

## Reporting Bullying

- Write down what your child says so you can remember the details
- Don't let your child talk you out of getting involved
- You may wish to talk with the teacher first. Then speak with others as necessary
- Do not contact the bully or his/her parents directly
- Keep an open line of communication with the school to monitor progress

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*"Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless." – Mother Teresa*

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## Reporting Options

- Fill out a bullying reporting form that is available in the front office of the school.
- Access the on-line reporting system through the district's website at [www.osceola.k12.fl.us](http://www.osceola.k12.fl.us). Enter keyword bullying. Either an on-line bullying report may be filed or a hard copy may be printed, completed and returned to an administrator at the school.

## Signs a Child May be Bullying Others

If you notice any of these signs in your child, contact your school guidance counselor, administration, or teacher.

- Is involved in physical or verbal fights
- Has friends who bully others
- Is increasingly aggressive
- Has unexplained extra money or new belongings
- Blames others for their problems
- Doesn't accept responsibility for their actions

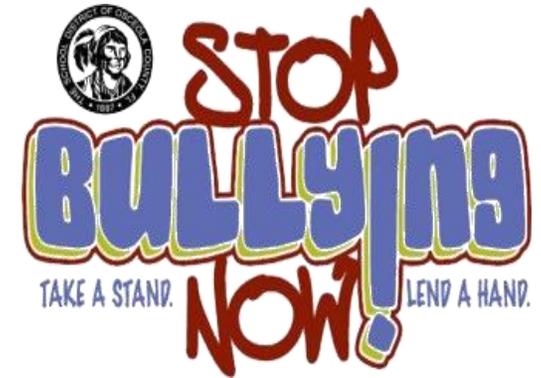
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*"No act of kindness, however small, is ever wasted." - Aesop*

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### **The Office of School Support Services**

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## CREATING BULLY-FREE SCHOOLS

*The School District of Osceola County, Florida*

# What is Bullying?

In Osceola County Schools, student behavior is defined as bullying if it meets three criteria:

1. The behavior is unwanted, offensive, threatening, insulting, humiliating, or interferes with the individual's school performance which results in the victim feeling stressed, injured, or threatened.
2. There must be an imbalance of power between the victim and the aggressor.
3. The behavior must be repeated.

## Types of Bullying

1. Verbal bullying – name calling, teasing, and making insulting remarks, threatening, disrespecting or demeaning a person's race, disability, appearance, or sexual orientation.
2. Physical bullying – hitting, pushing, spiting, stalking.
3. Social bullying – spreading rumors, isolating a person from a peer group through hurtful gossip.
4. Cyber bullying – using the internet, interactive and digital technologies or mobile phone to communicate words, images, or language, to willfully harm a person in the manner described above.

## Is Your Child a Target?

While many actions involve aggressive behaviors, not all are bullying incidents. This table shows some differences between rough play, fighting, and bullying.

<b>Rough Play</b>	Usually friends Often will do the same thing again Power not an immediate issue Not about hurting Affect is friendly, mutual
<b>Fighting</b>	Usually not friends Typically not repeated Power close to equal Trying to hurt each other Affect is negative, angry
<b>Bullying</b>	Not friends Behavior is repeated Power is NOT equal Bullying is trying to hurt or humiliate Affect varies

### Additional signs that a child is being bullied:

- Becomes socially withdrawn or exhibits poor social skills
- Unexplained scratches or bruises
- Frequent headaches or stomach aches, feeling sick or faking illness
- Has a sudden change in school attendance or in academic performance
- Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares
- Uses "victim" body language – hunches shoulders, hangs head, won't look people in the eye, backs off from others
- Has a lack of interest in school activities
- Self-destructive behaviors such as running away from home, harming themselves, or talking about suicide

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*"No one can make you feel inferior without your permission." - Eleanor Roosevelt*

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## Helping the Target

- Listen and focus on the child – learn what's been going on and show you want to help
- Assure the child that bullying is not their fault
- Know that kids who are bullied may struggle with talking about it
- Work together to resolve the situation and protect the bullied child
- Be persistent – commit to making it stop and consistently support the bullied child
- Follow-up – show a commitment to making bullying stop

## Helpful Websites

The following websites provide further information about recognizing and preventing bullying behaviors.

[www.StopBullying.gov](http://www.StopBullying.gov)

[www.PacerKidsAgainstBullying.org](http://www.PacerKidsAgainstBullying.org)

[www.tolerance.org](http://www.tolerance.org)