

Burton Street School

Bullying and Cyberbullying Information for Burton Street Parents

Definition of Bullying: Bullying is commonly understood as behavior that: (a) is intended to cause mental distress and or physical harm, (b) exists in a relationship in which there is an imbalance of power and strength, and (c) is repeated over time.

Definition of Cyberbullying: Cyberbullying is when a student is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another student using electronic communication media. Such media includes, but is not limited to, e-mail messages, text messages, social networking sites, internet based video sites and posting of blogs.

Burton Street administration, faculty and staff believe it is important:

- To nurture pro-social skills in students that include conflict resolution, appreciation for diversity, communication skills and cooperation with others.
- To utilize our character education curriculum by putting the culture of caring into action.
- To work effectively with families involved in a bullying situation.
- To support a culture of respect in our school community.
- To follow our school Code of Conduct when dealing with bullying issues.

To support these beliefs, Burton Street provides the following:

- Grade Level Presentations on Bullying- Words Hurt
 - K-2: Respecting the Boundaries of Others
 - 3-4: Accepting Individual Differences and Being Respectful to Others
- Mediation
- Counseling Interventions

Bullying Prevention Tips for Parents:

Parents play a central role in preventing bullying and stopping it when it happens:

- Teach your child to solve problems without using violence and praise them when they do.

- Help give your child self-confidence to stand up for what they believe in.
- Ask your child about their day and listen to them when they talk about school, social events, their classmates, and any problems they have.
- Take bullying seriously. Many kids are embarrassed to say they have been bullied.
- If you see bullying, stop it right away, even if your child is the one doing the bullying.
- Encourage your child to help others who need it.
- Children will model the behavior of their parents and family environment. Please consider this in your daily interactions with your child/children as well as what they are exposed to in the media (TV, music, movies, etc).

Recognize the signs of a child who may be bullied:

- Many school absences
- Anxiety about attending school
- Withdrawal from peers and social activities
- Unusual sadness
- Frequent visits to the school nurse
- Unexplained cuts or bruises
- Fear of walking home/riding the school bus
- A decline in academic performance or motivation

Is my child a bully?

This is a difficult question for any parent to consider. The following signs may indicate your child has bullied others.

- Talks about other children in a negative way (wimp, loser, stupid).
- Talks as though other children deserves what happens to them (he asked for it).
- Doesn't seem to care about others feelings.
- Behaves in a rough way towards others.
- Shows defiance (You can't tell me what to do!).
- Is easily frustrated when he/she doesn't get their own way.
- Is accused of bullying.
- Gets in trouble at school or elsewhere for fighting or saying mean things.

If you are told by someone at school that your child is bullying others, it is important that you take this seriously and make sure your child gets help if necessary. Children who frequently bully at school will as an adult often bully others in their dating, family and work relationships.

Cyberbullying Tips for Parents:

- Keep the computer in a common area of the house.
- Ask your child to tell you immediately about any uncomfortable online experiences, with assurances that you will not be angry if he/she confides in you.

- Consider the age of your child before allowing them on social networking sites.
- Consider filtering and monitoring software.
- Create a written internet safety plan with your child. Set rules for internet and e-mail use. Post these rules by your computer.
- Save or print inappropriate messages and pictures that your child has received.
- Contact your internet service provider and file a complaint if your child receives messages or images of concern.
- Talk frequently with your child. Discuss their online friends just as you talk about their other friends.

Resources for Parents:

netsmartz.org: A kid friendly online workshop hosted by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

ncpc.org: The National Crime Prevention Council offers great information on many related topics including bullying and cyberbullying.

Isafe.org: Internet safety education endorsed by the US Congress.

wiredsafety.org: Free resource focusing on internet safety, help and education for internet users of all ages.

getnetwise.org: A public service site by internet industry corporations and public interest organizations.

thinkquest.org: A site for elementary students, by students, on bullying.

Books for Burton Street School Students on the topic of Bullying:

Non Fiction Titles:

Bye-Bye Bully: A Kid's Guide for Dealing with Bullies by J.S. Jackson

Fiction Titles:

King of the Playground by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor

My Secret Bully by Trudy Ludwig

Thank you, Mr. Falker by Patricia Polacco

The Hundred Dresses by Eleanor Estes