

UNDERSTANDING HIB

(Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying)



**Hopewell Valley
Regional School District**

NEW LAW

- **January 5, 2011 Governor Christie signed into law the “Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights”**
- **New law goes into effect September 2011**
- **Amends the 2002 anti-bullying law**

KEY ISSUES IN NEW LAW

- New definition of bullying
- Clarifies responsibility for conduct away from school grounds
- Creates School Safety Teams
- Requires Anti-Bullying Specialist in every school
- Requires Anti-Bullying Coordinator for district
- New investigation, reporting, discipline, appeal procedures

KEY ISSUES IN NEW LAW (cont'd)

- New state reporting requirements on incidents of bullying
- New grading procedure for schools and districts
- New training requirements
- Clarifies instances where school employees may be subject to disciplinary action

NEW DEFINITION

“Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying”
 (“HIB”)

TYPES OF BEHAVIORS:

- Includes ANY gesture, or
- ANY written, verbal or physical act, or
- ANY electronic communication
- Can be a single incident or series of incidents

DEFINITION (cont'd)

Motivation for HIB Behavior:

- ANY actual OR PERCEIVED characteristic
- EXAMPLES: race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or mental/physical/sensory disability, or ANY OTHER DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTIC

DEFINITION (cont'd)

LOCATION OF INCIDENT:

- On school property
- At school-sponsored functions
- On a school bus
- Off school grounds (including cyberspace)

DEFINITION (cont'd)

MUST MEET ONE OF THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS in addition to causing substantial disruption or interference:

- Has effect of insulting or demeaning student or group of students OR
- Creates hostile educational environment for student by interfering with student's education OR severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to student

REVISED LANGUAGE, BUT SIMILAR LEGAL STANDARD

- Clarifies need for threshold showing substantial disruption with operation of school or rights of student, already true based on case law
- Clarifies single incident or series, but already true based on case law
- Clarifies emotional or physical harm, but already true based on case law

SIMILAR LEGAL STANDARD

(cont'd)

- Clarifies incident could be off school grounds, already true based on case law
- Creates new term “hostile educational environment,” but still requires threshold showing of substantial disruption first

ANTI-BULLYING COORDINATOR

- Appointed by Superintendent
- Coordinates/strengthens district HIB policy to prevent, identify, and address HIB Collaborates with anti-bullying specialists, BOE and Supt.
- Meets at least twice per school year with the anti-bullying specialists
- Provides data, in collaboration with the supt. to the NJDOE
- Performs other related duties

ANTI-BULLYING SPECIALIST

- Chairs the school safety team
- Leads the investigation of reported HIB
- Acts as the primary school official responsible for preventing, identifying, and addressing incidents of HIB in the school
- Assists the principal in appropriately applying the range of ways for responding to HIB established by the school board
- Provides input to local school board on annual re-evaluation, reassessment, review of policy

SCHOOL SAFETY TEAM

- Formed to develop, foster, and maintain a positive school climate, including HIB issues
- Meets at least 2 times per school year
- Consists of the principal (*or designee, preferably a senior administrator*) and principal appointees: a teacher in the school, the school anti-bullying specialist (serves as chair), a parent/guardian of a student in the school, and other members determined by the principal

WHAT IS BULLYING?



DISTINGUISHING CONFLICTS

Normal Conflict...

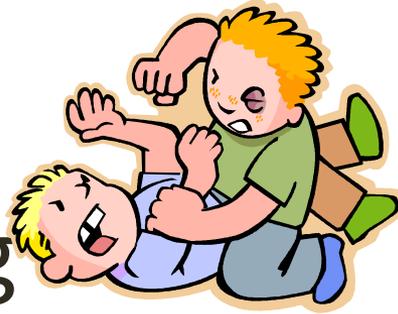
- Involves people with similar degrees of power
- Involves a mutual disagreement or difference in interests or goals
- Is reciprocal; both parties participate in the conflict
- Both parties are responsible for wrongdoing
- Can be fairly resolved by compromise or negotiation

Bullying...

- Involves an imbalance of power
- Involves one party exerting their needs or interests
- Is one-sided; one party instigates
- Involves hurtful behavior on behalf of one party against another
- Bully is responsible for wrongdoing
- A fair resolution involves a change in the behavior of the bully; the target has no concession to make
- *Does not become normal conflict if the target retaliates in defense*

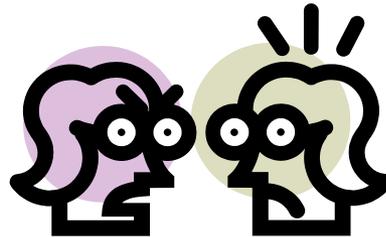
TYPES OF BULLYING

- Physical bullying



- punching, shoving, acts that hurt people

- Verbal bullying



- name calling, teasing, making offensive remarks

TYPES OF BULLYING

- Indirect bullying

- spreading rumors
- keeping certain people out of the “group”
- getting certain people to “gang up” on others



- Cyber bullying

- sending insulting messages by e-mail, text messaging, chat rooms, etc.



WARNING SIGNS OF BULLYING

How do you know if your child is engaging in bullying behavior?

Ask yourself...

-  Has my child ever been accused of being a bully at school or elsewhere?
-  Has my child gotten into trouble for fighting (physically or verbally) with other children at school?
-  Does my child become easily frustrated, defiant or oppositional when he does not get his way?

WARNING SIGNS OF BULLYING

(cont'd)

- 🚩 Who are my child's friends? How does my child interact with others? Have I witnessed my child with other children? Is she dominant or aggressive?
- 🚩 What does my child do with spare time? What are my child's hobbies?
- 🚩 Does my child speak about other children as "stupid" or use other negative terms to describe others?
- 🚩 Does my child talk about certain children "deserving" bad things to happen to them or showing little concern for others in bad situations?

WHAT YOU CAN DO IF YOU SUSPECT YOUR CHILD IS BULLYING OTHERS

- ☑ Discuss school rules and behavior expectations with your child
- ☑ Find out exactly what it is that your child has been doing.
What has your child been *accused* of doing? What does your child *admit* to doing?
- ☑ Talk to your child, calmly, about why she is engaging in such behaviors. It is important that you not approach your child in an accusatory or confrontational tone
- ☑ Some children may feel pressure to participate in bullying behavior in order to fit in with peers or to avoid being bullied themselves

WHAT YOU CAN DO IF YOU SUSPECT YOUR CHILD IS BULLYING (cont'd)

- ☑ Explain how bullying affects others (targets, bystanders, school climate)
- ☑ Discuss alternatives to aggressive behavior
- ☑ Role playing may help some children to understand how it feels to be bullied
- ☑ Teach your child to show tolerance for those who are different.
- ☑ Model this behavior yourself
- ☑ Praise your child for using alternative, appropriate behavior
- ☑ Establish consequences for negative behaviors, such as losing privileges (consequences should be nonphysical in nature)

WHAT YOU CAN DO IF YOU SUSPECT YOUR CHILD IS BULLYING (cont'd)

- ☑ Ensure appropriate adult supervision at all times.
- ☑ Be aware of your child's involvement in activities inside and outside of school
- ☑ Report any incidents of bullying behaviors to school officials, even if your child is the one engaging in those behaviors
- ☑ Seek outside help

HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOUR CHILD IS BEING BULLIED?

-  Does my child fear going to school?
-  Has my child been out sick a lot?
-  Visible bruises: Have I noticed bruises on my child? When I ask my child about the bruises, what is the response?
-  Does my child have friends? Who are they? Have I seen the way that they interact?
-  Is my child submissive or withdrawn with other children?

HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOUR CHILD IS BEING BULLIED? (cont'd)

- 🚩 Does my child seem unhappy or insecure or have low self-esteem?
- 🚩 Does my child talk about “nobody liking her” or “not having any friends?”
- 🚩 Does my child talk about wanting to hurt someone or get back at someone?
- 🚩 Does my child have difficulty being assertive when it's necessary?

WHAT YOU CAN DO IF YOUR CHILD IS BEING BULLIED

- ☑ Do not confront the suspected bully or bullies on your own.
- ☑ Talk to a school administrator about the situation.
- ☑ Ask your child what takes place in school, what happens when there is free time, how they are feeling.
- ☑ Role play with your child and discuss ways they can respond to a bully (e.g. walking away, telling an adult, or asking for help from peers.)
- ☑ Teach your child that telling on those who bully should not be considered tattling
- ☑ Let your child know that by reporting bullying, help will come and that support will come from you and from the school staff.

WHAT YOU CAN DO IF YOUR CHILD IS BEING BULLIED (cont'd)

- ☑ Encourage your child to talk with friends about bullying
- ☑ Bullies rarely target kids in groups, so your child should maintain a peer group that is unified
- ☑ Ensure appropriate adult supervision at all times
- ☑ Be aware of your child's involvement in activities inside and outside of school
- ☑ Report any incidents of bullying behaviors, even if your child is not the target of such behavior, to school officials
- ☑ Seek outside help

Hopewell Valley

ANTI-BULLYING SPECIALISTS

609-737-4000

- Bear Tavern: Kevin Kirwan, X 5703
- Hopewell Elementary: Amy Parker, X 7135
- Stony Brook: Terri Stimmler, X 6041
- Toll Gate: Christine D'Avirro, X 8245
- Timberlane: Cecelia Cardano, X 4125
- Central High: Joanna Strauch, X 3524
- District Anti-Bullying Coordinator: Rich Lang X2401