

## Carpenter Counselor's Corner

*High Expectations for Everyone \* Teaching and Learning for Everyone \* Respect for Everyone*



**Carpenter Elementary is a NO BULLY SCHOOL!**



**Definition of Bullying:** Bullying occurs when a student or group of students engages 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: 1. 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 2. Is sufficiently severe, persistent, and 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: 1. Exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator and the student victim through written or verbal expression or physical conduct; and 2. Interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of a school.

**If you think your child is being bullied,** we need to work as a team to help your child...your participation is critical to a successful outcome. Some suggested actions include:

1. **Make it safe for your child to talk to you.** When your child comes to you to talk about a bullying experience, try to avoid having an emotional reaction. It can be scary for a child to hear that a parent is planning to lash out at a peer or parent. Calmly ask questions until you feel you completely understand the situation (Is it bullying, a peer conflict, or a misunderstanding?). Try not to leap into action right away, but instead focus on making sure your child feels taken care of and supported. Remind your child that everyone has a right to feel safe and happy at school, and applaud the courage it took to take a stand and talk to you. Make a commitment to work with both your child and the school administration to resolve the issue.
2. **Teach your child to say "Stop!" or go find an adult.** Research shows that most bullies stop aggressive behavior within 10 seconds when someone tells the bully to stop in a strong and powerful voice. If the bully experiences self-assurance in your child it is more likely they will move on. Role-play an assertive response. Demonstrate the differences between aggressive and assertive and passive voices, as well as body language. Teach your child to find an adult if they have tried to stop the bully and it continues.
3. **Talk with your child's classroom teacher about the situation.** Make it clear that you are committed to partner with the school in being part of the solution. It is important to work together for your child to feel safe and happy at school.
4. **Arrange opportunities for your child to socialize with friends outside of school to help build and maintain a strong support system.** Try reaching out to neighborhood parents, local community centers with after-school activities, and your spiritual community. The more time your child can practice social skills in a safe environment, the better. Children who have friends are less likely to be bullying victims—and, if your child is bullied, friends can help ease the negative effects as bystanders.
5. **Don't go it alone.** When supporting a child through a bullying situation, parents often discover previously unnoticed issues that may contribute to the child's vulnerability. In addition to working with the school to help resolve the immediate issue, parents should also consider concerns about diagnosed or undiagnosed learning issues, depression, anxiety, eating disorders, etc.
6. **Encourage your child to stick with a friend (or find someone that can act as a buddy) at recess, lunch, in the hallways, and on the bus.** Kids are more likely to be targeted when they are alone. If your child doesn't have a friend to connect with, work with their teacher to help find someone to act as a safety partner.
7. If **cyberbullying** is an issue, teach your child to bring it to the attention of an adult, rather than responding to the message or erasing it. Many children fail to realize that saying mean things about someone on the Internet or through text messaging is a form of bullying. Make sure your child knows that you take cyberbullying seriously & that you'll be supportive through the process of handling the situation.

8. **Help your child become more resilient to bullying.** There's a lot parents can do to help "bully proof" their child. Here are two: First, provide a safe and loving home environment where compassionate and respectful behavior is modeled consistently. Second, acknowledge and help your child to develop strengths, skills, talents or other positive characteristics. Doing so will help your kid be more confident among all their peers at school.
9. **Follow Up.** Even after your child's bullying situation has been resolved, be sure to stay in touch with your child and the school. Keep the lines of communication open with your child, and learn the signs of bullying so that if another issue arises, you'll be prepared to get involved early and effectively.

Nacogdoches ISD has a way to report bullying: Complete the *Bully* Report form that can be found at [nacisd.org](http://nacisd.org) . The form will be received and reviewed by a school administrator.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions or concerns about bullying with your child.

#### Additional Internet Resources

[www.bullyingstatistics.org](http://www.bullyingstatistics.org)

<https://www.stopbullying.gov>

[www.thebullyproject.com](http://www.thebullyproject.com)

[www.pacerkidsagainstabullying.org](http://www.pacerkidsagainstabullying.org)

[www.newyorker.com/science/maria-konnikova/how-the-internet-has-changed-bullying](http://www.newyorker.com/science/maria-konnikova/how-the-internet-has-changed-bullying)