

ERASE – Expect RESPECT and a SAFE Education

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Information about Bullying

Bullying is intentional, hurtful and aggressive behaviour that makes others feel uncomfortable, scared or upset. A person who shows bullying behaviour says or does something intentionally hurtful to others and they keep doing it, with no sense of regret or remorse – even when it's obvious that they've hurt a person or when they're asked to stop. A person who shows bullying behaviour usually picks on another person's culture, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, looks, religion, or sexual orientation.

What is bullying - A persistent pattern of unwelcome or aggressive behaviour that hurts others physically and/or emotionally

For a situation to be considered a bullying incident, three indicators are usually present:

1. **Power** – children who bully acquire their power through physical size and strength, by status within the peer group, and by recruiting support of the group
2. **Frequency** – bullying is not a random act. It is this factor that brings about the anticipatory terror in the mind of the child being bullied that can be so detrimental and have the most debilitating long-term effects
3. **Intent to harm** – children who bully generally do so with the intent to either physically or emotionally harm the other child

It's important to know the difference between bullying and acts of aggression or conflict. Not all **mean or rude behaviour or conflict** is bullying.

Mean: Saying or doing something on purpose to hurt someone without consistency

Mean behaviour aims to hurt someone. Kids are mean to each other when they criticize things about another person (e.g. clothing, intelligence, coolness, etc.). Usually, mean things are said impulsively and then often regretted later.

Mean behaviour can be triggered by feelings of anger, frustration or jealousy. A kid might say something mean to make themselves look better in comparison to another person.

Being mean can sound like:

- "Are you seriously wearing that sweater again? Didn't you just wear it, like, last week?"
- "Get a life."
- "You're so fat/ugly/stupid."
- "I hate you!"

Mean behaviour causes damage. It's behaviour that should not happen – it should be discouraged and stopped. **Reporting mean behaviour to the school is important.**

Conflict: A disagreement or difference between peers who have equal power

Conflict is an inevitable part of a group dynamic.

Here's an example of conflict: Two girls on the basketball team are arguing with each other about losing a game. One of the girls blames the other for letting the opposing team knock the ball out of her hands before she could throw it. The other girl is saying it's her teammate's fault because she didn't pass the ball during the last few seconds of the game. They continue to fight until their coach gets involved and tells the girls to stop arguing.

In this scenario, both girls have equal power and are disagreeing over the outcome of a game. Neither girl has been threatened or harmed, and neither is showing signs of humiliation or distress.

It would be considered bullying if one of the girls continued an intentional campaign of blame against the other to hurt her feelings or alienate her from her friends. This could include several actions over the course of a few days or weeks – doing things like calling her names, taunting her outside of the gymnasium, or even getting others to gang up on her. **Reporting unresolved conflict to the school is important.**

Take action if you see UNKINDNESS or BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

It's EVERYONE's job to contribute positively to our school culture. You have the power to stand up for what's right and stand up for each other. Someone showing unkind or bullying behaviour loses their control if they don't have an audience watching them. At the very least, leave immediately. Tell an adult. Best case scenario take a stand by saying something.

If you see unkind behaviour or bullying, you can stop it within 10 seconds of getting involved. You could try:

- Saying something like, "leave him alone," or "cut it out."
- Defending the victim
- Directing attention away from the bullying
- Getting support from friends to stand up against bullying
- Reporting the bullying to adults

Don't be a bystander and encourage bullying behaviour by:

- Laughing, cheering or recording it
- Forwarding bullying photos or texts
- Visiting websites that target a specific person
- "Liking" mean comments or photos on social media
- Joining in on the bullying

You become part of the problem by watching bad things happen and not doing or saying anything about it.

You can talk to your school principal or get help [HERE](#).