

Building a Culture of Belonging

Our Approach to Bullying Prevention in the Middle School



Introduction: What is Bullying? How do we understand bullying?

What's Your Bullying Story?

Take a minute to quietly reflect on your own experiences with bullying.



As you enter Scan the QR
code and answer





Bullying Myth Buster



Why myths matter

- Misconceptions can lead us to minimize a situation, overreact in a way that escalates it, or miss the warning signs that a child is struggling.
- When adults share the same language, we can respond faster, more calmly, and in ways that actually protect kids and build skills.



“Social aggression is common in middle school: exclusion, rumors, gossip, group chats.”



True!

In middle school, bullying is often social, not physical. Relational and online harm can be just as damaging and is easier to miss.

**“A single
rude
comment is
automatically
bullying.”**



False!

A single rude comment is NOT bullying, it can still be damaging and needs addressing.





“Parents can make situations worse by messaging other kids or parents directly.”



True!

Messaging other kids directly can backfire: it escalates drama, undermines student skill building, raises safety risks, complicates follow up, and crosses boundaries.

“A student can be involved in multiple roles: target in one setting, aggressor in another.”



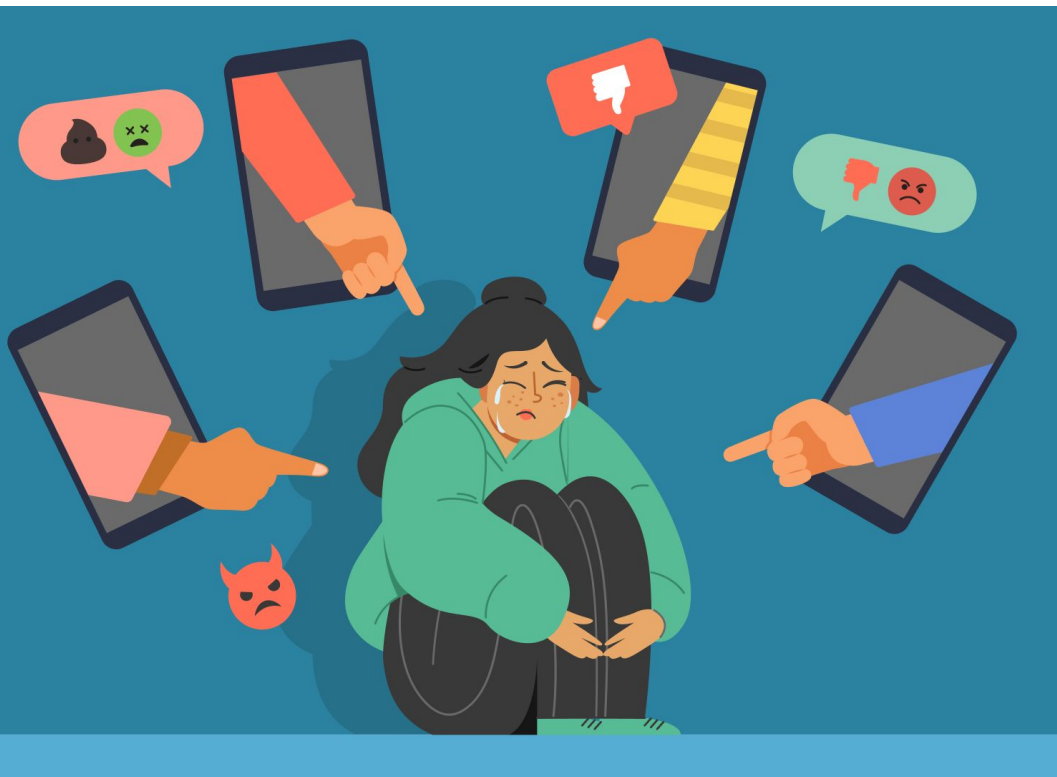
True!

Middle school roles can shift. A student may be targeted in one group and hurt others in another, often to fit in or regain control.





**“Most
cyberbullying is
anonymous.”**



False!

Cyberbullying is rarely random or truly anonymous. It usually involves peers your child knows and often mirrors what is already happening at school.



Bullying Definition



Bullying is an **ongoing** and **deliberate** misuse of **power** in relationships through **repeated** verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological **harm**.
(NCAB, 2018)

Bullying involves:

- **Intentional behavior:** Harmful behavior, not accidental; continues even when unwelcome.
- **Repetitive behavior:** Occurs repeatedly over time.
- **Imbalance of power:** One party uses physical, social, verbal, or other forms of power over another.
- **Bystanders:** Individuals who witness or participate passively or actively.



Bullying is NOT



**Take Care
of Others**

Behaviors Not Classified as Bullying: These behaviors are addressed seriously and distinguished from bullying.

- **Mutual Conflict:** Disagreement between students without a power imbalance. If unresolved, and it becomes targeted, it may escalate into bullying.
- **Social Rejection, Dislike, or One-Off Incidents of Unkindness:** Isolated unkindness or exclusion, not repeated or targeted. Still unacceptable and addressed through discipline processes.
- **Discrimination or Harassment:** Unfair treatment based on identity. Always taken seriously and addressed under the ICS policy.

What does the Middle School do to prevent bullying?

THE PROBLEM SOLVING MODEL: BUILDING RESILIENCE

Small Problem:



I can solve it!

Medium Problem:



I can try to solve it. If the problem is still there, I will ask an adult for help

Big Problem:



someone may be hurt or in danger, I need adult help right away.



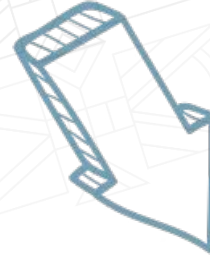
Inappropriate Behavior



Rude



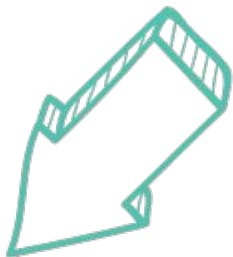
Mean



Bullying



Inappropriate Behavior



- **Unintentional** action that hurts another person's feelings or body
- Bad manners / Being impolite
- Action is **NOT** repeated and not targeted at anyone in particular

Small problem: child owned

Small Problem:



I can solve it!

Rude

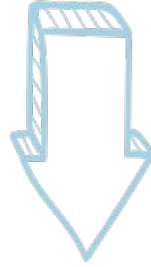
What might RUDE behavior look like?

The hallway is crowded as kids are getting to their first block. Johnny is trying to get up the stairs and is growing increasingly frustrated that he can't get through the crowd. He uses his hands to push his way through the crowd and other kids fumble back.



Inappropriate Behavior

- An **intentional** comment or action that hurts another person's feelings or body.
- Action is not repetitive or ongoing
- Can be verbal or physical



Mean

Medium problem:
shared problem

Medium Problem:



I can try to solve it. If the problem is still there, I will ask an adult for help

What might MEAN behavior look like?

The students are sitting at the cafeteria for lunch. Jane's best friend is absent and has no one to sit with. Jane sees an open seat next to Sally. Jane asks Sally if **she** can join their group. Sally replies, "No, you aren't part of our group," smirking before turning her back on Jane and continues her conversation.

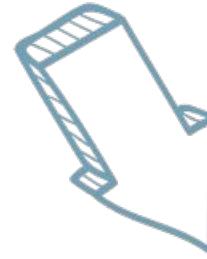


Inappropriate Behavior

Bullying is an **ongoing** and **deliberate** misuse of **power** in relationships through **repeated** verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological **harm**.

(NCAB)

Big problem: adult owned problem



Bullying Behavior

What might BULLYING behavior look like?

A Grade 7 student has started calling Chloe “Trash Lunch” because of the traditional food she brings. He posts it in their class group chat and says it out loud in the hallway and at lunch almost every day this week. A few other students have begun repeating it and sharing photos of her lunch with laughing emojis. Chloe has started skipping lunch, asking to eat in the bathroom or nurse’s office, and she is begging to stay home because she feels humiliated and unsafe at school.



Big Problem:



someone may be hurt or in danger, I need adult help right away.

How do we respond to bullying in the Middle School?

How We Take Care of Each Other

Social Emotional Learning (Curriculum, Pulse, Advisory, Group forums)

Teaches students the skills to recognize, refuse, and report harm.

Speak Up & Belonging

Guides how students and adults act in the moment:

Interrupt • Question • Educate • Echo

ICS Response Process

Shows what happens after we step in — from quick support to full team involvement.

Restorative Practices

Make sure harm is repaired and relationships are rebuilt.

Our Commitment

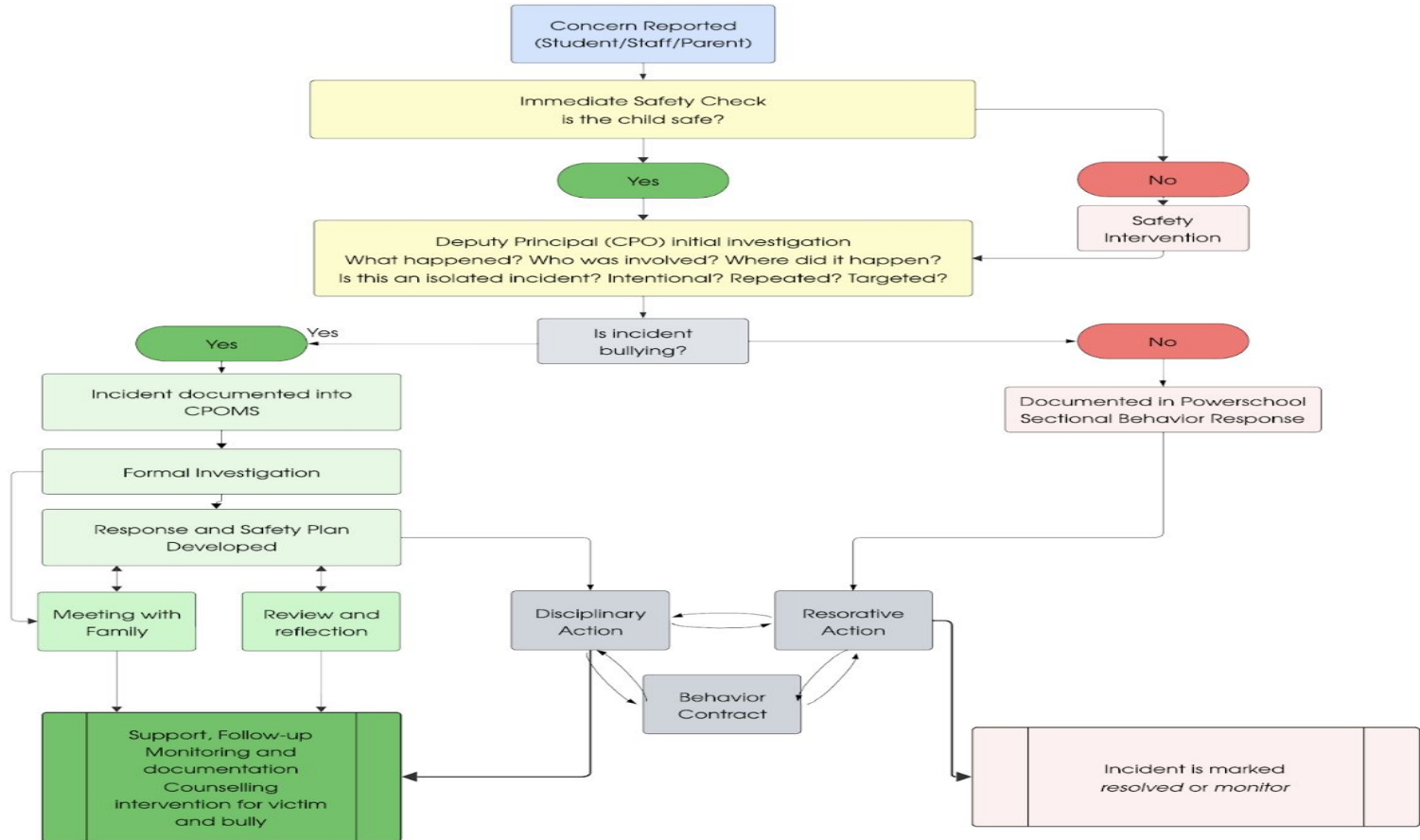
- You will be supported when you step in
- Students will be checked on after harm
- We will look for patterns and improve together

This is the ICS Way



**Take Care
of Others**

APPENDIX: Bullying Response Flow Chart





Q&A

