

The Department of Education and Training recognises that schools exist in a society where intimidation and harassment occur. Students have the right to expect that they will spend the school day free from the fear of bullying, harassment and intimidation. Bullying is a serious matter and is not acceptable in any form.

Bullying can be defined as intentional, repeated behaviour by an individual or group of individuals that causes distress, hurt or undue pressure. It can involve all forms of harassment (including sex, race, disability, homosexuality or transgender), humiliation, domination and intimidation of others. Bullying behaviour can be:

- **verbal** e.g. name calling, teasing, abuse, humiliation, sarcasm, insults, threats
- **physical** e.g. hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting
- **social** e.g. ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures
- **psychological** e.g. spreading rumours, glaring, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones.

Bullying can devalue, isolate and frighten young people. It has long-term effects on those engaging in bullying behaviour, those who are the subjects of bullying behaviour and the onlookers or bystanders.

All schools develop, implement, monitor and review anti-bullying plans as consistent with the Department of Education and Training's Anti-bullying Plan for Schools (*Anti-bullying Plan for Schools*). The plan recognises that teachers, students, parents, caregivers and members of the wider community have a responsibility to work together to address bullying. It provides information for school community members to identify bullying behaviours and provides clear procedures to report bullying.

The Anti-bullying Plan includes strategies utilised by the school to deal effectively with bullying behaviour. Schools implement strategies which best reflect individual school needs.

Parents and caregivers can support young people by:

- assisting them to understand and identify bullying behaviour as outlined in the school's Anti-bullying Plan
- responding to incidents of bullying in a manner consistent with the school's Anti-bullying Plan
- supporting all students in the school to deal effectively with bullying through strategies in the Anti-bullying Plan.

More information on bullying can be found at

<http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/studentsupport/studentwellbeing/anti-bullyingpolicy.php>

If you would like more information about your school's Anti-bullying Plan, please make an appointment with your school principal. If you require assistance to make the appointment please ring the Telephone Interpreter Service on 131 450, ask for your language and ask them to telephone the principal of your child's school. This service will be free of charge to you.