



# OCTOBER IS NATIONAL BULLYING PREVENTION MONTH

Bullying is widespread in the United States. It can cause harm to a student's social and emotional well-being and be a significant barrier to learning. Bullying can result in physical injury, social and emotional distress, self-harm, and even death. It also increases the risk for depression, anxiety, sleep difficulties, lower academic achievement, and dropping out of school.

Bullying, including cyberbullying (bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication), is defined as any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

- Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property.
- Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health.
- Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance.
- Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying.

Illinois School Code, 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7 requires that all public schools, non-sectarian nonpublic schools, and charter schools are to create and implement policies concerning bullying prevention.

**1 in 5** high school students report being **bullied** at school in the last year.



More than **1 in 6** high school students report being **cyberbullied** in the last year.



# What can you do to prevent bullying?

## What can **schools** do?

- ✓ Reduce conditions that contribute to bullying at school (e.g., unsupervised areas).
- ✓ Establish a positive school culture and climate and engage parents and youth.
- ✓ Build on the foundation of schoolwide approaches in implementing classroom programs.
- ✓ Intervene to modify the behavior of bullies by directly addressing motivational and developmental concerns related to individuals who bully and those who support bullying.
- ✓ Respond immediately to any problems experienced by those who are bullied and those who witness bullying.

## What can **parents/guardians** do?

- ✓ Support the schools' messages about bullying at home.
- ✓ Contribute to a positive school climate through the parent-teacher association, volunteering, and school improvement events.
- ✓ Recognize the warning signs of bullying.
- ✓ Keep lines of communication open and talk to your child about bullying.
- ✓ If you suspect your child is being bullied, work with your child and the school to find peaceful solutions.
- ✓ If you have worked with your child and the school and need further assistance, contact your school superintendent, local school board, or ISBE for more resources.

## What can **students** do?

- ✓ Treat everyone with respect.
- ✓ Protect yourself.
- ✓ Stand up for others.
- ✓ Get involved.
- ✓ Talk to someone you trust (teacher, counselor, administrator, parent/guardian, friend).

**Additional resources:**  
[www.isbe.net/Pages/Bullying-Prevention.aspx](http://www.isbe.net/Pages/Bullying-Prevention.aspx)  
[Stopbullying.gov](http://Stopbullying.gov)  
[Welcomingschools.org](http://Welcomingschools.org)