

Long Hill Ledger

Mrs. Jocelyn Merritt, Ed., M. NCSP, School Psychologist
Mrs. Kim Puleo, MA, NCC, LPC, District Counselor
Ms. Sarah Romeo, LCSW, School Social Worker

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide parents with helpful parenting tips and useful resources.

Helping Your Child Become More Resilient to Bullying

- Help to develop talents or positive attributes of your child. Suggest and facilitate music, athletics, and art activities. Doing so may help your child be more confident among his/her peers.

- Encourage your child to make contact with friendly students in his class. Your child's teacher may be able to suggest students with whom your child can make friends, spend time, or collaborate on work.

- Help your child meet new friends outside of the school environment. A new environment can provide a fresh start for

a child who has been bullied repeatedly.

- Teach your child safety strategies. Teach him/her how to seek help from an adult when he/she feels threatened by a bully. Talk about whom he/she should go to for help and role-play what she/he should say. Assure your child that reporting bullying is not the same as tattling.

- Ask yourself: Is my child being bullied because of a lack of social skills? If your child is hyperactive, impulsive or overly talkative, the child who bullies may be reacting out of annoyance. This does not make the bullying right, but it may help to explain why your child is being targeted. If

your child easily irritates people, seek help from a counselor so that your child can better learn the informal social rules of his/her peer group.

- Home is where the heart is. Make sure your child has a safe and loving home environment where he/she can take shelter, physically and emotionally. Always keep the lines of communication open.

Bullying vs. Conflict; Is There a Difference?

“Harassment, intimidation or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behavior, is conduct that disrupts a student’s ability to learn and a school’s ability to educate its students in a safe environment...”

Can we really stop every 3rd grader from a name calling incident? Can we really stop a 6th grader from writing an unkind note about a classmate? Every time?

Of course, we can’t control every aspect of student behavior, but some guidelines follow as to what might be a case of simple conflict resolution; effectively handled by the students themselves and perhaps the aid of a teacher or counselor **or** a case of bullying/harassment which requires swift and firm discipline from

the principal and parents.

Bully/victim conflict includes an imbalance of power or perceived power. This power may be social, economic or cognitive or simply a case of numbers. In some way the bully has an unfair advantage. The frequency of the behavior is also important to consider as is the actual effect on the victim. People react differently to different things. Whenever the victim is truly traumatized, it requires adult sanctions and a consequence plan.

Normal peer conflict implies a balance of power, less frequency and lack of real victim trauma. There may not be a “victim” at all in reality as both parties may feel victimized or “in the right”. They both may well be. In cases like this,

students may do best with mediation, reteaching of conflict resolution skills, or other assistance as needed. However, intervention should take place only if necessary. Allow students to resolve their own conflicts when and if they can. When adults run to the rescue for every conflict, they rob their children of the opportunity to learn important coping skills they will need later in life.

Never hesitate to contact your child’s school if you think your child is being bullied. Your child may tell you not to or be afraid things will get worse. However, that’s usually not the case, and it will certainly continue if nothing is done.

Among the excellent resources for parents and students is the website <http://www.stopbullyingnow.com/>



No
Bullying