



Bullying Guidebook



Introduction

Whitehouse ISD is committed to ensuring safety for all students in every aspect of their educational program. Partnerships with the parents, community members and local law enforcement agency are necessary in being proactive when combating safety concerns in our schools. As a parent, student or community member, the district hopes that this document will serve as a guide in understanding the meaning of “Bullying” and the dynamics that surround incidents where bullying may occur. By taking this proactive measure to educate our families and community, we hope to maintain a safe environment for the students of WISD.

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Section I General Information

Many children across the Nation are threatened, teased, and taunted by what have been historically referred to as “school-yard bullies.” The State of Texas is taking a proactive stance in combating bullying in schools by enacting law and school policies that more clearly define the meaning of bullying and the responsibilities Texas schools have in addressing related incidents. This document serves as a guide and resource for students, parents, WISD staff and community members. This guidebook contains the legal definition of what constitutes bullying versus disrespectful, rude behavior and the actions all stakeholders can take in helping keep our schools safe from such harmful effects.

Texas Education Code 37.0832(a) & WISD Policy FFI (Legal) – P: Definition:

“Bullying” means engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or “physical conduct that occurs on school property, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, or in a vehicle operated by the district, and that:

Has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student’s property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student’s person or of damage to the student’s property; or

Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student.

This conduct is considered bullying if it:

- Exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator and the student victim through written or verbal expression or physical conduct; and
- Interferes with a student’s education or substantially disrupts the operation of a school.

Bullying can take place through a variety of actions. Bullying may be physical, verbal, emotional, sexual in nature and can even be demonstrated in the cyber world of technology. Keeping the definition for bullying in mind when addressing concerns will help us all respond in an appropriate manner. Research and experience suggest that comprehensive efforts that involve teachers, administrators, students, parents, and community members are likely to be more effective than purely classroom-based approaches alone.

Cyber-bullying has become a prominent form of bullying across the nation and parents are urged to closely monitor the electronic transmissions your child may be sending and receiving. The website, Cyber Bully Alert, presents helpful information and serves as a resource for parents and students while trying to safeguard themselves from inappropriate activity often transmitted by electronic devices or through social media.

Cyber-bullying Information:

The following is taken from "Cyberbullyalert.com":

- "According to the National Crime Prevention Center, over 40% of all teenagers with Internet access have reported being bullied online during the past year."
- "Girls are more likely than boys to be the target of cyber-bullying. Also, there is a direct correlation to the amount of time girls spend online and the likelihood that they will be bullied."
- "The National Crime Prevention Center study found that only 10% of those kids who were bullied told their parents about the incident, and that a mere 18% of the cases were reported to a local or national law enforcement agency."
- "Only 15% of parents are "in the know" about their kids' social networking habits, and how these behaviors can lead to cyber-bullying."
- "Currently, the most common virtual locations for cyber bullying are chat rooms, social networking web sites, email and instant message systems."
- "Of the technologies above, chat rooms are currently where the most cyber-bullying occurs, with various sources finding anywhere between 45% - 57% of all incidents originating there."
- "Social networking sites such as FaceBook and MySpace are growing fast, and so are the cyber-bullying incidents originating from them. Experts believe that they will soon overtake chat rooms as the top source of cyber-bullying problems worldwide."
- "According to a recent study, 58% of 4th through 8th graders reported having mean or cruel things said to them online. 53% said that they have said mean or hurtful things to others while online. 42% of those studied said that they had been 'bullied online', but almost 60% have never told their parents about the incident."
- "Cell phone cameras and digital cameras are growing problems in the cyber-bullying world. A recent survey found that 10% of 770 young people surveyed were made to feel threatened, embarrassed or uncomfortable' by a photo taken of them using a cell phone camera."
- "According to extensive research on middle school age students and teenagers online, the fastest growing problems within the world of cyber-bullying are:
 1. Stealing an individual's name and password to a social networking site, and then using their profile to post rumors, gossip or other damaging information.
 2. Altering photographs using Photo Shop or other photo editing software in order to humiliate the individual.
 3. Recording conversations without the individual's knowledge or consent, then posting the call online.
 4. Creating confrontational and mean-spirited online polls about the individual and posting them on different web sites.
 5. Using web sites and blogs to post hurtful, embarrassing information about another individual."

Dating Violence:

Dating violence occurs when a person in a current or past dating relationship uses physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control the other person in the relationship. Dating violence also occurs when a person commits these acts against a person in a marriage or dating relationship with the individual who is or was once in a marriage or dating relationship with the person committing the offense.

For purposes of this policy, dating violence is considered prohibited harassment if the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that the conduct:

1. Affects a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment;
2. Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with the student's academic performance; or
3. Otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities.

Examples of dating violence against a student may include physical or sexual assaults; name-calling; put-downs; or threats directed at the student, the student's family members, or members of the student's household. Additional examples may include destroying property belonging to the student, threatening to commit suicide or homicide if the student ends the relationship, attempting to isolate the student from friends and family, stalking, threatening a student's spouse or current dating partner, or encouraging others to engage in these behaviors.

Retaliation:

The District prohibits retaliation by a student or District employee against a student alleged to have experienced discrimination or harassment, including dating violence, or another student who, in good faith, makes a report of harassment or discrimination, serves as a witness, or participates in an investigation.

Examples of retaliation may include threats, rumor spreading, ostracism, assault, destruction of property, unjustified punishments, or unwarranted grade reductions. Unlawful retaliation does not include petty slights or annoyances.

False Claims:

A student who intentionally makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a District investigation regarding discrimination or harassment, including dating violence, shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Reporting:

In this guide and in district policy, the term "prohibited conduct" includes discrimination, harassment, dating violence, bullying and retaliation as defined by this policy, even if the behavior does not rise to the level of unlawful conduct.

Any student who believes that he or she has experienced prohibited conduct or believes that another student has experienced prohibited conduct should immediately report the alleged acts to a teacher, counselor, principal, other District employee, or School Resource Officer.

Campus Principals, Assistant Principals and Counselors will be educating staff, students and parents about respective reporting procedures and intervention programs offered at each

campus. Prohibited Conduct may not be limited to action committed on school campuses or property; sometimes this conduct occurs on our school buses, at school related activities on or off campus or in other private or public places. When such condition occurs on school transportation or at school related activities, students are encouraged to follow the same reporting procedures. When conduct occurs in other locations and meets the definition for bullying, harassment, or dating violence parents and students are encouraged to report the behavior to school officials so that measures can be taken at school to prevent harmful effects from occurring during the school day or at school related activities.

Section II Plan of Action

District Level:

Whitehouse ISD has been in the forefront of school safety in our immediate area for a number of years and will continue to develop and implement proactive measures and programs that promote safety and school security.

1. Administer surveys to elementary and secondary students, parents and staff to determine the nature and extent of bullying perceptions at school.
2. Meet with campus administrators and counselors to develop guiding principles, training components and proactive intervention programs related to bullying behavior. In addition, establish procedures and protocols for all staff members when addressing or responding to reports of behavior indicative of bullying.
3. Facilitate staff awareness training and communicate procedures and guidelines to all campus staff, transportation department and food service employees.
4. Support the campuses in executing Anti-Bullying programs and events for students, parents and community members.

Campus Level:

Whitehouse school administrators and counselors are expected to customize the goals and objectives of the district in meeting the highest of standards in regards to student discipline and student safety. Campuses will work to meet the needs of each respective student body because each represents a unique group of individuals. Campuses will notify parents and students of activities and programs that specifically target anti-bullying.

1. Implement district guidelines and procedures for addressing and responding to behaviors indicative of bullying and other prohibited conduct.
2. Foster a school-wide climate of respect and responsibility among all students by instituting an effective approach to strengthening character education efforts that target respect and tolerance for the differences and diversity among the student and teacher population.
3. Establish specific reporting procedures at each respective campus.
4. Conduct consistent and meaningful character education activities and anti-bullying programs throughout the year. Communicate such activities and make students and parents alike aware of the campus's efforts to instill a positive school climate.

Classroom Level:

All Whitehouse ISD staff members receive anti-bullying and bullying awareness training where teachers, bus drivers, administrators and other staff members learn how to identify the potential for bully type behaviors in specific settings throughout the instructional program and how to intervene in a way that deters the actions of bullies. In addition, teachers are equipped with strategies and tools necessary to make each individual classroom a safe zone where the actions of bullies will not be tolerated.

1. Enforce campus and district policies and procedures regarding bullying and foster a positive classroom environment free of behaviors that can escalate to the level of bullying.
2. Support anti-bullying programs and activities by incorporating reinforcement of positive responsible behavior among all students.
3. Assist students in respecting the differences and diversity among classmates by modeling and reinforcing respectful actions towards all individuals.
4. Listen attentively and receptively to student or parent concerns who report bullying related incidents.

Students:

Students may not know what to do when they observe a classmate being bullied or experience such victimization themselves. Students may not know what to do when being on the receiving end of cyber-bullying when getting inappropriate text messages, social media postings and threatening messages. The school will continue campus activities and discussions that educate the students about appropriate action they can take to combat bullying and what they can do when witnessing or experiencing victimization. Here are some basic actions and considerations students can do to combat bullying:

1. Follow the school procedures and rules regarding appropriate behavior and respect for all students.
2. Hold others accountable for respectful, responsible behavior and speak up or offer support to the victim when you witness someone being bullied.
3. Express your disapproval of bullying by not joining in the laughter, joking, teasing, spreading of rumors, texting, or gossiping initiated by a bully.
3. Report behaviors of prohibited conduct or victimization to the appropriate personnel or adults.
4. Respect the difference and diversity among classmates at all times.

Parents:

The best protection parents can offer their children who are involved in Bully/victim conflict is to foster their child's confidence and independence and to be willing to take action when needed. Be careful not to make your child feel as though there is something wrong with him or her, and that he or she deserves such treatment. All children are entitled to courteous and respectful treatment. Convince your child that he or she is not at fault and that the bully's behavior and actions are the source of the problem. It is appropriate to call the school if your child is involved as either the bully or the victim. ("Preventing Bullying: A Manual for School & Communities; US Dept. of Education)

1. Talk to your students about appropriate behavior and inappropriate behaviors.
2. Maintain open communication and visit with your students about his or her school environment and incidents that may be indicative of prohibited conduct, bullying or

harassment. Offer support to your child when you suspect he or she may be the victim to any extent of “bully” type behavior but do not encourage dependence on you. Rescuing your child from challenges or assuming responsibility yourself when things are not going well does not teach your child independence. The more choices a child has to make, the more he or she develops independence, and independence can contribute to self-confidence.

Encourage your child to report concerns or prohibited conduct to a teacher, counselor or campus administrator.

3. Do not encourage your child to engage in aggressive behavior or to retaliate. Instead, teach your child to be assertive with a strong voice, not a loud voice, and avoid giving the bully the satisfaction of knowing he or she has “pressed” their buttons. No response at all is often the very best course of action.

4. Be patient. Conflict between children occurs every day, sometimes multiple times per day. Be prepared to help your child decipher the intent of what most consider “rude” behavior versus what some assume is bullying. Sometimes conflict requires parents to encourage their child to develop new interests and explore new “friendships.”

5. When problems persist and run the risk of escalating, please notify a school employee and report your concerns.

SECTION III

Parent Information

Ten Actions ALL Parents Can Take to Help Eliminate Bullying

Source: www.education.com

The latest research shows that *more than half of all* children are, at least on occasion, directly involved in bullying as a perpetrator, victim, or both. And many of those who are not directly involved witness others being bullied on a regular basis. No child is immune - kids of every race, gender, grade and socio-economic sector are impacted. But it doesn't have to be this way. As parents we have the power to help reduce bullying. Here is a list from www.education.com of top ten actions you can take to help address bullying:

1. **Talk with and listen to your kids every day.** Research shows that parents are often the last to know when their child has bullied or been bullied. You can encourage your children to buck that trend by engaging in frequent conversations about their social lives. Spend a few minutes every day asking open ended questions about who they spend

time with at school and in the neighborhood, what they do in between classes and at recess, who they have lunch with, or what happens on the way to and from school. If your children feel comfortable talking to you about their peers *before* they're involved in a bullying event, they'll be much more likely to get you involved *after*.

2. **Spend time at school and recess.** Research shows that 67% of bullying happens when adults are not present. Schools don't have the resources to do it all and need parents' help in reducing bullying. Whether you can volunteer once a week or once a month, you can make a real difference just by being present and helping to organize games and activities that encourage kids to play with new friends. Be sure to coordinate your on-campus volunteer time with your child's teacher and/or principal.
3. **Be a good example of kindness and leadership.** Your kids learn a lot about power relationships from watching you. When you get angry at a waiter, a sales clerk, another driver on the road, or even your child, you have a great opportunity to model effective communication techniques. Don't blow it by blowing your top! Any time you speak to another person in a mean or abusive way, you're teaching your child that bullying is ok.
4. **Learn the signs.** Most children don't tell anyone (especially adults) that they've been bullied. It is therefore important for parents and teachers to learn to recognize possible signs of being victimized such as frequent loss of personal belongings, complaints of headaches or stomachaches, avoiding recess or school activities, getting to school very late or very early. If you suspect that a child might be bullied, talk with the child's teacher or find ways to observe his or her peer interactions to determine whether or not your suspicions might be correct. Talk directly to your child about the situation.
5. **Create healthy anti-bullying habits early.** Help develop anti-bullying and anti-victimization habits early in your children, as early as kindergarten. Coach your children what *not* to do...hitting, pushing, teasing, "saying na-na-na-na-na" and being mean to others. Help your child to focus on how such actions might feel to the child on the receiving end (e.g., "How do you think you would feel if that happened to you?"). Such strategies can enhance empathy for others. Equally, if not more important, teach your children what to *do*...kindness, empathy, fair play, and taking turns are critical skills for good peer relations. Children also need to learn how to say "no" firmly, and how to avoid being mean to others. Coach your child about what to do if other kids are mean...get an adult right away to tell the child who is teasing or bullying to "stop," walk away and ignore the bully. It may help to role play what to do with your child. And repetition helps: go over these techniques periodically with your Kindergarten and early elementary school aged children.
6. **Help your child's school address bullying effectively.** Whether your children have been bullied or not, you should know what their school is doing to address bullying. Research shows that "zero-tolerance" policies aren't effective. What works better are ongoing educational programs that help create a healthy social climate in the school. This means teaching kids at every grade level how to be inclusive leaders and how to be empathic towards others and teaching victims effective resistance techniques. If your school does not have effective bullying strategies and policies in place, talk to the principal and advocate for change.

7. **Establish household rules about bullying.** Your children need to hear from you explicitly that it's not normal, ok, or tolerable for them to bully, to be bullied, or to stand by and just watch other kids be bullied. Make sure they know that if they are bullied physically, verbally, or socially (at school, by a sibling, in your neighborhood, or online) it's safe and important for them to tell you about it and that you will help. They also need to know just what bullying is (many children do not know that they are bullying others), and that such behavior is harmful to others and not acceptable. You can help your children find other ways to exert their personal power, status, and leadership at school, and that you will work with them, their teachers, and their principal to implement a kindness plan at school.
8. **Teach your child how to be a good witness.** Research shows that kids who witness bullying feel powerless and seldom intervene. However, kids who take action can have a powerful and positive effect on the situation. Although it's never a child's responsibility to put him or herself in danger, kids can often effectively diffuse a bullying situation by yelling "Stop! You're bullying!" Kids can also help each other by providing support to the victim, not giving extra attention to the bully, and/or reporting what they witnessed to an adult.
9. **Teach your child about cyber-bullying.** Children often do not realize what cyber-bullying is. Cyber-bullying includes sending mean, rude, vulgar, or threatening messages or images; posting sensitive, private information about another person; pretending to be someone else in order to make that person look bad; and intentionally excluding someone from an online group. These acts are as harmful as physical violence and must not be tolerated. We know from research that the more time a teen spends online, the more likely they will be cyber-bullied, so limit online time.
10. **Spread the word that bullying should not be a normal part of childhood.** Some adults hesitate to act when they observe or hear about bullying because they think of bullying as a typical phase of childhood that must be endured or that it can help children "toughen up". It is important for all adults to understand that bullying does not have to be a normal part of childhood. All forms of bullying are harmful to the perpetrator, the victim, and to witnesses and the effects last well into adulthood (and can include depression, anxiety, substance abuse, family violence and criminal behavior). Efforts to effectively address bullying require the collaboration of school, home and community. Forward this list and articles you've read to all the parents, teachers, administrators, after school care programs, camp counselors, and spiritual leaders you know. Bullying is an enormous problem but if we all work together, it's one we *can* impact.

*Five Actions Parents Can Take If Their
Child
Has Been Involved in
Bullying*

If you think your child is being bullied, take action now. Bullying is not something that just goes away on its own; it is not something that children can work out amongst themselves, and it is not something kids will just naturally outgrow. If you know (or think) that your child is bullying or being bullied, believe them and intervene immediately. Some suggested actions include:

1. Talk with your child's principal and classroom teacher about the problem and see if they have noticed anything.
2. Have your principal notify other teachers, recess aids, hallway monitors, and cafeteria staff so that everyone who comes in contact with your child can be on the lookout and poised to intervene should an episode be repeated.
3. Arrange opportunities for your child to socialize with friends outside of school to help build and maintain a strong support system.
4. Encourage your child to stick with a friend at recess, lunch, in the hallways, on the bus or walking home because kids are more likely to be targeted when they are alone.
5. If your child is taking part in cyber-bullying, make sure that they are aware that such behavior is not acceptable. Many children fail to realize that saying mean things about someone on the Internet or through text messaging is a form of bullying. If your child is victim to cyber-bullying, teach them to not respond to the message and bring it to the attention of an adult.

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You may access a WISD Bullying Concern Report form from the district website at www.whitehouseisd.org by going to the “Parents/Students” information button in the left column, then selecting “Bullying Information.”

Teen Bullying: What Parents Can Do

Source: Learning Forum international
Author: Bobbi DePorter

Bullying is a significant issue in America these days. It is estimated that anywhere from 11 to 25 percent of teens are the target of bullying in the United States. It's been reported that 160,000 students miss school every day to avoid being bullied.

While legislators are moving forward rapidly to enact laws against bullying, this problem likely will remain a reality of teenage life. Therefore, it's important that parents know what to do to avoid a tragic outcome in their family if one of their children is the victim of bullying.

One of the major problems among students who are bullied is that they are humiliated and embarrassed to the point where they keep it to themselves. Many victims incorrectly assume that because someone or a small group is picking on them, they think the whole world views them that way. This humiliation and sense of solitude can lead to depression and, as we're seeing in some cases, to suicide.

Parents of teens who have taken their own life have revealed later that they weren't aware of their child's problem. The kids had not felt confident enough in their relationship with their parents to seek their help. One parent of a teen who took his own life said, "If only he'd known how much he mattered to so many people."

Building a “Home Court Advantage”

So, what can parents do to grow a closer connection to their teens? My advice is to build what I call a “home court advantage.”

We hear of a home court advantage in sports, where the home team enjoys an edge as it feeds off the support of its fans. In families, the home court advantage helps teens reduce stress, cope with challenges and actually feel good about their lives. In addition, it strengthens the parent-teen relationship to the point where the teen will confide in his parents during times of trouble.

Building a home court advantage is a long-term process; it’s not a quick fix. The trust and the connection must grow over time. Here are four key steps in how to do it.

1. **Listen More/Talk Less.** If there is a lack of communication in your home, the situation won’t improve by trying to force it. In general, be ready with your ears when your teen does decide to open up, even if it’s to share simple news.

One great place to engage your teen is when you’re driving in the car together. When you are sitting beside each other in the front seat of the car, you’re facing forward. With both of you looking straight ahead, you’ve created a non-confrontational setting, in which a conversation can start and flow more easily.

Also, whether it’s in the car or somewhere else, when your teen is sharing some news, it helps to encourage more dialogue by saying, “Tell me more.” This simple request gives your teen an indication that you’re interested in what they’re saying. At the same time, it’s completely non-judgmental; you’re not offering an opinion on what was just said.

2. **Ask, Don’t Tell.** Do you like to talk with people who don’t understand you? Of course you don’t. Teens are the same way. Often when parents attempt to provide heartfelt advice, even with the best of intentions, teens will perceive it as a “lecture” and automatically shut down the communication process.

Asking a question, on the other hand, will generate a response and lead to a dialogue. A question, particularly one that requires more than a yes or no answer will engage the brain. It’s a classic technique in sales that is used to learn more about the prospective buyer and to build rapport. And it’s something that works well in families with teens, as well.

Asking more and telling less also gives parents a better opportunity to learn what pressures their teens may be under. Whether it’s bullying, relationships, grades, or something else, the information more likely will come to light by asking simple, non-probing questions.

3. **Share Your Values: Discover Your Teen’s.** It’s easy for parents to think that their kids know what values the family stands for. After all, they’re part of the family. But it’s best not to assume that they’re either focused or clear on your family’s values.

So have a casual conversation, perhaps at the dinner table, where you discuss what

values your family stands for. Ask your teens what their values are. If they need time to think about it, suggest revisiting the topic at dinner in a day or two.

Once you've had this conversation, encourage your teen to seek out others in school with like values. By being part of a group, a teen is less susceptible to being bullied. And by being part of a group of like-minded teens who share common values and interests, an individual is less likely to be ostracized.

4. **Build Authentic Bridges to Your Teen.** Build a home court advantage. Parents can begin to build a bridge by showing a sincere interest in a hobby or passion of their teen. It doesn't matter if it's a sport, in the arts, or creating video game software; if there is interest on the parent's part, the teen feels good.

Parents can further strengthen this bridge by participating in the hobby/activity with the teen, as appropriate. Finally, a third level in building the bridge using this strategy is to let the teen become the "teacher" by showing the parent how to do something that the teen is good at.

Creating a meaningful connection with your teen takes time, but it's an excellent investment on your part. It will ensure that a sufficient level of trust is present. This way, if your teen faces a personal crisis, such as being bullied, he or she will want to come to you for advice and support.

This article was written at Supercamp, a leading learning and life skills summer camp and Quantum Learning Network

SECTION IV STUDENT INFORMATION

Bulling Myths and Facts:

Elementary Students:

Myth: *"Bullying is just, stage, a normal part of life. I went through it my kids will too."*

Fact: Bullying is not "normal" or socially acceptable behavior. We give bullies power by our acceptance of this behavior.

Myth: *"If I tell someone, it will just make it worse."*

Fact: Research shows that bullying will stop when adults in authority and peers get involved.

Myth: *"Just stand up for yourself and hit them back."*

Fact: While there are some times when people can be forced to defend themselves, hitting back usually makes the bullying worse and increases the risk for serious physical harm.

Myth: *“Bullying is a school problem, the teachers should handle it.”*

Fact: Bullying is a broader social problem that often happens outside of schools, on the street, at shopping centers, the local pool, summer camp and in the adult workplace.

Myth: *“People are born bullies.”*

Fact: Bullying is a learned behavior and behaviors can be changed.

Secondary Students

Bullying and Harassment Information for Teens

What is it?

Bullying is when one person hurts or threatens someone else physically, verbally, or in writing. The bully may choose a victim who is smaller or younger than they are, or who is from a different race or culture, or they may pick on someone who is different in some other way. The bullying might happen once or it could happen over and over again. Bullying can include pushing, shoving, kicking, hitting, teasing or writing mean or threatening notes.

If the bullying or harassment gets so bad that it physically harms you or your property, makes you feel intimidated or afraid to go to school, or causes disruptions at school, it is probably against school rules and may also be against the law (check with an adult in your school to find out more). Assault and theft are always against the law. So if a bully physically attacks you or steals something from you, you can report this to the police. If an assault or attack takes place at school or on a school bus, you can also report it to the principal, and the school should take action to confront and/or discipline the bully.

Anyone can be a bully. Girls and boys tend to bully in different ways. Boys are usually more physical when they bully - shoving, pushing, and hitting. Girls, on the other hand, tend to use words more than physical force. Girls often bully by spreading rumors, taking part in gossip, or threatening someone.

If you are a victim of bullying, you might...

- Feel angry, sad, lonely or depressed.
- Feel like you have no friends.
- Find that you are always getting into fights.
- Want to hurt someone else or yourself.
- Feel like taking steps to defend yourself.
- Feel helpless to stop the bullying.
- Feel hopeless that anything can be done.
- Be afraid to go to school, or feel anxious all the time.
- Feel bad about yourself.

You're not alone

1 in 12 students who stay home from school do so because they are afraid to go to school.

3 out of 4 students report that they have been bullied at some time while they were in school.

Bullying is reported as most severe in grades 7-9, with grades 4-6 being next in severity, but it can happen in any grade.

60 percent of victims/targets report being bullied by boys, and 40 percent report being bullied by girls.

Get help

Being bullied is not your fault, and it is wrong. Nothing you say, the way you look, or what you believe in gives anyone else the right to make fun of you or hurt you.

Tell your parents, and talk with them about ways that they can help you to be safe.

Tell a teacher, counselor, or your school's principal, they can take action to stop the bullying.

Most schools are required to have a policy on dealing with bullying. If you feel that nobody in your school is helping you, see if you can find out what the policy is and talk with the principal about how the policy applies to your case.

If there is no policy in your school, talk with friends, a teacher, or the principal about creating one.

Help yourself

Try to walk away from the bullies.

Seek alternate friends.

Go with a friend to events & outings when possible.

Do not bring lots of money or expensive things to school that may tempt the bully.

Try to stay in areas where other students and teachers are around.

Be willing to experience new clubs, activities & group events where you can strengthen new friendships.

Don't be embarrassed to talk to an adult about someone who is bullying you.

Help someone else

If you see bullying happening in your school, you can help put a stop to it.

Refuse to join in if a bully tries to get you to tease someone.

Get a teacher, parent, or another adult to come help. You won't be snitching; you'll be taking a stand against bullying.

Talk to the person being bullied and try to get them to talk to an adult. Offer to go with them.

Report the bullying to an adult you trust.

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All Students

You may have used some of the following excuses:

"I didn't really mean to."

"He made me do it".

"I was only teasing."

"She did it first".

Bullies also use these excuses. Think carefully if you often use these excuses, are you hurting others.

What makes a bully?

Bullies can be boys or girls, big kids or little kids.

Some bullies use words to hurt the feelings of their victim and some like to hurt people physically.

Here are some of the things bullies might do:

They try to make you think they are popular or cool.

They often pick on younger or smaller kids; those who might be different in some way; or kids who don't have many friends.

They often involve others to help them gang up on the victim.

They can use teasing, name-calling, harassment and violence against their victim.

They may spread stories or rumors about their victim.

They may try to turn everyone against that person by like ignoring them.

They may hide, damage, or take their victim's things.

They may threaten to physically harm their victim or his/her friends and family.

They like embarrassing or hurting people.

What if you're the bully?

If you get into trouble for bullying and you want to have friends, ask an adult you trust (like your teacher or counselor) to help you. You will need to get some help to learn to manage your feelings in ways that don't hurt other people. There are always other things you can do when you are angry, stressed or frustrated. You will also have to help other people change their opinion of you.

Being the victim of a bully can lead to:

- Feeling left out and lonely
- Not wanting to eat
- Not wanting to go to school
- Running away from school or home
- Having bad dreams
- Wetting the bed
- Unusually poor grades
- Low attendance at school
- Change in behavior patterns
- Isolation

WITNESS – BYSTANDER

If you witness someone being harmed or being threatened, the right thing to do is report the incident. Each school will have a procedure for reporting either online or at school. This can be done anonymously. Our goal is for every person on campus to help stop bullying.

Both bullies and their victims need help in learning new ways to get along in school. Children need to learn about gaining, using and abusing power and about the differences between negotiating and demanding. They must also learn to consider the needs, behaviors and feelings of others. Whitehouse ISD will work with campus leaders to offer a variety of prevention and intervention strategies, activities and programs designed to eliminate bullying and other forms of personal conflict among our students during their school life. The partnership between our staff, students, parents and community is vital in achieving this goal.