil surface, prevents damaged roots due to cracking soil, moderates the soil temperature, stops soil particles damaging tender plants, helps control weeds and reduces erosion. Keep several inches of mulch around trees and under shrubs, groundcovers, flowers, and vegetables. Replenish mulch as needed.

APPROPRIATE MAINTENANCE: Mow regularly at the appropriate height for the selected turf grass. Remove only 1/3 of the leaf blade. Don’t bag it. Leave the grass clippings on the ground. Fertilize lawn area only 2 or 3 times a year and only when needed. Control weeds through the use of a pre-emergent program.

Website: Texas A&M – http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu; www.earthkind.tamu.edu

While it seems that mosquitoes have always been with us, West Nile Virus (WNV) was first detected in the United States in the summer of 1999 in New York City. In five years it had spread to all of the lower 48 states. West Nile outbreaks have occurred somewhere in the US every summer, and in 2012 Texas accounted for 39% of the 5397 cases of human infection reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov.

The actual number of people infected by WNV is undoubtedly much higher. Approximately 80% of people who are infected will show no symptoms at all. Almost all of the remaining 20% develop symptoms that are easily confused with the flu; fever, headache, body aches, nausea, vomiting and occasionally a rash. Many of these people, especially those who feel sick for only a few days, may not seek medical attention. If there is anything good that can be said about this past year’s WNV epidemic, it is likely that many residents of North Texas now presumably have lifelong immunity to the disease.

No one knows if this will be another record year for WNV, but we do know a few things about mosquitoes. Use this information to protect yourself from this disease and others that are spread by this annoying insect vector.

**Personal Protection, the Four D’s**

- **Dawn and Dusk**
  - Most of the mosquito species that transmit disease are in the genus Culex, and they are crepuscular which simply means that they are out and about at dawn and dusk. In a hot Texas summer that’s also when people like to be out and about.
  - There is a notable exception among disease transmitting mosquitoes, *Aedes albopictus*, the Asian Tiger Mosquito, a Texas resident since 1985, that is active all day long.

- **DEET**
  - Use an insect repellent. DEET is the most widely used active ingredient in repellents, but 669 mosquito repellent products are registered by the EPA and there are alternative active ingredients, such as Picaridin, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus, and IR3535 that have been proven safe and effective. http://www.epa.gov.
  - Remember to apply sunscreen first and then repellent.

- **Dress**
  - Wear long sleeves and long pants.

- **Drain**
  - Eliminate sources of standing water. Discarded tires provide the perfect mosquito breeding environment, but containers as small as an old can or cup can hold enough water for mosquitoes. Dr. Mike Merchant reported that Dallas County officials found a source of breeding mosquitoes on the property of 25% of people who called to complain about mosquitoes coming from public or neighbors’ properties. Standing water mosquitoes are fairly weak fliers and usually don’t move more than one mile in a lifetime.
  - Use cyclic irrigation, also known as cycle and soak, to break irrigation runs into short segments that allow for water to soak in instead of standing or running off to stand in the gutter or storm drain.
  - Regularly, at least twice a week because some mosquitoes can develop from egg to adult in as little as 4 days, empty and refill bird baths, pet water bowls, and saucers under flower pots.
  - Clean debris out of rain gutters.

Humans and horses can serve as hosts for WNV, but only horses can be vaccinated against it. Sometimes it’s good to be a horse.

For more information on controlling mosquitoes around the home, visit Dr. Merchant’s Mosquito Safari website, http://mosquitoesafari.tamu.edu or his You Tube Mosquito Control Channel, http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL601F08778CC0167C.
As spring is nearing, many will set off on a cleaning spree anxious to rid themselves of the clutter. During this process of renewal, we should remind ourselves and others to refrain from throwing away items that could be recycled or reused in a different way. There are countless benefits to practicing the three R’s (Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle). On the EPA’s website, http://www.epa.gov/recycle/recycle.html, they noted the following benefits:

- Reduces the amount of waste sent to landfills and incinerators;
- Conserves natural resources such as timber, water, and minerals;
- Prevents pollution caused by reducing the need to collect new raw materials;
- Saves energy;
- Reduces greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global climate change;
- Helps sustain the environment for future generations;

Helps create new well-paying jobs in the recycling and manufacturing industries in the United States. The first benefit for the three R’s, Reduces the amount of waste sent to the landfills and incinerators is something that can easily begin within our homes. So before you discard of a household item, such as an old cookie sheet that may have become unsightly consider ways that it can serve a different purpose. The creative minds at Disney’s Spoonful, http://spoonful.com/, have an idea for that old cookie sheet that could easily benefit the entire family. Get the message across with a repurposed cookie sheet.

What you’ll need
- Non-aluminum cookie sheet
- Ruler
- Scissors
- Self-adhesive shelf liner
- Scrap of wood
- Hammer
- Large nail
- Empty can
- Glue (we used Crafter’s Pick The Ultimate)
- Supermagnets
- Bottle caps
- Card stock
- Markers

How to make it
1. Measure the back of your cookie sheet and cut a piece of shelf liner that’s an inch wider and an inch taller. Stick the shelf liner to the back of the cookie sheet by peeling off one corner of the liner and laying it down on a corner of the cookie sheet. Slowly pull the backing away as you smooth the liner onto the sheet. Cut off the excess shelf liner.
2. To make a hole for hanging, place the cookie sheet over a piece of scrap wood and use a hammer to punch a nail through the center of the rim.
3. For the pencil holder, cut a piece of shelf liner that’s about an inch taller than the can. Wrap the liner around the can so that the ends overlap a bit, and then cut off the excess liner. Glue two magnets to the side of the can.
4. For the bottle-cap magnets, glue a magnet inside of each cap. Cut a piece of card stock to fit the cap, write a name on it, and glue it on top of the magnet.

Do you remember teasing and name calling when you attended school? A lot of us do and still to this day just consider it just a part of growing up. I can not remember how many times I heard "that is just a part of growing up, you need to toughen up". Today we realize that is not the case; teasing and name calling is causing a tremendous amount of anxiety and trouble for many youth. It is causing them not to want to go to school and learn, it is causing them to lose their childhood. It is even causing some of them to take drastic measures such as harming themselves or taking weapons to schools to defend themselves from possibly causing horrific consequences to fellow classmates.

Conflicts among youth and bullying have been increasing. House Bill 212 and 283 have mandated that school districts adopt and implement a dating violence and discipline management policy. The White House Conference on Bullying Prevention materials provides the following research statistics:

- 56% of students have personally witnessed some type of bullying at school.
- Bullying takes many forms, with school staff reporting that verbal (59%), social/relational (50%), and physical (39%) forms were of greater concern in their school than cyber-bullying (17%).
- Although school staff reported being very willing to intervene in bullying situations, slightly over half of the survey respondents indicated that there were few formal bullying prevention activities present in their schools, and less than 40 percent were directly involved in these activities.

Here are some signs that your youth may be a bully:

- There’s a boy or a girl (or maybe more than one) whom he or she have repeatedly shoved, or punched or physically pushed around in a mean way just because he or she felt like it.
- He or she had someone else hurt someone they don’t like.
- He or she spread a nasty rumor about someone, in conversation, in a note, or through email or instant messaging.
- He or she and their friends have regularly kept one or more kids from hanging out or playing with you. Examples: at their lunch table at school, during sports or other activities, or activities that are a part of a club or other kind of group activity.
- He or she have teased people in a mean way, calling them names, making fun of their appearance, or the way they talk or dress or act.
- He or she has been part of a group that did any of these things - even if he or she only wanted to be part of the crowd.

So how can you help? Talk to your youth and let them know teasing and name calling is not ok. Let them know you want to be informed if this is happening to them. Also let them know he or she needs to inform a teacher or adult they can trust that this is going on so it can be stopped.

Resource for this information is: http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/kids/signs-that-you-bully.aspx
During the high school years, students begin to consider possible career and post-secondary opportunities. While exploring various colleges/universities, a student will want to understand the admission requirements. While these vary among institutions, most will require a college admission test.

Frequent questions students ask are, “What is the difference between the SAT & ACT?” and “Which one should I choose?” Registration for each test is individual, so students may choose either or both. Each provider maintains excellent websites with testing information, practice questions, etc.

SAT
SAT is a globally recognized college admission test that lets you show colleges what you know and how well you can apply that knowledge. It tests your knowledge of reading, writing and math — subjects that are taught every day in high school classrooms.

The SAT doesn’t test logic or abstract reasoning. It tests the skills you’re learning in school: reading, writing and math. Your knowledge and skills in these subjects are important for success in college and throughout your life.

- The critical reading section includes reading passages and sentence completions.
- The writing section includes a short essay and multiple-choice questions on identifying errors and improving grammar and usage.
- The mathematics section includes questions on arithmetic operations, algebra, geometry, statistics, and probability.

The best way to prepare for the SAT is to take challenging courses, study hard, and read and write both in and outside the classroom. Students can also take advantage of our free online practice tools, such as an online or printable practice test, sample questions, The Official SAT Question of the Day™ and more.

ACT
The ACT tests measure the knowledge and skills that students have acquired throughout their education. The tests emphasize students’ capabilities in understanding and interpreting information, solving problems, and applying their knowledge and skills.

The ACT contains five curriculum-based tests: the English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science Tests are standardized multiple choice tests based on the major areas of high school and postsecondary instructional programs; the optional Writing Test is an impromptu essay on a given prompt.

- English – Measures standard written English and rhetorical skills
- Math – Measures mathematical skills acquired throughout high school
- Reading – Contains 40 questions measuring reading comprehension
- Science – Measures the interpretation, analysis, evaluation, reasoning, and problem-solving skills required in the natural sciences
- Writing – optional – Measures writing skills based on response to a stated prompt

There is no “guessing penalty” on the test. (Correct answers receive a score, but incorrect answers do not result in a penalty.)

ACT maintains a separate record for each test date. Students may submit the scores from a specific test date to the institution of their choice.