**What is Bullying?**

Bullying is sustained and targeted aggression causing embarrassment, pain or discomfort to the recipient. It can take a number of forms including physical, racist, sexual, emotional, cyber, verbal, gesture, extortion and exclusion. It:

* Is an abuse of power
* Can be planned and organised
* May be unintentional
* May involve individuals or groups (ringleaders, organisers, bystanders, urgers and joiners)

**Types of Bullying Behaviours**

**These may include:**

* Any form of physical violence such as hitting, pushing or spitting on others
* Interfering with another’s property by stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying it
* Using offensive names, teasing or spreading rumours about others or their families
* Using put-downs, belittling other’s abilities and achievements
* Writing offensive notes or graffiti about others
* Making degrading comments about another’s culture, religious or social background
* Hurtfully excluding others from a group
* Making suggestive comments or other forms of sexual abuse
* Ridiculing another’s appearance
* Forcing others to act against their will
* Using electronic communication devices such as email, text messaging or social media top intentionally harm, intimidate or humiliate others

**Possible Signs and Symptoms of Being Bullied**

**There is no particular pattern. A recipient of bullying may:**

* Have unexplained cuts and bruises
* Have equipment or personal items hidden, damaged, stolen or destroyed
* Complain of vague headaches, stomach aches or feeling sick
* Wet the bed, bite nails, have poor sleep patterns and bad dreams
* Exhibit unusual emotional outbursts or mood swings
* Withdraw from friends and family
* Appear anxious, insecure, sad, teary, depressed, secretive
* Have low self esteem
* Display an unwillingness to go to school
* Sit alone in class or be alone in the playground
* Change friendship groups frequently
* Come home hungry because lunch money or food has been taken
* Want extra money without giving a reason
* Show deterioration in school work and avoid participating in activities
* Display bullying behaviours to take out his/her frustrations on someone else

**Is Your Child Being Bullied – What to Do?**

**You can/could:**

* Listen carefully to your child
* Assure your child that it is not his/her fault
* Stay calm
* Get accurate details
* Talk to your child about coping strategies
* Help him/her to be proud of their differences if your child is different in some way
* Find out all the facts preferably from the school. Telephoning other parents can stir up a lot of unnecessary concern
* Seek assistance from the class teacher if the problem persists
* Seek support from the stage co-ordinator if the problem continues

**Is Your Child Bullying Others – What to Do?**

**Initially you will be defensive and unbelieving. This is natural. You can/could:**

* Find out all the facts preferably from the school. Telephoning other parents can stir up a lot of unnecessary concern
* Talk to your child but do not blame
* Emphasise that bullying is not acceptable in your family
* Role play alternate behaviours
* Seek assistance from the school or health professional
* Be specific re consequences for continuing unacceptable behaviours
* Reward appropriate behaviour
* Help your child to use the school strategies for dealing with bullying

**Talking about the problem is not dobbing!**

**Responsibilities of Students, Teachers and Parents**

**It is important that students:**

* Take responsibility for their own actions
* Refuse to be involved in any bullying situation
* Recognise that keeping silent about a bullying situation provides support and protection for the student who displayed the bullying behaviour
* Report the incident or suspected incident to the teacher
* Implement the strategies for dealing with bullying taught through the lessons in the Anti-Bullying Program
* Always use electronic communication devices under the supervision of an adult

**Parents and Caregivers can be supportive by:**

* Observing children for signs of distress or changes in behaviour
* Discouraging children from retaliating
* Reporting incidents to the school promptly
* Working co-operatively with the school to reach a solution
* Carefully monitoring their child’s use of electronic communication devices

**Staff will:**

* Implement the school’s Student Welfare and Discipline Policy
* Provide students with necessary strategies for dealing with bullying through a planned series of classroom lessons
* Work co-operatively with parents and the whole school community to reach a solution

**How to Handle Children Who Bully?**

**If you are being bullied or harassed in the playground:**

* Take a deep breath
* Look directly into the eyes of the person attempting to bully you
* Speak in a firm, clear voice and say loudly, “Stop that. I don’t like it.”
* Go directly to the teacher on duty if the attempts to bully you don’t stop and report what happened

**Any further incidents of bullying or threatening behaviour by the same person may result in him/her:**

* Being counselled by the duty teacher with regard to the appropriate behaviour
* Being removed by the duty teacher to walk with him/her or sit in a designated area
* Having the incident recorded/reported to the Assistant Principal who initiates school Welfare and Discipline Policy procedures



**Anti-Bullying**

**At**

**Penrith South Public School**

**Our school community is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.**

**Each of us has responsibility to reduce aggression in our society. By working together we can maintain a safe and happy school for our students.**