

BULLYING

Celina ISD strives to have an educational environment that is supportive of all children, where treating each other with respect and kindness is valued. For this to happen, we all have to work together: students, parents, and school staff members. Misconduct that fits the definition of bullying, harassment, or hazing or any student found to engage in, encourage, aid or assist in bullying, harassment, or hazing or had knowledge of and failed to report a bullying, harassment, or hazing incident will be subject to discipline as defined in our Celina ISD.

What is bullying?

Bullying occurs when a student or group of students engages in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic methods, or physical conduct against another student on school property, at a school-sponsored or a school-related activity, or in a district-operated vehicle, and the behavior:

- Results in harm to the student or the student's property,
- Places a student in reasonable fear of physical harm or of damage to the student's property, or
- Is so severe, persistent, and pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment.

This conduct is considered bullying if it exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator(s) and the student victim and if it interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of the school. Bullying is prohibited by the district and could include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name-calling, rumor-spreading, or ostracism. [Click here](#) for a video that depicts bullying.

What is hazing?

Hazing is harassment, humiliation, and/or embarrassment of other students, which may or may not include some physical abuse.

What is harassment?

Harassment means threatening to cause harm or bodily injury to another student, or maliciously taking any action that substantially harms another student's physical or emotional health or safety which might include physical confinement or restraint.

Warning Signs for Parents

Possible warning signs that a student is being bullied:

- Comes home with torn, damaged, or missing pieces of clothing, books, or other belongings
- Has unexplained cuts, bruises, and scratches
- Has few, if any friends, with whom he or she spends time
- Seems afraid of going to school, walking to and from school, riding the school bus, or taking part in organized activities with peers
- Takes a long, “illogical” route when walking to or from school
- Has lost interest in school work or suddenly begins to do poorly in school
- Appears sad, moody, teary, or depressed when he or she comes home
- Complains frequently of headaches, stomachaches, or other physical ailments
- Has trouble sleeping or has frequent bad dreams
- Experiences a loss of appetite
- Appears anxious and suffers from low self-esteem

IF YOUR CHILD IS BEING BULLIED:

1. Focus on your child. Be supportive and gather information about the bullying.

- Don't blame the child who is being bullied.
- Listen carefully to what your child tells you about the bullying.
- Have your child tell you who was involved and when and where each episode happened.
- Learn as much as you can about the bullying tactics used.
- Can he or she name other children or adults who may have witnessed the bullying?
- Empathize with your child and tell them that you are glad they had the courage to tell you about it.
- Ask your child what he or she thinks can be done to help.
- If you disagree with how your child handled the bullying situation, don't criticize him or her.
- Do not encourage physical retaliation (“Just hit them back”) as a solution. Hitting another student is not likely to end the problem and could result in your child having consequences.
- Check your emotions. A parent's protective instinct is very strong. Although it is difficult, a parent is wise to step back and consider the next steps carefully.

2. Contact your child's teacher or school administrator

- Parents are often reluctant to report bullying to school officials, but bullying may not stop without the help of adults.
- Keep your emotions in check. Give factual information about your child's experience of being bullied including who, what, when, where, and how.
- Emphasize that you want to work with the school staff to find a solution
- Do not contact the parents of the students(s) who bullied your child. This is usually a parent's first response but sometimes it makes matters worse.

- Expect the bullying to stop. Talk regularly with your child and with school staff. If the bullying persists, contact school authorities again.

3. Help your child become more resilient to bullying.

- Help to develop talents or positive attributes of your child. Doing so may help your child be more confident among peers
- Encourage your child to make contact with friendly students in his or her class.
- Help your child meet new friends outside of the school environment. A new environment can provide a “fresh start” for a child who has been bullied repeatedly.
- Teach your child safety strategies.
- How to seek help from an adult when feeling threatened by a bully
- Talk about whom he or she should go to for help
- Role play what to say
- Assure your child that reporting bullying is not the same as tattling
- Ask yourself if your child is being bullied because of a learning difficulty or lack of social skills. If your child is hyperactive, impulsive, or overly talkative, the child who bullies may be reacting out of annoyance. This doesn't make the bullying right, but it may help to explain why your child is being bullied. If your child easily irritates people, seek help from a counselor so that your child can better learn the informal social rules of his or her peer group.
- Home is where the heart is. Make sure your child has a safe and loving home environment where he or she can take shelter, physically and emotionally.
- Always maintain open lines of communication with your child.