

# What is Bullying?

Bullying is repeated physical, verbal, sexual, or psychological attacks or intimidation by one individual who is perceived as being physically or psychologically stronger than another.

Bullying has four elements:

1. **PAIN**-someone is physically or verbally hurting another person with actions that are intentional
2. **POWER**-a bully is perceived as powerful and is attempting to have "power" over another person
3. **PERSISTANCE**-It is a repeated act
4. **PERMISSION**-Seeing bullying and allowing it to happen; not reporting it to an adult.

## What Bullying is NOT:

- A general argument or conflict
- Choosing one friend over another
- Being a little bossy to other kids
- Having a one-time fight
- Making a one-time joke
- Being honest when you are communicating your feelings if you disagree with someone

## The Role of the Silent Witness:

There are two choices that a witness makes: he/she either adds to the harm of a victim by doing nothing, or takes action that helps the victim.

Just as there are different types of bullies, there are also multiple types of bystanders.

These include:

- Students who are followers; they don't start the bullying, but they join in once it occurs
- Students who are passive onlookers and support the bully but do not take part
- Students who feel uncomfortable with bullying, but are comfortable to take a stand
- Students who are willing to stand up, and report bullying.



## Preventing Bullying How can we help?

*Everyone plays a role in preventing bullying...administrators, counselors, teachers, parents, and students...*

What We Can Teach Students about Bullying In...

### The Elementary Years:

**The bully's goal is isolation.**

Bullying isn't just physical aggression, it is often exclusion. It may also show up as constantly making fun of another child or not allowing him/her to join a group of friends.

**The bully's power is secrecy.**

When a victim or bystander keeps bullying a secret, it makes the situation worse. Encourage students to break the silence and let them know that the adults will protect their privacy.

**Even very young victims of bullying can learn to confront aggression.**

Studies show that more confident children are less likely to be victims. Enhance self-confidence through role-playing, behavior, behavior training, and classes such as gymnastics, dance, theater, or any sport.

### The Middle and High School Years:

Experts believe that bullying behavior increases in the middle school because this is the time when students begin to gain independence from their parents and peer groups become more important.

**Warning signs that a middle school student may be a victim of Bullying:**

- Student doesn't want to go to school
- Student no longer sees his/her usual group of friends
- Student's grades fall
- Student seems consistently unfocused, stressed, or unmotivated
- Student stops taking care of his/her appearance
- Student self-mutilates