

# What is bullying?

Bullying is a widespread and serious problem that can happen anywhere. It is not a phase children have to go through, it is not "just messing around", and it is not something to grow out of. Bullying can cause serious and lasting harm.

Although definitions of bullying vary, most agree that bullying involves:

- **Imbalance of Power:** People who bully use their power to control or harm and the people being bullied may have a hard time defending themselves.
- **Intent to Cause Harm:** Actions done by accident are not bullying; the person bullying has a goal to cause harm.
- **Repetition:** Incidents of bullying happen to the same the person over and over by the same person or group.

## Types of Bullying

Bullying can take many forms. Examples include:

- **Verbal:** name-calling, teasing
- **Social:** spreading rumors, leaving people out on purpose, breaking up friendships
- **Physical:** hitting, punching, shoving
- **Cyberbullying:** using the Internet, mobile phones or other digital technologies to harm others.

An act of bullying may fit into more than one of these groups.

## Where can I go for more information?

Some websites that include useful information for parents and educators include:

StopBullying.gov  
parentfurther.com  
kidpower.org

# Do you have bullying concerns?

**If you have reason to believe your child needs assistance or if you have concerns about bullying behavior, please contact the following individuals, depending on your school.**

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

**Please begin by contacting your student's teacher. The teacher will coordinate a response with assistance from the School Counselor and Principal.**

## SKYVIEW UPPER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

### ARCOLA INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

**Families with concerns about bullying should contact their student's school counselor.**

## METHACTON HIGH SCHOOL

### General Concerns about Bullying

*Contact your student's grade level administrator.*

**If your child receives a direct threat of a violent or sexual nature, please contact MHS School Resource Officer Mike Nastasi, at [mnastasi@methacton.org](mailto:mnastasi@methacton.org) or at 610-489-5000, ext. 25200 (MHS Students) or Arcola School Resource Officer Mark Stead at [mstead@methacton.org](mailto:mstead@methacton.org) or at 610-489-5000, ext. 30237 (Arcola, Skyview and MSD Elementary Schools).**

**Questions or concerns about any of the information contained in this brochure should be directed to:**

**Dr. Susan Angstadt** Director of Pupil Services  
[sangstadt@methacton.org](mailto:sangstadt@methacton.org)  
**Pat Gavanus**, Secretary to the Director  
[pgavanus@methacton.org](mailto:pgavanus@methacton.org)

# Bullying Prevention

The Methacton  
School District  
*Learn, Lead,  
Succeed - Together!*



*"All elementary schools have adopted the same three rules: Be Safe, Be Respectful and Be Responsible. We have taught the students to respond to behavior that is not respectful by "Stop, Walk, and Talk." We are encouraging the students to be problem solvers."*

**Eagleville School Counselor Judi Schmitz**

**"Each student shall be responsible to respect the rights of others and to ensure an atmosphere free from bullying." MSD School Board Policy 249**

### **Elementary Schools**

In 2010-2011, the Methacton School District (MSD) established a Bully Prevention Steering Committee. This committee was a joint effort that included parents, teachers, counselors and administrators. Along with reviewing the current school board Bullying/Cyber-Bullying policy (MSD School Board Policy 249), the committee reviewed and ultimately recommended a bully prevention program to be implemented throughout MSD beginning this year. At all five elementary schools and Arcola Intermediate School, the selected program is called **Bully Prevention in School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS)**.

#### **What is School-Wide Positive Behavior Support?**

School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS) is a proactive approach to discipline that promotes appropriate student behavior and increased learning. With SWPBS, the focus is on blending socially valuable outcomes, research-based procedures, behavioral science, and a systems approach to reduce problem behavior and improve school climate.

There will be a school-wide social culture established where positive behavior is "expected" and rewards for bullying are NOT provided. The School Counselors, along with classroom teachers, will be teaching a series of five lessons in each class presenting Bully Prevention in School-Wide Positive Behavior Support.

#### **Lesson 1: Introduction to Bully Prevention in SWPBS:**

School-Wide rules and expectations will be established:

- Be Safe
- Be Respectful
- Be Responsible

Students will learn social responsibility skills needed in bully prevention.

Students will learn the three steps of Stop, Walk, Talk in responding to bullying.

#### **Lesson 2: Review**

Students will review school-wide rules and role-play three steps in responding to bullying.

#### **Lesson 3: Gossip**

Students learn how to apply the three steps of STOP, WALK, and TALK when responding to gossip they see going on in and outside of the classroom. Students will also learn the important role of being a bystander.

#### **Lesson 4: Inappropriate Remarks**

Students will learn how to apply the three steps in responding to bully prevention when they hear inappropriate remarks among their classmates.

#### **Lesson 5: Cyber-Bullying**

Students will learn how to apply the school-wide STOP, WALK and TALK signals when technology is used to be disrespectful to other students.

### **Skyview Upper Elementary School**

The foundation of the Skyview learning community is in the six pillars of Character Counts. These pillars include: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. These pillars are woven into everyday life at Skyview – from guidance lessons to behavior expectations to pillars of the month – the Skyview students know and demonstrate these pillars. Students participate in planning activities that align with the Character Counts program and staff members have received formal training on the program. More information on the pillars can be found in the Skyview handbook and on the school website. The pillars of the Character Counts program support positive behavior in students and helps to create a culture to prevent and reduce bullying.

Skyview students continue the steps learned at the elementary level through SWPBS. Review lessons on the steps of STOP-WALK-TALK are held with counselors along with counseling lessons on respect. Skyview counselors are available to meet with individual students, small groups and to hold class meetings to address any concerns.

### **Arcola Intermediate School**

Since a student who is exhibiting bullying behaviors is often experiencing other issues that are at the heart of the bullying, at Arcola, principals and counselors try to determine the whole picture so each component of what the child is experiencing can be addressed. Rarely is bullying just to bully. Therefore, during the time the student is serving the consequences of their actions, a series of restorative practices are implemented to assist the student in changing the negative behavior(s).

### **Methacton High School**

The Methacton High School (MHS) staff approach bullying from a perspective of restorative practices. The focus is not only on the actions being reported, but also on the root cause of the behavior. On case-to-case basis, mediations are conducted in the school counseling office with support from school counselors, assistant principals and Methacton's School Resource Officer. These mediations are optional and parent approved to bring parties together and provide greater understanding and valuable learning experience.