



Bullying Prevention

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www.ok.gov/sde/bullying-prevention

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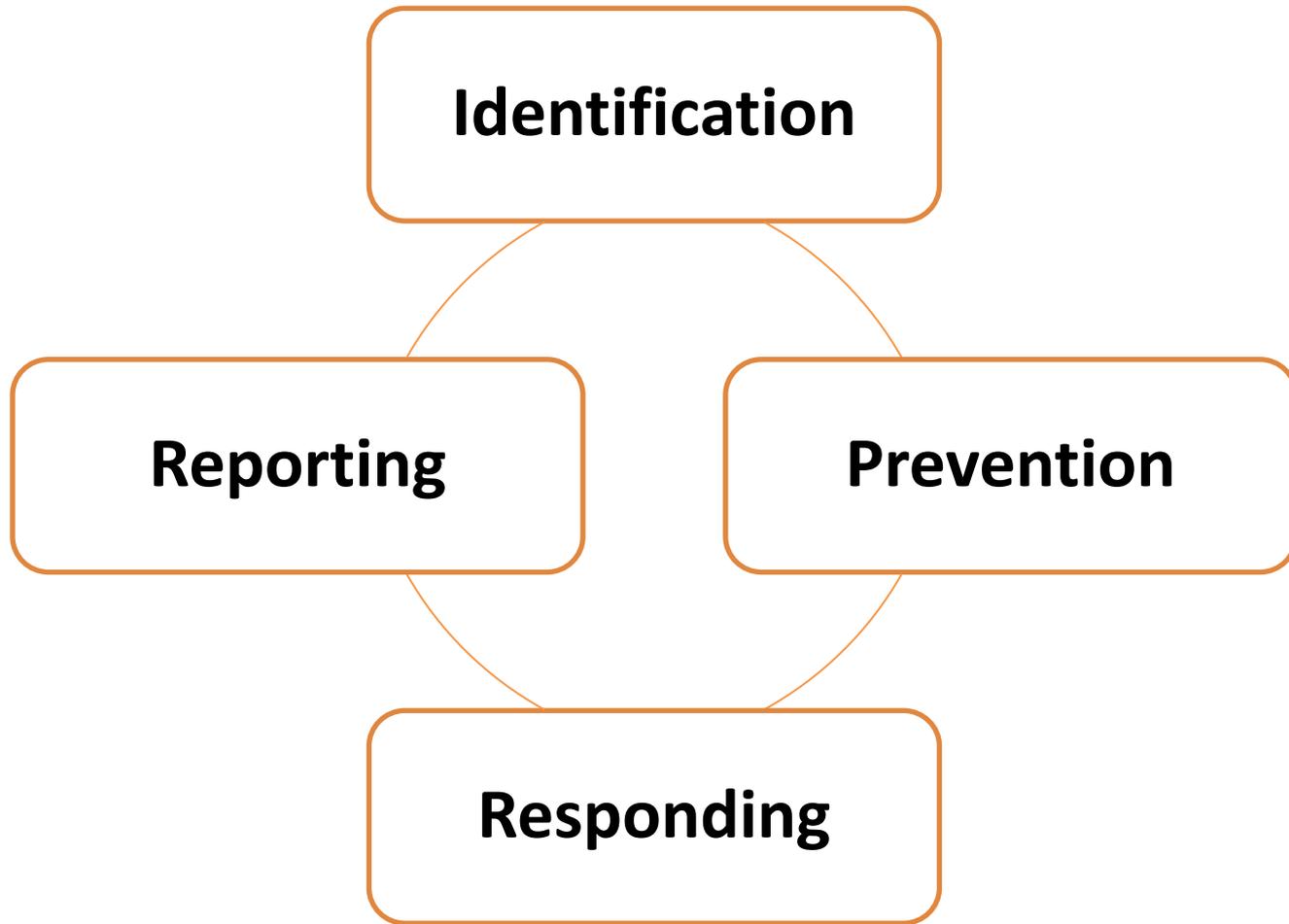
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A Frame Work for Bullying Prevention



Identifying Bullying

- **Goal: to understand the dynamics of the bullying phenomena and potential factors that lead to possible victimization.**

Identifying Bullying

- Understand bullying violence situated on continuum of violent behaviors: bullying, peer conflict, gang violence, harassment, stalking, teen dating violence, etc.
- It is not bullying when two students with no perceived power imbalance fight, have an argument, disagree or engage in conflict.

Bullying Definitions

School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act

- “Bullying means any **pattern** of harassment, intimidation, threatening behavior, physical acts, verbal or **electronic communication** directed toward a student or group of students
- that results in or is reasonably perceived as being done with the intent to **cause negative educational or physical results** for the targeted individual or group
- and is communicated in such a way as to **disrupt or interfere with the school’s educational mission or the education of any student.**”

Terms

School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act

- “At school” means on school grounds, in school vehicles, at school sponsored activities or a school-sanctioned events.
- “Electronic communication” means the communication of any written, verbal, pictorial or video content by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, a mobile or cellular telephone or other wireless telecommunication device or computer.

Terms

School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act

- “Threatening behavior” means **any pattern of behavior or isolated action**, whether or not it is directed at another person, that a reasonable person would believe indicates potential for future harm to students, school personnel, or school property.

Components of Bullying Behavior

- **Imbalance of power:**
 - Kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- **Repetition:**
 - Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.
- **Intentional harm:**
 - behaviors are intended to create harm physically, emotionally, socially, or in digital space.

Forms of Bullying

- Verbal bullying is saying or writing mean things.
- Verbal bullying includes:
 - Teasing
 - Name calling
 - Inappropriate sexual comments
 - Taunting
 - Threatening to cause harm

Forms of Bullying

- Physical bullying involves hurting a person's body or possessions.
- Physical bullying includes:
 - Hitting/kicking/pinching
 - Spitting
 - Tripping/pushing
 - Taking or breaking someone's things
 - Making mean or rude hand gestures

Forms of Bullying

- Social bullying, sometimes referred to as relational bullying, involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships.
- Social bullying includes:
 - Leaving someone out on purpose
 - Telling other children not to be friends with someone
 - Spreading rumors about someone
 - Embarrassing someone in public

Forms of Bullying

- Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using electronic technology.
 - Electronic technology includes devices and equipment such as cell phones, computers, and tablets as well as communication tools including social media sites, text messages, chat, and websites.
 - Examples of cyberbullying include mean text messages or emails, rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles.

Why Cyberbullying Is Different

- Kids who are being cyberbullied are often bullied in person as well.
- Additionally, kids who are cyberbullied have a harder time getting away from the behavior.
- Cyberbullying can happen 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and reach a kid even when he or she is alone. It can happen any time of the day or night.

Why Cyberbullying Is Different

- Cyberbullying messages and images can be posted anonymously and distributed quickly to a very wide audience.
- It can be difficult and sometimes impossible to trace the source.
- Deleting inappropriate or harassing messages, texts, and pictures is extremely difficult after they have been posted or sent.

Early Childhood

- Understand bullying behaviors in the context of age appropriate, developmental behaviors:
 - lower level of frustration thresholds due to limited language development, problem solving and communication skills, and
 - a strong sense of meeting egocentric desires often acting out toward others through engaging in physically aggressive behaviors.

Early Childhood

- Early childhood often marks the first opportunity for young children to interact with each other.
- Between the ages of 3 and 5, kids are learning how to get along with each other, cooperate, share, and understand their feelings.
- Young children may be aggressive and act out when they are angry or don't get what they want, but this is not (necessarily) bullying.

Implications of “Labeling” Students

- When referring to a bullying situation, it is easy to call the kids who bully others "bullies" and those who are targeted "victims," but this may have unintended consequences.

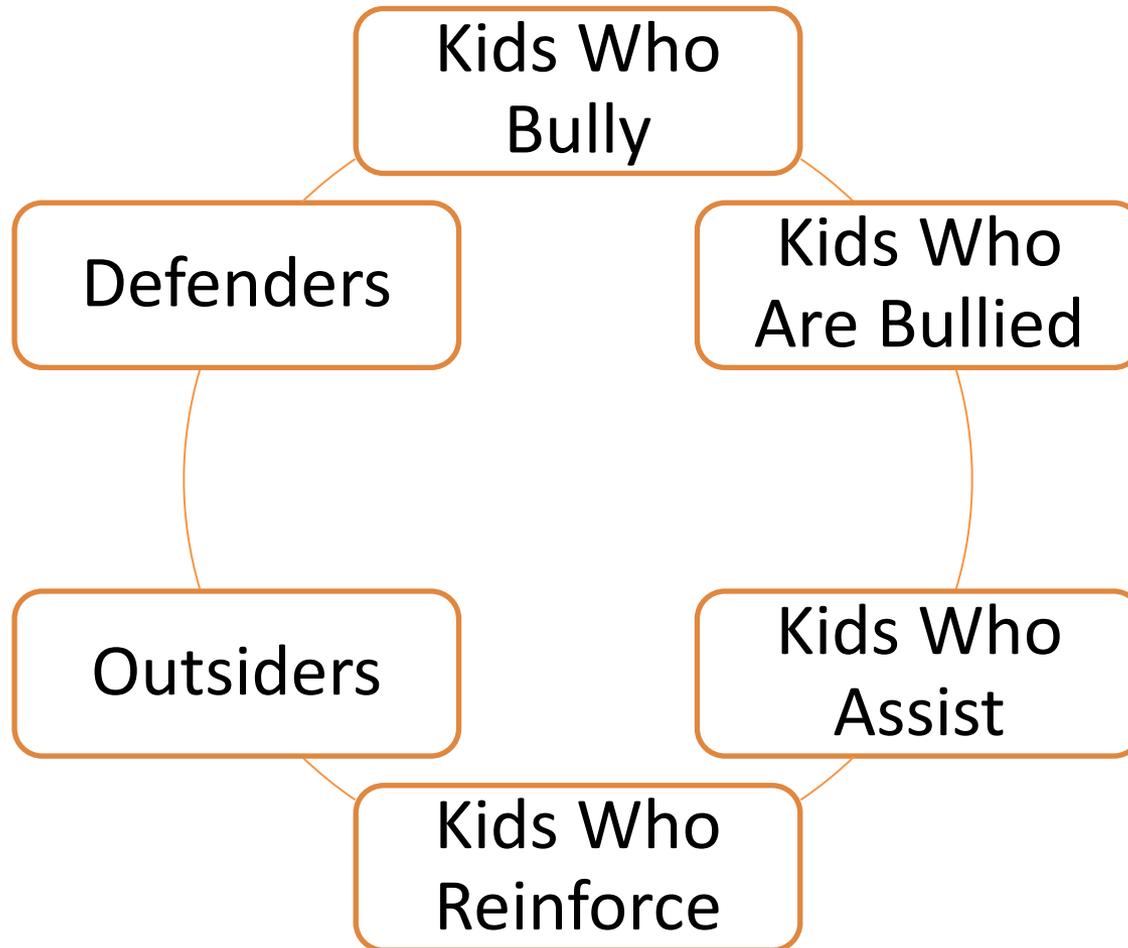
Implications of “Labeling” Students

- When children are labeled as "bullies" or "victims" it may:
 - Send the message that the child's behavior cannot change.
 - Fail to recognize the multiple roles children might play in different bullying situations.
 - Disregard other factors contributing to the behavior such as peer influence or school climate.

Implications of “Labeling” Students

- Instead of calling a child a "bully," refer to them as ***"the child who bullied"***
- Instead of calling a child a "victim," refer to them as ***"the child who was bullied"***
- Instead of calling a child a "bully/victim," refer to them as ***"the child who was both bullied and bullied others."***

Circle of Bullying



Circle of Bullying

- **Kids Who Bully**

- These children engage in bullying behavior towards their peers.
- There are many risk factors that may contribute to the child's involvement in the behavior.
- Often, these students require support to change their behavior and address any other challenges that may be influencing their behavior.

Circle of Bullying

- **Kids Who Are Bullied**
 - These children are the targets of bullying behavior.
 - Some factors put children at more risk of being bullied, but not all children with these characteristics will be bullied.
 - These children may need help learning how to respond to bullying.

Circle of Bullying

- **Kids Who Assist**

- These children may not start the bullying or lead in the bullying behavior, but serve as an "assistant" to children who are bullying.
- These children may encourage the bullying behavior and occasionally join in.

Circle of Bullying

- **Kids Who Reinforce**

- These children are not directly involved in the bullying behavior but they give the bullying an audience.
- They will often laugh or provide support for the children who are engaging in bullying.
- This may encourage the bullying to continue.

Circle of Bullying

- **Outsiders**

- These children remain separate from the bullying situation.
- They neither reinforce the bullying behavior nor defend the child being bullied.
- Some may watch what is going on but do not provide feedback about the situation to show they are on anyone's side.
- Even so, providing an audience may encourage the bullying behavior.
- These kids often want to help, but don't know how.

Circle of Bullying

- **Kids Who Defend**

- These children actively comfort the child being bullied and may come to the child's defense when bullying occurs.

Generally, children who are bullied have one or more of the following risk factors:

- Are perceived as different from their peers, such as being overweight or underweight, wearing glasses or different clothing, being new to a school, or being unable to afford what kids consider “cool”
- Are perceived as weak or unable to defend themselves
- Are depressed, anxious, or have low self esteem
- Are less popular than others and have few friends
- Do not get along well with others, seen as annoying or provoking, or antagonize others for attention
- However, even if a child has these risk factors, it doesn't mean that they will be bullied.

Children More Likely to Bully Others

- There are two types of kids who are more likely to bully others:
 - Some are well-connected to their peers, have social power, are overly concerned about their popularity, and like to dominate or be in charge of others.
 - Others are more isolated from their peers and may be depressed or anxious, have low self-esteem, be less involved in school, be easily pressured by peers, do not identify with the emotions or feelings of others.

Children More Likely to Bully Others

- Are aggressive or easily frustrated
- Have less parental involvement or having issues at home
- Think badly of others
- Have difficulty following rules
- View violence in a positive way
- Have friends who bully others

Children More Likely to Bully Others

- Remember, those who bully others do not need to be stronger or bigger than those they bully.
- The power imbalance can come from a number of sources—popularity, strength, cognitive ability—and children who bully may have more than one of these characteristics.

Suicide and Bullying

- Recent media publicity around suicides by youth who were bullied by their peers has led many to assume that bullying often leads directly to suicide.
- Although youth who are involved in bullying are more likely to have suicidal thoughts and attempt suicide than those who are not involved in bullying, research indicates that other risk factors play a larger role in suicidal behavior.

What do we know about suicide and its causes?

- Suicide has a devastating impact on youth and young adults. According to the CDC:
 - Suicide is the third leading cause of death among 15- to 24-year-olds.
 - 15% of high school students seriously considered suicide in the past 12 months and 7% reported making at least one suicide attempt in the previous year.

Suicide is a complex issue. According to the CDC, a combination of individual, relational, community, and societal factors contribute to the risk of suicide.”

- This can include:
 - Family history of suicide or child maltreatment
 - History of depression or other mental illness
 - Alcohol and substance abuse
 - Impulsive or aggressive tendencies
 - Isolation
 - Local epidemics of suicide
 - Easy access to lethal methods

Is bullying related to suicide?

- Researchers who have investigated possible links between bullying and suicide among children and youth have found that:
 - Children and youth who are involved in bullying are more likely than those who aren't involved in bullying to be depressed, have high levels of suicidal thoughts, and have attempted suicide.
 - Children who bully and who also are bullied by their peers (often referred to as “bully-victims”) are at the greatest risk for suicidal thoughts and behavior.

Is bullying related to suicide?

- Most studies have looked at the correlation between bullying and suicide at only one point in time.
- Very few have followed children and youth over time.
- So, although involvement in bullying is related to a greater likelihood of suicidal thoughts and behavior, it is wrong to conclude from these studies that experiences with bullying (alone) causes suicidal thoughts and behavior.

Is bullying related to suicide?

- A number of researchers note that there are other risk factors, such as mental health problems, that appear to play a much larger role than bullying in predicting suicidal thoughts and behavior.
- These findings show that there are many factors that may increase a youth's risk of suicide.
- They caution us not to make unwarranted assumptions about "simple" causes or explanations for suicidal thoughts or behavior when there are many factors at play.

Prevention

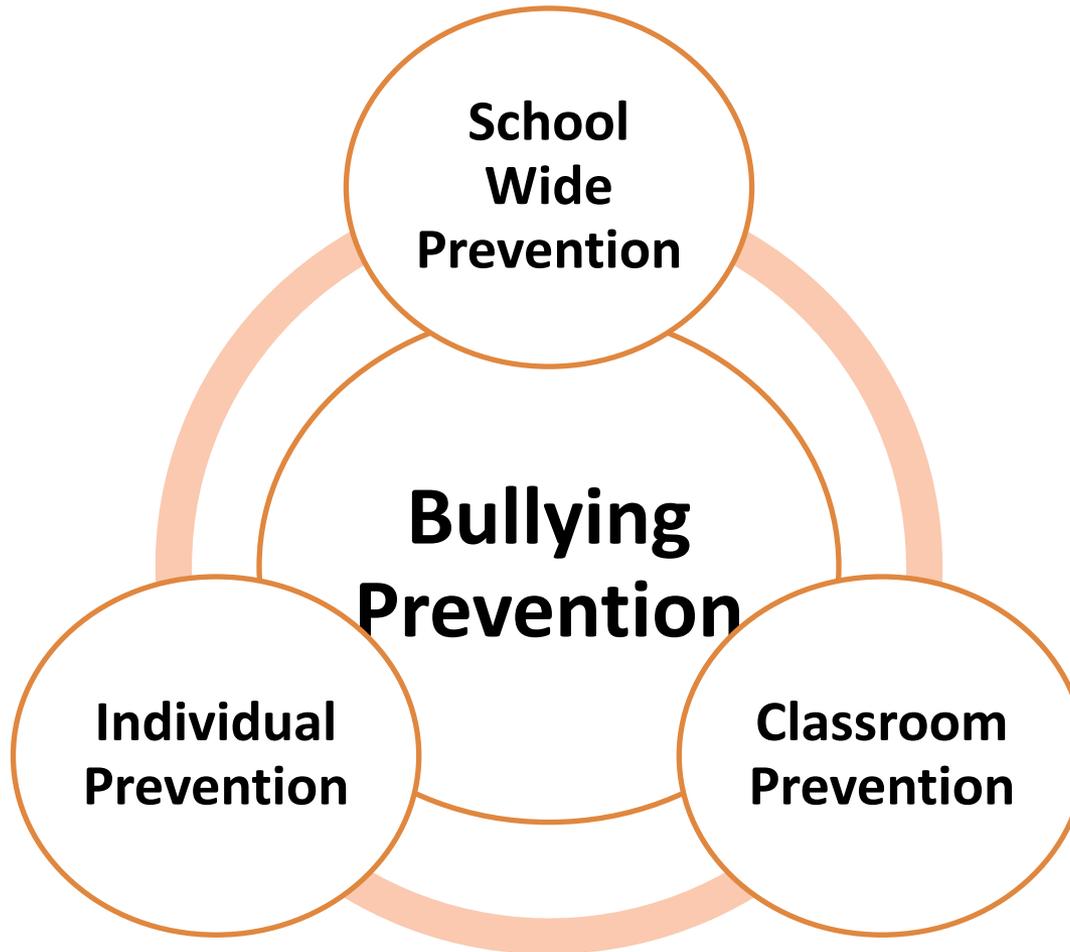
- **Goal: to nurture positive school climate reducing the likelihood of bullying occurring while at school or during school sanctioned activities.**

Clearly communicate, post, and enforce anti-bullying policy and procedures.

In accordance with the School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act

- Schools must publicized bullying policy and reporting procedures through annual written notice to parents, guardians, staff, volunteers and students with age appropriate language for students.
- Notice of policy to be posted at various locations within each school site, included but no limited to cafeterias, school bulletin boards, and administration offices.
- The policy is to be posted on the website for the school district and each school site that has a website.
- The policy must be included in all student and employee handbooks.

Three Areas of Model Prevention



School Wide Prevention

- Establish and maintain monthly ***Safe School Committee*** meetings creating uniform activities to be disseminated for use at ***school wide, classroom, and individual levels***.
- In accordance with the School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act
 - The Committee is to be established every year at each school site and shall be composed of at least seven (7) members may include administrators (including the official included in investigating reports of bullying), school staff, students, parents, school volunteers, community representatives, and local law enforcement agencies.

School Wide Prevention

In accordance with the School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act

- ***Safe School Committees***
 - The Committee shall assist the school board in promoting a positive school climate through planning, implementing and evaluating effective prevention, readiness and response strategies.
 - Utilize findings and implications to frame prevention and intervention yearlong activities.

Model School Wide Prevention

- Implement pre and post school climate survey to measure student perception of safety and well-being utilizing National Outcome Measurements (NOMs);
 - During the month of October, suggested options are to utilize the Measuring Bullying, Victimization, Perpetration, and Bystander Experience: A Compendium of Assessment Tools – a publication of the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (<http://ok.gov/sde/sites/ok.gov.sde/files/BullyCompendium.pdf>).
 - The teacher survey ***BULLYING SURVEY FOR SCHOOL STAFF*** is also available to measure teacher percepts of bullying behaviors at school (<http://ok.gov/sde/bullying-prevention>).

School Wide Prevention

- Develop prevention/intervention strategies to increase student perception of safety and well-being while at school based upon survey outcome findings and implications.
- Conduct a post school climate survey toward the end of the school year to determine effectiveness of prevention/intervention strategies.

Model School Wide Prevention

- Increase adult supervision for known “hot spots” for bullying, violence, or antisocial behaviors.
- Include a plan for all teachers to stand in the hallways during passing period for all schools and to monitor “high traffic” student areas.

Model Classroom Prevention

- Provide daily/weekly classroom forums for students to talk about school-related issues beyond traditional academics.
- These meetings can help teachers stay informed about what is going on at school and help students feel safe and supported.

Model Classroom Prevention

- Classroom meetings may include a wide range of subjects such as:
 - Defining bullying and bullying behaviors, rules prohibiting bullying, overt and covert bullying behaviors, cyberbullying, bullying prevention literature, current national events regarding bullying behaviors and developing a positive school climate.
 - Student behavior in various school locations (restroom, hallways, playground, cafeteria, parking lot, bus, bus stop, etc.),
 - Peer pressure, friendship, respect, diversity, aggressive behaviors, effective communication vs. non-effective communication skills building, etc.

Model Individual Prevention

- From a position of empathy and social responsibility toward others, promote inclusion of all students especially those who are left out.
 - Inform students that they (individually and together) have the ***power to positively impact the lives of others*** while at school creating a positive school climate.
 - They have the ***power to create*** a place where they can feel safe from the fear of peer violence, a place where supporting one another is welcomed, a place where everyone can succeed together.
- Establish positive peer groups for the inclusion of all students to allow for positive social interaction reducing the chances of student marginalization.

Responding to Bullying

- **Goals: to immediately intervene in bullying situations among students; to allow for anonymous reporting; and to provide for a finding of documented and verified incidents of whether or not bullying has actually occurred.**

Model response If possible bullying behavior is witnessed, immediately apply intervention strategies.

- **Immediately separate students.**
 - You may position yourself between the individuals to create a barrier and to redirect attention to an adult authority figure.
- **Use appropriate language to name inappropriate behavior and refer to student conduct rules: “It is inappropriate to push people at school; pushing is against school rules.”**
- **Show support for students who “stand-up” for or helped the student being targeted.**
 - Relay the message that you appreciate their social responsibility to help others in need.

Model response If possible bullying behavior is witnessed, immediately apply intervention strategies.

- Provide a **safe place** for targeted student.
- **Separately discuss** with aggressor and target regarding situational details.
 - Do not make students apologize to others on the spot.
 - Do not immediately question or force witnesses to answer questions about the situation.
 - Do not utilize a student mediator to investigate allegations of bullying.

Model response If possible bullying behavior is witnessed, immediately apply intervention strategies.

- Immediately apply consequences aligned with student conduct policy and procedure when appropriate.
- File a report with principal or designee regarding possible bullying incident for investigation.
- Maintain records regarding incident type, involved individuals, date, time, location, and action taken.

Model response If possible bullying behavior is witnessed, immediately apply intervention strategies.

- For future consideration:
 - Plan an informal, follow-up discussion with the student who was mistreated to check on feelings of safety and well-being.
 - Monitor for aggressive behaviors that may occur between the involved students.
 - Involve the targeted student in positive social/academic opportunities to connect with other peers.

Investigation

In accordance to the Safe School and Bullying Prevention Act

- Schools are required by law that appropriate school district personnel involved in investigating reports of bullying **make a determination regarding whether or not the conduct is actually happening.**
- Further, **no formal disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.**
- Findings may constitute further disciplinary action, **notification of law enforcement or referral to outside counseling resources.**

Model Investigative Process

- Communicate to reporting parties that bullying and violent behaviors at school will not be tolerated as such behaviors must and will be put to a stop.
- Communicate to all parties at the beginning of an investigate that you are conducting an investigation to determine if bullying or other violent behaviors have been committed as such behaviors will not be tolerated at school and if verified must stop.

Model Investigative Process

- **Complete** “Harassment/Bullying Investigation Form” located online:
<http://ok.gov/sde/sites/ok.gov.sde/files/InvestigationForm11.pdf>
- **Documentation:**
 - Gather statements from: targeted student, alleged offender, witnesses student/staff, and parent(s)
 - Gather other forms of information: medical information, police report, and bullying incident report form

Model Investigative Process

- **Take Action:**
 - **Separately interview:** targeted student, alleged offender, witness student/staff, and parent(s) target and alleged offender
 - **Review:** physical evidence (video), medical information, bus incident information, student records, social history between students, consider prior history of behavior

Model Investigative Process

- **Determine findings:**
 - **The Complaint is Sustained:** Bullying was documented and verified
 - **The Complaint was Not Sustained:** there was not enough verifiable proof that bullying was taking place or the complaining party has refused to assist in the investigation
 - **Unfounded:** the complaint was discovered to have no merit or the complaining party has informed the investigator that the allegations were false or untrue.

Documented and Verified Bullying Incidents

Delineate “bullied student” and “student who bullied”

- None were warranted
- Student contract:
<http://ok.gov/sde/sites/ok.gov.sde/files/StudentBehaviorContract.pdf>
- Review of student bullying prevention policy
- Conference with the principal
- Counseling interventions
- School service work
- Follow-up/Monitoring
- Loss of privilege on bus/loss of bus privilege
- Detention
- In-school assignment or intervention program
- Suspension
- Assignment to alternative education facility
- Contacted local or Federal law enforcement regarding criminal conduct
- Documentation of “timely” parent notification

Reporting

- **Goal: students will be supported by administration and staff who will take action to determine if bullying or some other form of violence has occurred.**

Reporting

In accordance with the School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act

- **Each school site must identify by job title the official responsible** for enforcing anti-bullying policy and the official responsible for conducting official investigations into reports of bullying (specifically the principal or designee).
- **Schools must publicized bullying policy and reporting procedures** through annual written notice to parents, guardians, staff, volunteers and students with age appropriate language for students.
- **Notice of policy to be posted at various locations within each school site**, included but no limited to cafeterias, school bulletin boards, and administration offices.
- **The policy is to be posted on the website** for the school district and each school site that has a website.
- **The policy must be included in all student and employee handbooks.**

Reporting

In accordance with the School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act

- Any School employee that has reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that a person is a target of bullying shall immediately report to the principal or a designee.
- If bullying behavior is suspected, reported by a student or parent, a “reporting” form must be completed and submitted to site principal or designee to begin a formal investigation.

Model Reporting Forms

- Sample parent/guardian reporting form letter:
[http://ok.gov/sde/faqs/bullying-frequently-asked-questions#What do I do if my child is bullied?](http://ok.gov/sde/faqs/bullying-frequently-asked-questions#What%20do%20I%20do%20if%20my%20child%20is%20bullied?)
- Incident report form:
<http://ok.gov/sde/sites/ok.gov.sde/files/HarassmentIncidentRep11.pdf>
- Bullying witness incident form:
<http://ok.gov/sde/sites/ok.gov.sde/files/WitnessForm12.pdf>
- Incident interview statement form:
<http://ok.gov/sde/sites/ok.gov.sde/files/Interviewstatement.pdf>
- Student survey:
<http://ok.gov/sde/sites/ok.gov.sde/files/StudentSurvey.pdf>

Reporting

In accordance with the School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act

- Parents or guardians must be notified in a “timely” fashion as to findings of documented and verified incidents of bullying.
- This includes students who have been the target of bullying behavior and students who target others with bullying behaviors.

Reporting

In accordance with the School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act

- Policy and procedure must include reporting to law enforcement all documented and verified acts of bullying which may constitute criminal activity or reasonably have the potential to endanger school safety.
- This may include but is not limited to vandalism, destruction of property, physical harm, the threat of physical harm, possession of a weapon, threatening the safety and well-being of others.

Reporting

In accordance with the School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act

- Schools must report documented and verified incidents of bullying to the OSDE.
- An annual report will be published on the OSDE's website regarding the number of documented and verified incidents of bullying in public schools in the state.



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