



INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

Understanding and Reporting Bullying

**Prevention & Intervention
in Chicago Public Schools**



Objectives

Attending community members will:

1

Understand the CPS bullying policy, the bullying definition, and required school intervention steps

2

Receive information and resources for social-emotional learning and prevention education to prevent bullying behaviors

Conflict and Aggression...

- ...are a normal part of normal development and show up differently by age
- ...will continue to occur throughout our lives, but can oftentimes be prevented
- ...show up in different forms and can hurt in different ways
- ...present a challenging opportunity to understand feelings, needs, and teach new skills
- ...can cause pain and harm to others and ourselves
- ...are often modeled in our community and repeated in school

...are the responsibility of the community and its the job of adults to help facilitate learning and keep children safe

Childhood Social & Emotional Development

All children are...

- Learning to love themselves and others
- Exploring the boundaries between themselves and their needs, wants, and those of other people
- Making sense of differences and the way needs are often met unevenly in our community
- Forming a sense of “right” and “wrong”
- Developing a sense of control, including their own assertiveness and aggression when they face challenges

All Harmful Conflict and Aggression is Understood and Addressed

Stop harmful behaviors through effective redirection

Assess to understand, engage reflection, and reinforce safe boundaries

Communication and awareness

Teaching skills and intervention

- Social, emotional lessons, and restorative interventions
- Peer support and bystander intervention
- Behavioral/mental health support plans and interventions
- Special education supports and resources
- Safety Plan to support boundaries and communication

The “Why” Behind the Bullying Framework

Some conflict and aggression can be “bullying”, which has roots in established power imbalances and repeated, intention to create harm to others:



Results in increased levels of harm to people targeted or involved



Complex root causes and additional steps and safety consideration required for intervention



Conflict mediation is not possible until person who is engaging in aggressions is able to engage in a healthy process and person impacted feels safe

CPS Policy: Bullying Definition

CPS' definition is responsive to Illinois School Code (105 ILCS 5/27-23.7) and aligned with national and international anti-bullying frameworks

Additional definitions found in Addressing Bullying & Biased Based Harm Policy in the **Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook**

Any physical or verbal act, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students, and meets ALL of the following criterion:

1. Imbalance of power
2. Severe or pervasive
3. Intent was to cause harm
4. Behavior has detrimental effects on targeted student

Defining Bullying



Imbalance of Power, Intent, and Repetition

Imbalance of Power
Is based on real or perceived factors clearly operating in the aggressions with the people involved

Age differences, disability, race/ethnicity, sex or gender, social-economic or political capital

Intent

- Students understand their behavior is going to inflict harm and does it for that purpose
- Is not an accident, a manifestation of a disability or developmental age, nor a defense against a threat

Repetition by the Same Parties

- The same person or group repeats the behavior and/or there is evidence that people intentionally coordinate to target the same person

Reporting Bullying for Students and Parents



If you believe your child has been bullied, listen and focus on your child and show you want to help. In a gentle manner, ask your child for details. Ask when the bullying happened, exactly what was said and done, in what order, and if anyone else (adult or child) was present.

Notify the school principal as quickly as possible. Do not contact the person targeting your child. You may also report bullying to any CPS employee in person, or by call or email:

**24/7 CPS Student
Safety Center Hotline:
(773) 553-3335**

BullyingReport@cps.edu

Discrimination Behaviors



If the bullying behavior includes discrimination of any kind this should be reported to the school. This will be also be reported to the **CPS Office of Student Protections and Title IX** for additional investigation and intervention steps.

Families can report all discrimination directly to the the Office of Student Protections and Title IX:

(773) 535-4400

OSP@cps.edu

All discrimination is prohibited and parents and caregivers can find more information about the **Comprehensive Non-Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** policy at the **[CPS Office of Student Protections and Title IX website](#)**.

Bullying Policy Requirements for CPS Schools



Immediate Awareness:

Schools must notify of parents of all students involved within 1 day



Investigation:

Involving student and adult interviews, observations, media evidence that helps **understand and determine the behavior**

- Within 10 days (or longer if circumstances require)
- Safety planning, interim supportive measures throughout investigation based on student needs

Bullying Policy Requirements for CPS Schools



Outcome Determination:

Parent letters must be sent to all parents, including the opportunity to appeal the school's determination

- Parents may appeal the school's determination by calling **(773) 553-2249** or emailing **studentdiscipline@cps.edu** within 15 calendar days of notification of the original decision



Student Accountability:

For students engaged in bullying behaviors, in accordance with the CPS Student Code of Conduct policy, found in the [Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook](#)

School Intervention Steps

In addition to the awareness raising, planning, and investigation steps, the school will engage the following next steps:

- Safety Plans for students, increased awareness/supervision in classes, common areas
- Ongoing parent communication and collaboration for involved students
- School-Wide Prevention and Education: Ongoing social-emotional skill-building in classrooms and school-wide bullying awareness campaigns
- Behavioral health intervention and skill-building for individuals and groups
Individual goals, skill-building lessons, interventions or group from teachers, counselors, social workers, speech/OT, community partners, outside referrals, etc
- Restorative conversations or peace circles when needed and appropriate
- Additional teacher support and responsive lesson plans

Social & Emotional Learning Goals & Supports

How do we teach SEL?

Explicit instruction

- Second Step lessons are taught PreK-8
- Cohesion with IB Learner Profiles
- Second Step Bullying Prevention Units

Integration

- SEL skills development integration into academic content

Restorative Practices in and out of the classroom

Targeted and Intensive Social-Emotional Supports



The Second Step PreK-8

PreK	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8
Second Step® Early Learning	Second Step® Elementary Digital Program	Second Step® Middle School
Unit 1: Skills for Learning Unit 2: Empathy Unit 3: Emotion Management Unit 4: Friendship Skills & Management Unit 5: Transitioning to Kindergarten	Unit 1: Growth Mindset & Goal Setting Unit 2: Emotion Management Unit 3: Empathy & Kindness Unit 4: Problem-Solving Bullying Prevention Unit Supplement	Unit 1: Mindsets & Goals Unit 2: Recognizing Bullying & Harassment Unit 3: Thoughts, Emotions, & Decisions Unit 4: Managing Relationships & Social Conflict

Restorative Practices

What is Restorative Justice?

Restorative Justice is a way of building positive, meaningful relationships and community that strengthen how we take care of ourselves and one another.

It's a mindset that views conflict as an opportunity for growth and learning and a set of practices that intentionally support people through healing.



CPS RP
Guide & Toolkit



CPS RP
Parent Toolkit



Talking Circles At Home and Parenting
Restoratively By J. Viets
@TransformHarm.org

- ★ **Welcoming environments that anticipate needs**
- ★ **Shared community agreements**
- ★ **Restorative Conversations**
- ★ **Peer Conferencing (Student-led RP)**
- ★ **Community circles**
- ★ **Peace Circles**
- ★ **Restorative Reconnections**

Common Misperceptions

Punitive responses are the best way to get bullying to stop	False: While exclusionary discipline may be used in cases of bullying to ensure safety of students, responses that include teaching, awareness, and skill-building will stop bullying behavior from happening in the future
All harmful conflict and aggressive behavior is “bullying”	False: Many aggressive, harmful behaviors occur, but are not bullying. The overuse of the “bullying” term to describe non-bullying aggression can obscure specific needs and can delay problem-solving efforts
Only a bullying determination will cause the school to take real action	False: Schools must take action to investigate and intervene in any conflict or harm occurring
If the school does not find bullying, it communicates to students and parents/ caregivers that the harm did not happen	False: Harm can occur in conflicts that are not bullying, so the school’s steps to intervene should include transparency for parents about how harm occurred and will be addressed, regardless of a bullying determination

Common Misperceptions



Note

Many behaviors of concern are other Student Code of Conduct behaviors even if they are not found to be bullying



Important Consideration

School cannot provide all details of their investigation, including information about other student needs, frustrating parents/caregivers who want more information

Important Acknowledgements

The following challenges and limitations should be acknowledged and considered:

Schools cannot share confidential information from students or transcripts of the bullying investigation, including the names of all of the students they interviewed (FERPA)

Schools cannot “force” friendship, deeper peer relationships, or friend-group inclusion

- Student may not actively exclude peers' participation in school-based activities nor can they intimidate and harass one another
- Students have the freedom to be friends with other students and may decide not to get closer to other students outside of school activities
- Schools can assist parents with SEL needs related to peer relationships outside of school, but there are limitations to managing relationships and intervening if harassment or bullying are not present

STOP BULLYING



Chicago Public Schools

Parent and Caregiver Social-Emotional Learning Resources

Early Years: At-Home Social Skill Development Tips	• <u>Building Social and Emotional Skills at Home, NAEYC</u> • <u>Second Step Elementary Grades Book list</u>
Adolescent Connection and Skill-Building Parent Resources	• <u>Committee for Children Parent Teen Connect Resources (ParenTeen Connect)</u>
Restorative Practices at Home	• <u>RP Parent Toolkit</u>, CPS and <u>Talking Circles at Home</u>

Helpful Contacts & Resources

<u>CPS Student Code of Conduct and Addressing Bullying and Bias-Based Behavior Policy</u>	CPS Office of Social & Emotional Learning (bullying appeals) (773) 553-2249 studentdiscipline@cps.edu
CPS Student Safety Center (24/7 Hotline) (773) 553-3335 bullyingreport@cps.edu	National Suicide Prevention Lifeline hotline 1-800-273-8255 (EN) 1-888-628-9454 (SP)
CPS Parent Support Centers (773) 553-3772	Stop Bullying: stopbullying.gov It Gets Better Project: itgetsbetter.org