

Bullying

What is Bullying?

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive, offensive, threatening, insulting, or humiliating words or actions intended to cause fear, intimidation, or harm that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated or has potential to be repeated over time.

In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- **An Imbalance of Power:** Kids who bully use their power – physical strength, embarrassing information, or popularity – to control, intimidate, or harm others.
- **Repetition:** Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, excluding someone from a group on purpose, and more.

Types of Bullying

- **Verbal Bullying:** Saying or writing mean or rude things. *Malicious teasing/insulting; threatening to cause harm.*
- **Social Bullying:** Also known as relational bullying, involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships. *Exclusion/shunning spreading rumors; embarrassing someone in public.*

- **Physical Bullying:** Involves hurting a person's body or possessions. *Hitting/kicking/unwanted physical contact; taking or breaking someone's things*
- **Cyberbullying:** Involves use of information and communication technology (email, cellphone, social media, etc.) to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group that is intended to harm others. *Posting slurs or rumors about a student online; sending email or messages that are mean or threatening; taking and/or sending embarrassing photos of students;*
- **Sexual Bullying:** Unwanted sexual advances, touching, or comments intended to make the victim uncomfortable, embarrassed, or humiliated.

When and Where Bullying Happens

Bullying can occur during or after school hours. While most reported bullying happens in the school building, a significant percentage also happens in places like on the playground or on the bus. It can also happen traveling to or from **school**, in the student's **neighborhood**, or on the **Internet**.

Is your child being bullied?

Are there signs that your child is being bullied?

Does your child:

- Arrive home from school with clothing which is torn or in disarray?
- Have bruises, cuts, or scratches which cannot readily be explained?
- Not want to go to school in the morning? Complain of stomach or headaches?
- Go the long way to school?
- Have sleep disturbances – can't sleep, wakes often, nightmares?
- Appear uninterested or unable to do school work?
- Seem sad/depressed or have mood swings?
- Appear to be a loner – few friends, if any?
- Lack self-confidence? Appear timid or shy?

If your child exhibits any of these behaviors, he/she may be bullied. Talk to them about bullying. You may never know unless you ask.

Helping Your Child

- Listen to your child. Treat the problem seriously.
- Remain calm.
- Be supportive of your child. Don't blame him/her.
- Don't tell your child to fight back. Fighting back can make the problem worse.
- Teach your child the proper steps of reporting bullying
- Report the incident(s) to the school

Is your child the bully?

The following questions can help you determine if your child may be bullying others. Does your child:

- Dominate other family members? Use threats to get his/her way? Intimidate brothers/sisters and/or kids in the neighborhood?
- Brag about how he/she is superior to other kids?
- Have a quick temper, easily frustrate, and act impulsively?
- Have difficulty following rules well and acts impatient when made to wait?
- Cheat?
- Become defiant and/or aggressive toward adults, both at home and at school?
- Participate in criminal behavior (stealing, vandalism)? Hang out with kids that act the same way?

“Yes” responses may indicate that your child engages in bullying behavior.

Helping the Bully

- Don't deny the problem or minimize it; treat it seriously
- Don't believe everything your child tells you. Double-check the facts
- Try to find out why your child is bullying – get professional help if necessary
- Let your child know that bullying isn't tolerated
- Don't model bullying behavior (threats, slaps, etc.)

Reporting Bullying

The Potosi School District uses “[Safe Alert System](#)” as a quick and easy way for students to **anonymously, or with their names**, report incidents of bullying as well as other safety concerns. Students can report via text message, email, web, or phone. Staff response to these alerts are typically addressed the day of the report or the next school day.

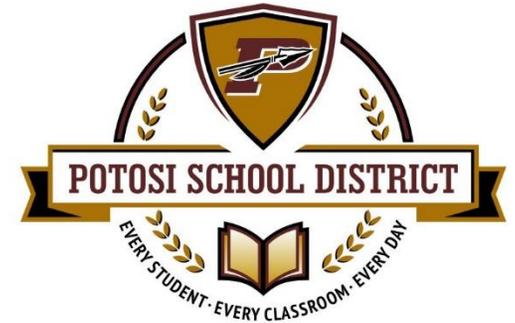
- **Web:** <http://1498.alert1.us>
- **Email:** 1498@alert.us
- **Phone:** **815.402.2799**
- **Text:** **815.402.2799**

Students can also:

- Report **verbally** or in **writing** to a teacher, guidance counselor, principal, or any adult at Potosi Public Schools
- Tell any trusted adult, parent, or guardian
- If it is an emergency, **Call 911**

Resources

www.StopBullying.gov
www.PacerKidsAgainstBullying.org
www.StopCyberBullying.org
www.ncpc.org
www.tolerance.org



How the Potosi School District Addresses Bullying

Bullying can threaten students' physical and emotional safety and can negatively impact their ability to learn. We take a preventative approach:

- Incorporation of topic of bullying into lessons and activities
- Speaker presentations about bullying
- Integration of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) into the classroom
- Our Mindfulness Grant allows us to set up preventative measures to help kids develop self-awareness and self-regulation skills to create positive interactions
- Middle School Character Council students implementing our “10 Days of Kindness” Campaign among middle school students; outline for the campaign:

<http://www.actionforhappiness.org/10-keys>