

Students: Know the Facts

Every school district is required to have policies and procedures for addressing the issues of bullying and cyber-bullying. Ask to see your district's policy and learn how your school is implementing the policy.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is negative, often repeated behavior with the intent to hurt someone physically or emotionally and involves an imbalance of power (physical size, social status) between the aggressor(s) and the target(s).

Physical bullying:

- Hitting, kicking, or pushing someone...or even just threatening to do it
- Stealing, hiding or destroying someone's things
- Making someone do something he or she doesn't want to do

Verbal bullying:

- Name-calling
- Teasing, taunting
- Insulting or otherwise verbally abusing someone

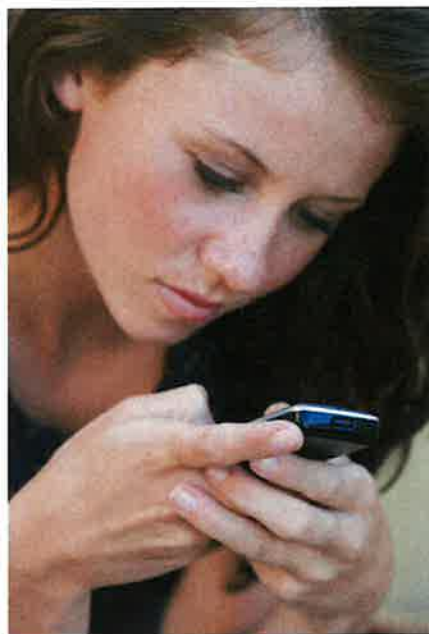
Emotional bullying:

- Refusing to talk to someone
- Excluding someone from groups or activities
- Spreading lies or rumors about someone
- Making someone do something he or she doesn't want to do

Cyber-bullying

Threats, or intimidation using computers, cell phones and social networking sites by:

- Sending hurtful or threatening emails or text messages.
- Posting photos or other information about without consent.
- Spreading lies and rumors.
- Creating a group or social networking page to target or exclude someone.



What to Do If You Are Being Bullied

Tip #1: How to respond as bullying is happening

- **Walk away.** Bullies want to know they have control over your emotions, so don't react with anger or retaliate with physical force.
- **Protect yourself.** If you can't walk away and are being physically hurt, protect yourself so you can get away. Your safety is the first priority.
- **Report the bullying to a trusted adult.** It's scary to report and no one wants to be seen as a snitch or tattletale, but you have a right to be safe at school. Adults are responsible to help with the problem without letting the bully know it was you who reported them.
- **Repeat as necessary.** Report each bullying incident until it stops. There is no reason for you to ever put up with bullying.

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Tip #2: How to deal with a cyber-bully

- **Do not respond** to cyber-bullying messages.
- **Document and report cyber-bullying.** Save or print out emails, text messages or screenshots for reporting the incident to adults.
- **Block the cyber-bully** on your phone, IM list, websites or social media pages. Report inappropriate messages to an adult, the internet service provider or website moderator. Report threats against your safety to the police.

Tip #3: Avoid isolation

- **Let People Know.** Talk to a parent, counselor, coach, religious leader or trusted friend. Expressing what you're going through can make a huge difference to the way you feel, even if it doesn't change the situation.
- **Don't blame yourself.** It is not your fault. No matter what someone says or does, you should not be ashamed of who you are or what you feel.

Adapted and used by permission from Helpguide.org:
<http://helpguide.org/mental/bullying.htm>

The Stats: Bullying in Montana

In 2021, **15.6 percent** of high school students reported being **bullied at school** (down from 22% in 2019), and **16.4 percent** reported being **electronically bullied** (down from nearly 18% in 2019).

Source: 2019, 2021 YRBS Survey

The Bystander



Bullying situations usually involve more than the aggressor and the target. They also involve bystanders—those who watch bullying happen or hear about it. Depending on how bystanders respond, they can either contribute to the problem or to the solution.

Hurtful Bystanders

Some bystanders encourage the bullying by laughing, cheering, or making comments, and other bystanders join in the bullying once it has begun.

Passive Bystanders

Most bystanders passively accept bullying by watching and doing nothing. Without realizing it, these bystanders also contribute to the problem. Passive bystanders provide the silent acceptance that allows people who bully to continue their hurtful behavior.

Why don't more bystanders intervene?

- They think, "It's none of my business."
- They are afraid of getting hurt or becoming a victim.
- They feel powerless to stop the bully.
- They don't like the victim or feels the victim "deserves" it.
- They don't want to draw attention to themselves.
- They fear retribution from the bully.
- They think that telling adults won't help or it may make things worse.
- They don't know what to do.

Bystanders who don't intervene or don't report the bullying often suffer negative consequences themselves. They may experience:

- Pressure to participate in the bullying.
- Anxiety about speaking to anyone about the bullying.
- Guilt for not having defended the victim.

Bystanders have the power to play a key role in preventing or stopping bullying by:

- Discouraging the aggressor from continuing the behavior.
- Reporting the bullying to adults.
- Working with a group of students to help prevent bullying at school.



Preparing children to become helpful bystanders

Adults can prepare students to become helpful bystanders by talking to them about the different ways bystanders can make a difference and by letting them know that adults will support them when they step forward.

Adapted and used by permission from eyesonbullying.org
<http://www.eyesonbullying.org/bystander.html>

Bullying Prevention Tips for Families



Talk to your child about bullying

Make sure your children know what bullying is. If they know what bullying is, they will know what not to do and will be able to recognize a bullying incident.

Ask for a copy of the school's bullying policy and procedures. Every Montana school district is required to have policies and procedures to address bullying and cyber-bullying. Make sure you and your children know how to report an incident, whether it is your child being bullied or someone else.

Take bullying seriously

Listen to your kids when they talk about their days. Are they telling you about a bullying incident? Children may be embarrassed or afraid to acknowledge that they are being bullied.

Encourage your children to report incidents of bullying. Let them know that you will support them through the reporting process.

Report the incident to school personnel

Share your child's concerns and specific information about bullying incidents with appropriate school personnel.

Ask how the school plans to deal with the incident as well as their plans for preventing future bullying incidents as well as preventing retaliation.

If you feel the problem hasn't been addressed, follow-up with the school administration to make sure they are following the district's policies and procedures.

What NOT TO Do:

- Do not ignore your child's report.
- Do not advise your child to physically fight back. (Bullying lasts longer and can become more severe when children fight back.)
- Do not confront the child who bullies.
- Do not confront the family of the child who bullies.

Adapted from stopbullying.gov: <http://www.stopbullying.gov/parents/index.html>.



Tips for Parents Dealing with a Child who Bullies

It can be difficult for any parent to learn that their child is bullying others. The sooner you address the problem, the better chance you have of avoiding the long-term effects this behavior can have on a child.

People who bully others:

- Are more likely to get into fights, vandalize property, and drop out of school.
- Have a higher risk of abusing alcohol and other drugs in adolescence and as adults.
- Are twice as likely as their peers to have criminal convictions as adults and four times more likely to be multiple offenders.
- Are more likely as adults to be abusive toward their intimate partners, spouses, or children.

Warning signs your child may be bullying others

Your child:

- Gets into physical or verbal fights with others.
- Gets sent to the principal's office or detention a lot.
- Has extra money or new belongings that cannot be explained.
- Is quick to blame others.
- Does not accept responsibility for his or her actions.
- Has friends who bully others.

Bullying Prevention Tips for Families



What to do if your child is engaging in bullying behavior

- **Educate your child about bullying.** Foster empathy by encouraging your child to look at his/her actions from the victim's perspective. Remind your child that bullying can have legal consequences.
- **Remember you are a model for your children.** Kids learn from adults' aggressive and mean-spirited behavior as well as from acts of kindness and empathy.
- **Establish consistent rules of behavior.** Make sure your child understands your rules and the consequences for breaking them.
- **Set limits with technology.** Let your child know you'll be monitoring his or her use of computers, email, and text messaging.
- **Seek Support.** Talk to school personnel, mental health providers, the PTA or other parenting organizations in your community about how to address the issue. Also, there are many good resources online. (Review the "Resources" tab on the Bully Free Montana page).

Adapted from stopbullying.gov and [Helpguide.org](http://helpguide.org):
<http://www.stopbullying.gov/parents/index.html>
<http://helpguide.org/mental/bullying.htm>

Bullying 101

Name: _____

P D E R F R I E N D
A A L T I M E S P K
I Y L A M P O W E R
N R O N L I N E R H
P Y R U D E R L S I
A P A T T E R N O M
T G E R A F F E N E
T H A P P Y O H H A
S O C I A L P E R N
R N R U D E T A L K

My Definition of Bullying:



Bullying 101

What Is Bullying?

The definition of bullying is unwanted, _____ behavior that is likely to be _____, coming from someone who has more _____.



1 Power

In a _____ imbalance, the person doing the harm is usually the person who we believe has the most power.

2 Pain

Bullying behavior involves unwanted, _____, or _____ behavior.

3 Pattern

Bullying behavior involves a _____
– actions that have already been repeated or are likely to be repeated over time.

~~~~~ "Is It Bullying?" Scenarios ~~~~~

1 Is there...

- ☐ A Power imbalance?
- ☐ Pain caused?
- ☐ Pattern of behavior?

3 Is there...

- ☐ A Power imbalance?
- ☐ Pain caused?
- ☐ Pattern of behavior?

2 Is there...

- ☐ A Power imbalance?
- ☐ Pain caused?
- ☐ Pattern of behavior?

4 Is there...

- ☐ A Power imbalance?
- ☐ Pain caused?
- ☐ Pattern of behavior?



Bullying 101

What Is Bullying?

Bullying that occurs online or in a digital setting is called _____.

How To Report

Where and how do I report bullying?

What gets in the way of reporting bullying?

What beliefs do you have about reporting? What stood out to you from our discussion about reporting?

Someone in my life / at school who I can trust to talk to is...

_____.



Bullying 101: Assessment

Name: _____

Date: _____

1

What are the 3 components of bullying behavior?

2

How and where can you report bullying at your school?

3

What's 1 additional thing that you've learned about bullying or from our class discussion?

True or False?

First identify if the statement is true or false. If false, then use the space below to make it true.

4

A power imbalance is always about physical strength.

True or **False**

5

Bullying always involves some form of pain– physical or emotional.

True or **False**

6

Bullying only happens in person.

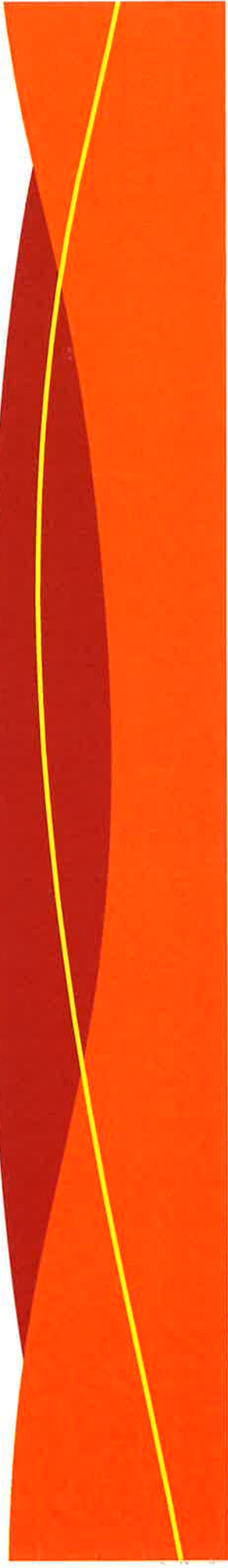
True or **False**





Bullying

Behavior that is unwanted, harmful, and is likely to be repeated, coming from someone who has more power.



Am I Being Bullied Reflection Form

What is this document used for?

Sometimes, we label behaviors as 'bullying' when they might not fit the definition; hurtful actions aren't always bullying. Alternatively, sometimes something is hurtful and we can't quite tell if it is considered bullying!

If you're unsure whether what you're experiencing is bullying, you can use this checklist below. Read each statement and mark the ones that match your situation. This will help you figure out an action plan for responding on the last page.

First, briefly describe what's happening

Determining if it's Bullying:

Reflect on the following questions to determine if what you're experiencing fits the definition of bullying:

Unwanted and Harmful:

- ☐ **Physical:** Is someone hitting, pushing, or physically hurting you and making you afraid to go to school? [Yes / No]
- ☐ **Emotional:** Do you feel sad, scared, anxious, or upset because of what someone is saying or doing to you? [Yes / No]
- ☐ **Social:** Do you feel left out, ignored, or excluded by others? [Yes / No]

Imbalance of Power:

- ☐ Are they older or in a higher grade than you? [Yes / No]
- ☐ Do they have more friends or allies than you do? [Yes / No]
- ☐ Are they using their position or friendships to make you do things you don't want to do? (Peer pressure) [Yes / No]

Likely to be Repeated:

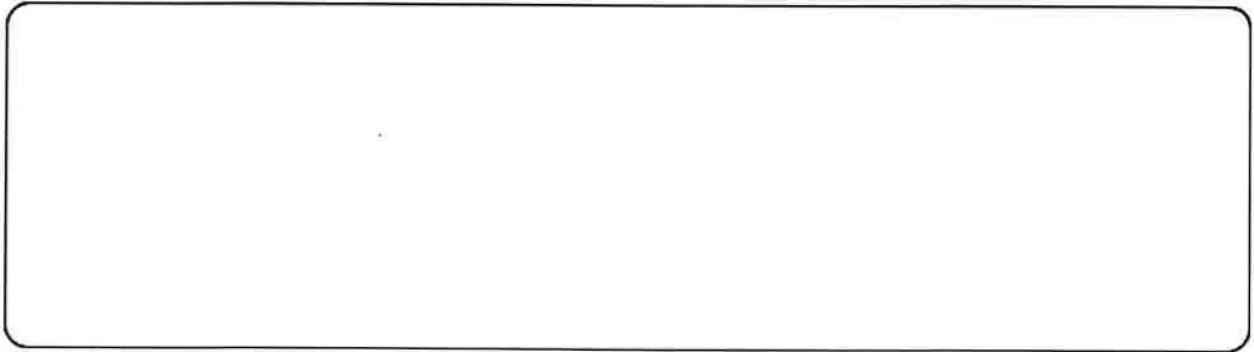
- ☐ Has this behavior happened more than once? [Yes / No]
- ☐ Do you feel like the behavior is becoming more frequent or escalating over time? [Yes / No]

Based on your answers, decide if it's bullying or just hurtful behavior. Either way, make a plan to address the situation.

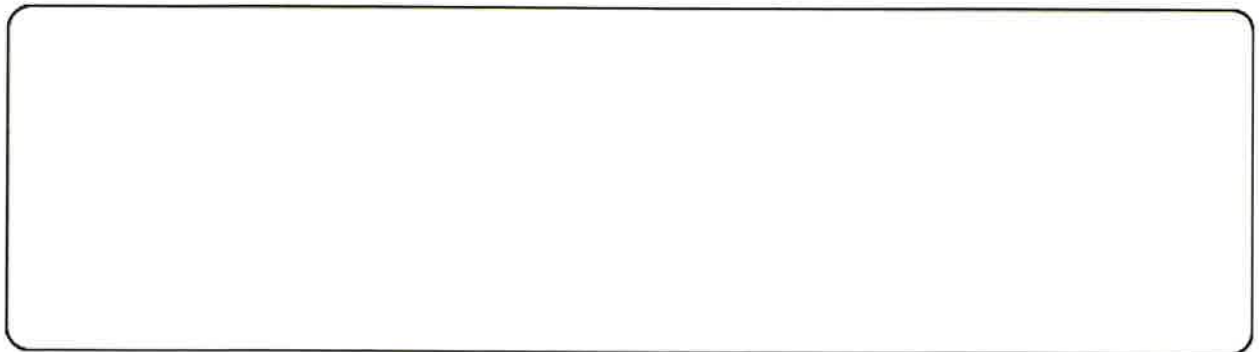
Developing Your Plan:

Take some time to think about your plan and write down your responses below. Remember, you're not alone, and there are people who can support you through this process.

- **I will stop bullying by** (Consider strategies like staying with friends, confidently standing up for yourself, or seeking help from trusted adults.)



- **I will support myself or others when experiencing bullying by** (Consider how you can offer support and assistance to yourself or others. Think about ways to show empathy, care, and seek help from adults or peers.)



- **I will report bullying by** (Determine how you will report the bullying behavior to the appropriate authorities. Think about who you will talk to, what information you will share, and how you will document evidence of the bullying.)

