

Guide to Bullying

What is Bullying?

Bullying is typically a form of repeated, persistent, and aggressive behavior directed at an individual or individuals that is intended to cause (or should be known to cause) fear and distress and/or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, or reputation. Bullying occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance.

Definition of bullying from Policy/Program Memorandum 144, Ministry of Education

When a conflict or potential bullying situation is brought to the attention of a faculty or staff member, the students involved are referred to the counselor and assistant principal. We work with the students and their families to resolve the conflict and prevent future issues from occurring. Counseling, educational, and behavioral strategies as well as increased monitoring of the students are techniques found to address these issues. If the behavior continues despite these interventions, disciplinary action will be taken.

When relational aggression (social bullying) occurs, the students involved are counseled on solutions to the situation including empathy building, communication strategies, and assertiveness skills. Bringing the students together facilitates this process.

Effects of Bullying

- Low Self-Esteem
- Depression
- Anxiety

Effects of Continued Bullying on Child who Bullies

- Difficulty with relationships later in life
- More likely to have a criminal record

Bystanders

- People who watch or participate in mean behavior also live with the consequences of that behavior
- Research shows that people who practice virtue are happier than those who go along with the crowd

What to do instead?

- Walk away, giving the bully the clear impression that you do not like his or her behavior: don't give the bully an audience.
- Tell an adult
- Stand up for the victim
 - Stand next to him or her
 - Help the victim walk away from the situation
 - Tell the bully to stop it
 - Don't get involved in hitting or pushing or insulting the person who is bullying

If you are bullied:

- Talk to someone you trust. If they don't do anything, tell another adult
- Walk away
- Don't get involved in pushing or hitting or insulting the person who is bullying you
- Let your friends know what is happening so that they can help support you
- Tell him or her to stop
- Try not to react to the negative behavior

Reinforcement at Home

Talk with your child about how they would handle a situation in which their friend was the only person in the class not invited to a birthday party? What would your child do if their friend told them not to talk to another friend? What would you do if you saw a child push another child?

Educational Resources for Parents on the topic of Bullying:

The following webpage includes a pamphlet with common questions and answers parents may have regarding bullying as well as online respect and responsibility guidelines. <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/bullying.pdf>

Books for Children in Grades K-2: These short stories show different ways to deal with teasing. You can read them together and discuss the lessons.

Crysanthemum by Kevin Henkes

A Porcupine Named Fluffy by Helen Lester

The Recess Queen by Alexis O'Neill and Laura Huliska-Beith
Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon by Patty Lovell
The Berenstain Bears and Too Much Teasing by Stan & Jan Berenstain
Enemy Pie by Laura Candler

Books for Children in Grades 3-5:

100 Dresses by Eleanor Estes: This book addresses subtle put-downs among girls.
Super Emma by Jamie Harper
How to face up to the class bully! by Valerie Wilson Wesley

Books for Parents to Read on this Topic:

Girl Wars: 12 Strategies that will end Female Bullying by Cheryl Dellasega and Charisse Nixon
The Good Son: Shaping the Moral Development of our Boys and Young Men by Michael Gurian
Boys Should be Boys: Seven Secrets to Raising Healthy Sons by Meg Meeker