

## What is Bullying?

"Harassment, intimidation, or bullying means a gesture, an electronic communication, or a written, verbal, physical, or sexual act that is reasonably perceived to have the effect of harming a student physically or emotionally or damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of personal harm or property damage; or insulting or demeaning a student or group of students causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school."

~ As defined by the South Carolina Safe Schools Climate Act, Section 59-63-120

"Unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time."

~ As defined by stopbullying.gov

Horry County Schools is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for students and staff members, and part of that is creating a climate where bullying is neither accepted nor tolerated. We believe that a safe and supportive school environment can help prevent bullying behaviors. We must clearly communicate expectations for student behavior as it relates to bullying, and then we must appropriately deal with those who violate those expectations. Likewise, we must provide appropriate support to those who are victims of bullying.

Our Bully Prevention online resources will help you understand the roles and responsibilities of the District and its schools, with helpful resources for parents and students. The South Carolina Safe School Climate Act requires public schools to take steps to prevent school harassment, intimidation, or bullying. The Act requires each district to adopt prevention policies and provide training for all persons who work in public schools.

## How Do I Report Bullying?

Anyone can report bullying. Students who experience bullying, or those who observe bullying, are encouraged to tell an adult who can help. Parents are encouraged to contact the school principal or assistant principal if they have concerns that their child, or another child, has been subjected to bullying in any form.

Horry County Schools takes bullying very seriously and will investigate all reports thoroughly. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken if an investigation determines that a student, or group of students, have engaged in bullying, regardless of the tactics used or the time of day the incident occurred. Additionally, the District will involve local law enforcement, as needed, to assist with the investigation and to determine if a crime has occurred.

If parents continue to have concerns after making a report at the school level and after the school has

been afforded time to conduct an investigation, a written complaint may be submitted to Horry County Schools' Executive Director of Student Affairs for further review at: **NoBullies@HorryCountySchools.net**

Anonymous reports can be made at any time by calling the School Crime Tip Line at: **(843) 915-SROS (7767)** or by accessing the reporting tools on the HCS website or mobile app.

If parents feel they are not getting a prompt response to their concerns from the Office of Student Affairs, they may contact the Office of the Ombudsmen at the South Carolina Department of Education for assistance in resolving the concerns. The SCDE's ombudsman does not take sides in the investigation, but rather assists with communication regarding the district's adherence to defined policies and appeal procedures.

**SPEAK OUT  
AGAINST BULLYING!**

**UNITED  
AGAINST BULLIES  
& VIOLENCE!**

Horry County Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, immigrant status, English-speaking status, or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal or S.C. law in its programs or activities. For questions regarding the nondiscrimination policies call 843-488-6700, or write Horry County Schools, 335 Four Mile Rd., Conway, SC 29526.

**HCS**  
Horry County Schools

**Bully Prevention  
& Reporting**

**Visit: [horrycountyschools.net/stopbullying](http://horrycountyschools.net/stopbullying)**