



A Parent's Guide to Bullying



The Peoria Unified School District Governing Board believes it is the right of every student to be educated in a positive, safe, caring and respectful learning environment. The Board further believes a school environment inclusive of these traits maximizes student achievement, fosters student personal growth and helps students build a sense of community that promotes positive participation as members of society.

What are the signs of bullying?

Although each bullied student or victim reacts in their own unique, personal way, the following is a list of typical signs a student may have been bullied.

- Mood changes, crying, easily upset
- Loss of appetite
- Unexplained bruises or torn clothing
- Consecutive absences, grades declining
- Loss of interest or lack of participation in activities

Who bullies and why?

Students who bully are generally taller, stronger and older students that target smaller, younger students, but this is not always the case. Students that bully are sometimes motivated for the increased social status they acquire from bullying.

Basic characteristics of bullies and bullying:

- Bullies may enjoy feeling strong and superior.
- Bullies may like having power over others.
- Bullies may use their power to hurt other people.
- Bullies may lack empathy towards others.
- Bullies may or may not have low self-esteem.



References

Olweus, D. (1993). *Bullying in school: What we know and what we can do*. Oxford, England: Blackwell.

Olweus, D. (1997). Bully/Victim problems in School: Knowledge base and an effective intervention program. *The Irish Journal of Psychology*, 18, 170-190.

Peterson, J.S. & Ray, K.E. (2006). Bullying and the gifted: Victims, perpetrators, prevalence, and effects. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 50(2), 148 – 166.

Rowan, L.O. (2007). Making classroom bully-free zones: Practical suggestions for educators. *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, Summer: 182 – 185.

Scarpaci, R.T. (2006). Bullying: Effective practices for its prevention. *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, Summer: 170 – 174.

Peoria Unified School District - Policy J-3200 JICK
<http://lp.ctspublish.com/asba/public/lpext.dll?f=templates&fn=main-h.htm>

Arizona Revised Statutes 15-341, section 37
<http://www.azleg.gov/ars/15/00341.htm>

Books on bullying

For parents:

- *The Bully, the Bullied, and the Bystander*, by Barbara Coloroso
- *Bullyproofing Your School: A Comprehensive Approach for Elementary Schools*, Second Edition, by Garla Garrita, et al.
- *Bullying at School: What We Know and What We Can Do*, by Dan Olweus
- *Back Off, Cool Down, Try Again: Teaching Students How To Control Aggressive Behavior*, by Sylvia Rockwell

For parents and students:

- *Bullies are a Pain in the Brain*, by Trevor Romain
- *Bully on the Bus: The Decision is Yours*, by Carl W. Bosch
- *Don't Pick on Me: How to Handle Bullying*, by Rosemary Stones
- *I am Special*, by Max Lucado
- *Just Kidding*, by Trudy Ludwig
- *Stop Picking on Me*, by Pat Thomas

Websites:

- www.bullybeware.com
- www.nobully.com
- www.pacerkidsagainstbullying.com
- www.stopbullyingnow.com
- www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/kids

Bullying

Bullying may occur when a student or group of students engages in any form of behavior that includes such acts as intimidation and/or harassment that:

- Has the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm or damage to property
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that the action, behavior or threat creates an intimidating, physical or emotional harm,
- Occurs when there is a real or perceived imbalance of power or strength or
- May constitute a violation of law.

Bullying of a student or group of students can be manifested through written, verbal, physical or emotional means and may occur in a variety of forms including, but not limited to:

- Verbal, written/printed or graphic exposure to derogatory comments, extortion, exploitation, name calling, or rumor-spreading either directly through another person or group or through cyberbullying
- Exposure to social exclusion or ostracism,
- Physical contact including but not limited to pushing, hitting, kicking, shoving or spitting and
- Damage to or theft of personal property.

Cyberbullying is, but is not limited to, any act of bullying committed by use of electronic technology or electronic communication devices, including telephonic devices, social networking and other internet communications, on school computers, networks, forums and mailing list or other district-owned property, and by means of an individual's personal electronic media and equipment.

Harassment is intentional behavior by a student or group of students that is disturbing or threatening to another student or group of students. Intentional behaviors that characterize harassment include, but are not limited to, stalking, hazing, social exclusion, name calling, unwanted physical contact and unwelcome verbal or written comments, photographs and graphics. Harassment may be related, but not limited to, race, religious orientation, sexual preference, cultural background, economic status, size or personal appearance. Harassing behaviors can be direct or indirect and by use of social media.

Intimidation is intentional behavior by a student or group of students that places another student or group of students in fear of harm of person or property. Intimidation can be manifested emotionally or physically, either directly or indirectly, and by use of social media.

Questions to ask your child if you suspect they are being bullied:

- Are you being teased/bullied/harassed at school?
- What are they doing? Who is doing this?
- How long has this been going on?
- Have you told an adult at school? What did he/she do?



What can parents do about bullying?

If you suspect bullying:

- Listen to your child. Do not down-play the incident.
- Assure your child that it is okay to report the problem to his/her teacher. Communicate with the teacher regarding the incident.
- Consider completing a Bullying Incident Form located in the school office.
- If necessary, seek additional assistance with your school administrator.

What to tell your child when confronting the bully:

- STOP Tell the person to stop the behavior.
- WALK Walk away from the situation.
- TALK Talk to an adult.

If your child is the target, suggest the following strategies:

- Don't react.
- Agree with the comment to stump the bully.
- Distract the bully by changing the subject.
- Laugh or joke about the bully's comment.
- Stay away from the bully.
- Complete a Bullying Incident Form located in the school office.

If your child is the bystander, suggest the following strategies:

- Invite the target to leave with you.
- Tell the bully to stop!
- Report the information to an adult.
- Complete a Bullying Incident Form located in the school office.