

Creating an Anti-Bullying Plan

What components are needed for a plan?

- A code of conduct, effectively communicated to all students.
- Teaching Catholic social teachings regarding the dignity of each person while instilling respect for all people.
- Making the school or parish program a “telling” environment. Any child who is bullied by another child or adult, or who sees another child being bullied, should be urged to report the incident to designated people.
- Coaching on what to do when being bullied and how to describe the incidents to adults.
- Experts from outside for staff training and planning.
- Social skills instruction.
- Students exhibiting bullying behavior need to be shown other ways to use their energy.
- A common vocabulary related to bullying, harassment and positive interpersonal relations.
- Parents are acquainted with the program’s policies and practices.

www.ncea.org, 2010

Sample Plan

<p style="text-align: center;">Prevention Plan for _____</p> <p>Ultimately, strategies to prevent bullying will only be effective when placed within the context of a culture in which respect for others is consistently taught and demonstrated across all facets of school/parish life. Catholic values, which represent the antitheses of bullying, must be continually affirmed in words and actions.</p> <p>The teachers/catechists at _____ will include education about the harm and injustice caused by different forms of bullying in their curriculum wherever it is appropriate.</p> <p>The Role of Teachers/Catechists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Act as role models of caring and tolerant behavior• Listen to reports of bullying• Protect the victim from further harm• Act to stop the behavior recurring• Raise awareness through the curriculum <p>The Role of Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students who are being bullied are encouraged to speak to their teacher and give him/her full details of the event• Students who witness bullying should intervene if they are able to immediately seek teacher assistance if they can't intervene <p>The Role of Parents:</p> <p>Parents play a key role in support of both the victims and perpetrators of bullying. The school/parish will work in partnership with parents in the disciplinary process. Parents can assist in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Let your child know that bullying in any form is never acceptable.• Listen to your child and take their feelings and fears seriously.• Make sure your child knows that being bullied is not their fault.• Avoid calling your child names, like “weak”.• Don't tell your child “not to worry, to forget it, to toughen up”.• If bullying is verbal, help your child develop the skills to ignore it so that the bully does not get the satisfaction of a reaction. Practice a supply of quick

(non-insulting) responses – for example, “that’s your opinion”).

- Avoid the urge to take everything into your own hands unless absolutely necessary, as this will make your child feel less in control.
- Help your child feel good about the other things in his/her life. Feed their self-esteem.
- When it is clear that your own child is the bully, recognize the seriousness of the issue and support the school/parish in implementing this policy.

St. Joseph School, Rice Lake, 2010

What can schools and parish programs do about bullying?

- Assess the prevalence of bullying, where it is happening, who is involved and when it is happening.
- Implement comprehensive programs that include policies, curriculum and interventions.
- Have strong leadership and commitment against bullying.
- Communicate regularly and enforce consistently to students, parents, teacher and others the rules against bullying.
- Create a climate that discourages bullying.
- Educate parents about bullying and involve them in the prevention efforts.
- Develop and purchase quality bullying prevention programs, strategies and resources.
- Consider the environmental design and develop strategies in “hot spots” such as buses, cafeterias, bathrooms and other locations.
- Provide training for all who work with the children.
- Include cyberbullying as an unacceptable computer use policy.
- Maintain data regarding the effectiveness of the bullying prevention efforts.

WI DPI, Bullying Prevention Policy Guidelines, 2007

What should be part of a bullying policy?

1. A Definition of Bullying

Sample

Bullying includes aggressive or hostile behavior that is intentional and involves an imbalance of power between the bully and the bullied. It is typically repeated over time.

Bullying takes many forms, including, but not limited to, physical or verbal assaults, nonverbal or emotional threats or intimidations, social exclusions and isolation, extortion, and the use of a computer or telecommunications to send embarrassing, slanderous, threatening or intimidating messages.

Bullying is a form of victimization and is not necessarily a result of or part of an ongoing conflict.

Bullying can also be characterized by teasing, put-downs, name-calling, cruel rumors, false accusations, and hazing.

WI DPI, Bullying Prevention Policy Guidelines, 2007

2. Prohibitions – what is not allowed

Sample

These behaviors are prohibited:

Students-to-student behaviors characterized as bullying per the definition, provided it takes place

- at school/during religious education classes,
- during a school/religious education sponsored activity
- on school buses
- through the use of school equipment in the case of cyberbullying

A student bullying, as per the definition, an adult staff member, using the same criteria as above.

An adult staff member bullying, as per the definition, a student or another staff member.

WI DPI, Bullying Prevention Policy Guidelines, 2007

3. Procedures for Reporting

Sample

Students and their parents are always encouraged to talk to their teacher and/or the principal/DRE about bullying concerns.

Reports of bullying may be made verbally or in writing and may be made confidentially. Those receiving the report will record the report. All reports will be taken seriously.

Staff and administrators/DREs will support students and coworkers making such reports and protect against any potential retaliation for making such reports. There will be no retaliation against individuals making such reports in good faith. Individuals engaging in retaliatory behavior will be subject to disciplinary consequences.

Excerpts from St. Joseph School, Rice Lake, 2010 and WI DPI, Bullying Prevention Policy Guidelines, 2007

4. Investigation Procedures

Sample

The administrator/DRE will investigate concerns about bullying behavior and gather whatever information is necessary to determine the facts and the seriousness of the report. This may or may not include a conversation/meeting with the person(s) who are victim(s) of the bullying, staff, parents, and the alleged person(s) engaged in bullying behavior. Parents and/or guardians of each pupil involved in the bullying incident will be notified prior to the conclusion of the investigation. The findings of this process will remain confidential to parties not directly involved.

St. Joseph School, Rice Lake, 2010

5. Disciplinary action

Sample

Programs designed to prevent bullying behavior redirect students from continuing to bully and to support both victims of bullies and the bullies themselves will be explored and implemented as needed.

Where it is determined that students participated in bullying behavior in violation of the policy, the principal/DRE may take disciplinary action including, but not limited to, suspension, expulsion and referral to law enforcement officials.

Staff found to have participated in bullying behavior, or having become aware that bullying was taking place and failed to report the behavior, are considered to be in violation of the prohibitions expressed in the policy. They may be subject to disciplinary action which may include, but not limited to, suspension and termination of position.

WI DPI, Bullying Prevention Policy Guidelines, 2007