

Child Protection Policy

Executive Summary

Dear Parents and ASFM Community,

Children's physical and emotional wellbeing is a priority for American School Foundation of Monterrey (ASFM). In accordance to our mission and vision's beliefs in Open Minds, Caring Hearts, and Global Leadership and to the state of Nuevo León legislation, at ASFM we have developed and adopted a **Child Protection Policy** to guide our staff, administrators and families in matters related to the health, safety and care of children in attendance at our school. This policy is so important that we are sharing this document with parents to emphasize this truly critical issue for our community. This document is a synthetic version of our Child Protection Policy.

The ASFM Child Protection Policy is based on local and national laws, Secretaría de Educación (SE) rules and regulations and international treaties and conventions such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

ASFM Child Protection Team

Introduction

The government of Nuevo Leon requires generating school environments of peace, trust, and respect for human rights, as well as school communities capable of promoting social cohesion, limiting and inhibiting violent behavior, where discrimination in any of its manifestations is eradicated. Violations of human rights and crimes committed against children and teenagers damage human dignity, and should, therefore, be avoided or, as the case may be, identified, stopped and repaired comprehensively, through attention that complies with the highest national and international standards in the matter.

It is for this reason that, taking into account the international, national and local normative framework regarding prevention, attention, sanction and correction of child violence, the "Guide for the early detection and protocol of action in cases of violence against children" is presented for the school setting: Child sexual abuse, bullying and/or school violence and child abuse".

A school community capable of detecting and inhibiting violent behavior is required, through actions aimed at promoting the development of integral human beings that generate harmonious and peaceful spaces and environments for coexistence. Specifically, everyone should be alert and work on the appropriate development of students, starting by strengthening those social and emotional skills that promote inclusion, respect for diversity and coexistence, then know what to do in the presence of situations or behaviors related to child sexual abuse, harassment and / or school violence or child abuse.

Principles for detection and a protocol of action in cases of child sexual abuse, school harassment and/or violence.

GUIDE FOR EARLY DETECTION AND PROTOCOL OF ACTION IN CASES OF:

Child sexual abuse, school harassment and/or violence, and child abuse in public and private basic education schools of the state of Nuevo Leon Secretaría de Educación

Definitions

Child abuse: Abuse and neglect of children under 18 years of age, including all forms of physical or psychological abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, neglect and commercial or other exploitation that cause or are likely to cause harm to the health, development or dignity of the child or teenager or endanger his or her survival, in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power. Exposure to intimate partner violence is also sometimes included among the forms of child abuse.

Child sexual abuse: It consists of the participation of a child or teenager in a sexual activity that he or she does not fully understand, to which he or she is not capable of giving consent, or for which because of its development it is not prepared and cannot express consent, or which violates laws or social taboos. Sexual abuse of minors occurs when this activity takes place between a child or teenager and an adult, or between a child, teenager and another child or teenager who, because of his or her age or development, has a relationship of responsibility, trust or power with him or her. The purpose of the activity is to satisfy the needs of the other person. It may include various sexual practices with or without physical contact such as exhibitionism, touching, manipulation, corruption, anal, vaginal or oral sex, prostitution, and pornography.

School harassment: A form of psychological, physical, verbal, sexual or cyber aggression or abuse, inside or outside public or private educational institutions, that a student receives from another student or students, repeatedly, and without apparent provocation on the part of the recipient; attacking his/her dignity and hindering his/her academic performance, social integration or integration with groups, as well as his/her participation in educational programs, damaging his/her willingness to participate or take advantage of the educational

programs or activities of the school, by making him/her feel a reasonable fear of suffering any type of harm.

School violence: A malicious act or omission with the intention of physically or psychologically harming a person belonging to the educational community, whether students, teachers, parents, guardians, administrative or subordinate staff, that occurs within school facilities, or in other spaces directly related to the school environment, around the school or places where extracurricular activities take place. In addition, actions carried out through social networks are considered school violence, or any type of communication, written, electronic or through images, which is intended to damage the dignity of persons in the area indicated.

Child Protection Team: School Brigades on the Prevention of Bullying and School Violence formed by a group of people selected from among the members of the school community of a school, who interact and meet for the purpose of taking the necessary measures to carry out preventive actions of violence and/or school bullying in the school to which they belong.

Types of Bullying and/or Violence

I. Physical. The act that causes non-accidental bodily harm to a member of the school community, using physical force or some other means that may cause or do not cause injury whether internal, external, or both;

II. Verbal: That coming from the act that manifests itself through verbal or corporal expression, such as insults, contempt, and mockery in public or in private;

III. Psychological: That resulting from an act or omission that transcends emotional integrity or psychological stability, causing the recipient depression, subjugation, isolation, devaluation of self-esteem or dignity;

IV. Cybernetic: The one that is made through the use of any electronic means; like the internet, web pages, social networks, blogs, electronic mails, messages, images or videos by cellular telephone, computers, video recordings or other digital technologies. This type of harassment or violence shall be considered as such even if it extends outside the school setting but begins or arises in the setting of the educational community;

V. Sexual: Any discrimination, harassment or violence against another member of the school community related to sexuality, as well as sending messages, images or videos with erotic or pornographic content through digital technologies that denote obscenity, touching, harassment, sexual harassment or abuse; and

VI. Social exclusion: When the member of the school community is notoriously excluded, isolated or threatened to be so, from school coexistence for reasons of discrimination of any kind.

Sexual abuse and bullying are particular forms of violence against children, but with very specific characteristics that differentiate them from other types of violence. Sexual abuse is characterized by the nature of the violence used, and bullying is characterized by having three fundamental characteristics in the use of violence: intention, repetition, and duration.

Essential Responsibilities of the Educational Community

"To keep silent about an act of child sexual abuse, school harassment and/or violence, child abuse, or any other crime against a student implies liability due to omission."

It is the obligation of EVERY person in the educational community, as well as school educational authorities, who has knowledge of cases of students who suffer or have suffered, in any way, violation of their rights, or the commission of any crime, inside or outside the school, to immediately report it to the corresponding authorities.

Teacher Responsibilities	Responsibility of the Administrative Personnel <i>and/or people that are part of the School System but are not Teachers</i>	Responsibility of the Principal and Assistant Principal	Responsibility of Parents and Guardians
To know and apply the standardizing documents and school organization documents issued by the Ministry of Education.	To know and apply the standardizing documents and school organization documents issued by the Ministry of Education.	To inform the educational community about the standardized documents and school organization documents issued by the Ministry of education and make them available.	To know the standardizing documents and school organization documents as well as the actions and procedures for cases of sexual abuse of a child, bullying and/or school violence and child abuse issued by the Ministry of Education

<p>To understand the Law for the Rights of Children and Teenagers, the Law for Preventing, Treating and Eliminating Abuse and School Violence, and the Regulations for School Discipline for the State of Nuevo Leon.</p>	<p>To understand the Law for the Rights of Children and Teenagers, the Law for Preventing, Treating and Eliminating Abuse and School Violence, and the Regulations for School Discipline for the State of Nuevo Leon.</p>	<p>Understand the Law for the Rights of Children and Teenagers, the Law for Preventing, Treating and Eliminating Bullying and School Violence and the Regulations for School Discipline for the State of Nuevo Leon.</p>	<p>Understand the information from the educational authority and administration to whom to appeal to for the preventative actions and/or, should it be necessary, to execute action steps</p>
<p>Have training in human rights to integrate into the curriculum from a rights-based approach and favor learning related to values, attitudes and skills in health education, comprehensive sex education, violence prevention, etc</p>	<p>Apply throughout the school day the actions outlined in this document and immediately document the findings and inform the authority of any findings and/or indicators associated with the possibility of sexual abuse of a child, bullying and/or school violence, and child abuse.</p>	<p>Verify that the actions outlined in this document are implemented during school days and immediately document the findings and inform the authority of any findings and/or indicators associated with the possibility of sexual abuse of a child, bullying and/or school violence, and child abuse.</p>	<p>Observe and be alert to any change in student conduct in or out of the classroom, immediately notifying the authority of any findings and/or indicator associated with possibility of sexual abuse of a child.</p>
<p>Observe the dynamics of interaction between students and be alert to any change in behavior inside and outside the classroom, inform immediate supervisor of any findings and/or warning signs associated with any type of sexual abuse of a child, bullying and/or school violence, and child abuse.</p>	<p>.Report to your immediate supervisor any situation of risk to children and teenagers that is observed in the service areas, playgrounds and school facilities</p>	<p>Create conditions so that administration, teachers and all school personnel are continuously trained and updated on human rights.</p>	<p>Notify the school if there is any anomaly in my child's behavior</p>

Apply the actions indicated in this document during the school day.	To support what the supervisor requests in order to safeguard the safety of the students.	Establish in the staff meetings(Consejo Técnicos) strategies for the prevention and/or early detection of cases of sexual abuse of a child, bullying and/or school violence, as well as child abuse.	
Report to your immediate superior any situation of risk to children and teenagers that is observed in the service areas, playgrounds and school facilities		Document all actions related to the prevention and/or early detection of sexual abuse of a child, bullying and/or school violence, as well as child abuse.	

Mechanisms for the Implementation of the Responsibilities of Parents and/or Guardians

Parents and/or guardians of each school shall implement essential responsibilities to prevent situations of child sexual abuse, school harassment and/or violence, as well as child abuse, in the following terms:

Tasks	Mechanisms
<p>Active observation and detection of risk factors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I am constantly watching my child. ● I am alert to how my child relates to his classmates and teachers. ● I observe repeated behavior changes at home.

<p>Information and communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I talk with my child about the characteristics of self-care and the situations to avoid so that he/she will not be hurt, abused, or mistreated. • I read and sign the documents and rules about the organization of the school, as well as the actions and procedures of attention in cases of child sexual abuse, school harassment and/or violence, as well as child abuse. • Inside the school building I know where to locate information about the instances that can support in case of child sexual abuse, or any other situation that arises in the school. • I maintain constant communication with the school through written communications and visits.
<p>Procedure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the event of any suspected conduct of child sexual abuse, school harassment and/or violence, as well as child abuse, I immediately inform the principal in writing. • I submit my observation in writing to the school authority. • I will use, if necessary, the channels of communication established at the school to report any disagreement regarding the service of the school. • I will cooperate with the school administration's actions to maintain the safety of my child.

Mechanisms for the Implementation of Teachers' and Staff Responsibilities

Teachers of each school shall implement minimum responsibilities to prevent situations of child sexual abuse, school harassment and/or violence, as well as child abuse in the following terms:

<p>Tasks</p>	<p>Mechanisms</p>
<p>Active observation and detection of risk factors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I constantly observe the interactions of my students in all school related events. • I am alert to the return of my students when they request to leave the classroom. • I avoid activities that jeopardize the safety of my students. • I maintain visibility in windows and classroom lighting. • I identify places that could put my students at risk.

<p>Information and communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I'm careful to express myself with respect and with appropriate vocabulary when addressing any member of the school community, especially with the students. ● I listen with respect and attention to what my students say. ● I work with my students on issues related to protection and self-care according to the programs. ● I inform mothers, fathers, and guardians about the protection and self-care measures that are practiced in the classroom and at school. ● I teach my students to identify behaviors that bother them. ● I read and sign the documents and rules about the organization of the school; actions and procedures in cases of child sexual abuse, school harassment and/or violence, as well as child abuse. ● I inform my supervisor of the relevant facts that occur in my classroom in writing.
<p>Procedure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I provide a log in which I record the relevant facts in the classroom, relating to changes in behavior and the needs expressed by my students. ● I set up a mailbox in the classroom for students to express their ideas, their emotions or any action that they don't like or that hurts them. ● In the event of any probable situation of child sexual abuse, school harassment and/or violence, as well as child abuse, I immediately inform my authorities and do so in writing. ● If my immediate supervisor does not act, I report it to the appropriate authority. ● If I detect any irregular behavior in a fellow teacher or non-teacher who is suspected of child sexual abuse, I immediately inform the school principal in writing. ● I have training in human rights and related subjects, and I give my current training certificate to the school principal.

Risk Indicators

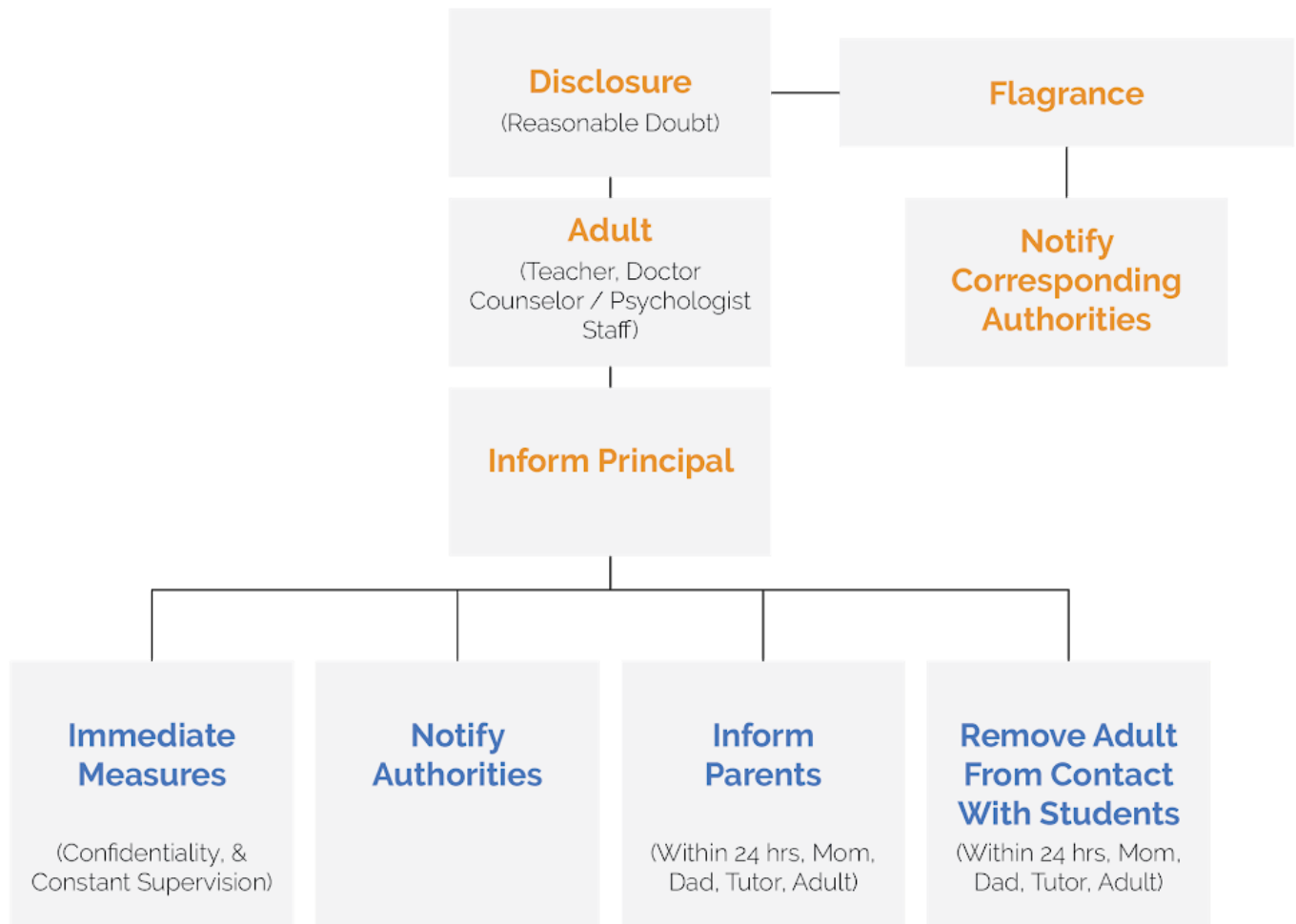
Risk indicators are characteristics or situations that suggest probable cases of sexual abuse, harassment and/or school violence, as well as child abuse, and constitute elements for informing the school's management authority and for initiating the identification of cases.

Some indicators may suggest the existence of one or more risk situations in which a learner may be found, as they are common indicators for more than one type of violence; below are common indicators for the 4 situations addressed in this Guide and protocol.

Common Risk Indicators, Child Sexual Abuse, School Harassment and/or Violence, as well as Child Abuse

- Fear of going to the bathroom.
- Noticeable changes in eating habits (excessive or decreased).
- Unexplained crying crisis.
- Extreme sensitivity.
- Difficulties in the integration with a group of equals.
- Refuse to go or stay in school.
- Urinary incontinence.
- Fecal incontinence
- A tendency to isolate oneself.
- Running away from home.
- Self-aggressive manifestations of various kinds (cutting, hitting, putting oneself in situations of physical risk, pulling out one's hair, scratching oneself to the point of bleeding and causing other serious injuries that compromise one's health).
- Constant physical discomfort.
- School desertion.
- Changes in dress or appearance.
- Difficulty concentrating on homework.
- Disinterest in activities related to learning and school.
- Avoidance of participation in games or group activities.
- Sudden refusal to participate in physical activities.
- A sudden drop in school performance.
- Sudden mood swings.
- A tendency to complain a lot, be demanding or isolated.
- Sleep disorders: drowsiness, falling asleep in class.
- Presence bruises, burns, bites, hair loss, fractures, lacerations, scrapes, visible wounds.

Guidelines For Action In Case Of Child Sexual Abuse And Child Abuse And Neglect.



1. ASFM Personnel shall immediately notify the principal of the school, the detection of a student (s) and/or pupil (s) with an indicator of risk of child sexual abuse or in case of suspicion of probable child sexual abuse.
2. The principal of the school is responsible for notifying, reporting or detecting an indicator of risk of child sexual abuse or suspected child sexual abuse, ensuring the

protection of the identity of the student (s) and/or student (s) who are victims, offended, witnesses, or are related in any way in the commission of a crime, in order to prevent their public identification.

3. The principal of the school upon detection, notification or denunciation of an indicator of risk of child sexual abuse or probable child sexual abuse to the detriment of a student, shall proceed immediately to the following:

A. If the report comes from the student or another student, the adult must listen to him or her and give him or her the confidence to express what he or she wants to say about the case.

B. Take immediate measures to protect the affected student(s), as well as other students, such as:

- Protect the psychosexual and emotional integrity of the affected student(s), their identity and the confidentiality of the situation, through the constant supervision of the activities carried out inside the school.
- If another student(s) and/or student(s) are identified as responsible(s), the psychosexual and emotional integrity of the student, as well as the protection of the student's identity and the confidentiality of the situation, is taken care of through the constant supervision of the activities carried out inside the school. In addition, the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student(s) involved as responsible are informed of the designation.
- Immediately notifies the Office of the Attorney General for the Protection of Children and Teenagers of Nuevo Leon and the State Office of School Safety of the Ministry of Education.
- If the accusation is against teachers or other staff: The teacher is immediately separated from the group and/or students; and in the case of the rest of the personnel, the teacher is separated from the group and from contact with students.

C. Meeting, within the next day, with the parents or guardians of the affected student(s), or involved student(s); in the event that the parent, guardian or a relative of the student is named as responsible, a trusted adult of the student will be called.

D. In case of flagrance of a probable child sexual abuse, report the situation immediately to the corresponding authorities and grant all help to allow them to carry out their investigation properly.

E. Implements the protective measures indicated to the school by the Ministry of Education and other competent authorities.

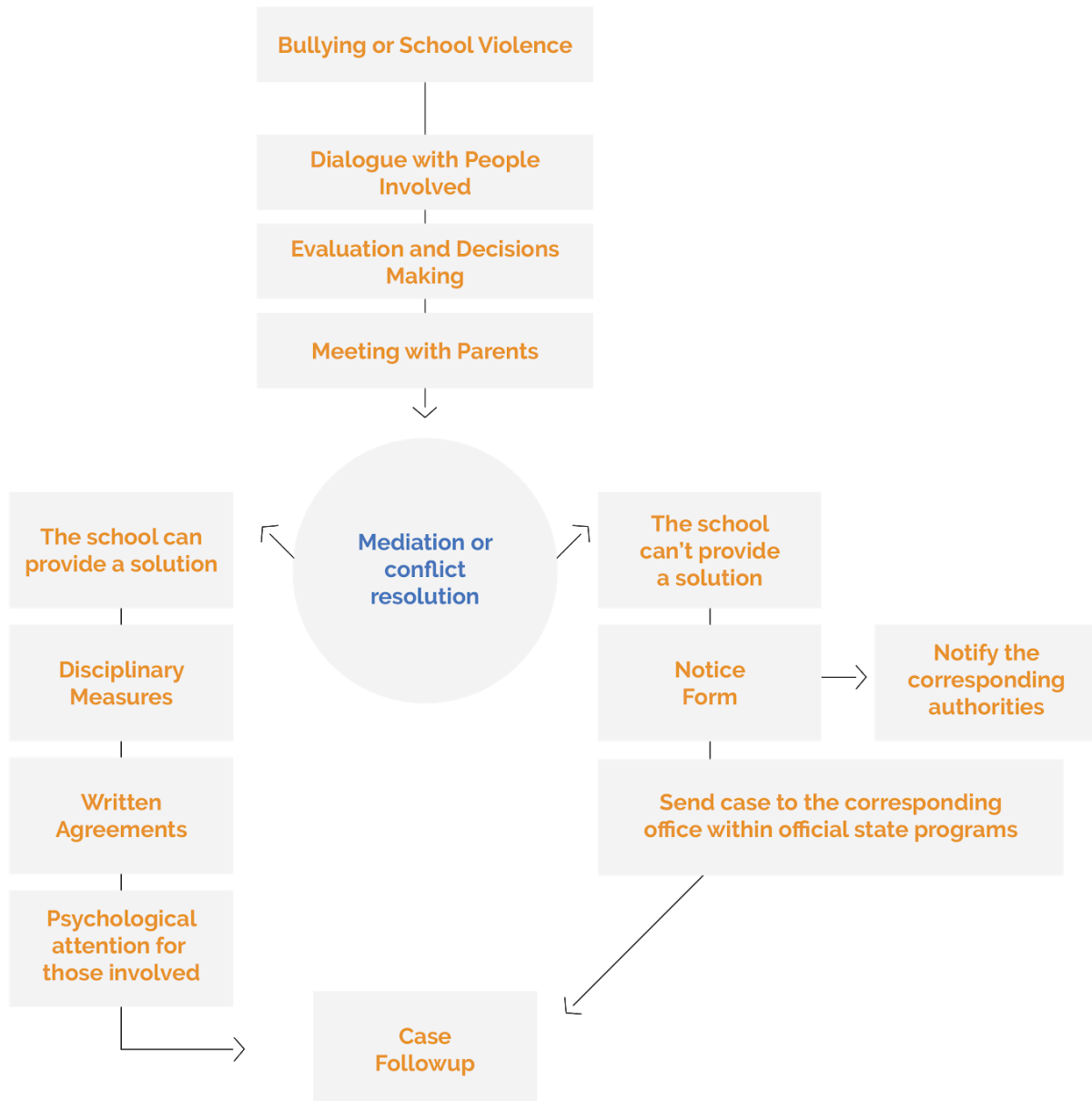
In case of any indicators of child sexual abuse or a case of probable child sexual abuse, all school personnel must follow this guidelines, and under no circumstances may the affected student(s) and/or student(s) be physically searched.

Guidelines for action in cases of bullying and/or school violence

Section Iv

Guidelines For Action

In Case Of Bullying And/Or School Violence Between Pupils



1. Any member of the school staff shall immediately inform the principal of any case of school harassment and/or violence or retaliation, of which he or she has been a witness or has news.
2. The principal will promptly investigate and log the report. If the principal determines that bullying or school violence or retaliation occurred, he or she shall:
 - I. Notify the appropriate authorities.
 - II. To take appropriate disciplinary action and apply appropriate disciplinary measures.
 - III. Inform the parents or guardians of the student(s) and/or student(s) generator and participants; and
 - IV. Communicate to the parents or guardians of the student(s) and/or receiving student(s) the measures that are taken to prevent or sanction any act of harassment or interschool violence or retaliation.
3. It is the responsibility of the school principal to guarantee the protection of the identity of the pupil(s) and/or pupil(s) who are recipients, generators, witnesses, or who are related in any way in order to avoid their public identification.
4. The school principal, teachers, and other staff shall ensure confidentiality and maintain the discretion of the case to protect the students who report and those involved in the school harassment or violence.
5. The principal of the school shall consider the following:
 - I. If the signal comes from the receiving student(s) and/or student(s) themselves or another student(s) and/or student(s), you must listen to him/her and give him/her the confidence to express what he/she wants to say about the case, following the recommendations of this guide indicated in article 36.
 - II. It dictates immediate measures to protect the receiving student(s) and/or student(s) and other students, among others: Take care of the physical and psychological integrity of the student(s) and/or student(s), as well as protect their identity and the confidentiality of the situation, through the constant supervision of activities carried out within the school campus, and offer psychological support to students, in the case of public schools through the Psycho-pedagogical Advisory Units or the Psychosocial Care Program.
 - III. Request the intervention of the School Brigade to carry out the investigation that contributes to the identification of the case (school harassment or violence), the magnitude of risk and the establishment of actions for its integral attention.
 - IV. In the case of a conflict that can be tackled through peaceful conflict resolution strategies, seek the solution of the case collaboratively between the students themselves and/or the student(s) involved, making agreements and commitments in writing.

- V. In the case of a situation that cannot be addressed through peaceful conflict resolution strategies, make written agreements and commitments with mothers, fathers or guardians to reach a collaborative solution to the case.
- VI. If necessary, refer those involved in specialized care, of which mothers, fathers or guardians must report on progress and present evidence of compliance. Informing that if the foregoing is not complied with, the Office of the Attorney General for the Protection of Children and Teenagers will be notified for its intervention.
- VII. To apply disciplinary measures in accordance with the School Discipline Regulations, seeking to encourage a change in the attitude of the student(s).
- VIII. In the case of a complaint, give a written response to the parent or guardian.
- IX. Implement a set of actions for comprehensive case management and establish follow-up measures for non-repetition, in accordance with the Act to Prevent, Address and Eradicate Bullying and School Violence.

Section III

General Recommendations In Child Sexual Abuse Situations

If there are indicators of child sexual abuse or probable child sexual abuse, all school personnel, without exception, shall implement the following recommendations to address students:

Recommended	Should Be Avoided
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Receive information immediately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ask questions/interviews.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Show that you understand and take seriously what the student says. ● "I'll always believe what you tell me." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Manifest alarm at the story.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● State that you trust them and what they tell you. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ask to show body parts.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assure him he was right to speak out. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Say "it's over," "forget the past," or "let's forget it."
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explain that they are not to blame for what happens to them and that the abuser cannot harm adults he may have threatened to harm. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Insist that the student report facts or answer questions that he or she does not want to answer.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Messages such as: "Older people are there to take care of children. Whenever an adult hurts a child, it's the adult's responsibility, because he knows it's wrong" or "If an adult is doing something that makes you uncomfortable, you should know that he is responsible for what's happening, not you (even if it's an acquaintance, whom you love very much, and even if he told you it's wrong if you say it). The transmission of these messages will alleviate the anguish that the student is feeling and will help him or her to feel protected and will generate a climate of confidence so that they can talk about what happened. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Question what the student is saying.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tell you that you are going to have a consultation with specialized personnel and that in this way you will be better protected and supported. Reiterate that you will be fine and that everything is for you to feel better. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ask closed-ended questions that can only be answered by "yes" or "no".
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Do not promise that secrecy will be kept secret from the authorities, saying that this is necessary to protect it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Induce and/or suggest answers.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Thank him for telling what happened and tell him that you have been very brave in doing it because that way he will protect himself and will be able to help other children not to have the same thing happen to them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verbalize hypotheses about what happened.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assure the person that nothing will happen to him/her and that he/she will be supported, expressing yourself with attention and affection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ask that you repeat what happened to other people repeatedly.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If it is a situation of child sexual abuse outside of the family context, mothers, fathers or guardians should be informed of what the student has said. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Manifest anger and blame them for what happens.

- If you are referring to a situation of child sexual abuse committed by a member of the family, it is suggested that you contact an adult referent who will indicate the student, make him or her feel good, protect him or her and help him or her.

- Prejudice. Approach parents in a punitive manner. Speak in an accusatory manner.

Section V

General Recommendations In Cases Of Bullying And/Or Violence At School

Article 36.- If there are indicators of school harassment or violence or cases of school harassment or violence, all school personnel, without exception, must implement the following recommendations to address the student(s) and/or student(s). In addition to giving knowledge to the school's management team:

Recommended	Should Be Avoided
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive the information and act immediately and prudently so as not to expose the student to his/her peers or put him/her at risk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To postpone the listening for another moment.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not ignore or minimize the incident, since minors will not be able to solve the case without the action of an adult. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insist that the student report facts or answer questions that he or she does not want to answer.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay calm and believe the student's story. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question what the student is telling.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To manifest that one trusts him and what he tells, making the receiver feel safe, making him see the interest and effort to support him. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make value judgments about the parents, himself or his aggressor.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In order to gather all the factual information, first listen without interrupting everything that the student wants to express and then organize the questions, avoiding those that blame him. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ask closed-ended questions that can only be answered by "yes" or "no".
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Avoid the duplication of stories and record in quotation marks and verbatim their sayings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Induce and/or suggest answers.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tell you that you are going to have a consultation with specialized personnel and that in this way you will be better protected and supported. Reiterate that you will be fine and that everything is for you to feel better. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verbalize hypotheses about what happened.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Do not promise that the secret will be kept secret from the authorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ask to repeat what happened to other people repeatedly.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure that nothing will happen to him/her and that him/her will be supported, expressing yourself with attention and affection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Perform actions that involve you without explaining what they are about.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Try to organize a group of people in solidarity (pupils, mothers or fathers) who accompany the recipient of bullying and/or school violence, mainly at times of greatest risk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prejudice, approach parents in a punitive manner and/or speak in an accusatory manner.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evidence to peers of the receiver or generator of school harassment and/or violence.

In addition to the above recommendations, each school must guarantee the accessibility of the report by having a complaint box available to students, parents and/or guardians, as well as the availability of receiving complaints at all times at the school.

A complete version can be accessed here in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).