



212 Fourth Avenue, SE
Decatur, AL 35601
Telephone: 256-552-3000
Email: Superintendent@dcs.edu

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Decatur City Schools is proud to partner with Parents and Children Together (PACT) to provide child abuse prevention programs to all 10th grade students. The goal is to help teens recognize, react to, and report dangerous situations. The program teaches that adults are responsible for teens' safety, but there are things teens can do to keep safe, that it is NEVER too late to tell, and that abuse is NEVER the teen's fault.

Why does your teen need a safety program? These statistics compiled by the Monique Burr Foundation for Children provide insight:

- 10% of children are abused before their 18th birthday,
- 14% of children have been solicited online,
- 22% of students have been bullied,
- 73% of children under 17-years-old have viewed explicit material online.

The MBF Teen Safety Matters® program from the Monique Burr Foundation for Children is evidence-based and is currently being used in the tenth grade. The interactive curriculum speaks to teens in a way they can best learn and respond. The program empowers students to spot and respond to bullying, cyberbullying, the four types of abuse (physical, emotional, sexual, neglect), relationship abuse, digital abuse, and other digital dangers and provides tools that teens can use to be safe. The program uses the following components:

- Age-appropriate scripts and corresponding videos for students in the tenth grade.
- Fun games and activities to reinforce concepts.
- Take-home items to remind teens and parents of the lessons and the 5 Safety Rules: Know What's Up, Spot Red Flags, Make A Move, Talk It Up, No Blame/No Shame.

When teens are taught safety information and rules to help them stay safe, they perform better in school and enjoy healthier, happier, and safer lives as reported by research synthesized by the Monique Burr Foundation for Children. MBF Teen Safety Matters® also meets the legislative requirements of Erin's Law, which requires public schools to implement a prevention-oriented child sexual abuse program and is endorsed by Erin Merryn, child sexual abuse survivor and founder and president of Erin's Law.

Programs are presented throughout the year to various grade levels. For more information about PACT's Student Awareness program or to find out more about other services PACT provides, you may visit www.pactfamily.org or call 256-355-7252.

DCS recognizes and respects the fact that some parents/guardians would rather introduce such topics at home or at a later age. If this applies to your family, you may simply complete the information below and return this letter to your student's principal, who will "opt-out" your child from attending such presentation.

Parent/Guardian Opt-Out

I do not wish for my child, _____, to participate in the PACT program.

Child's Grade: _____ Child's Teacher: _____

School: _____ Parent's signature: _____