

Bullying Awareness for Parents



Lawrence Family Development Charter School

Susan Dion Earabino, Ed.D., Principal

Creating a safe, respectful, and tolerant learning environment is the responsibility of everyone.



An Act Relative to Bullying in Schools

- o In May 2010, the Governor signed Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010 into law which addresses Bullying in Schools.
- o The law required all schools and school systems to develop and implement a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan by December 2010.
- o In Parent-Student Handbook



Definitions

Bullying: the repeated use of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination directed at a target that:

- o Causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- o Places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property;
- o Creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- o Infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- o Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school

Definitions, cont.

- o Cyberbullying: bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as: telephones, cell phones, computers, and the internet. It includes, but is not limited to, voice mail messages, e-mail, instant messages, text messages, and internet postings (social networking sites, web pages, etc.). In addition, it includes the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Definitions, cont.

- o Hostile environment: a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.
- o Aggressor: student or adult who engages in bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation. includes any school staff member or any school-related staff
- o Target: student against whom bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation has been perpetrated.
- o Retaliation: any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

Bullying May Include:

- Physical intimidation or assault;
- Intimidating someone to do something against his will;
- Threats oral or written;
- Name-calling, put-downs;
- Stalking;
- Threatening looks, gestures, or actions;
- Spreading rumors;
- False accusations;
- Social isolation

Bullying

Bullying is

- o repeated
- o directed at a target
- o intended to cause fear or harm
- o an imbalance of power

Bullying is not ...

- o a one-time thing
- o intended to tease or get attention
- o not liking someone
- o bumping into someone
- o arguing, disagreements
- o not wanting to play with another
- o being bossy

is it BULLYING?

When someone says or does something
unintentionally hurtful
and they do it once, that's
RUDE.

When someone says or does something
intentionally hurtful
and they do it once, that's
MEAN.

When someone says or does something
intentionally hurtful and they *keep doing it*—
even when you tell them to stop or show
them that you're upset—that's
BULLYING.

19% of students age 12-18 report
that they have been bullied at school:


called names **13%**

subject of rumors **13%**

pushed **5.3%**

excluded **5.2%**

threatened **3.9%**



Among students age 12-18 who report that they have being bullied at school during the school year, 15 % were cyberbullied.

15% of students age 12-18 report
that they have been cyberbullied:

texts

internet

instant messages

through games

Bystanders

- 44% of students who witnessed a bullying incident ignored it.
- 24% of students who witnessed an incident also made fun of the victim.
- 90% of social media-using teens who have witnessed online cruelty say they have ignored mean behavior. 35% have done so frequently.
- 21% of social media-using teens reported joining in when witnessing online cruelty.

Bystanders

When bullying occurs, bystanders are present 80 percent of the time.

A bystander has the potential to make a positive difference in a bullying situation, particularly for the youth.

BYSTANDERS -

during an incident:

- * Defend the target**
- * Intervene as a group**
- * Change the subject**
- * Question the bullying behavior**
- * Use humor to lighten up a serious situation**
- * Open stating an objection “STOP!”**
- * State approval of the victim and validate the friendship**

BYSTANDERS -

after an incident:

- * Reach out privately to the target of the bullying to express support or concern.**
- * Report the bullying to a parent, teacher, or school administrator.**
- * Reach out privately to the person doing the bullying to express concern if it feels safe.**

Acts of Bullying, which include Cyberbullying, are Prohibited:

On school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school related activities, functions or programs whether on or off school grounds, at a bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; and

At a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is owned, leased or used by the school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringes on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying Prevention & Intervention Plan

- o Reporting Responsibilities by: any staff member who becomes aware; and students or others who witness or becomes aware.
- o Use of LFDCS Bullying Prevention and Intervention Incident Reporting Form
- o Investigation
- o Interviews
- o Written statements
- o Confidentiality
- o Determination
- o Decision
- o Follow-up

Reporting Bullying or Retaliation

- Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents, or others, and may be made orally or in writing.
- Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing.
- All staff members are required to report immediately to the principal or supervisor any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses.
- Reports made by students, parents, or others who are not school employees, may be made anonymously.

Responding to a Report of Bullying or Retaliation

- o Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal or administrator will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents.
- o Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to:
 - o Creating a personal safety plan;
 - o Pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus;
 - o Identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target; and altering the aggressor’s schedule and access to the target.

Investigation

- o The principal or administrator will investigate promptly all reports of bullying or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved.
- o During the investigation the principal or administrator will: interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. Whoever is conducting the investigation will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, and/or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is also prohibited by law.



Bullying and Special Ed. Students

- Whenever the evaluation of the IEP Team indicates that a child has a disability that affects social skills development or that the child is vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing because of the child's disability, the IEP shall address the skills and proficiencies needed to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.



How do I know?

if my child is being bullied?

- Missing items
- Headaches, stomachache, “faking” illness
- Overeating, undereating
- Nightmares
- Declining grades, loss of interest in schoolwork, or not wanting to go to school
- Loss of friends or avoiding social situations
- Feelings of helplessness or decreased self esteem
- Self-destructive behaviors such as running away from home, harming themselves, or talking about hurting themselves

How do I know?

if my child is being a bully?

- Get into physical or verbal fights;
- Have friends who bully others;
- Are becoming increasingly aggressive;
- Say or do mean things;
- Get sent to Head of School/Principal's office or to detention frequently; blue slips;
- Have unexplained extra money or new belongings;
- Blame others for their problems;
- Don't accept responsibility for their actions;
- Are competitive and want to be popular, first, best.

If your child reports being bullied:

1. Try to determine if it's bullying or not;
2. Call the Head of School and discuss in person or on the phone;
3. Give the Head of School time to determine if it's bullying or a non-bullying incident;
4. If it is not bullying, the other student will still most likely have a consequence;
5. If it is bullying, the Head of School will investigate and get back to you.

If your child is being a **bully**:

1. The Head of School will contact you to discuss it in person;
 2. The Head of School will present you with the facts from the investigation;
 3. Your child will have a consequence according to the Handbook.
-

As a parent:

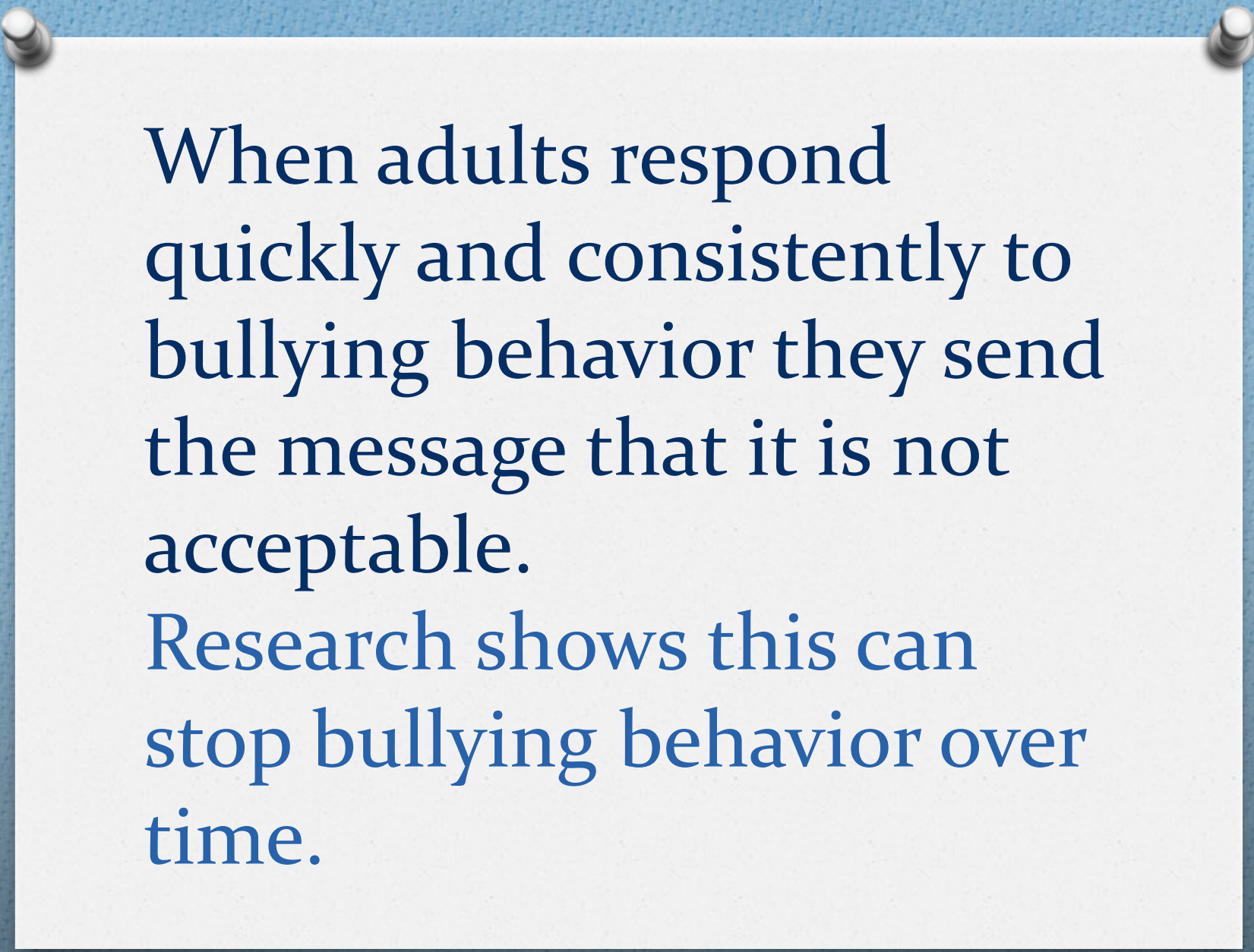
- **Do not panic.**
- **This does not mean that your child is bad.**
- Bullying behavior can be turned around.
- Work with the school to help your child.
- At home talk about: empathy; treating others the way you want to be treated; reinforce that your child is still loved and you believe that they can change the behavior.
- A consequence at home sends a message of what you expect from your child.
- Counselling may help.

The Effects of Bullying

Children who are Bullied: more likely to experience depression and anxiety; sadness and loneliness; changes in sleep and eating patterns; loss of interest in activities they used to enjoy; health complaints; decrease in grades; self harm

Children who Bully Others: more likely to abuse alcohol and other drugs in adolescence and as adults; get into fights, vandalize property, and drop out of school; criminal convictions and traffic citations as adults; be abusive toward their romantic partners, spouses, or children as adults

Bystanders: more likely to have increased use of tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs; have increased mental health problems, including depression and anxiety; miss or skip school; feel guilty about not helping



When adults respond quickly and consistently to bullying behavior they send the message that it is not acceptable.

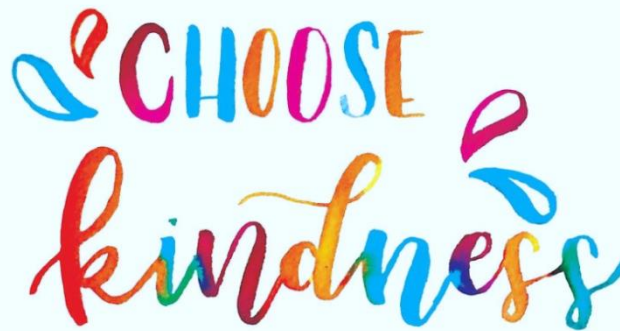
Research shows this can stop bullying behavior over time.

Bullying and Suicide

- The relationship between bullying and suicide is complex.
- It is not accurate and potentially dangerous to present bullying as the “cause” or “reason” for a suicide, or to suggest that suicide is a natural response to bullying.
- Research indicates that persistent bullying can lead to or worsen feelings of isolation, rejection, exclusion, and despair, as well as depression and anxiety, which can contribute to suicidal behavior.
- The vast majority of young people who are bullied do not become suicidal.
- Most young people who die by suicide have multiple risk factors.

At home:

- ✓ Talk to your child.
- ✓ Let them know that they can tell you anything.
- ✓ Listen without reacting.
- ✓ Monitor all devices: computers, laptops, tablets, cellphones.
- ✓ Read the section in the Parent-Student with your child.
- ✓ Keep in touch with the school.
- ✓ Be a good role model.



We are all in this together!



stopbullying.gov

