**Parent Newsletters**

# [School Letterhead]

# Newsletter 1A

Dear Parent/Guardian:

As you know, 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 are 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.

What to do if your child tells you they are being bullied.

*Take reports seriously*. Tell child “I hear you; I’m here for you; I believe you; I’ll do what I can to help.”

*Don’t minimize, rationalize, or explain away bullies’ behavior.*

*Assure victim that it is not their fault.*

*Don’t tell your child to fight back.*

* + Once the bully-victim relationship is established attempts to fight back are likely to be unsuccessful because of the power imbalance and it often escalates the situation.

*Advise your child to report bullying to the school.*

* + Work with your child to determine best way to inform school/teachers.
	+ Work with the school to help address the situation.

*Don’t confront the bully or bully’s parents alone.*

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]**

**[School Letterhead]**

**Newsletter 2A**

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.

**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. (Sometimes called *gender harassment*)

While sexual harassment is less of an issue at elementary school it does start to appear in the forms of Minor teasing/name calling or unwanted touching that is sexual in nature. You can help reduce these behaviors by talking to your children about sexual/gender harassment and telling them that it is wrong to pick on people because they are a girl/boy or to touch them without their permission. Do not dismiss sexual harassment as “he/she just does that because they like you.”

Here are some common examples of gender harassment in elementary school:

* Pulling someone’s pants down
* Snapping someone’s bra
* Giving a “wedgie”
* Name-calling or spreading rumors of a sexual nature.
* Boys looking in the girls’ bathroom
* Girls looking in the boys’ bathroom
* Hugs or kisses that you don’t want
* Teasing someone about their private parts

If your child reports bullying to you or you are concerned that your child behavior that sounds like sexual harassment you should contact the school immediately **[Who should parents contact and how].**

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

# [School Letterhead]

# Newsletter 3A

Dear Parent/Guardian:

As you know 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.

Another form bullying/harassment can take is cyberbullying – or the use of technology such as cell phones or the internet to harass. This form of harassment is currently growing in the USA and parents should be aware of it and strategies to help keep kids safe.

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 you time and future involvement.

**[School Name and Contact Information]**

What is cyber bullying?
Cyber bullying or online bullying is a term used to refer to bullying over electronic media. Cyber bullying is willful and involves recurring or repeated harm inflicted through electronic text. Cyber bullying can be as simple as continuing to send e-mail to someone who has said they want no further contact with the sender. Cyber bullies may also include threats, "putdowns" or hate-motivated speech. Cyber bullies may publish the personal contact information of their victims or assume the victim’s identity.

(Backside)

What can parents do to promote safe use of the Internet?

1. Keep your child's computer in an open area of the house. It is easier to monitor what your child is viewing.
2. Install filtering software on the computer your child uses or use child-friendly search engines.
3. Instruct your child to never give out personal information online to someone they do not know. Explain that people are not always who they say they are. Even small amounts of information like hobbies or a child's favorite hangout provide too much detail to be shared on the Internet.
4. Instruct your child to never meet in person with someone they first meet online. No matter how long they have been communicating online, it is virtually impossible to know if your child's new "friend" is who they say they are.
5. Make sure your children know they should not respond to offensive or dangerous emails. Encourage your child to follow three simple steps: Stop, Block, and Tell.

"**Stop**" the correspondence immediately; responding can make the situation worse.
"**Block**" the user from sending additional emails.
"**Tell**" a parent or trusted adult about the situation.

1. Visit the Web sites your child visits. Spend some time familiarizing yourself with your child's online world. Many children know more about the Internet than their parents do. Ask them to show you what they like to do online.
2. Be a responsible cyber citizen. Just like being a citizen of your local community carries responsibilities, so does being a citizen of the cyber community. Use good manners, be respectful of others, and be safe.
3. Finally, if a child sees something that is inappropriate or makes them uncomfortable, they should report it immediately to a parent. Parents should then report the behavior to their Internet Service Provider or law enforcement.