

# Bullying Prevention Newsletter

## Summary of the Essential Details Parents Need to Know

Township High School District 211



For Parents of Academy-North Students

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### Be Aware of the Warning Signs That Your Teen May be a Victim of Bullying

- Comes home with damaged or missing clothing or other belongings
- Reports losing items such as books, electronics, clothing, or jewelry
- Has unexplained injuries
- Complains frequently of headaches, stomachaches, or feeling sick
- Has trouble sleeping or has frequent bad dreams
- Has changes in eating habits
- Hurts themselves
- Is very hungry after school from not eating his or her lunch
- Runs away from home
- Loses interest in visiting or talking with friends
- Is afraid of going to school or other activities with peers
- Loses interest in school work or begins to do poorly in school
- Appears sad, moody, angry, anxious or depressed when they come home
- Talks about suicide
- Makes negative statements about themselves and their abilities
- Blames himself or herself for problems
- Suddenly has fewer friends
- Avoids certain places
- Acts differently than usual

### What Can I do as a Parent if I Believe my Teen is Being Bullied or Bullying Others:

- ◆ **Talk with your son/daughter.** Commonly, students do not tell their parents they are being bullied so if your child tells you about being bullied, it has taken a lot of courage for him or her to do so. Express your concern and make it clear that you want to help.
- ◆ **Help your teen understand bullying.** Explain that bullying is more than physical; it can be done in person or over the phone or computer.
- ◆ **Empathize with your son/daughter.** Say bullying is wrong, it is not their fault, and you are glad they had the courage to tell you about it. Tell them they are not alone and many people have experienced the same thing.
- ◆ **Work together to find solutions.** Ask your son or daughter what can be done to help. Reassure them that working with others can help to resolve the problem and that the situation will be handled with sensitivity.
- ◆ **Document ongoing bullying.** Work with your son or daughter to keep a record of all bullying incidents. If it involves cyberbullying, keep a record of all messages or postings.
- ◆ **Teach your son or daughter to take a stand against bullying in a nonviolent manner.** Give guidance about how to stand up to those who bully if it is safe to do so.
- ◆ **Stay vigilant to other possible problems your son or daughter may be having.** Some of the warning signs may be signs of other serious problems. Share your concerns with a counselor at your teen's school.
- ◆ **Be persistent.** Bullying may not be resolved overnight.
- ◆ **Work with your son or daughter's school.** Bullying is something that the administration in District 211 takes very seriously. We want to be a part of the solution and we need your help.

## What Can I Do as a Parent to Help Prevent Cyberbullying?

- ❖ Be savvy about social media websites and online/text communication (see the websites listed in this newsletter for helpful resources to get informed).
- ❖ Keep family communication about social networking open and positive. Discuss this as you would other social activities your teen participates in.
- ❖ Start the conversation with your teen about which social media sites they use, and why. Have access to their online profiles and passwords. Monitor regularly.
- ❖ Encourage your teen to tell you if something makes them feel uncomfortable – you can help them tell the school, if need be.
- ❖ Create a list of Internet house rules as a family, including off-limit sites, hours of usage, and guidelines, for information sharing as well as what to keep private.
- ❖ Keep computers in open and public areas and not in your teen's bedroom.
- ❖ Insist that your teen never agrees to meet an online "friend".
- ❖ Emphasize the importance of responsible and ethical online behavior. Discuss consequences of what can occur both at home and at school if your teen uses the internet to bully others.
- ❖ Ensure your teen understands that once a photo or message is posted on the Internet, it is there forever. Discuss how this can impact your teen's post-high school education and employment plans.

**We need everyone's help!**

## Teach Your Teen not to be a Bystander

The definition of a bystander is a person who is present at an event without participating in the central actions of the event. If our students don't intervene in a safe and appropriate manner when they observe bullying, they can cause the victim to feel alone and that no one cares. Teach your teen that by doing nothing they are siding with the bully. Reinforce the messages we have sent to our students by telling your teen to do the following if they witness bullying:

- Say something to the bully if it is safe to do so
- Report the event to the discipline office or make a report using the online Bullying Safety and Concern Center [http://www.academy-north.org/index.php?option=com\\_forme&Itemid=88](http://www.academy-north.org/index.php?option=com_forme&Itemid=88)
- Console the victim
- Step up – So others won't get stepped on

**District 211 welcomes input or reports from parents as well as students and other members of the school community**

Reports can be made **anonymously** to report bullying that you have experienced or witnessed by calling 847-755-6700 or by using the following link: [http://www.academy-north.org/index.php?option=com\\_forme&Itemid=88](http://www.academy-north.org/index.php?option=com_forme&Itemid=88)

**UNITE**  
→ ←  
**AGAINST**  
**BULLYING!**

## Resources for Parents

**Stop Bullying Now!** - This website presents a wide range of research-based strategies for reducing bullying and reducing the harm that bullying can do. It has resources for students, parents, and educators.

<http://www.stopbullyingnow.com>

**Cyberbullying Research Center** - The Cyberbullying Research Center is dedicated to providing up-to-date information about the nature, extent, causes, and consequences of cyberbullying among adolescents. It is an informative website which includes blogs on varying topics related to cyberbullying.

<http://www.cyberbullying.us/>

**Facebook Safety** - This website provides useful information to help others have a safe experience on facebook. Information is provided for teens, parents, educators, and law enforcement. <http://www.facebook.com/safety/>

**Eyes on Bullying** - Eyes on Bullying offers a variety of tools that can help you look at and understand bullying in a new way, reexamine your own knowledge and beliefs about bullying, and shape the beliefs and behaviors of the children in your care. <http://www.eyesonbullying.org>

**Teaching Tolerance** - The site promises to awaken Americans to the problems of hate and intolerance, prompt them to action, and encourage them to dig deeper into themselves. It contains useful information for students, parents, and teachers. It also has free lesson plans and materials for educators.

<http://www.tolerance.org>

**Wired Safety** - WiredSafety.org is a US charity operating online through its thousands of volunteers around the world. It provides one-to-one help, extensive resources, information, and education to people of all ages on a myriad of Internet, mobile, gaming and interactive technology safety issues.

<http://www.wiredsafety.org/>

**Stop Bullying.gov** - A federal government website managed by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. It contains useful information and resources for students, parents, and educators on bullying prevention, as well as, step to step guides for dealing with bullying. <http://www.stopbullying.gov>

**Stand for the Silent** - This site was founded by Kirk and Lisa Smalley, parents of Ty Smalley, who had been a victim of bullying. They are encouraging teens to recognize that everybody is important and deserving of respect and kindness.

<http://www.standforthesilent.com>