

### Special Issue:

## BULLYING & HARASSMENT

Bullying and harassment have profound impacts on our schools today. It is estimated that nearly two thirds of the children absent from school on any given day are absent due to fear of intimidation. What was once defined as “boys will be boys” behavior has escalated into one of the most significant problems of school violence in American schools.

In no case should bullying be taken lightly. The FBI White Paper on School Violence identified certain characteristics common to students involved in school shootings. In addition to discovering that all were Caucasian boys, all had a fascination with violent movies, music & weapons, and all were social outcasts, rejected from peers, the FBI found that **all were bullied as victims and then became bullies**.

This entire issue of *The Red Apple* takes a look at what constitutes bullying and harassment, and explores steps that can be taken to prevent it.

### What Is Considered Bullying?

#### Physical Aggression

Pushing; shoving; spitting; kicking; biting; ripping clothing; cornering

#### Social Alienation

Gossip; setting up someone to look bad; racial or ethnic slurs; starting false rumors; name calling

#### Verbal Aggression

Name calling; teasing; disrespecting the victim's appearance, family, or possessions; threats to harm

#### Intimidation

Playing a trick on someone; coercing or blackmail, taking the victim's possessions; daring the victim to do something not in his best interest

#### Sexual Harassment

Offensive sexual remarks; physical acts such as flipping up dresses, forcing kisses, grabbing, touching; spreading sexually explicit rumors or notes; bribing or coercing to perform sexual acts; demeaning comments based on gender; using profanity

### FACTS About Bullying

**FACT** Bullying is VICTIMIZATION and is not normal behavior.

**FACT** Bullying behavior is seen in children as young as four.

**FACT** 90% of victims of bullies experience a drop in academic performance.

**FACT** Bullies are motivated by power and want to win in every circumstance.

**FACT** Bullies lack in a sense of empathy and self-esteem.

### Also In This Issue:

- 5 Things A Student Can Do About Bullies
- Creating a Positive School Climate
- What Can Your School Do About Bullying?

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## What Can Your School Do About Bullying?

Define and develop policies regarding bullying and harassing

Publicize and post the policies

Provide a consistent procedure for school personnel to follow

Positive policies that demonstrate respect for students have been proven to be more effective than highly punitive systems.

Prevent problem behaviors at an early age and at the beginning signs of trouble

Do a thorough investigation of the types of bullying and harassment in your school, where it occurs, when it occurs and who are most frequently victims as well as perpetrators.

Provide each student a map of the schools and have them mark the spots in which they do not feel safe.

Use this information to provide more supervision to the "unsafe areas".

Establish a confidential student "hot-line".

Provide an anonymous way to report potential incidents and still feel safe.

Install convex mirrors in areas in which it is difficult to see around corners.

Install surveillance cameras for areas of concern.

Provide conflict resolution. Peer courts and mediation programs within the school.

Engage students in activities that provide support and recognition for everyone.

Enlist the support of volunteers and parents to take part in a bully prevention program

Provide a confidential outlet for students to talk about problems concerning bullying.

Offer counseling and groups for anger management, self-esteem, assertiveness and tolerance and appreciation.

Develop school wide activities that spotlight appreciation of diversity.

Find ways to deal with bullying rather than just punish.

Teach students to resist bullies using brain not brawn.

Teach students to assist each other.

## Tips for Creating A Positive School Environment

1. Create one standard of behavior with high, positive expectations for all students.
2. Provide a school wide behavior management plan that includes:
  - Consistent expectations
  - Consequences for minor misbehaviors to major infractions
  - Reward system for appropriate behavior
3. Post the plan in all hallways, rest rooms, classrooms, and common areas.
4. Teach the plan to students and advise parents.
5. Consistently apply the plan.
6. Provide adequate supervision for students. Be an active presence.
7. Create an attractive, welcoming, and orderly appearance for the school.
8. Establish rapport with students by showing interest in outside activities. Respect their needs, likes & dislikes, and demonstrate acceptance.
9. Celebrate students' accomplishments.
10. Encourage cooperative lessons and active learning.

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## Things A Student Can Do About BULLIES

### 1

Avoid confrontations with bullies.

### 2

Act assertively.

### 3

Maintain an assertive posture and state simply that you want the behavior to stop.

### 4

Ignore name-calling and other things designed to provoke.

### 5

Get help from an adult.