



ANTI-BULLYING INITIATIVE



**STILLWATER AREA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**
We learn not for school but for life

Stillwater Area Public Schools is committed to creating a safe and welcoming environment in which all of our students can learn and achieve. In May of 2011, the District took steps to confront bullying through the adoption of a new Bullying Prohibition Policy (Policy R 1.3). This was done in an effort to assist us in our goal of preventing and responding to acts of bullying, intimidation, violence and other similar disruptive behavior, which have significant impacts on the safe and positive learning environment for our students.

The Bullying Prohibition policy can be accessed in the District Handbook, or on the District 834 website at: http://www.stillwater.k12.mn.us/Policy_1_3_Bullying_Policy.html. If you are unable to access the policy, please contact your child's school or the District office.

The success of this policy requires the participation and cooperation of teachers and school support staff, students, parents and guardians, school administrators, and transportation staff. Please be sure to familiarize yourself with the policy as well as the information in this pamphlet, which provides tips and resources to identify, prevent and respond to bullying. Students and staff are trained on this policy each year, and parental awareness and support will enhance the success of the initiative.

What is Bullying?

Excerpted in part from Stillwater Area Schools' Bullying Prohibition Policy

"Bullying" is a pattern of written or verbal expression, physical act, or gesture, that is intended to cause, or is perceived as causing, distress to a student(s) which substantially interferes with their ability to learn, achieve, and participate at school.

Some examples of bullying include:

- Intentional negative actions such as exclusion, stalking, shoving, hitting, beating, remarks about sexual orientation or disability, spreading rumors, physical and verbal harassment or intimidation, racial or ethnic slurs, and remarks about body, mind, family language, religion and socioeconomic status.

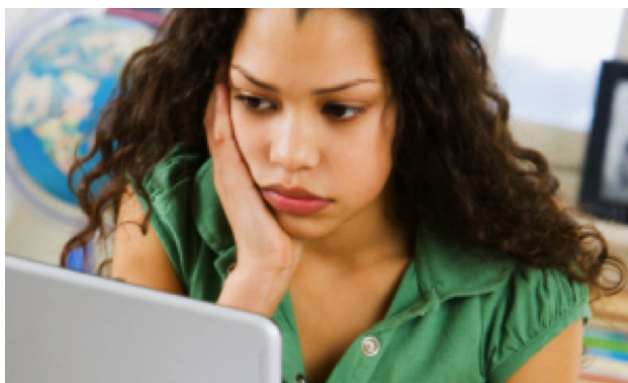
Bullying is conduct that has the effect of:

- Harming a student, damaging a student's property, intimidating or placing a student(s) in reasonable fear of harm to person or property, or creating a hostile educational environment.

What is Cyber-Bullying?

Excerpted in part from Stillwater Area Schools' Bullying Prohibition Policy

Cyber-bullying is the misuse of technology to tease, intimidate, defame, threaten, or terrorize another person by sending or posting e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings, including blogs. Acts such as these may be considered bullying regardless of whether they are committed on or off school district property and/or with or without the use of school district resources.





What are the warning signs that your child may be being bullied?

Some warning signs of bullying include:

- Student returns from school with torn clothing or unexplained injuries
- Student is unusually anxious, distressed, unhappy, depressed, or tearful when returning from school
- Student does not bring friends home after school or spend time at other childrens' homes; appears isolated from other students
- Student is fearful about attending school, walking to and from school, or riding the bus to school
- Student has trouble sleeping, displays poor appetite, or suffers from headaches and stomachaches (especially before school), or exhibits unexpected or uncharacteristic mood shifts, irritability, or sudden outbursts of temper
- Student loses interest in schoolwork and/or shows a decline in academic performance

What will the District do about Bullying?

The District will take immediate action to investigate, respond, remediate, and discipline acts of bullying, intimidation, violence, and other similar disruptive behavior.

Upon completion of an investigation, the District will take disciplinary measures sufficient to deter violations and appropriately address prohibited behaviors. District action may include such things as positive behavior interventions, warning, suspension, exclusion, expulsion, and remediation.

What will the District do about Cyber-Bullying?

The District will take steps to address cyber-bullying to the extent that it affects the educational environment and the rights and welfare of its students, and is within the control of the school district in its normal operations.





What can you do if you believe bullying is occurring?

Listen. Encourage your child to share their problems with you or another trusted adult. Assure him or her that talking is not tattling, it is about sharing facts to help protect them and others. Listen attentively and reassure him or her that they will not have to face the problem alone.

Be supportive. Tell your child that it is not his/her fault and they do not deserve to be bullied. You can empower your child and build their self esteem by praising him or her for their accomplishments, help them find talents that they can develop, and help them make friends by encouraging them to participate in school activities and/or sports, or other physical activities.

Be patient. Talking about bullying may be very difficult for your child. They may fear retaliation or feel like telling you, or someone else, won't change anything or will make it worse.

Communicate and strategize. Talking with your child about strategies to prevent bullying may help you in improving your child's social skills.

Report it! If you believe bullying is occurring, tell the principal at your child's school immediately, or fill out the Suspected Bullying Incident Report Form, which you can find on the District's website, and give it to the principal at your child's school.

What if my child is exhibiting bullying behaviors or tendencies?

- Talk to school staff such as your child's classroom(s) teacher, the school counselor or student advocate/social worker at your child's school. They may be able to help you understand and deal with bullying behavior, and provide you with tips and tools to assist you in working with your child.
- Explain to your child that bullying is not okay under any circumstances and that you will not tolerate it. Establish appropriate consequences for his or her actions such as taking away privileges and allowing your child to earn them back with appropriate behavior. When your child handles conflict in an appropriate way, such as showing compassion for others or finding a positive way to deal with their feelings, provide positive reinforcement through praise and recognition.
- Set a good example for your child by modeling cooperation, respect, kindness and empathy. Remember, children learn what they live.
- Examine behaviors taking place in your home, including such things as media in the form of television or video games that promote violence, or interactions that could impact their self esteem, such as constant teasing and taunting by a sibling.
- Maintain contact with your child's school and support their efforts to modify your child's behavior. Frequent communication with teachers and administrators is important to find out how your child is progressing with behavior modifications.
- Take bullying behaviors seriously! Children who bully have an increased risk of engaging in other forms of anti-social behavior later in life, such as juvenile delinquency, criminality, and substance abuse.

Where can I get more information about bullying?

For Parents

- The Bully, the Bullied, and the Bystander: From Preschool to High School—How Parents and Teachers Can Help Break the Cycle of Violence by Barbara Coloroso
- Girl Wars: 12 Strategies That Will End Female Bullying by Cheryl Dellasega, Charisse Nixon
- Lost Boys: Why Our Sons Turn Violent and How We Can Save Them by James Garbarino
- The Anti-Bullying Handbook by Keith Sullivan

For Students

- Bullies are a Pain in the Brain by Trevor Romain
- GirlWise: How to Be Confident, Capable, Cool, and in Control by Julia Devillers
- Help! I'm in Middle School... How Will I Survive? by Merry L. Gumm
- How Full Is Your Bucket? by Carol McCloud
- One by Kathryn Otoshi
- My Secret Bully by Trudy Ludwig
- The Berenstain Bears and the Bully by Stan Berenstain
- Sorry by Trudy Ludwig

Other Resources

- <http://www.pacerkidsagainstbullying.org/>
- <http://thebullyproject.com/resources.html>
- <http://www.schoolsafety.us/free-resources/bullying-in-schools-fact-sheet-series>
- <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/bully.htm>