



***No Such Thing as a Bully***<sup>®</sup>

**Shred the Label, Save a Child**

## **Bullying Prevention Policy for Schools**

### **Executive Summary**

Bullying in schools interferes with the right of our students to learn in a safe environment. Bully actions have consequences for individuals that may be lifelong, both for those who experience them and those who use them; there are also consequences both for the school and the community.

Here we provide schools with a framework for implementing an effective program to prevent bullying and deal with bully actions and their consequences.

We begin by defining the critical terms *bully action* and *victim response*, terms which enable us to separate acts from people and allow us to deal with problems directly, without making people into the problems. Also defined are *bystander reaction*, *retaliation*, and several types of bullying typically encountered within a student population.

The bullying policy outlined here addresses what sorts of behavior are prohibited by the school, both on its grounds and anywhere else where students may gather for purposes related to the school. Consequences for bullying actions ranges from counseling and teaching to referral to law enforcement – the goal of all consequences being the restoration of a positive, supportive climate to the school.

The school is given the responsibility for establishing and adhering to a reporting system for bullying incidents; anyone touched by the incident is invited to contribute to the reporting of that incident, even anonymously. Reporting of such incidents, and related data, will be available to state/provincial school boards and local law enforcement as needed. A brief explanation of the reporting system is provided, and typical questions used in interviews of those involved in the incident are offered.

The school is given the responsibility of providing training opportunities, employing materials from *No Such Thing as a Bully* (NSTAAB), for staff, students, and parents and guardians. School staff will have opportunities to implement these principles in the classroom; parents and guardians will be offered the chance to own NSTAAB reference materials.

The policies outlined here are not intended to infringe on protected rights of individuals.



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### 1 Introduction:

Bullying in schools is a pervasive problem with negative effects on the climate and culture of our schools. It is a series of behaviors that interferes with the right of students to learn in a safe environment without fear. It happens in schools, on school buses, at school sponsored events or where multiple children are gathered. Bully actions can have significant lifelong consequences, both for those who use them and those who experience them. Consequences may include, difficulty

focusing and learning, feelings of being unsafe, long term emotional and behavioral problems, issues with peer relationships, lesser engagement of students, and a negative cultural impact on the school environment. It is the intention of this document to provide schools with a framework for implementing an effective program to prevent bullying and deal with bully actions and their consequences.

## 2 Definitions:

Bullying, bully action, retaliation, bystander reaction are defined, non-exclusively, as follows:

### 2.1 **Bullying consists of:**

Bullying = Bully Actor perspective + Bully Action + Victim Responder perspective	
Bully Actor perspective =	Intention to hurt + Superior Power + enjoyment + Desire for control + feeling of contempt
Bully Action =	Hurtful + Deliberate
Victim Responder perspective =	Vulnerability + Sense of oppression/unjust treatment

### 2.2 **Definition of Types of bullying include:**

- 2.2.1 *Physical:* striking another person; damaging or stealing another person's property
- 2.2.2 *Verbal:* name-calling, teasing, humiliating or threatening
- 2.2.3 *Social:* excluding others; spreading rumors; humiliation; interference in relationships
- 2.2.4 *Electronic (Cyber):* verbal and/or social bullying via technology including the use of communication technologies, technological devices, web pages, discussion groups and instant messaging to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behavior by an individual or group that intends to harm a person or persons harm other people.

2.3 **Definition of Bully action:** An action that is disrespectful of another person physically, verbally, socially or electronically (cyber). Including, but not limited to: kicking, hitting, any physical altercations, damaging or stealing property, name calling, name calling in relation to personal characteristics, teasing, humiliating or threatening, excluding others, spreading rumor, interference in relationships, disrespectful conduct on social media sites and administrating or posting on negatively intended social media pages (i.e. pages created for the purposes of humiliation, embarrassment or revenge.)

2.4 **Definition of Retaliation:** The use of any bully action against a person (employee, volunteer, student, parent/guardian) who has intervened in a bully action or made a report of a bully action.

2.5 **Definition of Bystander action/reaction:** The response of someone witnessing a bully action. Negative bystander behavior can itself meet the definition of bullying behavior and may be considered as detrimental as direct bully actions.

### **3 Principles and Acknowledgements:**

- 3.1 The culture of a school is impacted by employees, volunteers and parents and guardians behaving appropriately and modeling respect for students. Acknowledgement is given to adults who will not tolerate bullying behaviors in schools, on school buses or at school-sponsored events.
- 3.2 Bully actions must be challenged. Parents/guardians must learn to talk about this with their children. Adults at all levels must learn to intervene appropriately and consistently when necessary. All adults involved must understand the levels and processes of intervention. Children need to find that adults can offer effective solutions.
- 3.3 Bully actions exist anywhere children gather: schools, playgrounds, the bus, in-school and after school activities, over the telephone, and on the Internet.
- 3.4 Bully actions taking place away from the school can have an effect on the learning environment for students within the school.
- 3.5 Bullying can potentially lead to several kinds of anger and behavioral problems including retaliation and increasingly bad behavior when bully actions don't bring the desired response. Decreasing bullying should lead to a decrease in these other types of bully related problems.
- 3.6 Bystanders, whether passively watching or actively encouraging bully actions, may be affected negatively, and even become desensitized to cruelty and violence. They may be afraid, or they may learn they can also use bully actions to gain prestige.
- 3.7 While certain characteristics may increase the possibility that a child may experience bullying actions, bullying does not have to be based on any particular characteristic and the policy applies equally to all students.
- 3.8 Prevention of bullying in schools requires a focus on individual behaviors and attitudes and the culture of the school. The reactions of the student being targeted and the attitudes and actions of bystanders play significant roles. A comprehensive school bullying policy will address all of these roles within the culture of the school.

### **4 Prohibitions:**

- 4.1 Bullying, cyberbullying, retaliation and bully actions are prohibited in schools, on school grounds, during off site school activities, and while traveling to and from school or anywhere else the school has purview.
- 4.2 Retaliation by a child experiencing bully actions is prohibited.
- 4.3 Retaliation by all persons towards a person who has experienced or reported bullying actions is prohibited.
- 4.4 Retaliation by anyone towards a child using bully actions is prohibited.

## **5 Resolution:**

- 5.1 It is therefore resolved that \_\_\_\_\_(School/School Division) will support policies and programs for the prevention, intervention, and elimination of bully actions. We will work toward a logical community approach to bullying, involving teaching/training students in positive behavior and creating a culture of intelligent preparation for and response towards bully actions in schools and in the community.

## **6 Policy and Procedure:**

### **6.1 Informal and Formal Reporting of Bullying Issues**

- 6.1.1 We will have a continuously available and formal complaint process in place, whereby any person can report experiencing or witnessing bully actions. The process will include an anonymous reporting system. However no student shall receive consequences solely on the basis of an anonymous report.
- 6.1.2 We will invite all complainants to be a part of a formal complaint, investigation and resolution process. Should the complainant refuse, the complaint is written from the point of view of the appointed person for tracking and supervision purposes.
- 6.1.3 We will be a part of the member support site for bullying, named “No Such Thing as a Bully,” and be open to receiving named or anonymous reports through the reporting system, as explained in Appendix I.
- 6.1.4 We will have a minimum of two people to whom all bullying complaints are reported, hereafter called “The Compliance Team.”
- 6.1.5 All complaints will be appropriately investigated and handled in a manner consistent with due process requirements, and according to the procedures given in Appendix II.
- 6.1.6 Bullying investigations will adhere to the appropriate privacy and confidentiality laws.
- 6.1.7 Parents/guardians of bully actors and victim responders will be alerted to a bullying complaint and advised of the outcome.
- 6.1.8 Regular orientation sessions on reviewing bully actions, victim responses and the policies and procedures for handling bullying situations and dealing with complaints will be held at the school and be open to all stakeholders.

## **6.2 Investigating and Evaluating Bullying Situations**

- 6.2.1 Anyone may initiate a formal report of bullying. The Complainant will be advised that the investigation process and confidentiality around it will adhere to the legalities of the school district and applicable local, regional and national laws.
- 6.2.2 The outcome of an investigation is unknown prior to the completion of the investigation. It cannot be predicted what will be discovered or what kind of hearing may result. The compliance team may conclude that the district must conduct an investigation based on information in their possession regardless of the complainant's interest in filing a formal complaint. Provincial, State and Federal reporting laws for criminal behavior may be addressed.
- 6.2.3 Complainants and children involved in bullying situations will be advised of anti-retaliation provisions.
- 6.2.4 All children may have a parent or other trusted adult with them during any District-initiated investigatory activities.

## **6.3 Referrals**

- 6.3.1 School Social Worker and/or compliance team or principal designate completes an assessment of needs for both offending child and the child experiencing the bully action.
- 6.3.2 Assessment includes recommendations for training, teaching and/or counseling.
- 6.3.3 Parents/guardians are informed of assessment, local procedure for accessing services, or ways the school will provide teaching/training elements to meet the child's needs.

## **6.4 Involvement of Parents/Guardians**

- 6.4.1 Students will be provided with age-appropriate information on the recognition and prevention of harassment, intimidation or bullying; they will be informed of their rights and responsibilities under this and other District policies at student orientation sessions and on other appropriate occasions, which may include parents/guardians.
- 6.4.2 Parents/guardians will be provided with copies of this policy and other appropriate materials on the recognition and prevention of harassment, intimidation and bullying.
- 6.4.3 An open session with invitations given to parents regarding the school's bullying policy will be held within the first 30 school days of the year.
- 6.4.4 Parents and guardians will have the opportunity to receive guides for addressing bullying with their children directly.
- 6.4.5 Parent volunteers are welcomed and encouraged.
- 6.4.6 Parents and guardians will be expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner while on the school grounds. Disruption of school activities will be grounds for removal.

## **6.5 Completion of Investigation**

- 6.5.1 When an investigation is completed the Compliance Officer shall compile a full written report of the complaint and the result of the investigation.
- 6.5.2 The Superintendent (or designee other than the Compliance Officer) shall respond in writing to the complainant and the accused within three days with one of the following conclusions:
  - 6.5.2.1 That the district intends to take corrective action.
  - 6.5.2.2 That the investigation is incomplete to date and will be continuing.
  - 6.5.2.3 That the district does not have adequate evidence to conclude that bullying occurred.

## **6.6 Policy for Consequences of Bullying Situations**

- 6.6.1 Corrective measures deemed necessary will be instituted as quickly as possible, but in no event more than 30 days after the Superintendent's written response, unless the Accused is appealing the imposition of discipline and the District is barred by due process considerations or a lawful order from imposing the discipline until the appeal process is concluded.
- 6.6.2 Counseling, teaching programs, corrective discipline, and/or referral to law enforcement will be used to change the behavior of the perpetrator, as appropriate.
- 6.6.3 Remediation will also be expected to minimize the impact on those affected. This includes appropriate intervention(s), restoration of a positive climate, and support for victims and others impacted by the violation. Teaching expectations and skills to the child using bully actions is a focus.
- 6.6.4 False reports or retaliation for harassment, intimidation or bullying will constitute violations of this policy.

## **6.7 Anti-retaliation provisions**

- 6.7.1 Parents and students are advised that post-disclosure retaliation is unacceptable and is treated harshly. Consequences, including suspension or transfer may be implemented.

## **6.8 Written/computer Records:**

- 6.8.1 Written/computer records of complaints, investigation process and investigation results will be kept on file until the students named have turned 21, or according to state/provincial law.
- 6.8.2 Records compiled for reporting purposes and/or release to the public, will follow state/provincial confidentiality legislation.

## **6.9 Training of Educators and Staff in Bullying Prevention and Intervention**

- 6.9.1 Classroom educators will receive training with regard to this policy. Educators in Compliance positions will facilitate knowledge and immersion of policy through the school year.
- 6.9.2 Classroom educators will view the videos on the No Such Thing as a Bully Website that teach how to incorporate lessons or components of lesson into curriculum.

6.9.3 Educators will have the opportunity to review bullying protection and prevention materials as needed, and will be expected to refresh their knowledge of said materials on a yearly basis.

## **6.10 Training of Parents and Guardians in Bullying Prevention and Intervention**

6.10.1 An informational meeting will be held annually to address bullying prevention and intervention and the school's policy. Parents/guardians, students, volunteers, and community will be invited.

6.10.2 Parents will have the opportunity to purchase educational materials, including "No Such Thing as a Bully – Shred the Label, Save a Child; Bullyproofing Protections for Parents and Children".

## **6.11 Implementation and Review**

6.11.1 These guidelines will be in force at all times when students are on the school grounds, on a school bus, at a school bus stop and at school sponsored events when held off school grounds.

6.11.2 This policy will be reviewed and affirmed each year, during the annual meeting as named in point 11.

## **6.12 Bullying Prevention and Intervention Programming in the School**

6.12.1 A bullying prevention team will be established to bring ongoing attention to bullying issues through awareness activities, assemblies, classroom and school activities. The team will contain students, teachers and community members.

6.12.2 Staff will dedicate a meeting at a minimum every two months to discussion of bullying issues, use of bullying prevention and intervention tools in the classroom, and the school climate.

6.12.3 Students will be given an assembly annually, to address these guidelines, and bullying in general, through activities such as student performances, motivational speakers. Such assemblies will require student attendance.

6.12.4 Classroom teachers will be given the opportunity to build lessons on bullying prevention and intervention into their individual curricula as appropriate.

## **6.13 Transparency and monitoring**

6.13.1 Data regarding reporting of bullying issues and investigations will be collected.

6.13.2 Data will be reported to the supervision agencies as regulated by State/Provincial legislation.

6.13.3 Data dispersed to the public will follow appropriate State/Provincial legislation.

## **6.14 Right to other legal recourse**

6.14.1 Nothing in this policy precludes any person from seeking redress under applicable civil and criminal law.

## **6.15 General Rights**

6.15.1 Nothing in this policy is meant to infringe on federally regulated rights.

## 7.0 Prohibition of Bullying Behaviors:

\_\_\_\_\_ (school) is committed to a civil, respectful and safe environment for all students, employees, volunteers and visitors. We therefore expect an environment free from bullying issues. Bullying issues are defined as:

Bullying Issue = Bully Actor perspective + Bully Action + Victim Responder perspective	
Bully Actor perspective =	Intention to hurt + Superior Power + enjoyment + Desire for control + feeling of contempt
Bully Action =	Hurtful + Deliberate, May be repeated
Victim Responder perspective =	Vulnerability + Sense of oppression/unjust treatment

7.1 Types of Bully Actions include:

*Physical:* striking another person; damaging or stealing another person's property

*Verbal:* name-calling, teasing, humiliating or threatening

*Social:* excluding others; spreading rumors; humiliation; interference in relationships

*Electronic (Cyber):* verbal and/or social bullying via Internet or phone

7.2 Bully Actions must be addressed before they:

Physically harm a student or property

Interfere with the education of another student or students

Become severe and persistent

Disrupt the operation of the school

7.3 Bully Actions might target one's personal characteristics, including but not limited to sexuality, sexual behavior, race, disability, appearance or sexual orientation. They may take many forms including slurs, rumors, jokes, innuendos, demeaning comments, insulting sketches, pranks, gestures, physical attacks, threats, or other written, oral or physical actions. In such cases, it is the individual's choice to engage in the act rather than to reflect on its ultimate impact. Many other behaviors that do not rise to the level of harassment, intimidation, or bullying may still be prohibited by other district policies or building, classroom, or program rules.

7.4 This policy is not intended to prohibit expression of religious, philosophical, or political views, provided that the expression does not substantially disrupt the education environment or infringe on the rights of others.

7.5 The Superintendent is authorized to direct the development and implementation of procedures addressing the elements of this policy, consistent with the complaint and investigation components of District procedures governing Sexual Harassment, Nondiscrimination, and Exceptional Misconduct.

Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix I. TIPS Reporting System**

Schools who join the No Such Thing as a Bully Website receive opportunity to use the survey and reporting tools associates with the TIPS system. This allows the school to employ a button on their website that provides a system for anonymous or named reporting. Documents and photos may also be attached to reports if desired. The report is automatically sent to five people, including the compliance team. The system also assists with disclosure compilation and reporting.

Goals:

- To connect the dots regarding student behavior prior to any violent incidents occurring. To enable people in the school and school community to report bullying
- To decrease fear of retaliation
- To increase access to confidential reporting abilities
- Ensure school investigators receive the same information at the same time.
- Empower school leaders to properly investigate and remediate bullying actions

## **Appendix II. What to ask students involved in an investigation**

In this table,

Actor - A  
Receiver - R  
Witness - E

The characteristics of a bullying situation are:

The bully actor's desire to hurt  
The bully actor's superior power  
The bully actor's desire for control  
Hurtful, deliberate or repeated action  
The victim responder's vulnerability  
The victim responder's sense of oppression

Bullying Characteristic	Ask A	Ask R	Ask W	Seek more info?
A's Desire to Hurt	What were you trying to do?  Did you know you were hurting R?	Were you hurt in the incident?  Do you think A wanted to hurt you?	What did you see happen?  Do you think A wanted to hurt R?	Continue with Open Ended Questioning(OEQ) until it seems all information is gathered.
A's Superior Power	How did this make you feel?  Were any of your friend there?  Was anyone cheering you on?	Were any of your friends there?  Did anyone try to stop A?	Who else was present?  Was A acting alone?  What did you do?	Speak with any other Witnesses to continue gathering information.
A's Desire for Control	What did you hope to get out of this?  How did you feel when the situation started?  How did you feel when the situation ended?	What was A hoping to get out of this?	Have you seen A act like this before?	Continue with OEQ until it seems like all information has been gathered.
Hurtful, repeated action	Describe what happened.  Has it ever happened before?	Describe what happened.  Has it ever happened before?	Describe what happened.  Has it ever happened before?	Continue with OEQ until it seems like all information has been gathered.
R's Vulnerability	How did R react?	How did you react?  How did you feel while this was happening?	How did R react?	OEQ, particularly about possible future action.
R's Sense of Oppression	How did it end?	How did you feel afterwards?	How did it end?	OEQ, especially to find out how R can feel safe.