

BULLYING INFORMATION MESA GRANDE ACADEMY

- I. What Bullying Is
 - A. Intentional
 - B. Mean/Hurtful/Aggressive action or words
 - C. Pattern of negative and repeated behaviors
 - D. Includes persistent and purposeful exclusion
 - E. Includes unwanted sexual contact or comments
 - F. One-sided and usually a real or perceived imbalance of power – physical, social network or verbal skills – that favors the perpetrator
 - G. Motivated by the power to hurt, embarrass, create fear or intimidate

- II. What Bullying Isn't
 - A. Everything we don't like that happens to us
 - B. What children say in an attempt to understand what is unknown to them
 - C. Occasional taunts, aggressive behaviors and injured feelings that sometimes happen in the course of a school day
 - D. What young children do and say as they are learning how to get along with others

- III. How to Prepare Your Child to Respond to Potential Bullying
 - A. Give them unconditional love
 - B. Listen to all their concerns and joys
 - C. Instill, reinforce and reward the values of empathy, compassion and acceptance
 - D. Encourage them to give others the benefit of the doubt
 - E. Encourage them to use Kelso's Choice to stand up for themselves and others
 - F. Encourage them to tell an adult immediately if their attempt to solve the problem does not help
 - G. Foster friendships among their classmates and get to know their classmates' families
 - H. Remember – you are not doing your child a favor if they are taught that everything they don't like is bullying. We all experience unpleasant moments in our relationships but most of them can be resolved – sometimes even resulting in rich friendships.

- IV. What Mesa Grande Academy Does to Help Prevent Bullying
 - A. The Power of One
 - B. Kelso's Choice
 - C. Character Counts
 - D. Attempt to create a culture of Kindness - encourage, reinforce and reward the values of empathy, compassion and acceptance.

- V. Mesa Grande Academy's Policy Regarding Bullying

- A. Can we be a “No Bully” zone
 - 1. No – even when being vigilant, statistics show adults will be able to observe less than 10% of bullying
 - 2. We need the appropriate “power of one” among our students
 - B. Adults are to be always watchful
 - C. Students are to always stay in supervised areas
 - D. To respond to every report of bullying (and other unresolved unpleasant incidents as soon as we are made aware of them
 - E. To report to parents when their child is being bullied
 - F. To report to parents when their child is bullying others
 - G. To work to educate bullies how to become caring students
 - H. Provide redemptive discipline for first time or occasional bullies
 - I. Require professional intervention for persistent bullies
 - J. Require withdrawal from school for bullies and/or families that do not respond positively to efforts to remediate bullying issues
- VI. What To Do When Your Child Experiences Something They and You Do Not Like But Is Not Bullying
- A. Listen and discuss how your child feels
 - B. Discuss Kelso’s Choices and how they were or could be used; Rehearse possible scenarios
 - C. Help your child think of something nice to do in return – what would you like for them to do if the tables were turned
 - D. If you feel your child needs additional support or the relationship needs special adult observation – tell your child’s teacher right away
- VII. What To Do When Your Child Experiences Bullying
- A. Listen and discuss how your child feels; do not claim to know how they feel
 - B. Never advise them to ignore the bully
 - C. Promise your help to solve the problem and work together on ideas to deal with it
 - D. Report the incident to the teacher immediately and ask for and expect feedback on what they observe
 - E. Encourage your child to tell the teacher immediately
 - F. Encourage your child to stay near the supervisor in situations where the bullying may occur
 - G. Remember that bullies are feeling insecure and seeking friendship also so it never hurts to try to help fill that need – however, this is not required nor always successful
 - H. The connections you have made with your child’s classmates and parents can pay benefits here if you feel it is necessary to try to problem solve with the bully’s parents
 - I. If you feel the teacher is not responsive, meet with the principal to explain the situation
 - J. If your child is experiencing bullying in a variety of settings, seek professional help as a family; research their skills and reputation
 - K. Seek activities for your child outside their regular social groups

- L. Be alert to warning signs that your child may be being bullied: Lethargy, depression, self-mutilation, extreme makeover attempts, diminished personal hygiene, lack of interest in social activities, sudden change in weight, inexplicable fits of rage, sudden increase or decrease in grades, faking illness to avoid going to school,
- VIII. What To Do If You Think Your Child Is A Bully
- A. Continue to do all the items listed in Section III
 - B. Listen and empathize with your child
 - C. Think about your family interactions – are siblings allowed to bully each other or is there an adult who is bullying other family members – if so, get help to change these ways of relating
 - D. Consider the types of TV programs/video games/movies your child experiences: Do they promote or glamorize bullying/aggressive types of behaviors or relationships; Make changes as necessary
 - E. Encourage them to use Kelso's Choices to solve their problems
 - F. Help them understand differences in their acquaintances
 - G. Do not accept the excuse that they were joking
 - H. Listen to their conversations with their friends – listen for things that sound like they are making fun of others or gossiping; do the same with internet, text and e-mail conversations
 - I. Remember that they are feeling insecure and seeking friendship so do what you can to help them fill these needs in positive ways
 - J. Have discussions about who is popular and who isn't – try to get them to name those who struggle to be accepted or who seem to be lonely; later encourage them to invite some of these individuals over to an event you are hosting (along with their friends) – if your child wishes they could but are afraid of the consequences they are probably not a bully but a bystander; if they refuse/act indignant/laugh, they are the bully
 - K. Find a positive mentor for your child
 - L. If the concern persists, get professional help
- IX. What To Do If You Think You Are A Bully
- A. Remember the power of example
 - B. Search for avenues to fill your need for security and friendship in positive ways
 - C. Get professional help if being aware is not enough to change your relationships with others
- X. Ideas for this handout came from many sources, but here are a couple that may be of special interest:
- A. Jodee Blanco – [Please Stop Laughing at Me](#); and [Please Stop Laughing at Us](#).
 - B. National School Safety Center – www.schoolsafety.us