

TIS Policy on Bullying and Harassment

June 2009

What is bullying and harassment?

Bullying and/or harassment is the deliberate action by one person to intimidate another with words, actions or behaviour. Unfortunately, bullying is commonly found wherever children come together in groups - and as a result, the schoolyard is the number one hot-spot for bullying.

The main ways bullying occurs are:

- Teasing
- Exclusion
- Physical
- Harassment

Who's affected by bullying?

The short answer is everyone. If a child is in a situation where bullying occurs - even if he's not the victim or the perpetrator - he will witness what's going on, which can be very distressing and perhaps make him feel anxious. By witnessing someone else's bullying, he has the power and the obligation to put a stop to the bullying by telling an adult.

Bystander intervention

One of the ways in which school bullying can be reduced is by encouraging students who observe bullying taking place at school to act in such a way as to discourage it. Research suggests

1. Most bullying takes place when bystanders are present
2. Although most bystanders do not act to discourage it, when any one of them does there is a good chance (around 50%) that the bullying will stop
3. Teachers generally do not have the opportunity to take any action because they are typically **not** present and are not told about it.
4. A large proportion of students would like to see bullying stopped.

What Does TIS Do?

Firstly, we believe that everyone in the school community - students, teachers and parents - need to be free of bullying. When bullying occurs, it is everyone's business. Even being a bystander can greatly help or hinder bullying in the school.

If bullying does occur, we seek to respond in the most appropriate way. This may include the use of sanctions in extreme cases, but we also recognise that progress can often be made using a problem-solving approach working with students. We will involve parents in this process on a case by case basis, however if bullying is happening at school, we ask parents to let us know. Parents are often the first person the child tells.

Secondly, we work with children in the classroom. We help them, by letting them know our policy on bullying and harassment, and understand what bullying is (and is not).

Here are some topics on what we teach:

Knowledge

What bullying is

The school anti-bullying policy

Why it must be stopped – the harm it does

The content of the school's anti-bullying policy

Attitudes

Being unprejudiced

Being cooperative and empathic

Resisting negative group pressure

Self-acceptance, as an antidote to discouragement

Skills

Being assertive and not acting aggressively

Resolving differences constructively, using conflict resolution techniques

Helping others who are being bullied, as a good [bystander](#)

Reacting effectively if bullied

What parents can do

Although no parent can 'bully-proof' a child, the risk of being bullied can be reduced by parents who are responsive to a child's needs, employ an authoritative (not authoritarian) style of parenting and help their child to develop into a friendly and cooperative individual. If bullying occurs it is best being tackled by parents and teachers working together.

How parents can help

Parents play an important part in a number of ways. Parents can reduce the risk that their child will be bullied

through responsive and responsible, non-authoritarian parenting

Through helping their children to acquire good interpersonal skills, especially making friends and acting assertively when necessary.

In supporting your children if they do become involved in bully/victim difficulties at school and being prepared to share the problem and work collaboratively with the school to solve it.

In assisting us as much as possible in the development of enlightened policies and practices to address the problem.

THE PEER RELATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE (PRQ) FOR CHILDREN

Show how often the following statements are true of you. To do this circle one of the answers underneath each statement.

1. I like playing sport
Never Once in a while Pretty Often Very Often
2. I get good marks in class
Never Once in a while Pretty Often Very Often
3. I get called names by others
Never Once in a while Pretty Often Very Often
4. I give soft kids a hard time
Never Once in a while Pretty Often Very Often
5. I like to make friends
Never Once in a while Pretty Often Very Often
6. I play up in class
Never Once in a while Pretty Often Very Often
7. I feel I can't trust others
Never Once in a while Pretty Often Very Often
8. I get picked on by others
Never Once in a while Pretty Often Very Often
9. I am part of a group that goes round teasing others
Never Once in a while Pretty Often Very Often
10. I like to help people are being harassed
Never Once in a while Pretty Often Very Often

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|---|-------|-----------------|--------------|------------|
| 11. I like to make others scared of me | Never | Once in a while | Pretty Often | Very Often |
| 12. Others leave me out of things on purpose | Never | Once in a while | Pretty Often | Very Often |
| 13. I get into fights at school | Never | Once in a while | Pretty Often | Very Often |
| 14. I like to show others that I'm the boss | Never | Once in a while | Pretty Often | Very Often |
| 15. I share things with others | Never | Once in a while | Pretty Often | Very Often |
| 16. I enjoy upsetting wimps | Never | Once in a while | Pretty Often | Very Often |
| 17. I like to get into a fight with someone I can easily beat | Never | Once in a while | Pretty Often | Very Often |
| 18. Others make fun of me | Never | Once in a while | Pretty Often | Very Often |
| 19. I get hit and pushed around by others | Never | Once in a while | Pretty Often | Very Often |
| 20. I enjoy helping others | Never | Once in a while | Pretty Often | Very Often |

Ken Rigby and Phillip Slee, 1994