

BULLYING PREVENTION



School Guide



BUILD A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

A safe and supportive school climate can help prevent bullying. Safety starts in the classroom. Students should also feel and be safe everywhere on campus—in the cafeteria, in the library, in the rest rooms, on the bus, and on the playground. Everyone at school can work together to create a climate where bullying is not acceptable.

Create a Safe and Supportive Environment

- Develop a school policy that includes rules and consequences for bullying behavior.
- Establish a culture of inclusion and respect that welcomes all students. Reward students when they show thoughtfulness and respect for peers, adults, and the school.
- Make sure students interact safely. Monitor bullying "hot spots" in and around the building. Students may be at higher risk of bullying in settings where there is little or no adult monitoring or supervision, such as bathrooms, playgrounds, and the cafeteria.
- Enlist the help of all school staff. All staff can keep an eye out for bullying. They also help set the tone at school. Teachers, bus drivers, cafeteria staff, office staff, librarians, school nurses, and others see and influence students every day. Messages reach kids best when they come from many different adults who talk about and show respect and inclusion. Train school staff to prevent bullying.
- Set a tone of respect in the classroom. This means managing student behavior in the classroom well. Well-managed classrooms are the least likely to have bullying.

Bullying Prevention Staff Training

To ensure that bullying prevention efforts are successful, all school staff need to be trained on what bullying is, what the school's policies and rules are, and how to enforce the rules. Training may take many forms: staff meetings, one-day training sessions, and teaching through modeling preferred behavior.

Educate About Bullying

Educating students about what bullying is and how they can prevent it is a key component to a school wide effort. Schools can incorporate the topic of bullying prevention in lessons and activities. Examples of activities to teach about bullying include:

- Internet or library research, such as looking up types of bullying, how to prevent it, and how kids should respond.
- Presentations, such as a speech or role-play on stopping bullying.
- Discussions about topics like reporting bullying.
- Creative writing, such as a poem speaking out against bullying or a story or skit teaching bystanders how to help.
- Artistic works, such as a collage about respect or the effects of bullying.
- Classroom meetings to talk about peer relations.



Evidence-Based Programs and Curricula

Schools may choose to implement formal evidence-based programs or curricula. Many evaluated programs that address bullying are designed for use in elementary and middle schools. There are many considerations in selecting a program, including the school's demographics, capacity, and resources.

SOURCE: stopbullyingnow.gov

Archdiocese of New York Drug Abuse Prevention Program

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems.

In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- *An Imbalance of Power:* Kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- *Repetition:* Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.
- Intent to harm.
- Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.



Where and When Does Bullying Happen?

Bullying can occur during or after school hours. While most reported bullying happens in the school building, a significant percentage also happens in places like on the playground or the bus. It can also happen travelling to or from school, in the youth's neighborhood, or on the Internet.

Types of Bullying

There are three types of bullying:

Verbal bullying is saying or writing mean things. Verbal bullying includes:

- Teasing.
- Name-calling.
- inappropriate sexual comments.
- Taunting.
- Threatening to cause harm.

Social bullying, sometimes referred to as relational bullying, involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships. Social bullying includes:

- Leaving someone out on purpose.
- Telling other children not to be friends with someone.
- Spreading rumors about someone.
- Embarrassing someone in public.

Physical bullying involves hurting a person's body or possessions. Physical bullying includes:

- Hitting/kicking/pinching.
- Spitting.
- Tripping/pushing.
- Taking or breaking someone's things.
- Making mean or rude hand gestures.



ENGAGE PARENTS AND YOUTH

School staff can do a great deal to prevent bullying and protect students, but they can't do it alone. Parents and youth also have a role to play in preventing bullying at school. One mechanism for engaging parents and youth, a school safety committee, can bring the community together to keep bullying prevention at school active and focused.



Benefits of Parent and Youth Engagement

Research shows that school administrators, such as principals, can play a powerful role in bullying prevention. They can inspire others and maintain a climate of respect and inclusion. But a principal cannot do it alone. When parents and youth are involved in the solutions:

- Students feel safer and can focus on learning.
- Parents worry less.
- Teachers and staff can focus on their work.
- Schools can develop more responsive solutions because students are more likely to see or hear about bullying than adults.
- School climate improves because students are engaged in taking action to stop bullying.
- Parents can support school's messages about bullying at home. They are also more likely to recognize signs that a child has been bullied or is bullying others.



How Parents and Youth Can Contribute

Schools can set the stage for meaningful parent and youth involvement, but it doesn't happen overnight. Parents and youth need to feel valued and be given opportunities to contribute their expertise. To sustain parent and youth involvement, schools need to provide meaningful roles for them. For example:

- Students can contribute their views and experiences with bullying. They can take leadership roles in school to promote respect and inclusion, communicate about bullying prevention with their peers, and help develop rules and policies.
- Parents can contribute to a positive school climate through the parent teacher association, volunteering, and school improvement events.
- School staff can keep parents informed, make them feel welcome, and treat them as partners. Schools can consider identifying a school coordinator to support parent and youth engagement strategies. Schools can set meeting times that are convenient for parents and youth and may consider additional incentives such as providing dinner or childcare.



When the brain is feeling threatened, it gets worse at thinking and making choices.

Want students to think better? Help them feel safe.



BULLYING PREVENTION GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

Manage Classrooms to Prevent Bullying

Teachers can consider these ways to promote the respect, positive relations, and order that helps prevent bullying in the classroom:

- Create ground rules.
- Develop rules with students so they set their own climate of respect and responsibility.
- Use positive terms, like what to do, rather than what not to do.
- Support school-wide rules.
- Reinforce the rules.
- Be a role model and follow the rules yourself. Show students respect and encourage them to be successful.
- Make expectations clear. Keep your requests simple, direct, and specific.
- Reward good behavior. Try to affirm good behavior four to five times for every one criticism of bad behavior.
- Use one-on-one feedback, and do not publicly reprimand.
- Help students correct their behaviors. Help them understand violating the rules results in consequences: "I know you can stop (negative action) and go back to (positive action)."
"If you choose to continue, then (consequence)."



Class Meetings

Classroom meetings provide a forum for students to talk about school-related issues beyond academics. These meetings can help teachers stay informed about what is going on at school and help students feel safe and supported. These meetings work best in classrooms where a culture of respect is already established. Classroom meetings are typically short and held on a regular schedule. They can be held in a student's main classroom, home room, or advisory period.

- Establish ground rules. Kids should feel free to discuss issues without fear. Classroom meetings are not a time to discuss individual conflicts or gossip about others. Reinforce existing classroom rules.
- Start the conversation. Focus on specific topics, such as bullying or respectful behaviors. Meetings can identify and address problems affecting the group as a whole. Topics should be broad and lead to solutions that build trust and respect between students. Use open-ended questions or prompts such as:
- Share an example of a student who helped someone at school this week.
- Without names, share an example of someone who made another student feel bad.
- What did students nearby do? What did you do? Did you want to do something different—why or why not?
- If you could describe the perfect response to the situation, what would it be? How hard or easy would it be to do? Why?
- How can adults help?
- End the meeting with a reminder that it is every- one's job to make school a positive place to learn. Encourage kids to talk to teachers or other trusted adults if they see bullying or are worried about how someone is being treated.
- Follow-up when necessary. Monitor student body language and reactions. If a topic seems to be affecting a student, follow-up with him or her. Know what resources are available to support students affected by bullying.

