

# BULLYING PREVENTION TIP SHEET FOR TEACHERS



Talk to your class about bullying early to prevent incidents throughout the year.

For more information, visit: [www.prevnet.ca](http://www.prevnet.ca)

## WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is repeated, unwanted aggressive behaviour that involves an observed or perceived power imbalance. It can result in physical, social, or educational harm or distress for those who are bullied.

- The person who bullies does it deliberately and with a goal – to cause distress to another, or to gain a social or material reward.
- Bullying is a relationship problem. Over time, the person who is bullying feels more and more powerful and the person who is bullied feels more and more helpless, shamed and trapped.
- Bullying requires relationship solutions, that is, solutions that create safety and social-emotional growth for those who bully, those who are bullied and those who witness it.
- Bullying can be physical (e.g., pushing), verbal (e.g., name calling) or social (e.g., excluding or spreading rumours). It can be carried out in person or using electronic devices like cell phones. It is often directed at students who are perceived as different – e.g., race, religion, sexual orientation, body type or ability.

## WHY IS BULLYING OF PARTICULAR CONCERN TO EDUCATORS?

- If students are bullying others they are learning to use aggression to control and distress others. Unless they learn more constructive ways to use and share power they may carry this pattern on into adulthood.
- If students are repeatedly bullied they become increasingly powerless and unable to defend themselves; they get trapped in the abusive situation.
- Whether students are bullying or being bullied, they are at higher risk than other students for academic and health problems

## WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO DEAL WITH BULLYING?

- Let students know that they don't have to be friends with everyone, but they must respect every one's right to be safe and treated with dignity.
- Be a positive role model: set an example of inclusiveness, respect and valuing students' unique differences. Demonstrate concern and empathy for all students. Stand up for anyone who is bullied.
- Do not tolerate oppressive slang including racial slurs or insults based on sexual orientation.
- Assign students to groups and teams to ensure that students who are vulnerable to bullying are with students who will support and stand up for them. Monitor consistently and intervene whenever bullying occurs.
- Be proactive. Use opportunities like Bullying Awareness Week for discussions with your class. Have discussions often about positive relationships.
- Listen to what students say and take it seriously. Recognize the courage it takes to report bullying and remind students that seeking help from an adult is not the same as tattling.
- Work with your school team to create and implement effective bullying prevention policies and procedures in your school.