

Parent Newsletter 1

[School Letterhead]

Dear Parent/Guardian:

In recent years, there has been a growing concern around the country about student safety. Behaviors that had traditionally been allowed to persist, being excused as “kids will be kids” or a normal part of growing up, are now being considered and addressed.

We here at **[School Name]** are participating in a comprehensive program to help make the school safer for all of our students that will address bullying and sexual harassment. As part of this program we will be periodically sending information home to let you know about what students are learning and how you can support your children in being safe at school.

We do this, not only to keep you informed, but to invite you to be part of keeping your, and all kids safe. We want to be partners with you in helping your kids and our students to be safe and excel to the highest level they can.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us. We look forward to the upcoming changes and to creating a safer environment for everyone.

Thank you for your time and future involvement.

[School Name and Contact Information]

(Backside)

The first step to keeping kids safe is increasing awareness of bullying. Everyone needs to know what it means, what it looks like, and how it makes people feel.

Bullying is defined as an aggressive behavior done with the intent to control or harm that involves a real or perceived imbalance of power. It is not considered bullying if two students of equal power joke around or fight. Bullying can be direct or indirect.

It can take many forms including:

- Physical (hitting, kicking, biting, throwing things, etc.)
- Verbal (name calling, teasing, taunting, insulting, etc.)
- Relational (gossip, exclusion or leaving people out, telling people not to be your friends, not letting you play).
- Cyberbullying (mean text-messages or internet activity)

Bullying can have negative effects on students such as:

- School avoidance,
- Absenteeism,
- Poorer grades,
- Fear,
- Depression,
- Loneliness,
- Anxiety,
- Low self-esteem,
- Physical illness.

If your child reports bullying to you or you are concerned that your child is being bullied, you should contact **[Who parents should contact and how]**.

A copy of our school policy on bullying can be found at **[provide web address for school or district bullying policy]**

Parent Newsletter 2

[School Letterhead]

Dear parent/guardian:

As was explained in the first letter, we here at **[School Name]** are developing a comprehensive program to make our school safer for your kids. One part of this is addressing sexual harassment in a more direct and complete manner. This is part of making the school safer for everyone.

In the first letter, we identified bullying and the affects it can have on a student. In this letter we would like to inform you about sexual harassment and its impact on students. While much of sexual harassment is often focused on the experiences of girls, we would like to let you know that all students are affected by it.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.

Thank you for your time and your support.

[School Name and Contact Information]

(Backside)

The first step to keeping students safe is to increase awareness about sexual harassment. Everyone needs to know what it means, what it looks like, and how it makes people feel.

Sexual Harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other physical, verbal, or non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature made by a member of the school staff toward a student, or by one student toward another student.

A common misconception about sexual harassment is that only a person who is being harassed, or who is directly involved in a sexual harassment situation can be a victim. A witness to a situation can also be a victim if it makes them afraid that it can happen to them.

There are two basic forms of sexual harassment:

- Quid Pro Quo: Exchange of sexual interaction for some other desired resource.
- Hostile environment: Unwelcome environment at school that is related to sexual or gender-related issues.

Sexual Harassment can have negative impact on students, such as:

- Limits ability to study and focus in school
- Increases depression
- Reduces self confidence
- Heightened stress
- Fear and anxiety
- Become more introverted and angry, less social

If your child reports bullying to you or you are concerned that your child is being sexually harassed, you should contact **[Who should parents contact and how]**.

A copy of our school policy on sexual harassment can be found at **[enter web address for school or district web address]**

Parent Newsletter 3

[School Letterhead]

Dear parent/guardian:

In a continued effort to make our school and students safe here at **[School Name]**, we want to keep you informed about issues surrounding bullying and sexual harassment so as to help us work together to protect all students.

As a parent/guardian, you may be aware of changes in your child's behavior, which can help in identifying if your child is being victimized, either through bullying or sexual harassment.

Common Warning signs if your child is being victimized or the potential to be victimized:

- Change in attendance at school; erratic
- Less desire to attend school
- Academic performance declines
- Less interest in school and school work
- Lonely, withdrawn, isolated
- Prefers hanging out with teachers or in classrooms
- Limited number of friends
- Frequent illness; visiting school nurse
- Change in mood or behavior
- Isolates from family or won't talk about what's bothering them
- Low self-confidence and/or self-esteem
- Concerned about personal safety
- Blames himself for problems/difficulties

Just to be aware, children do not usually display all of these characteristics if they are being victimized. As well, simply displaying some of these characteristics do not automatically mean your child is being victimized, or will be victimized, but it is still good to be aware of such concerns and to inform your child's teacher or other trusted staff member at the school so we can continue to monitor his or her experiences.

Thank you for your time and your support.
[School Name and Contact Information]

Parent Newsletter 4

[School Letterhead]

Dear Parent/Guardian,

As we have informed you in previous newsletters, we here at **[School Name]** are developing a comprehensive program to address bullying and sexual harassment. In creating such a new program, we also must become more aware about bullying, sexual harassment and the victims of such incidences but also the aggressors of the same incidences.

It is difficult to hear that a child may be engaging in behaviors that have been recognized as bullying or harassment. Our intent is not to label a child as a bully or harasser, but instead to address those behaviors and to help each student learn to work within the school culture. Including you in this process is important, as it is not about labeling a child as a bully or harasser, but about addressing those behaviors that are bringing about such events. We do not want to lose any of our students to such incidences.

To begin, it is important to recognize the impact that bullying and harassment can have on the aggressive child in a situation. As well, we would like to inform you of behaviors that are important to recognize in a child that may be related to such aggressive behaviors.

The intent is not to label and punish a child, but rather to intervene in a child's behavior to help them in their interactions so they may avoid experiencing any negative consequences that may accompany such aggressive behaviors.

We realize that such discussions may be difficult to have about your child but we would like to let you know that we want to help your child overcome such obstacles. This may include a punishment based on an incident that he or she may have encountered but will also include a plan to help the student address those behaviors.

We appreciate your support. Please contact us if you have any questions.

[School Name and Contact Information]

(Backside)

Effects on Kids Who Are Bullying Others:

- Result from learning that abusing power is okay.
- Are long-term and include future risk of
 - Higher Risk of Dropping Out
 - Engagement in Delinquency
 - Substance Use and Abuse
 - Engagement in Dating/Domestic Violence
 - Engagement in Sexual Harassment

Effects on Kids who Bully and Are Bullied:

- Lower Self Esteem
- Most Likely To Be Referred For Psychological Counseling
- Fewer Friends- More Isolation
- Most Stigmatized Group of Kids

Children who Sexually Harass often experience the following:

- Lack A Social Conscience
- More Likely To Engage In More Immature and Irresponsible Behaviors
- Exposed Early In Life to Pornographic Images
- Have Lower Levels of Empathy
- Are More Authoritative
- Boys Who Harass Girls Often Believe In Male Superiority.
- Boys Who Harass Publicly See It As A Venue To Display Masculinity.
- Behaviors and Personality Attributes Displayed By Harassers Are Similar To Those Displayed By Those Who Attempt Sexual Assault
- Females Who Sexually Harass Have Often Been Victims of Sexual Harassment Themselves
- Males Who Sexually Harass May Often End Up As Victims In The Future