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Anti-Bullying: Strategies and Resources for Educators

Educators help create the kind of positive environments that allow students to feel safe and supported, and encourage them to learn. To support their efforts, the Department presents resources below for preventing and responding to bullying, thus avoiding its negative and often long-term consequences for students. We also encourage all educators to understand their related district policies and procedures.

What does state law require?

[Ohio Law](#) requires all Ohio public school districts to have policies prohibiting harassment, intimidation, and bullying. School staff members should know about their district’s policy and how it defines their role in addressing prohibited behaviors.

What is an educator's role?

Any school staff who witness acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying shall promptly notify the building principal and/or the principal’s designee of the event observed. The district policy shall state the procedure for promptly documenting the incident reported.

After an incident is reported, school administration can investigate and develop a [Student Action Plan](#) to safeguard all students from further incidents of harassment, intimidation, bullying. Student Action Planning is a process between the student, their parent or guardian, school staff, and peers to effectively respond to student safety needs. School administration may have a separate action plan for each student involved in a reported incident. Students may include:

- » Each student directly harmed.
- » Each student involved in causing harm.
- » Each bystander. (Note: bystanders may have participated in causing harm through encouragement or support of harmful actions or may have experienced harm as witnesses.)

Strategies for school personnel

- » **Modeling** behavior that is inclusive and promotes **respect for all students**;
- » Providing students with opportunities to talk about bullying and enlist their support in **defining bullying as an unacceptable behavior**;
- » **Helping students know what to do** if they observe or are confronted by a bully;
- » Posting and publicizing rules against bullying, including **fair and consistent consequences**;
- » **Establishing and explaining written student behavior codes** to students, parents and the community and having students and parents sign **behavior contracts** consistent with these codes;
- » **Constantly monitoring** cafeterias, playgrounds and other “hot spots” where bullying is likely to occur and where direct adult supervision may not be present;
- » **Taking immediate action** when bullying is observed so that both the target and the bully know that mistreating someone is not tolerated;
- » **Creating cooperative learning activities** that encourage interaction among students from different groups and ensure equal treatment of all participants;
- » Implementing a **buddy system** that pairs students with friends, student mentors and other supportive students, particularly if they are new to school; and
- » Forming friendship groups that **support children** who are regularly bullied by peers.

Resources

- » [SchoolSafety.gov](#) provides schools and districts with actionable recommendations to create safe and supportive learning environments for students and educators.
- » [Educate about Bullying](#) – Stopbullying.gov presents evidence-based programs and other ways educators can incorporate bullying prevention in lessons and school activities.
- » [Creating a Safe and Respectful Environment in Our Nation’s Classrooms](#) – The National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments created these two modules to help teachers cultivate meaningful relationships with students while creating positive classroom environments.
- » [Youth Violence Prevention: Bullying](#)- The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention defines bullying behavior, provides warning signs and practices to prevent bullying behavior. The CDC also includes outcomes, quick facts with stats and resources to assist schools and families respond to and interrupt bullying behavior.
- » [STOMP Out Bullying](#) offers suggestions on [how teachers can end bullying](#) as well as an online [Educator Participation Toolkit](#) of activities to help in preventing and addressing bullying.
- » [Ohio Mental Health Network for School Success \(OMHNSS\)](#) – This network builds connections between schools and community agencies to address the mental health and school success of children and adolescents. By enhancing students' healthy psychological development, the goal is to reduce mental health barriers to learning.
- » [Learning for Justice](#) – This site has free resources for addressing issues of diversity and bullying.
- » [Anti-Bullying and Disabilities](#) – Bullying impacts 60 percent of individuals with disabilities. OCALI (Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence) presents resources to increase awareness, provide education and promote action. You will find webcasts for educators and families, websites, anti-bullying program information, and books by grade level.

Related

[Ohio Positive Behavior and Intervention Supports](#)
[Ohio School Safety Center](#)

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OHIO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE

Stephen D. Dackin, Director | 25 South Front Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215
1-877-644-6338 | contact.center@education.ohio.gov

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