

Understanding Bullying

A Parent's Guide



Director of Equity

254-5270

Prevention Coordinator

254-5488

Safety Coordinator

254-5271

What parents can do:

If you suspect your child is being bullied

- Gather information
- Monitor your child's activities and relationships with others
- Supervise and review electronic communications like the Internet, social networking sites, and cell phones
- Communicate your concerns and seek out support from school administrators
- Talk to your child about the difference between tattling and telling

Tattling Vs. Telling

Tattling:

- Unimportant
- Harmless
- Can handle by self
- The purpose is to get someone in trouble
- Behavior is accidental

Telling:

- Important
- Harmful or dangerous
- Need help from adult to solve
- The purpose is to keep people safe
- Behavior is purposeful

For over a year, concerned members of the community and District 51 staff have worked together so that the issue of bullying in the District can be better addressed. We want all parents and students to know that there is help available if you believe your child is being bullied or is a bully. You are encouraged to contact the school administration in your child's school, if you believe there is a problem. You may also contact the 3 district staff numbers listed on the front of this bulletin. If you would rather not talk to a staff member or if you have general questions about the work of SEAC, the School Equity Advisory Committee, you may contact Donna Bennett, community representative, at 639-2224. Donna is the chair of the committee.

We want you to know that there are many people who are concerned and who want to help stop bullying in our schools.

Definition of Bullying

Any written or verbal expression, or physical or electronic act or gesture, or a pattern thereof, that is intended to coerce, intimidate, or cause any physical, mental or emotional harm to any student. Bullying is prohibited against any student for any reason, including but not limited to any such behavior that is directed toward a student on the basis of his or her academic performance or any basis protected by federal and state law, including disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, ancestry or the need for special education services, whether such characteristic(s) are actual or perceived.

A Message from the Mesa County Valley School District 51 Board of Education:

All students have the right to feel safe at school. Kids need to stand up for what is right and take the lead in helping when they see bullying happening. Rules are set by our educational system and those who do not abide by them will be held accountable.

Possible Signs of Bullying

- Avoids certain situations, people, or places
- Exhibiting changes in behavior, such as being withdrawn and passive, being overly active and aggressive, or being self-destructive
- Crying or showing other signs of depression or anxiety
- Change in eating and sleeping habits
- Drop in grades
- Loss of interest in previously enjoyable activities
- Exhibiting low self-esteem
- Showing signs of fear around certain situations, people, places

Normal Conflict

- Equal power/or between friends
- Happens occasionally
- Accidental
- No serious emotional harm
- Equal emotional reaction
- Not seeking power or attention

VS.

Bullying

- Imbalance of power
 - Repeated, negative & purposeful
 - Can be serious with threat of physical or emotional harm
 - Strong emotional reaction from target/victim
 - Seek power or control
 - No remorse/blames victim
 - No effort to solve problem
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