



## Teacher's Guide to Bullying

Educators are required to provide a safe environment for students by adopting and implementing policies against bullying. When school personnel and students accept the responsibility to support vulnerable children and stand together against intimidation, the problem of bullying is reduced and the school climate is seen as a place of safety.

### What is bullying?



- Repeated physical or psychological intimidation of a child or children by individuals or groups.
- Physical acts like hitting, kicking or assaulting.
- Intimidation, stealing money or possessions, breaking others property.
- Teasing, name-calling, making racist remarks, spreading rumours, making threats, and excluding children from groups.

### Bullying

#### What is Bullying?

Bullying is a repeated and or chronic, pattern of hurtful behavior involving intent to maintain an imbalance of power

1. Repeated
2. Intentional
3. Power differential



### Who is hurt by bullying?

The victim suffers. They are usually shy, anxious, passive, weak or may look or act differently. Victims often are socially isolated and lack communication and assertiveness skills. If bullying is ignored or downplayed, it can cause lifelong psychological damage by interfering with the victim's social and emotional development. In severe cases suicide or violence toward others can result from being bullied.

The perpetrator is hurt. He/she tends to be strong, aggressive and lack empathy for victims. The bully has learned that aggression brings rewards. They have most likely experienced bullying or abuse themselves. If bullies are allowed to intimidate others, the resulting habits often lead to other antisocial behaviors such as delinquency and crime.

The bystanders, who are the silent majority, are also adversely affected. They may feel fearful and anxious. If no negative consequences result from bullying, the observers may be drawn into aggression themselves.

### Why do children bully?

- They may have been bullied or abused.
- They may have personally observed bullying behavior.
- They may have had a long exposure to media violence.
- They may have found that bullying is an easy way to get what they want.



Bullying makes people sad. If I feel sad at school, I need to tell my mom and dad.

### What can school personnel do to combat bullying?

1. Provide adequate adult supervision before, during and after school on school grounds, in the lunchroom, and in the halls.
2. Survey bully/victim problems at your school by using disciplinary records or through a school-wide questionnaire. Compile baseline data on the incidence of threatening behaviors. Listen to victim's stories and compile a report including anonymous quotes from children and teachers on what happened, how they reacted, and what effect the bullying had on them.
3. Be mindful that bullying behavior is frequently concealed so adults may not be aware of it. Victims often do not report intimidation due to feelings of shame, fear of retaliation or fear the adults will not be able to protect them. In addition, many uninvolved children may be afraid to report intimidation for fear it might happen to them. Thus, promote reporting by keeping the name of the informer confidential, and by resolving the situation fairly.
4. Develop a clear anti-bullying policy on how to deal with various intimidating behaviors from the mildest to the most vicious. Include appropriate, consistent responses and consequences.
5. Hold a meeting of the entire school staff. Explain the findings to raise awareness of the problem, and discuss implementation of the anti-bullying policy.
6. Involve parents, caregivers and community members through fliers, newsletters, parent-teacher meetings and media to elicit their support against harassment in schools.
7. Inform students of the anti-bullying policy through a school-wide meeting or in each classroom. Define bullying, discuss the possible results, and explain the actions the victim should take, as well as the child who observes the intimidation. Emphasis that since bullying involves an imbalance of power, disclosing about a bullying situation is not tattling. Illicit student's cooperation by explaining that when everyone contributes towards eradicating bullying behaviour, the school will be a safer, more peaceful place to learn.
8. Have the teachers hold classroom meetings to reiterate the information shared on bullying and to reinforce what to do in a bullying situation. Provide age-appropriate role play exercises and related assignments that help children learn to manage their emotions and resolve disputes peacefully.

- 9.** Challenge school personnel to model respectful, accepting attitudes toward all children regardless of their socioeconomic status, race, gender or culture. Have them support the inclusion of isolated children by encouraging friendly, welcoming behaviours in other students.
- 10.** Have the teacher or counsellor provide the victim in safe, group learning activities that foster his/her self-confidence and social interaction skills. Work with the bully on redirecting his/her behavior, developing empathy and increasing his/her prosocial skills. Provide assistance to the child who intimidates others, through counselling and age-appropriate exercises to understand the consequence of the bullying behaviour.
- 11.** Have the teacher and/or counsellor meet with the parent or caregiver of the bully to develop a plan of action to alleviate the problem. Also, meet with the parent or caregiver of the victim to discuss ways he/she can assist the child in developing assertiveness and friendship skills.
- 12.** If extreme bullying is noted, seek further professional mental health and/or law enforcement assistance.

Adapted from **Educator's Guide to Bullying**

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