

# Students: Know the Facts

Every school district is required to have policies and procedures for addressing the issues of bullying and cyber-bullying. Ask to see your district's policy and learn how your school is implementing the policy.

## What is Bullying?

Bullying is negative, often repeated behavior with the intent to hurt someone physically or emotionally and involves an imbalance of power (physical size, social status) between the aggressor(s) and the target(s).

### Physical bullying:

- Hitting, kicking, or pushing someone...or even just threatening to do it
- Stealing, hiding or destroying someone's things
- Making someone do something he or she doesn't want to do

### Verbal bullying:

- Name-calling
- Teasing, taunting
- Insulting or otherwise verbally abusing someone

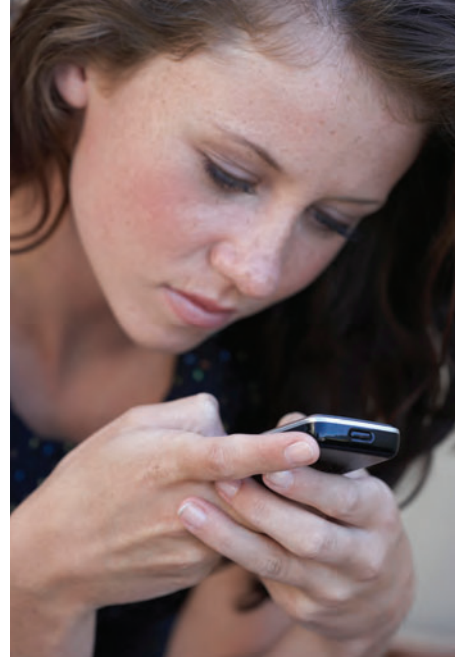
### Emotional bullying:

- Refusing to talk to someone
- Excluding someone from groups or activities
- Spreading lies or rumors about someone
- Making someone do something he or she doesn't want to do

## Cyber-bullying

Threats, or intimidation using computers, cell phones and social networking sites by:

- Sending hurtful or threatening emails or text messages.
- Posting photos or other information about without consent.
- Spreading lies and rumors.
- Creating a group or social networking page to target or exclude someone.



## What to Do If You Are Being Bullied

### Tip #1: How to respond as bullying is happening

- **Walk away.** Bullies want to know they have control over your emotions, so don't react with anger or retaliate with physical force.
- **Protect yourself.** If you can't walk away and are being physically hurt, protect yourself so you can get away. Your safety is the first priority.
- **Report the bullying to a trusted adult.** It's scary to report and no one wants to be seen as a snitch or tattle-tale, but you have a right to be safe at school. Adults are responsible to help with the problem without letting the bully know it was you who reported them.
- **Repeat as necessary.** Report each bullying incident until it stops. There is no reason for you to ever put up with bullying.

## Tip #2: How to deal with a cyber-bully

- **Do not respond** to cyber-bullying messages.
- **Document and report cyber-bullying.** Save or print out emails, text messages or screenshots for reporting the incident to adults.
- **Block the cyber-bully** on your phone, IM list, websites or social media pages. Report inappropriate messages to an adult, the internet service provider or website moderator. Report threats against your safety to the police.

## Tip #3: Avoid isolation

- **Let People Know.** Talk to a parent, counselor, coach, religious leader or trusted friend. Expressing what you're going through can make a huge difference to the way you feel, even if it doesn't change the situation.
- **Don't blame yourself.** It is not your fault. No matter what someone says or does, you should not be ashamed of who you are or what you feel.

Adapted and used by permission from Helpguide.org:  
<http://helpguide.org/mental/bullying.htm>

### ***The Stats: Bullying in Montana***

In 2021, **15.6 percent of high school students reported being bullied at school** (down from 22% in 2019), and **16.4 percent reported being electronically bullied** (down from nearly 18% in 2019).

Source: 2019, 2021 YRBS Survey