

Bullying and Cyber-Bullying

A teacher, parent/guardian,
caretaker guide

Bullying, a definition

- ***Repeated*** use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that includes or intends to do the following:



Bullying is a *repeated* act which...

- Causes physical or emotional harm to victim or victim's property
- Places victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property
- Creates a hostile environment for victim
- Infringes on the rights of the victim
- Materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or orderly operation of a school.

Bullying involves....

- A power imbalance
- Abuse-type victimization
- Repetition by one or more people
- Intent to harm



Cyber-Bullying is different....

- People routinely underestimate its profound impact
- It involves more people than typical bullying
- It involves different people who may not typically bully in person
- It has a broader impact—home, school, work, society

Cyber-Bullying is....

- Bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication
- It includes any e-mail, internet communications, instant messages, fax, social networks, blogs, web-pages, cell phones, texting, images sent by electronic means



Cyber-Bullying also includes

- Impersonating or assuming the identity of another through electronic means previously listed
- Distributing, posting, or sharing material electronically



Why do students bully?

- Low self-esteem
- Poor social skills
- High self-esteem but no sense of consequences or empathy
- Bias or hostility toward person or group who differs; Intolerance, prejudice
- Cognitive dysfunctions
- Lack of coping skills or adult to help with problem solving

Common Misconceptions about Internet/Cyber Use

- Individuals believe that you can't pass yourself off as someone you are not (Identity fraud)
- Exhibit lack of understanding of "privacy" limits
- Few users realize permanence of internet
- Individuals believe that openly visible content wouldn't or couldn't be viewed by others in a position to judge them (ex. Employers)
- The belief that what is online doesn't count.

How do we eliminate bullying

- You must alter the culture and climate of school
- You must change the attitudes of adults and children to make bullying behaviors socially undesirable.
- Direct adult intervention is most effective
- Set firm limits and boundaries
- Establish consequences

What won't stop bullying?

- Retaliation or “paying bullying forward”



- Mediation between parties as there is an inherent imbalance of power



What can parents/guardians do to help address bullying?

- Don't be in denial or let your emotions take over
- Gather information and document it.
- Communicate with school or parties involved.
- Fill out a bullying report.



How can schools address bullying?

- Develop a plan and method for reporting
- Train staff
- Institute consequences
- Communicate
- Education--Discuss bullying with students through assemblies and classes
- Establish student leadership/mentoring program

School Incident Procedure

Incident is Reported—Incident report form completed

Assess Safety Issues

Conduct Investigation

Interview Target

Interview Aggressor

Interview Witnesses

Initiate Action Plan

Assign Consequences

Contact Parent/Guardian

Inform pertinent staff

Complete Incident Form

Follow-Up/Monitor Behavior