Bully Blocker Curriculum

At our school, we believe that bullying of any kind is unacceptable. All students should be free from worries about being bullied. Students who bully others must be taught other, appropriate ways of interacting with peers. As a result, our school will be implementing an anti-bullying program. Our goal is for students at our school to learn universal rules and expectations about bullying as well as different skills and tools they can use to prevent or respond to bullying. As you may know, bullying can take different forms, such as physical or verbal, and it can harm victims' social relationships with their peers. Bullying is hurtful to students who are the targets of bullying as well as to students who witness bullying.

We define bullying as:

- One-sided with an imbalance of perceived power
- Intentional and repeated
- Happening when someone purposely hurts, frightens, or threatens someone
- Happening when someone purposely leaves out, ridicules, spreads rumors or makes offensive comments

Our anti-bullying goals this year include growing a more positive school setting, increase awareness about bullying among all educators, staff, and students; enforce school anti-bullying rules; provide enhanced supervision in bully-prone locations; and teach students skills to deal with bullying, problem solving, and making friends.

We ask for your assistance with reaching our goals by helping and encouraging your child to use these skills at home. It is important to empower children to find solutions to peer conflicts and provide a listening ear. Bullying is something that is different from equal power conflicts where both sides are adding to the conflict. The following is a list of tips for parents to help your children respond appropriately to bullying.

• Listen to your child and help assess whether bullying has taken place. Sometimes there is a conflict involving two or more people which feels incredibly hurtful but is not bullying.
• If your child is a witness to bullying, he or she should not join in or laugh at it.
• Tell your child that bullying should always be reported to an adult when someone is hurt or unsafe, when the bullying continues, and when other strategies have not worked.
• Talk with your child about bullying and the strategies he or she has already tried. Remind your child to stay calm and confident and to use positive self-talk.
• Monitor your child's Internet and cell phone use and encourage him or her to inform you if others are sending inappropriate messages.
• Model and discuss nonaggressive ways to resolve problems or conflicts. Don't tell your child to fight back.
• Help and encourage your child to develop friendships. Children with friends are less likely to be bullied.
• Rather than provide advice or solutions to everyday problems, encourage your child to use the Steps for Problem Solving and other new skills our students will be learning. Help him or her find new alternatives and solutions that feel appropriate given the situation.
• Help your child practice skills such as cooling down, acting confident, negotiating, listening actively to others, and using I messages when resolving problems with siblings or others at home.
• Praise your child for his or her efforts to resolve problems. Focus on the positive things your child does. Provide opportunities for your child to make appropriate choices and help turn mistakes into positive learning experiences.
• If your child is bullying others, explain to him or her why this behavior is not acceptable.

Establish rules and consequences and supervise your child's activities outside of school. Your support and partnership with our school staff is vital to the success of our anti-bullying goals at our school. If you have any questions about this program, please call or visit your child's teacher or the principal to discuss them.