Healthy and Safe School Environment:

Bullying Comes Naturally to Many Students
Research has found that teachers and administrators witness only about four percent of all bullying incidents; more than 70 percent of bullying is indirect or psychological and it continues to be an increasingly subtle -- and serious – problem, studies show. Typical bullies are not necessarily stereotypical outcasts and may even be popular or interested in improving their social status. Schools should take such behavior seriously and understand that the most effective preventions work to change the school climate. Read about it at www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/sept11/vol69/num01/Bullying-Is-Common%E2%80%94And-Subtle.aspx.

A Quarter of High-School Students Report Being Bullied
About 25 percent of high-school students say they were bullied during the 2008-09 school year, primarily by being the focus of jokes or the subject of rumors, according to the National Center for Education Statistics. The bullying most likely was to take place in the classroom or school hallways. While fewer students say they were bullied online, a growing number of online incidents resulted in students getting into fights at school or avoiding certain parts of the building. Read more at www.usnews.com/education/blogs/high-school-notes/2011/08/24/bullying-affects-a-quarter-of-high-schools-students.

How to Prevent Bullying on Social Networks
Many educators are beginning to realize that social-networking tools such as Facebook and now Google+ can be used by students to create groups that include, exclude and otherwise bully their peers. In this blog post, graduate research and teaching assistant Ira Socol suggests educators bring these tools into the classroom with forethought and care regarding how they can be used to support open learning environments, while protecting against the creation of harmful and unsafe situations for students. Read more at www.edutopia.org/blog/dark-side-google-plus-ira-socol.

How to Prevent Bullying on Social Networks
Maurice Elias, director of the Social-Emotional Learning Lab at Rutgers University, in this blog post encourages teachers to consider their position on creating a pledge for students to sign to help prevent bullying in school.

Elias suggests that a powerful and effective pledge created, in part, by and for students would affirm values the students seek to uphold, and would be signed publicly by each student. Find out how at www.edutopia.org/blog/student-pledges-against-bullying-harrassment-maurice-elias.

The Role of Mentors in Ending Bullying
Middle-school students who are mentored by college students could be less likely to become bullies, according to the architects of a bullying-prevention program. Education professor Tammy James and middle-school health teacher Marnie Gibson also say that college students could help younger students open up about bullying in a way they will not around adults. "They're more likely to listen to older students because they look up to them -- as opposed to adults looking down on them," one student said. Read about it at www.dailylocal.com/articles/2011/08/25/news/doc4e557aaeced3a960563241.txt.

Ten Steps to Decrease Bullying
This article offers 10 steps to reduce bullying that are relevant and derived from the experiences of one teacher regarding what actually happens among kids. Read about them at www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/post/teacher-how-to-address-bullying-school--and-how-not-to/2011/08/01/gIQAihTneJ_blog.html.

Feds Encourage Private Sector to Combat Cyberbullying
Federal technology officials are pushing social networks and app creators to make responses to cyberbullying a priority and some organizations have begun to do that. MTV has partnered with Massachusetts Institute of Technology researchers on an app called *Over the Line?,* which allows users to share and rate possible incidents of cyberbullying. The data from the app will be used to evaluate the digital ethics of young people and possible responses to the problem. Facebook also has pledged a $200,000 grant to research cyberbullying. Read the article at http://informationweek.com/news/government/security/231602176. To connect with *Over the Line?*, go to www.athinline.org/overtheline-iphone-app.