



October 2012 National Bullying Month

Week 2

WCPSS Board Policy on Bullying

1. As used in this policy, harassing or bullying behavior is any repeated, systematic pattern of gestures or written, electronic, or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication on school property; at any school sponsored function; on a school bus; or as otherwise stated in Board Policy 6400- Student Code of Conduct, and that:

- a. Places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property; or
- b. Creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits. A hostile environment means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior.

2. Harassing or bullying behavior includes, but is not limited to, acts reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, socioeconomic status, academic status, gender identity, physical appearance, sexual orientation, or mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics.

Types of Bullying

Physical bullying

Physical bullying is any unwanted physical contact between the bully and the victim. This is one of the most easily identifiable forms of bullying. Examples include:

- punching
- pushing
- shoving
- kicking
- inappropriate touching
- tickling
- headlocks
- school pranks
- teasing
- fighting
- Use of available objects as weapons

Emotional bullying

Emotional bullying is any form of bullying that causes damage to a victim's psyche and/or emotional well-being. Examples include:

- spreading malicious rumors about people
- keeping certain people out of a "group"

- getting certain people to "gang up" on others (It also could be considered physical bullying)
- ignoring people on purpose - the silent treatment
- harassment
- provocation

Verbal bullying

Verbal bullying is any slanderous statements or accusations that cause the victim undue emotional distress. Examples include:

- directing foul language (profanity) at the target
- commenting negatively on someone's looks, clothes, body etc. - personal abuse
- tormenting
- harassment
- rumors
- being laughed at

Cyber-bullying

Cyber-bullying is any bullying done through the use of technology. This form of bullying can easily go undetected because of lack of parental/authoritative supervision. Because bullies can pose as someone else, it is the most anonymous form of bullying. Cyber bullying includes, but is not limited to, abuse using email, instant messaging, text messaging, websites, social networking sites, etc.

What the Data Says About Bullying

Bullying is a common occurrence in most schools. According to the [American Psychological Association](#), approximately 40% to 80% of school-age children experience bullying at some point during their school careers. Regardless of the grade level, socioeconomic environment, gender, religion, or sexual orientation, bullying can happen to anyone. However, various studies point out that students from lower socio-economic backgrounds are more bullied than students from higher socio-economic backgrounds. Most children experience bullying at some point in their academic careers. The following is a list of statistics that illustrate the severity of bullying within classrooms:

- 20-40% of bullying victims actually report being bullied
- 70% of [middle school](#) and [high school](#) students experience bullying in school
- 7-12% of bullies are habitual and pose a serious threat
- 5-15% of students are constantly bullied
- 27% of students are bullied because of their refusal to engage in common sexual practices
- 25% of students encourage bullying if not given proper education and support in anti-bullying techniques

Due to the low numbers of students who actually report incidents of bullying, teachers need to have a certain level of awareness that will thwart any potential problems. This awareness starts with understanding bullying.

Frequency of Bullying

There are two sources of federally collected data on youth bullying:

- The 2009 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) indicates that, nationwide, 20% of students in grades 9–12 experienced bullying.
- The 2008–2009 School Crime Supplement (National Center for Education Statistics and Bureau of Justice Statistics) indicates that, nationwide, 28% of students in grades 6–12 experienced bullying.

Sources: American Psychological Association, [StopBullying.gov](#)

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