



Bullying and Harassment

Department of Student Services & Special Education

*Supporting a Caring, Safe, & Healthy
Learning Environment for the Whole
Child*

What Is Bullying/Harassment?

Arlington Public Schools defines bullying/harassment, including bullying/harassment based on an actual or perceived characteristic such as race, national origin, creed, color, religion, ancestry, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or disability, as the repeated infliction or attempted infliction of injury, discomfort, or humiliation on a student by one or more students. It is a pattern of aggressive, intentional or hostile behavior that occurs repeatedly and over time. Bullying/harassment typically involves an imbalance of power or strength. Bullying/harassment behaviors may include physical, verbal, or nonverbal behaviors. These behaviors include, but are not limited to; intimidation, assault, extortion, oral or written threats, teasing, name-calling, threatening looks, gestures or actions, rumor spreading, false accusations, hazing, social isolation, and abusive e-mails, phone calls, or other forms of cyber bullying. The term "cyberbullying" is used when text, photos, videos or other media are uploaded to computers and/or internet to defame, insult, harass or haze others.

Every child deserves a safe and respectful environment. Parents and school staff must work together to provide this environment. Parents can be instrumental in helping their child by learning the signs of bullying/harassment and by knowing strategies to deal with it if it occurs. By maintaining open and respectful communication with their child, parents set the stage for coping with a wide range of problems, including bullying/harassment. Teaching children to respect themselves and others can be the first and largest step towards the prevention of bullying/harassment.

Students Who Bully/Harass

Students who bully/harass want to control others by manipulating and embarrassing them. Bullying is never okay. It is a learned behavior that can be changed. Students who bully can receive help and support to change their behaviors by visiting the school staff members listed in this brochure.

Bullying/Harassment Can Include:

- Name calling
- Teasing, making fun of someone
- Spreading rumors and gossip
- Insulting someone
- Telling or writing lies about someone
- Expressing sarcasm, subtle negative comments
- Excluding specific persons
- Pushing, tripping, hitting
- Ridiculing
- Threatening, intimidating or scaring people
- Belittling people because of their race or culture
- Making sexual comments or innuendos



Students Who Observe Bullying/Harassment

If your student observes incidents of bullying, encourage her/him to do the following: support the person being bullied; tell the bully to stop; do not laugh or side with the bully; and tell a responsible adult. Students should not confront the aggressor if they think that doing so is unsafe.

What Parents Can Do?

Whether your child is being bullied/harassed or is bullying/harassing others, you can help! Talk to your child about bullying and harassment. If you think your child is being bullied, ask your son or daughter what has happened. Encourage your child to report bullying/harassment at school to teachers, school counselors, or the principal. Make a follow-up contact with school staff yourself.



Students Who Are Bullied/Harassed Can:

- Report bullying at school to teachers, school counselors, or the principal
- Talk to a trusted adult at home
- Calmly say, "Stop it."
- Walk away
- Be assertive, but do not get into a physical or verbal fight
- Hold your head up and show confidence in yourself
- Use humor
- Stick with a friend whenever possible
- Avoid the bully

Ways for Students and Parents to Report Bullying/Harassment

Any student or parent may initiate a complaint by talking to school staff. School administrators are responsible for investigating each complaint. The school administrator will respond quickly and decisively to reported incidents of bullying/harassment.

Talk to:

School Administrator

Teacher/Coach

School Counselor

School Nurse

School Psychologist

School Social Worker



Resources

- Check with the school counselor & visit the bullying page on the APS website.
- www.stopbullying.gov
- <http://pbskids.org/itsmylife/friends/bullies/>
- <http://www.stompoutbullying.org/>

Arlington Public Schools prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, national origin, creed, color, religion, gender, age, economic status, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, gender identity or expression, and/or disability. This policy provides equal access to courses and programs, counseling services, physical education and athletics, vocational education, instructional materials and extra-curricular activities. Violations of this policy should be reported to the Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services at 703-228-6008 or the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources at 703-228-6110.

Policies and Procedures

Arlington Public Schools strives to develop and maintain a climate of respect within each school. This includes adult modeling of respectful behavior and caring responses to student concerns.

The APS Bullying/Harassment Prevention Policy (25-1.17) aims to reduce incidents of bullying and harassment within the school division. This policy applies to school buildings; school grounds; school-sponsored social events, trips, and sporting events; and to buses and bus stops. Bullying that occurs off school premises, including misuse or inappropriate use of technology, is also prohibited and subject to school discipline when the order, safety or welfare of the school or its students is affected as a result of such out-of-school actions.



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October, 2015