



What Parents Need to Know

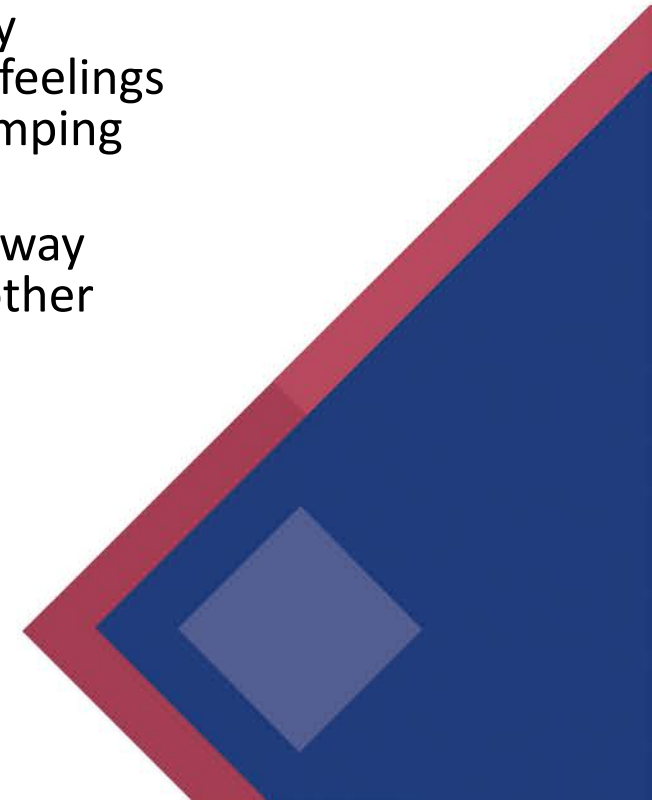
Bullying Prevention, Intervention, Reporting, and Hazing

2022-2023

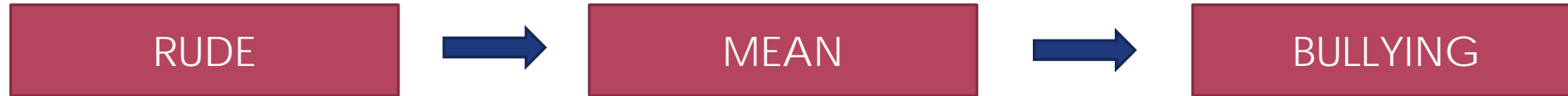
Peer Conflict and Teasing

There are many types of **aggressive behavior that do not fit the definition of bullying**. While these types of behaviors are still very serious and require immediate attention, they require different prevention and response strategies.

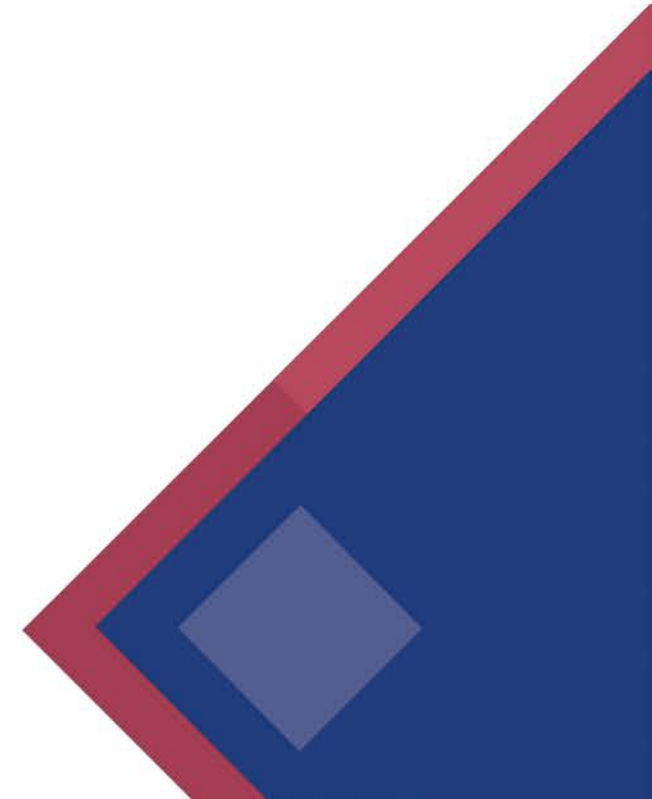
- **Peer Conflict** - It is not considered bullying when individuals with no perceived imbalance of power have an argument, disagreement or fight. Examples may include, not liking someone, isolated expressions of unpleasant thoughts or feelings regarding others, single act of telling a joke about someone, accidentally bumping into someone, or incidents of exclusion.
- **Teasing** - Teasing usually involves two or more friends who act together in a way that seems fun to all the people involved. Often individuals will tease each other equally, but it never involves physical or emotional abuse.



Inappropriate Behaviors



- Harassment
- Hazing





The distinction between "rude" and "mean" behavior has to do with intention. While rudeness is often unintentional, mean behavior very much aims to hurt or depreciate someone.

Kids are mean to each other when they criticize clothing, appearance, intelligence, coolness or just about anything else they can find to belittle others. Meanness also sounds like words spoken in anger -- impulsive cruelty that is often regretted in short order. Very often, mean behavior in kids is motivated by angry feelings and/or the misguided goal of propping themselves up in comparison to the person they are putting down.

- **Rude:** if someone *unintentionally* says or does something that is hurtful and is not repeated
- **Mean:** if someone *intentionally* says or does something hurtful and is not repeated
- **Bullying:** if someone *repeatedly* says or does things *intentionally, despite being told to stop or the other person showing they are upset, and/or with an imbalance of power (or threat of power).*

Normal Conflict vs Bullying

What do we mean by “Normal Conflict?”

Conflict is a struggle between two or more people who perceive they have incompatible goals or desires. Conflict occurs naturally as we interact with one another. It is a normal part of life, as we will not always agree with other people about the things we want, what we think, or what we want to do. Most conflicts arise in the moment, because people situations from different points of view. When one or both people involved in a conflict have the skills to resolve the dispute so that both of their needs are met, the same conflict between the same two people most likely will not be repeated.

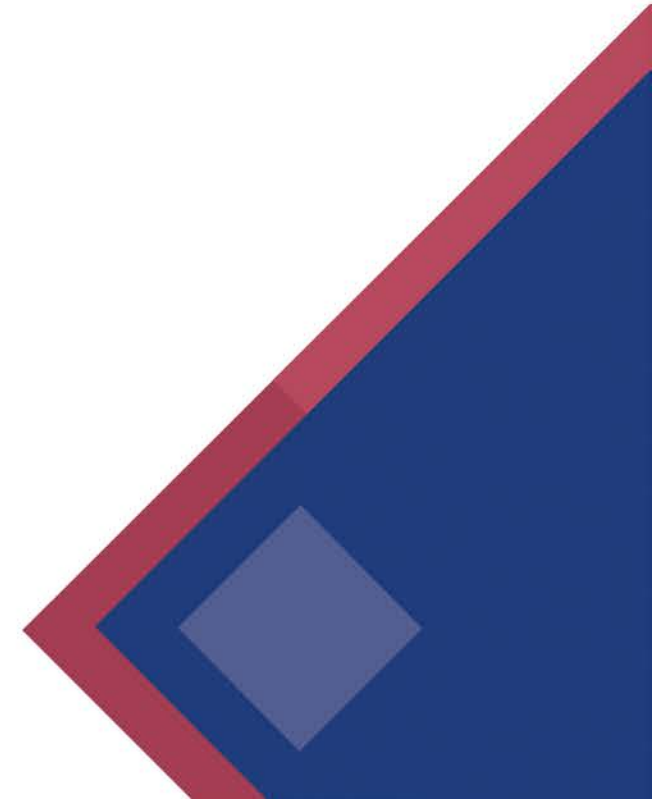
What is Bullying?

Bullying behavior is different from conflict. Bullying is behavior that is intended to cause harm. The person who bullies purposely says or does something to hurt the target of his/her behavior. There is always an imbalance of power (physical or social) or strength between the person enacting the bullying behavior and the target of the behavior. For example, the person bullying may be physically bigger or stronger or may be older or have greater social status or social power than the person being targeted. Although bullying can occur in a single incident, it is usually a pattern of behavior repeated over time and can take many forms –physical, verbal, or social.



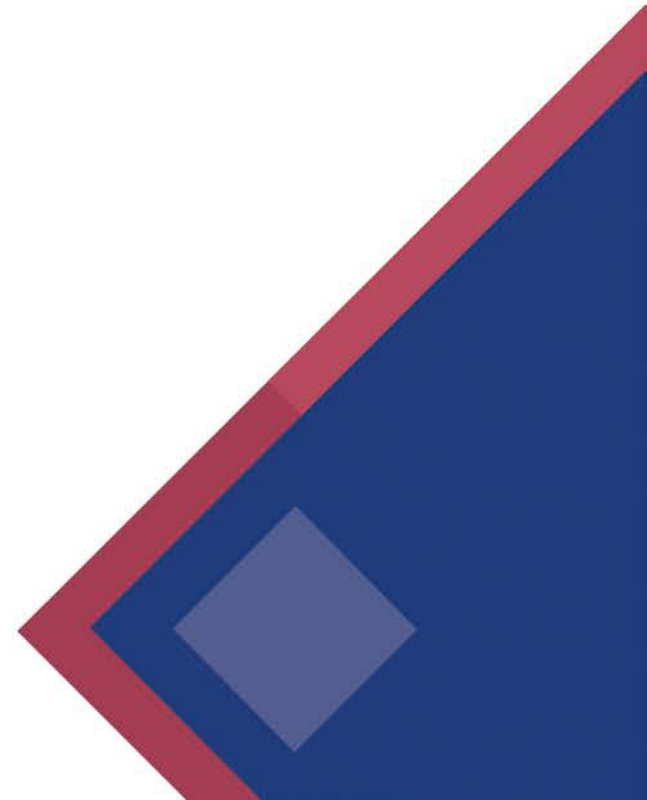
Bullying Definition

Bullying is defined as unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. The imbalance of power involves the use of physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity to control or harm others.



Characteristics of Bullying

- **Unwanted**
- **Intentional Aggressive Behavior**
- **Repeated**
- **Power Differential**



Bullying Definition

Any act that substantially interferes with a student's educational benefits, opportunities or performance **and**:

If the act takes place on school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided equipment or transportation, or at any official school bus stop and has the effect of:

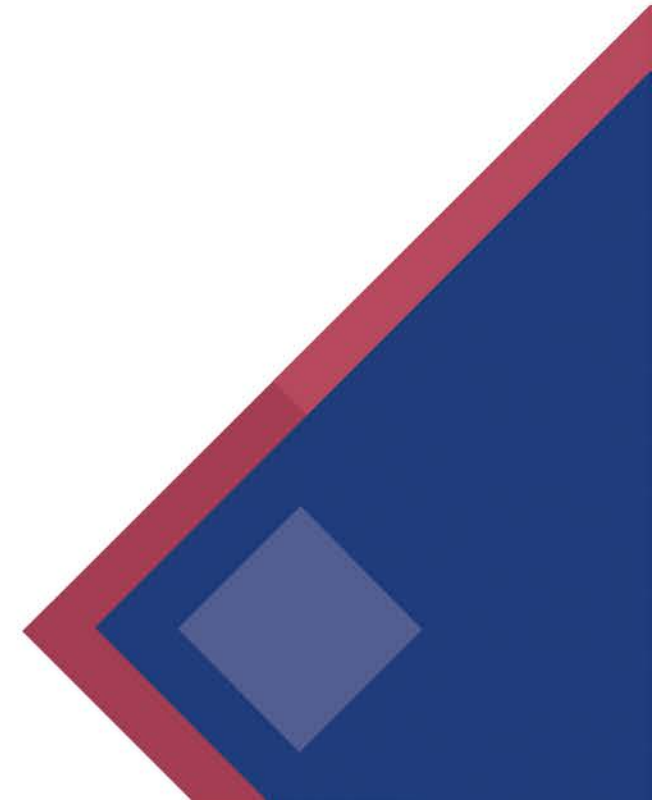
- Physically harming a student or damaging a student's property;
- Knowingly placing a student or students in reasonable fear of physical harm to the student or damage to the student's property;
- Causing emotional distress to a student or students; or
- Creating a hostile educational environment.



Is a Situation Bullying?

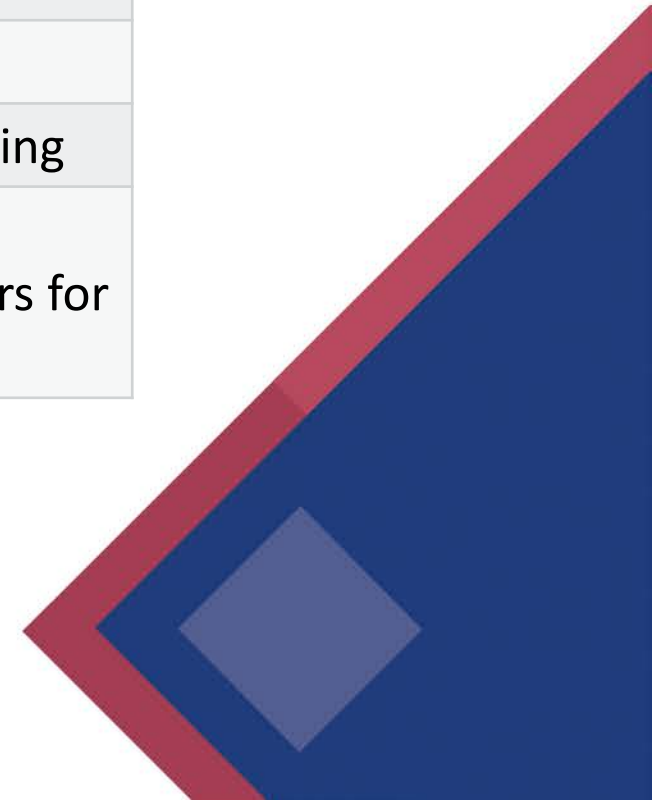
To determine if an event was indeed bullying, ask yourself?

- Was it intentional? Was the action meant to hurt?
- Is there an imbalance of power?
- Is the behavior repeated (pattern of behavior)?



Fighting vs. Bullying

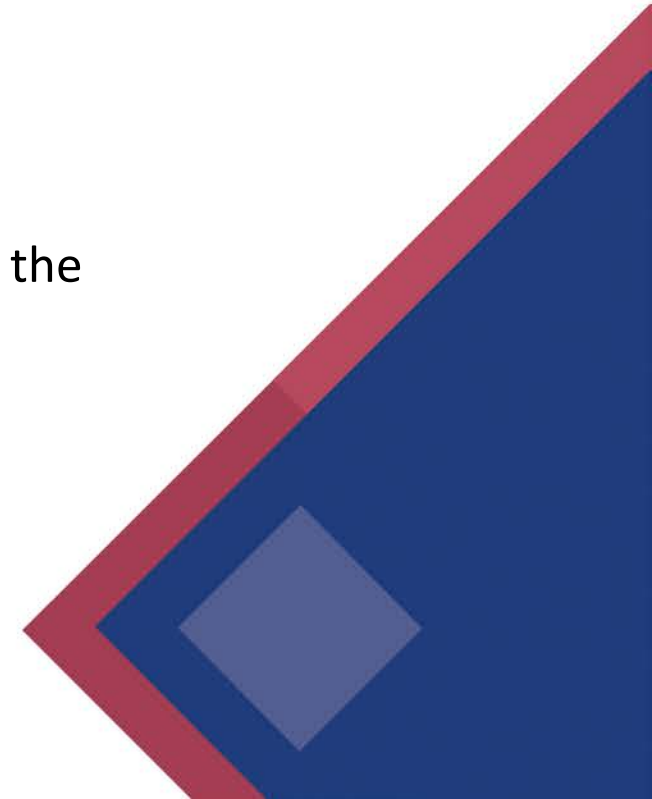
Rough Play	Real Fighting	Bullying
Usually friends; often repeated (same players)	Usually not friends; typically, not repeated	Typically not friends; Generally repeated
Balance of power	Power relatively equal	Unequal power
No intent to harm	Intentional harm – doing	Intentional harm – doing
Affect is friendly; Positive, mutual	Affect/Mood is negative; Tense, hostile affect	Affect negative; Mood/Response differs for victim and aggressor



Warning Signs for Bullying

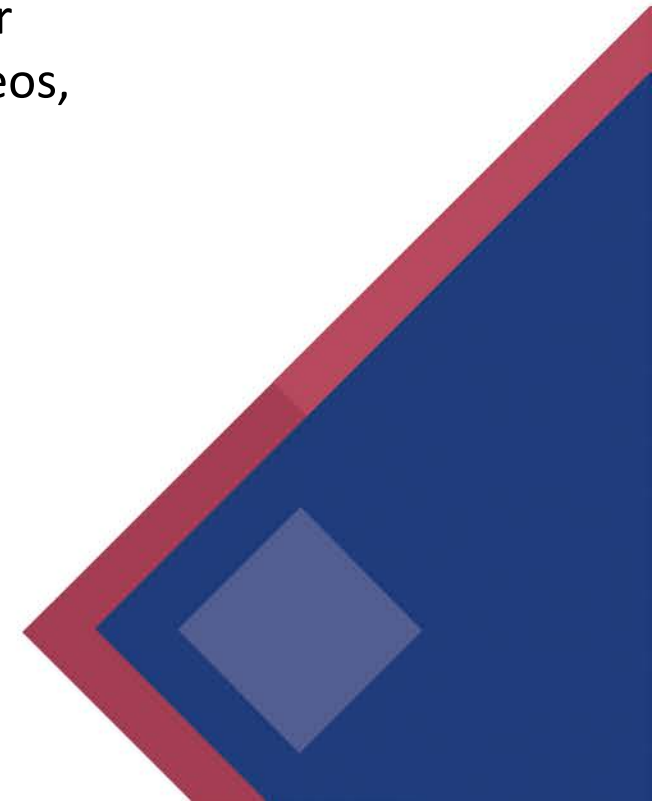
There are many warning signs that may indicate that someone is affected by bullying—either being bullied or bullying others. Recognizing the warning signs is an important first step in taking action against bullying. Not all children who are bullied or are bullying others ask for help.

It is important to talk with children who show signs of being bullied or bullying others. These warning signs can also point to other issues or problems, such as depression or substance abuse. Talking to the child can help identify the root of the problem.



Cyberbullying Definition

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using electronic technology. Electronic technology includes devices and equipment such as cell phones, computers, and tablets, as well as communication tools including social media sites, text messages, chat, and websites. Examples may include mean text messages or emails, rumor sent by email or posted on social network sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles.

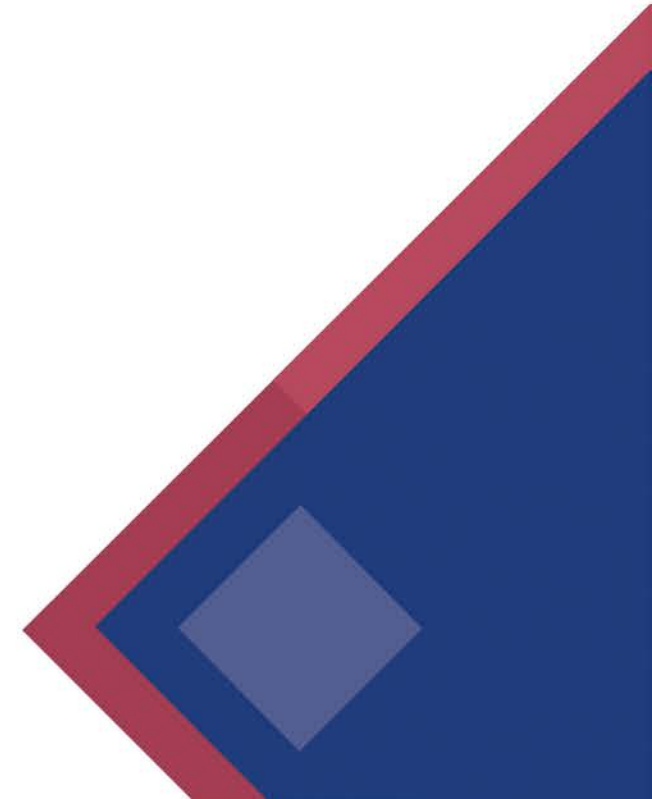


What are the Signs of Cyberbullying?

Many kids and teens who are cyberbullied don't want to tell a teacher, parent, or trusted adults, often because they feel ashamed or fear that their devices will be taken away at home.

Signs of cyberbullying vary, but may include:

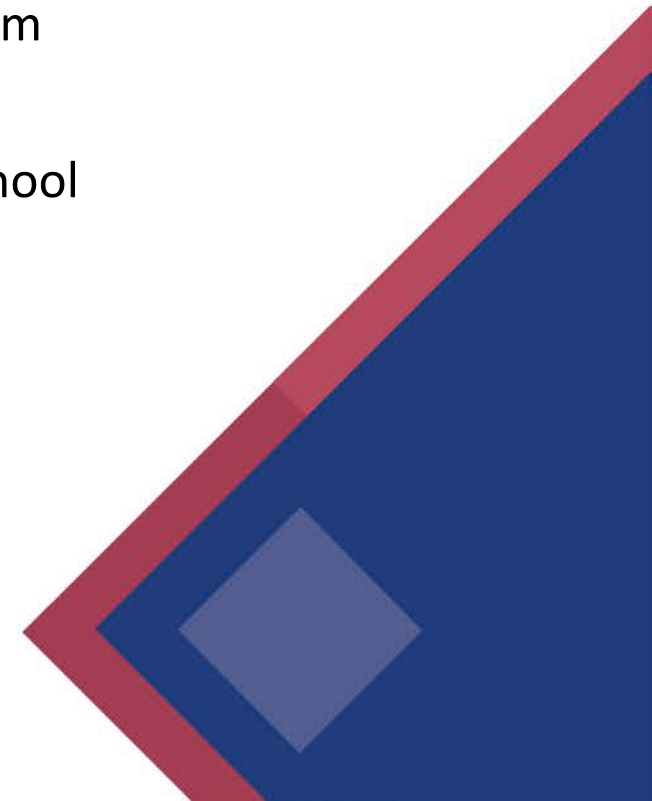
- Being emotionally upset during or after using the Internet or the phone
- Being very secretive or protective of one's digital life
- Spending more time than usual in their room
- Withdrawal from or lack of interest in family members, friends, and activities
- Avoiding school or group gatherings
- Slipping grades and "acting out" in anger at home
- Changes in mood, behavior, sleep, or appetite
- Suddenly wanting to stop using the computer or device
- Being nervous or jumpy when getting a message, text, or email
- Avoiding discussions about computer or phone activities



What Can Parents Do?

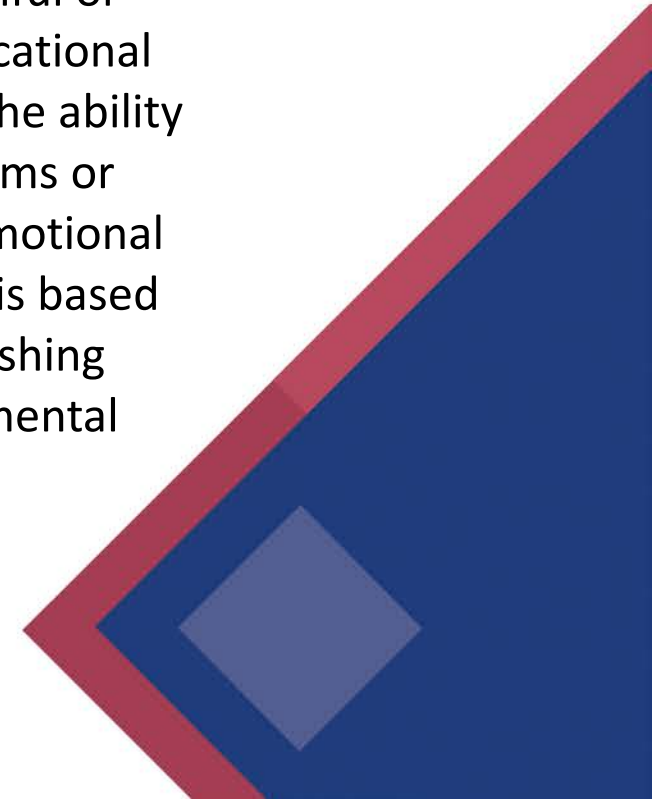
When cyberbullying is the problem:

- Document messages or posts
- Avoid interaction online – block future messages or emails, avoid any problem websites
- Discuss the situation with your child's school. Problems may extend from school to home, or home to school



Harassment Definition

Harassment is any unwelcome conduct based on a protected class under the federal civil rights laws that is severe, pervasive or persistent **and creates a hostile environment** that **interferes with** or **limits** a student's ability to **participate in** or **benefit from services, activities, or opportunities** offered by a school. Harassment meets one or more of the following criteria: is an act directed at one or more students that is received as harmful or embarrassing; is directed at one or more students; substantially interferes with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more students; substantially affects the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from the school district's educational programs or activities by placing the student in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing emotional distress; is based on a student's actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic, or is based on an association with another person who has or is perceived to have any distinguishing characteristics; is repeated over time – is severe, persistent, and pervasive; causes mental duress, or psychological trauma to the victim.



Harassment = Discrimination against students protected under ...

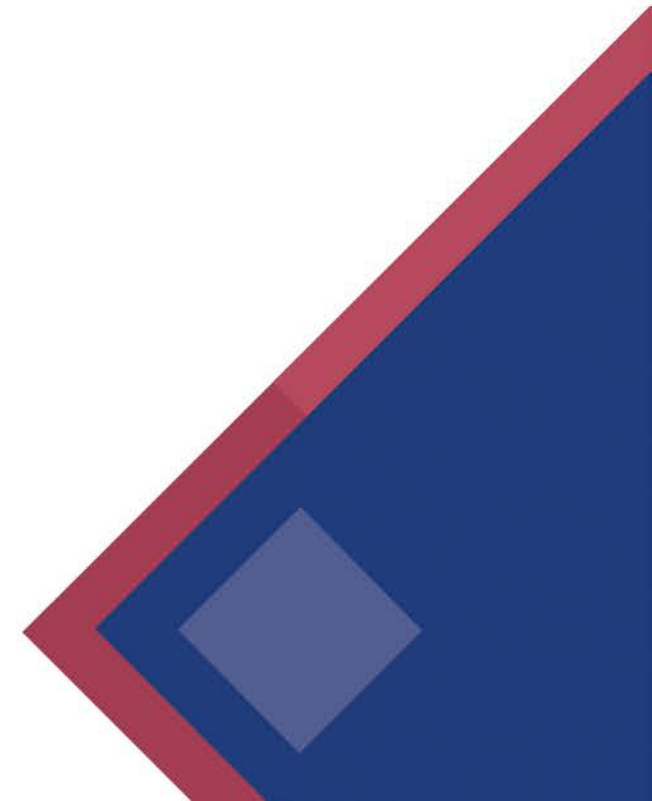
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), which prohibits race, color, or national origin discrimination. Title VI can involve discrimination based on religion if the harassment is based on a student's actual or perceived ancestry or ethnic characteristics.
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits sex discrimination. Title IX covers sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, pregnancy or marital discrimination.
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), which prohibits disability discrimination.



What Can Parents Do?

Parents can support their children by:

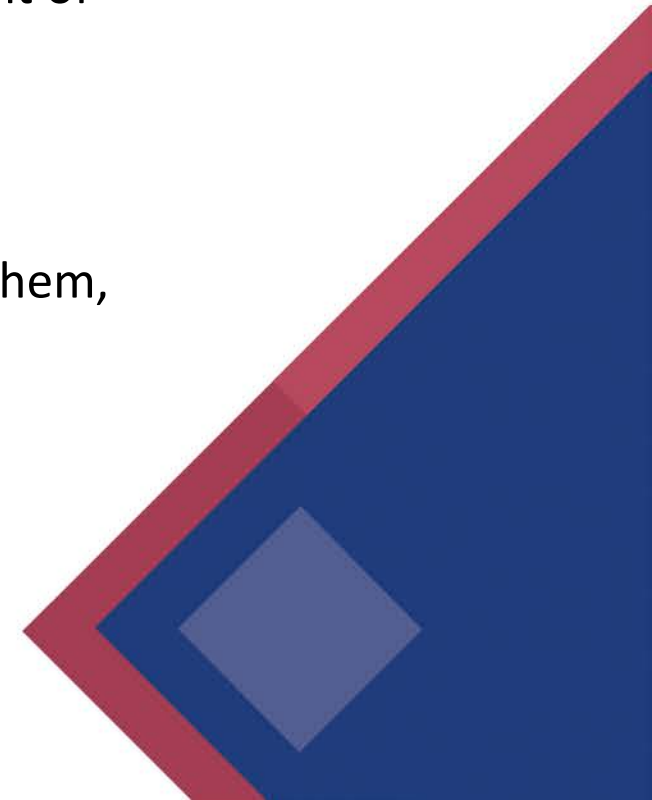
- Encouraging your student to report conflicts to his or her teacher immediately.
- Praising him or her for having the courage to tell.
- Help your child connect with peers who demonstrate positive behavior.
- Modeling positive behavior such as respect and solving problems without aggression.
- Do not tell a child to retaliate.
- Help develop a plan and problem solve for safety.
- Empower your child to become an ally to children who are bullied.



What Can Parents Do?

When your child is the victim:

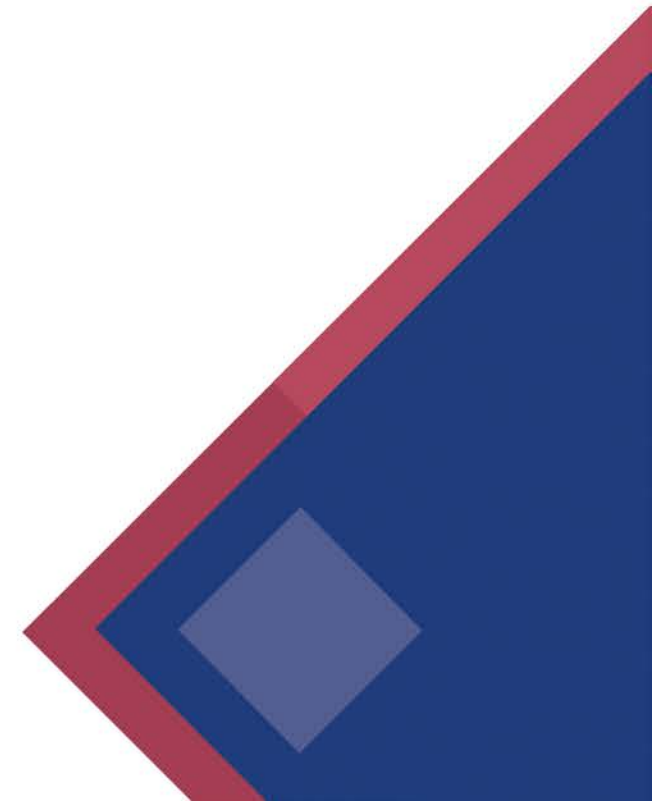
- Encourage your child to report any problems
- Keep documentation of instances – this will help you communicate the extent of the problem to school officials, etc.
- Talk with the teacher, counselor, or principal about the problem
- Do not try to fix the problem by confronting the bully or the bully's parents
- Guide your child through the process of addressing the problem, alongside them, empowering them to take appropriate steps to address the issue
- Notify the school administration immediately if your child is physically threatened



What Can Parents Do?

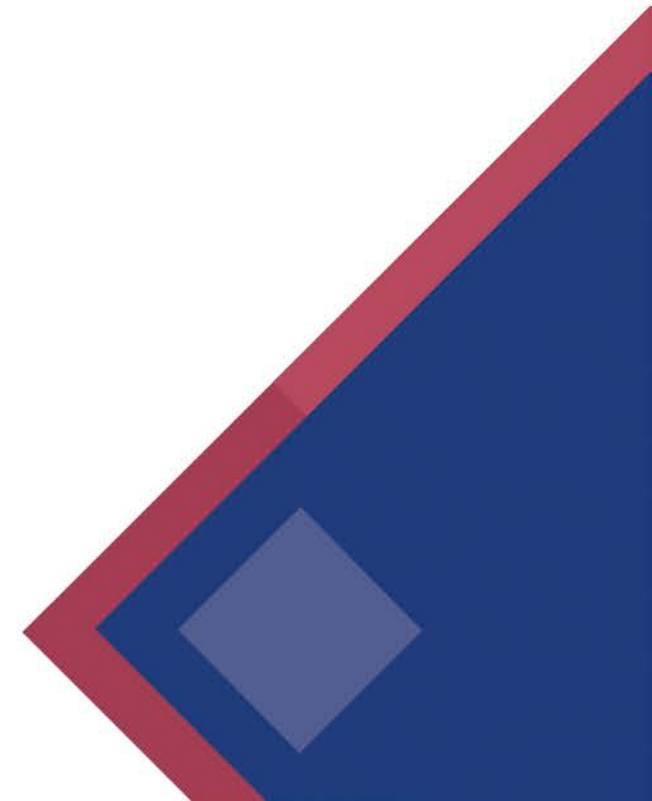
When your child is the bully:

- Be a positive role model
- Set appropriate behavioral guidelines and consequences
- Reinforce positive and kind behavior
- Teach your child how to be respectful and show anger appropriately
- Seek professional assistance, if necessary



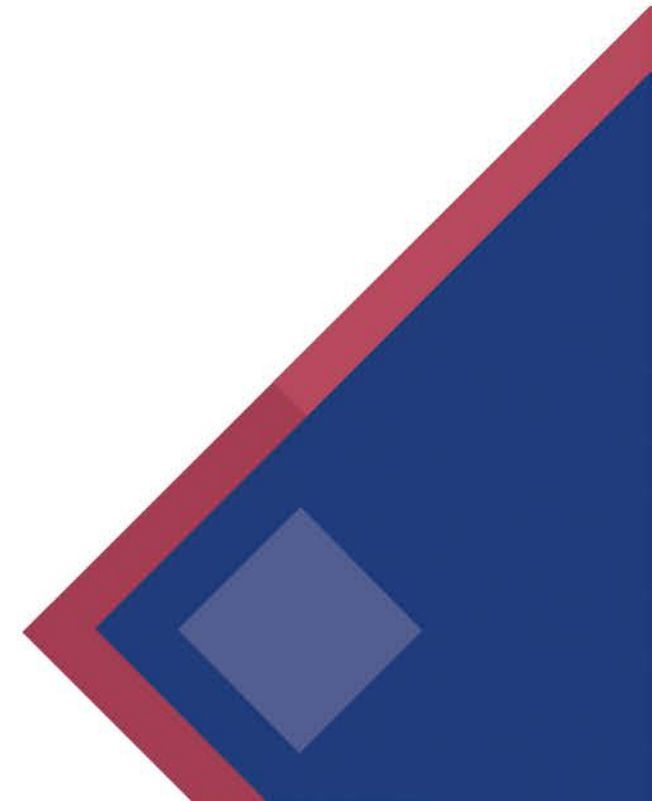
School Responses to Accusations of Bullying

- Have a suspected bullying investigation process
- Investigate the bullying complaint. (Start within 48 hours)
 - Meet with your child to learn what happened.
 - Meet with anyone who witnessed the incident.
 - Meet with the person accused of bullying.
- Develop a safety plan to keep your child safe.
- Provide counseling services if appropriate
- Notify parents of incident and their plan to handle the situation.
- Complete the investigation
- Administer consequences as appropriate.
- Monitor adherence to the safety plan.



Common Mistakes Made in Bullying Situations

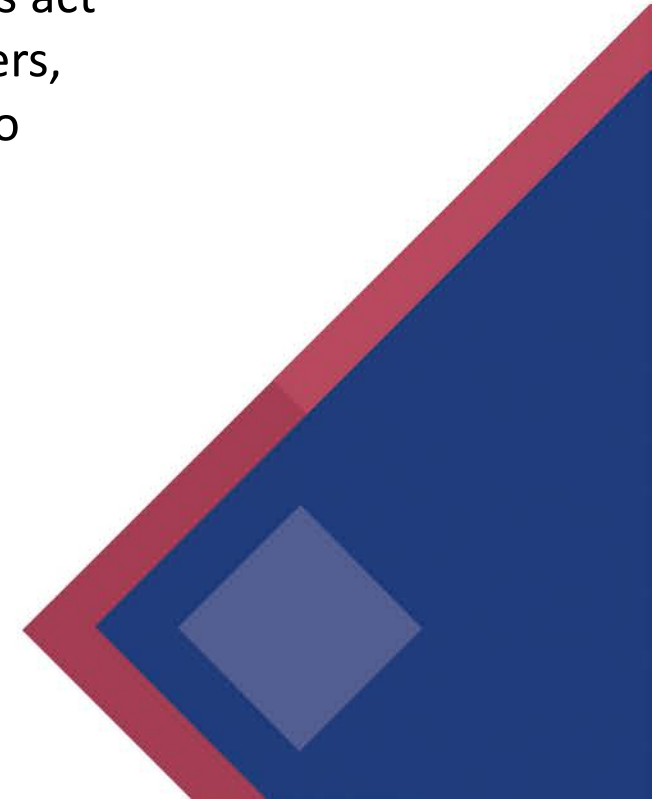
- Misidentifying the situation, i.e. bullying vs other inappropriate behavior
- Telling a child to ignore the bullying.
- Blaming the child for being bullied.
- Encouraging the child to retaliate.
- Confusing bullying with conflict and general bad behavior.
- Making the bullying meet with the offender.
- Sending a bully and victim to mediation.



Hazing Definition

Hazing is the use of embarrassing and often dangerous or illegal activities by a group to initiate new members.

Pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. 49-2-120, hazing means, any intentional or reckless act in this state, on or off LEA property, by one (1) student acting alone or with others, that is directed against any other student or that induces or coerces a student to endanger that student's mental or physical health or safety.



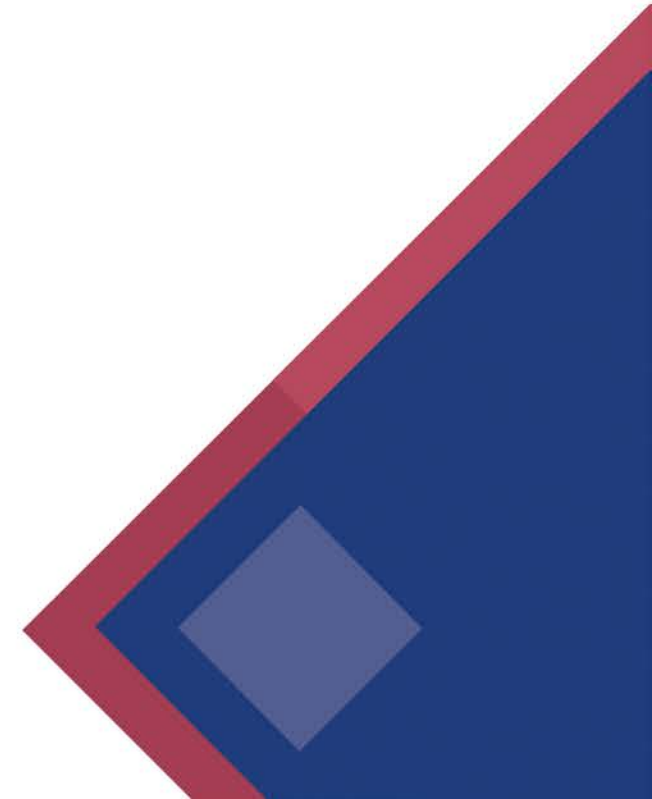
Resources

Bullying

- [The American Psychological Association](#)
- <https://www.stopbullying.gov/>
- <https://www.parentcenterhub.org/bullying/>

Cyberbullying

- <https://cyberbullying.org/resources/parents>



When Bullying/Harassment Doesn't Stop

When you are not satisfied with the response from the local school...

- Contact KCS Central Office Ombudsman to file a grievance
- Contact KCS Title IX Compliance officer (if appropriate)

If all else fails, contact the Office of Civil Rights for more information and to file a complaint.

