

Parent Support

How can I tell if my child is being bullied:

Children who are being bullied or harassed may not talk about it with their teachers. They may be afraid that it will only make things worse or they may feel that it is wrong to 'tell tales'.

This is why, as a parent or caregiver, you have an important part to play in helping the school, and your child, deal with bullying. A change in behaviour in students may be a signal that they are being bullied.

Some signs that a child is being bullied may be:

- Unexplained cuts, bruises or scratches
- Damaged or ripped clothing
- Vague headaches or stomach aches
- Refusal to go to school
- Asking for extra pocket money or food
- Tearfulness, anxiety or difficulty sleeping
- 'Hiding' information on mobile phones, devices or emails

How can I support my child if they are the perpetrator?

Children will bully others for a number of reasons including to fit in with their peers, they have experienced bullying themselves or they may have feelings of insecurity. It is important to:

- Talk with your child about what bullying behaviour is and that it is unacceptable.
- Talk with the school about their Anti-bullying policy and how it can be reinforced at home.
- Listen to your child for clues that they have been bullied themselves.
- Discuss the 'Declaration of the Rights of Individuals in the school' from this document with your child.

Declaration of the Rights of Individuals at

As a member of the Elizabeth South Primary School community, you have the right:

- To feel safe, to be safe and to be treated with respect.
- To feel included.
- To be valued for yourself and not be compared to others.
- To be free from harassment.
- To know who to go to for help.
- To be listened to and be heard.
- To know that steps will be taken to resolve problems or issues.
- To be provided with information and advice about bullying and how to manage it.

Bullying can include:

Face-to-face bullying:

Sometimes referred to as direct bullying, involves physical actions such as punching or kicking or overt verbal actions such as name-calling and insulting. Face-to-face bullying may also include extortion such as demanding money or possessions.

Covert bullying:

Sometimes referred to as indirect bullying, is a subtle type of non-physical bullying which isn't easily seen by others and is conducted out of sight, and therefore often unacknowledged by adults. Covert bullying behaviours mostly inflict harm by damaging another's social reputation, peer relationships and self-esteem. Covert bullying may include rude gestures, threatening looks, exclusion or spreading rumours.

Cyberbullying:

Cyberbullying occurs through the use of information or communication technologies such as Instant Messaging, text messages, email and social networking sites. It has many similarities with offline bullying but it differs in that the student(s) who is/are bullying can be anonymous, it can reach a wide audience and the sent or uploaded material can be difficult to remove.

(National Safe Schools Framework Resource Manual
www.safeschools.deewr.gov.au)



ELIZABETH SOUTH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Anti-Bullying --- Advice for Parents/Caregivers

Every member of the Elizabeth South Primary School community has the right to be safe and free from the attempts of others to exert unjust power over them. As a consequence all members of the Elizabeth South Primary School community have made a commitment to work collaboratively to maintain a safe and caring environment for all students.

Definition:

Bullying is a pattern of repeated physical, verbal, psychological or social aggression that is directed towards a specific student by someone with more power and is intended to cause harm, distress and/or create fear. Bullying may be carried out overtly (e.g. face-to-face) or covertly (e.g. through repeated social exclusion or via technology). It is a sub-category of aggression and is different to, but also related to, harassment and violence. It is not the same as conflict or social dislike even though, in some cases, the outcome of both can be bullying.

A one-off disagreement with a friend or conflict over a game is not considered bullying unless the conflict continues and becomes intentionally hurtful.



Government
of South Australia
Department for Education
and Child Development

Responses to incidents of bullying

The principles underlying responses to incidents of bullying at Elizabeth South Primary include:

- An acknowledgement that there are degrees of seriousness of incidents of bullying and responses cater for this range.
- Those responses seek to have a non-punitive approach to enable students to learn the appropriate social behaviours and provide an opportunity to restore positive relationships.
- Responses will be age appropriate.
- Ensure parents are aware of incidents concerning their child.

Low level incidents:

Responses would include the use of a restorative practice process to understand, clarify and resolve the situation and work together towards repairing the harm caused. A restorative conference may be held by a teacher or a member of the leadership team to ensure that the issue is addressed in a timely fashion.

The restorative conference would include:

- A focus on what happened
- What harm has resulted
- What needs to happen to resolve the situation or repair the relationship
- A monitoring agreement
- Generally parents not notified

Intermediate level incidents:

The Method of Shared Concern includes:

- Talking with the perpetrator(s) and the victim(s) individually.
- Identifying the concerns of the victim(s) to the perpetrator(s).
- Establishing an agreement aimed at reconciling the situation.
- Jointly negotiating how the agreement will be monitored.

If there continues to be further bullying, the situation would be considered of high severity. Parents of students involved in this process will be notified and updated on the progress of the situation.

The Method of Shared concern will be modified to cater for younger students or students with special needs. It would also be modified to suit the complexity of the situation.

High Severity:

Responses to incidents of high severity, with parent involvement, might include:

- Sanctions such as removal from the yard, loss of play, restricted play areas or assigned tasks.
- The implementation of the suspension, exclusion and expulsion guidelines.
- Counselling for the victim and referral to outside agencies
- Notification to Families SA by parents
- Notification to police by parents
- Negotiation with families to access DECD support services or Child And Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

How is bullying reported

When to report

Reporting of an incident should occur as soon after the incident as possible. This gives the school the best opportunity to follow up the incident and intervene when appropriate.

How to report:

Parents and students may find it helpful to write down the details of the incident as a first step. A face-to-face discussion is usually the best way of reporting an incident and, if they are dissatisfied with the outcome, they can follow up with a written statement with the request for a further meeting. If seriously concerned about the manner in which the school is dealing with an incident, a parent can contact his/her local Regional Office for support or Parent Complain Line.

When your child reports an incident of bullying it is important for you to remain calm and encourage them to recount what has happened. You may want to find out and record the following information to help the school understand what has happened so that they can intervene appropriately.

- What happened
- Who was involved
- Where it happened
- If anyone else saw it

These steps are also useful if you find out that your child has been involved in bullying or harassing others.

Who to report to:

Parents and students may choose to report incidents of bullying, including cyber bullying, to their class teacher in the first instance and, if the incident is serious or unresolved, to the Principal, Deputy Principal, or School Counsellor. It is difficult for the school to follow up on an incident if it is unaware of it and, therefore, reporting of incidents of bullying is encouraged. If you have tried these suggestions and your child is still be bullied or harassed, contact the Para Hills DECD Office and talk the Manager, Support Services or the Director. Office staff will work with you and the school and try to solve the problem.

Websites/Information and other useful contact

Cyber Safety

<http://www.cybersmart.gov.au/>

Bullying No Way!

<http://bullyingnoway.gov.au/>

Advice for parents and care-givers: Bullying and harassment at School

http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/speced2/files/links/Bullying_Brochure_DEC_2.pdf

Department for Education and Child: Child and Student Wellbeing

<http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/speced2/default.asp?navgrp=bullying>

Kids Helpline: Bullying

<http://www.kidshelp.com.au/kids/information/hot-topics/bullying.php>
1800 55 1800

Kids Helpline: Make cyberspace a better place

<http://www.kidshelp.com.au/grownups/getting-help/cyberspace/>

Parent Helpline SA

www.parenting.sa.gov.au Ph 1300 364 100

Parent Complaint Line

1800677435

Elizabeth South Primary School

08 82552219

Para Hills Office

08 8314 4000