

# What can Schools do About Bullying?

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Bullying behaviour is very common and can be present at any school. Bullying can become lessened when students and staff change the environment that it takes place.

Some important steps to changing the school environment are:

## Step 1: Commitment from Staff



When changes are made to a school, the biggest indicator of success is the keenness from the school staff. The school staff are role models. They should be educated about and committed to the school's plans.

As a beginning step, have staff look at how they treat others.

## Step 2: School Climate Committee



The School Climate Committee (SCC) are people in the school who are enthusiastic about making their school environment safe and respectful. They may represent different members of the school community. For example: students, parents, teachers of various grades, social worker, principal etc. The SCC will work together to develop the school plan.

Maintaining interest and enthusiasm over time will be a challenge. Consider adding new members to renew the original goal.

## Step 3: Involve Families



Families are a key partner to changing the environment in which bullying takes place.

When families:

- model conflict resolution,
  - supervise play,
  - provide consequence for poor behaviours,
  - keep in touch with school, and
  - are educated and respond to bullying
- ... there are fewer incidents of bullying at home and at school.

## Step 4: Involve Students



There are many ways students can be involved in changing their school climate. For example:

- involved in the SCC or the school statement
- older students help younger students resolve conflicts
- organize playground games
- and many other activities

## Step 5: School Statement



A school statement represents what the school values. Many schools will try to incorporate the values of:

- Justice
- Respect
- Equity
- Inclusiveness
- Compassion

Students, staff and families should take part in creating their school statement about a safe and respectful school.

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## Step 6: Supervision plan



Bullying can take place anywhere. For example: playground, lunchroom, hallways, wash rooms, or the school bus.

Adults that supervise need to know:

- where bullying takes place,
- what bullying looks like and
- what actions to take

## Step 8: Response Plan to Bullying



Schools need clear guidelines and procedures when bullying takes place. They should include:

- ways to respond to and track bullying
- ways to support students who are bullied
- ways to respond to students who bully
- ways to respond to students who see bullying
- ways to plan restorative interventions

All school staff, parents and students should be educated about how bullying will be responded to.

## Step 7: Enhancing the School's Climate



Bullying behaviour can be lessened when schools:

- include programs that support supervision
- teach and recognize pro-social behaviours

Bullying is a learned behaviour. Therefore, it is important that more positive behaviours are taught and reinforced.

Some examples of activities that could enhance your school climate:

- Class room meetings
- Leadership clubs
- Organized games on the playground
- Staggered recess times
- Social skill building programs, etc.

## Step 9: Promoting and Implementing the School Plan



The school plan is a combination of the **School Statement**, the **Supervision Plan** and the **Response Plan**. Once those key plans are developed you can:

- Inform staff and students,
- Inform parents,
- Launch the plan at a school assembly
- Live the school plan

## Step 10: Monitor and Reassess



It is important to ensure the school plan remains relevant and effective over time. Think about ways to monitor the success of the plan. As well, a decision should be made for when and how the school plan will be reassessed.



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