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New Children's Book Launches August 1st, Takes on Bullying

WASHINGTON, D.C. – (August 1, 2012) – According to the National Center for Education Statistics, approximately a third of all children are bullied at school at some point. It's a problem that impacts millions of children every year, leaving many parents unsure of what to do. Before the school bells ring for the next school year, it's important that parents have a serious conversation with their children about bullying, to help them avoid being a victim, or doing the bullying. It is never too early to educate children about bullying.

"Issues like bullying are familiar to most kids. They may have been a victim of it, they may have done the bullying, or they may have seen others being bullied," explains Peter J. Goodman, author of the first book in a new series "We're All Different But We're All Kitty Cats," which releases on August 1, 2012. "The first thing we need to do is start a conversation about it early, so that we can address it and start reducing the incidents. And prevention is most effective when implemented at the preschool level."

Bullying, according to the National Institutes of Health, is when someone repeatedly tries to harm someone that they think is weaker. Bullying comes in multiple forms, including physical (e.g., hitting, kicking, pushing, etc.), verbal (e.g., threatening, teasing, etc.), and social (e.g., rumors, exclusion, etc.). In recent years, cyber-bullying has also become more widespread, which involves bullying through the use of electronic means, including online and through text messaging.

Here are some tips for parents when talking to their child about bullying:

- Discuss what bullying is so they have a clear definition of what would be included.
- Teach them to not react to bullies. If they do react, the bully is more likely to continue the behavior. By your child not reacting, the bully will most likely lose interest.
- Explain that children need to be confident when dealing with bullies. If ignoring them doesn't work to end the bullying, they need to stand up to them by being confident, looking them in the eye, and telling them to stop the behavior.
- Encourage the child to make friends with others, so that the bully sees that the child has support.
- Always make sure that the child knows to seek assistance from school personnel. Bullying should be reported, so that the school can properly deal with it.
- Help children identify their strengths and learn to focus on those, rather than focusing on any negative traits that the bully may tease them about.

There are several ways parents can help children learn to better understand bullying, including through reading books together and role playing. If a parent realizes that their child is the bully, they need to discuss the problem with their child, try to get to the bottom of why they are engaging in such behaviors, and work with the school administrators to help stop the behavior.

“Bullying is a serious issue, and we need to have an open dialogue about it,” added Goodman. “That’s what my books are all about. They start a conversation that will last a lifetime.”

In his first book of the series, “The First Day of School,” Goodman addresses the issue of bullying. Through a cast of cat characters, he helps children learn what bullying is, and what parents and classmates can do to help address it. To learn more about the book series, or to purchase the volume that addresses bullying, visit www.kittycatsbook.com.

dreamBIG Press has partnered with PACER’s National Bullying Prevention Center, based in Minneapolis, to help raise awareness about bullying prevention.

“Sharing stories with young children to raise awareness of treating each other with kindness, creating empathy, and looking out for one another can be valuable tools to help prevent bullying,” says Julie Hertzog, Director of PACER’s National Bullying Prevention Center. “This book is one more important piece to that puzzle.”

About Dream Big Press

dreamBIG Press is a publishing house that has created a series of children’s books titled *We’re All Different But We’re All Kitty Cats*. The books are designed for elementary-school-aged children, to tackle common issues that they may encounter such as bullying, childhood fears, confidence, being different, and making friends. Through the use of a cast of cats, the author helps children better understand those issues, and learn how to deal with them. The company was started by Peter J. Goodman, a multimedia children’s author and president of Gut Instinct Creative, an award-winning marketing communications company. For more information about dreamBIG Press or the book series, visit the site at: www.kittycatsbook.com or our YouTube channel www.youtube.com/kittycatsbook.

PACER’s National Bullying Prevention Center

Every day, 160,000 kids in America stay home from school to avoid being bullied. [PACER’s National Bullying Prevention Center](http://www.pacer.org/national-bullying-prevention-center) educates communities nationwide to prevent bullying through the use of creative, interactive resources including the websites TeensAgainstBullying.org and KidsAgainstBullying.org. Based in Minneapolis, PACER offers educators, students, families, and individuals the tools they need to address bullying in schools, recreational programs, and community organizations. For more information, visit PACER.org/bullying.

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Sources:

National Center for Education Statistics. *Student Victimization in U.S. Schools*. Page 11. <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2012/2012314.pdf>

National Institutes of Health. *Bullying*. <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/bullying.html>