

News

Iowa works to make reporting cyberbullying easier

Mark Moran
Iowa News Service

It can be challenging for parents and caregivers to shield their children from bigotry and hatred online.

In Iowa, the numbers are startling, even in the face of a law to prevent bullying. Almost half of Iowa middle- and high school students reported being bullied verbally, physically or through cyberspace, according to research at the University of Iowa, despite a 2007 anti-bullying law.

Schools are trying to make it easier to report cyberbullying anonymously, online.

Lindsay Schubiner, Momentum program director at the Western States Center, said keeping kids safe on the internet is import-

ant because some are being recruited online by white nationalist groups.

"As hate, violence and threats to democracy continue, and bigotry and conspiracy theories are further mainstreamed, young people see that, and it has an impact," Schubiner stated. "It's really important for parents and caregivers to provide an open space to critically examine what all of that means to them, and to their future and to their values."

About 45% of middle- and high school students nationwide say they have been victims of cyberbullying, according to a survey from the Cyberbullying Research Center. The survey also shows cyberbullying has increased over the past decade.

Schubiner emphasized vigilance is the

first key to ensuring kids are safe online. She suggested watching for hate groups using jokes to minimize violence, scapegoating, or "straw man" arguments to manipulate people; tactics she stressed both children and parents need to be aware of.

"Helping them to recognize the kinds of strategies that are intended to influence them can be a really powerful way to push back against this," Schubiner contended.

Schubiner encouraged parents and caregivers to listen openly and non-judgmentally to their children about their online experiences.

"Really lean on relationships, and relationships that the young person has with either older peers or other adults who share inclusive and equitable values."

Monroe Library

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project, the library will be extending the due dates for the books to accommodate the extended time the building will be closed. Librarians have also been working to get readers signed up for other ways to access the new stories while the doors are closed.

"We've worked on accommodating the readers by having them get on E-books and other options," Tripp-Lanser said.

Salon Essence

CONTINUED FROM 1

is the exposed duct work in the ceiling. That is where I started and what I wanted make sure it was all exposed."

The public was first alerted a change was coming to the long empty building when the plywood covering the windows and doors were removed. Hansen said facade grants from the City of Monroe and Jasper County Economic Development Corporation helped to transform the bland, beige exterior to the clean storefront that shines along the busy roadway.

"That was very helpful to bring money back to the interior," Hansen said. "It has been fun getting the reaction once we took down the plywood 'no trespass-

ing' signs."

Keeping all of the same services along with a few new offerings, Salon Essence is more than ready to welcome guests in the doors. The additional square footage make it easier to expand what the salon can offer now and in the future.

"We have more space, we can offer more things, do more things," Hansen said. "We started doing extensions, eyelash extensions, facials, we massage, all body waxing, spray tan and, of course, all of the hair."

Excitement radiates from Hansen, her fellow stylist and guests as they make the new location their home. A lot of hard work, time and energy helped make Salon Essence a premier business for Monroe.

"We have been really busy, it has been fun," Hansen said.



Fresh white paint and contrasting black furniture gives the new Salon Essence location a clean, modern look. Jamee A. Pierson/PCM Explorer

Auditor

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the financial side of the office, where she has remained since. In addition to payroll duties, Jennings has helped

with insurance and budgets.

Jennings was born and raised in Jasper County. She grew up on a family farm near Kellogg. In fact she bought the home she was raised in and her parents built.

Jennings graduated from AIB College of Business in Des Moines with a bachelor's degree in accounting.

As the new county auditor, Jennings is looking forward to everyone working together and

moving forward.

"Obviously, I have big shoes to fill with Dennis retiring," Jennings said, who also noted upon her swearing in that there would be big things to come and likely some changes. "Change is always good. (I'm looking forward to) all of us working together and making our office better than what it already is."

SUPERVISORS REJECT SURPRISE INTERVIEW

Before the morning supervisors meeting entered into a prolonged recess, the board was approached by another individual interested in the county auditor position. Mark Hallam, a member of the Newton City Council, said he told

Cupples of his interest in the office months ago.

However, Hallam was not one of the three people chosen to be interviewed. One of the individuals to be interviewed eventually withdrew themselves, leaving only two people to be interviewed. Hallam asked the supervisors to be considered for an interview that afternoon, essentially filling in that third candidate slot.

"In the past 10 years, community services has become very important to me," Hallam said. "Everything from being a trustee with the Newton Community Educational Foundation to a historic preservation commissioner. And of course serving on the Newton City Council and mayor

pro-tem."

Hallam added his leadership philosophy has always been driven by vision and he would like to discuss it more with supervisors later that afternoon.

Talsma rejected the consideration, saying the agenda had already been posted with the two interview slots. Cupples mentioned the supervisors could amend the agenda, but Talsma did not like the idea and he did not want to get the county into any legal trouble. Cupples was fine with supervisors interviewing Hallam.

Stevenson sided with Talsma, noting the consideration may be too last-minute. Hallam accepted the board's decision.

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Attention Farmers!



Please join us for
2023 Crop Insurance Meeting
and
Beef Quality Assurance Certification

Attend event one or both, but either way we'd like to see you on:
Tuesday, January 31, 2023 at Sun Valley Barn
1981 Fifield Rd, Pella, IA

Itinerary:
3:30 p.m. - Registration for Certification
4:00 p.m. - Certification class with Pat Wall
5:30 p.m. - Social Time
6:00 p.m. - Dinner
Immediately Following Dinner - Meeting
Crop Updates with Great American and Farm Succession Presentation with Patrick Hatting



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klemke@vangorpins.com