

BULLY PREVENTION

HOLY FAMILY SCHOOL

Answering your questions about bullying and how issues of bullying are handled at Holy Family School.

Our Policy and Belief...

It is the policy of Holy Family School and GRACE to ensure that each student is treated with dignity and respect because we are all made in the image of God. We believe that our educational and catechetical environment must reflect our Catholic values in attitudes and actions at all times, as the Lord has called us to do: "Love one another as I have loved you." We are obliged to follow the Lord's commands and teach our students that "What you do to the least among you, you do it to me." Thus, Jesus insists that we treat others with dignity, respect and courtesy.



What is Bullying?

Bullying is deliberate or intentional behavior using words or actions, or electronic communication, intended to cause fear, intimidation or harm. Bullying may be repeated behavior and involves an imbalance of power. The behavior may be motivated by an actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic, such as, but not limited to: age; national origin; ethnicity; religion; gender; gender identity; sexual orientation; physical attributes; physical or mental ability or disability; and social, economic or family status.

Bullying behavior can be:

1. **Physical** (e.g. assault, hitting or punching, kicking, theft, threatening behavior)
2. **Verbal** (e.g. threatening or intimidating language, teasing or name-calling, sexually suggestive remarks, racist remarks, put-downs, jokes, demeaning comments, drawings, cartoons, pranks, gestures)
3. **Indirect** (e.g. spreading cruel rumors, intimidation through gestures, organized or overt social exclusion and sending insulting messages or pictures by electronic devices – also known as cyberbullying)

Cyber-bullying is bullying that takes place using electronic technology. Electronic technology includes devices and equipment such as cell phones, computers, and tablets as well as communication tools including social media sites, text messages, chat, and websites.

Examples of cyber-bullying include:

1. mean text messages or emails, rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites
2. embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles



WE ARE:
GRACE.

Questions to ask your child about bullying...

If your child should state that he or she is being bullied at school, it is important to sit down with him or her and ask some basic questions. As a parent, it is your natural reaction to want to protect your child, but it is important in these situations to keep a level head and try to get as much information as possible to determine if what is occurring is truly bullying and if further steps are necessary.

More open-ended questions will help your child talk about the situation he or she was in. As the PACER Center suggests, ask questions such as:

- † Who hurt or said mean things about you?
- † When and where did this occur?
- † What led up to the event?
- † How often does this occur?
- † Did the other child hurt you on purpose or was it an accident?
- † Did the other child know you were being hurt?

Source: <http://www.pacer.org/publications/bullypdf/BP-2.pdf>

When should I get school officials involved?

Much, of course, depends on the severity of the problem. If the behavior towards your child has been going on for 2-3 weeks (sooner if more severe especially involving physical actions), the school should be told. PLEASE DO NOT WAIT MONTHS BEFORE CONTACTING OUR SCHOOL. Oftentimes, matters can be resolved rather quickly if school officials are given the opportunity to intervene. While we want parents to inform of us bullying behaviors, it is also important that we work together to teach our students to advocate for themselves as well. This is an important part of growing up during their elementary and middle school years.



Steps to informing school officials...

1. Start with your child's classroom teacher or homeroom teacher. Most problems originate in the classroom and our teachers want to get involved and be kept in the loop right away. Most issues can be resolved very quickly if the classroom teachers are informed immediately.
2. Provide your child's classroom teacher or homeroom teacher with an update about a week after your initial report. Let the teacher know if things are improving or if things seem to be getting worse.
3. After giving your child's classroom teacher or homeroom teacher ample opportunity to intervene and still no progress has been made, it is now time to involve the following individuals in this order...
 - A. School Counselor – Mrs. Amy Cain
 - B. Principal – Mr. Steve Gromala
4. Students and parents may also use our 'Report of Bullying / Harassment Form', which is available on our website and with our school counselor.

WE ARE GOD'S CHILDREN

