



ALABAMA

School Personnel

Training on Bullying

INFORMING EDUCATORS: SAFE SCHOOLS

March 2026

BUILDING INFORMED EDUCATORS

Prepared by:



ALABAMA SCHOOL
BULLYING & SUICIDE
PREVENTION COMMITTEE

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Required Under the Law HB 366

Jamari Terrell Williams Student Bullying Prevention Act

Ala. Code § 16-28B-1

- Local education agencies (LEA) shall adopt a policy on student suicide prevention.
- All certificated public school personnel shall receive annual training in suicide awareness and prevention.
- Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) shall make referral, crisis intervention and other related information available to students, parents and school personnel.
- The ALSDE shall educate students in recognizing signs of ideation and other warning signs related to suicidal behavior.
- The ALSDE shall promote cooperative efforts between school personnel and community suicide prevention programs.
- The ALSDE shall develop a plan to assist survivors of attempted suicide, completed suicide, the death of a student and develop healing processes.

TRAINING OUTLINE

- Overview of Bullying & Dynamics
- Explore the Types of Bullying with Scenarios
- Legal Responsibilities
- Cyberbullying Warning Signs
- Cultural Responsiveness & Supporting Vulnerable Students
- Roles in Bullying & Signs of Involvement

TYPES OF BULLYING –Physical

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior involving a real or perceived power imbalance.



PHYSICAL

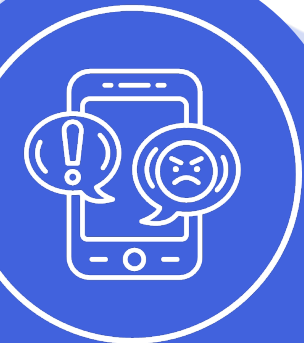
- Hitting
- Kicking
- Pushing
- Property damage



VERBAL



SOCIAL/EXCLUSION



CYBERBULLYING

TYPES OF BULLYING – Verbal

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior involving a real or perceived power imbalance.



TYPES OF BULLYING – Social/ Exclusion

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior involving a real or perceived power imbalance.



TYPES OF BULLYING – Cyberbullying

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior involving a real or perceived power imbalance.



PHYSICAL



VERBAL



SOCIAL/EXCLUSION



CYBERBULLYING

- Harassment or intimidation through digital platforms

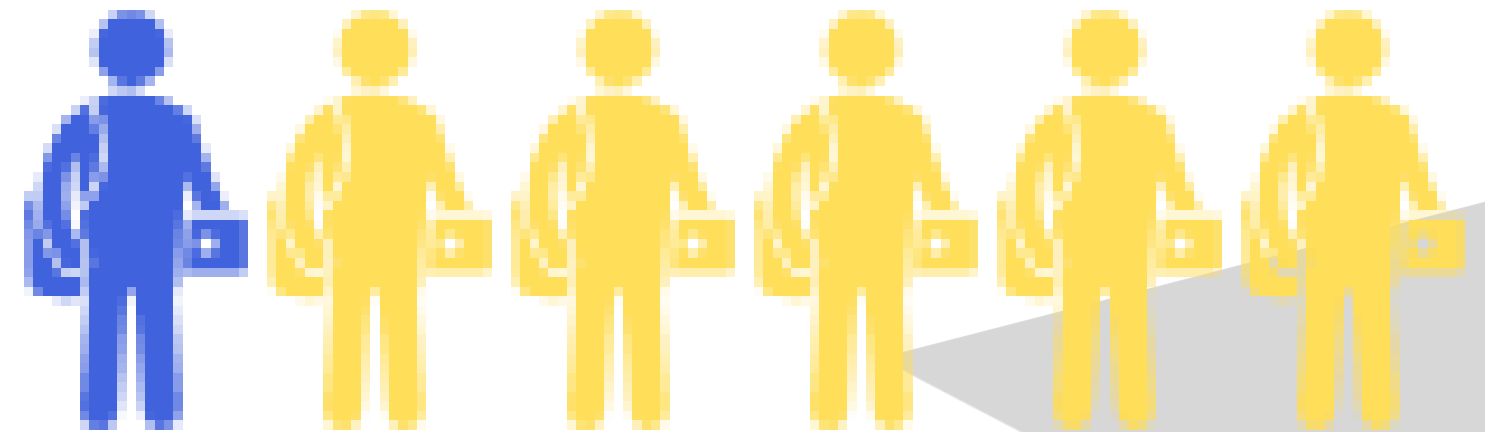
Prevalence 2023 YRBS (CDC, 2024)

MORE THAN



1 in 5 high school students reported being bullied in the last year.

MORE THAN



1 in 6 high school students reported being cyberbullied in the last year.

UNDERSTANDING BULLYING DYNAMICS

POWER
IMBALANCE

INTENTIONAL
AND
REPEATED
BEHAVIOR

SOCIAL
HIERARCHY &
GROUP
DYNAMICS

PSYCHOLOGICAL
DRIVERS

ENVIRONMENTAL
FACTORS

UNDERSTANDING BULLYING DYNAMICS – Power Imbalance

POWER IMBALANCE

- Bullying involves an unequal balance of power – physical strength, social status, intelligence, or access to digital platforms.
- The bully uses this advantage to control, intimidate, or humiliate the victim.

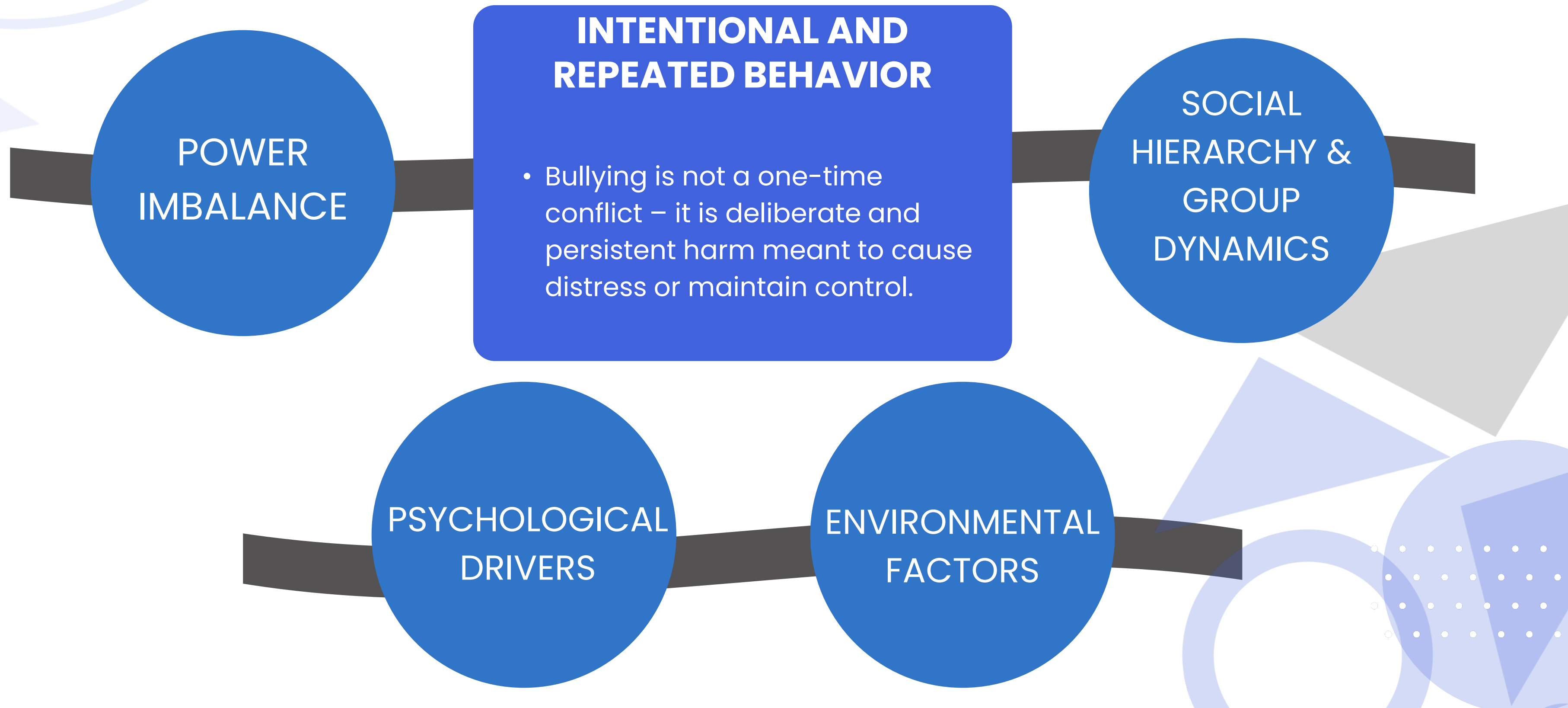
INTENTIONAL
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SOCIAL
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GROUP
DYNAMICS

PSYCHOLOGICAL
DRIVERS

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FACTORS

UNDERSTANDING BULLYING DYNAMICS – Intentional and Repeated Behavior



UNDERSTANDING BULLYING DYNAMICS – Social Hierarchy & Group Dynamics

POWER
IMBALANCE

INTENTIONAL
AND
REPEATED
BEHAVIOR

SOCIAL HIERARCHY & GROUPT DYNAMICS

- Peer groups often reinforce bullying behaviors to maintain social ranking (“cool” vs. “outcast”).
- Bystanders may provide silent approval or laughter, reinforcing the aggressor’s power.

PSYCHOLOGICAL
DRIVERS

ENVIRONMENTAL
FACTORS

UNDERSTANDING BULLYING DYNAMICS – Psychological Drivers

POWER
IMBALANCE

INTENTIONAL
AND
REPEATED
BEHAVIOR

SOCIAL
HIERARCHY &
GROUP
DYNAMICS

PSYCHOLOGICAL DRIVERS

- Insecurity, need for dominance, past exposure to aggression, or lack of empathy.
- Sometimes linked to unmet emotional needs or low self-esteem masked by control-seeking.

ENVIRONMENTAL
FACTORS

UNDERSTANDING BULLYING DYNAMICS – Environmental Factors

POWER
IMBALANCE

INTENTIONAL
AND
REPEATED
BEHAVIOR

SOCIAL
HIERARCHY &
GROUP
DYNAMICS

PSYCHOLOGICAL
DRIVERS

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

- School climate, lack of supervision, unclear policies, or social media pressure can create fertile ground for bullying.

EXPLORE THE TYPES OF BULLYING

Scenarios

Reflection Questions

PHYSICAL BULLYING – Scenario

SCENARIO:

During recess, two students corner another student near the basketball court. One pushes the student while the other grabs his backpack and throws it into the mud. The student walks away quietly and avoids recess the next day.



PHYSICAL BULLYING – Reflection Q&A

What could teachers or peers have done in this situation?

- Teachers or peers could have intervened immediately, separated the students, ensured safety, and reported the incident.

What are some subtle forms of physical bullying that may go unnoticed?

- Subtle signs: “playful” hitting, property damage, or the student avoiding recess or physical areas.

VERBAL BULLYING – Scenario

SCENARIO:

A student repeatedly calls another “stupid” during group work and mocks them in front of classmates. Over time, the targeted student stops volunteering answers in class.



VERBAL BULLYING – Reflection Q&A

REFLECTION Q&A:

How can staff intervene early when teasing becomes harmful?

- Staff should address teasing immediately, reinforce respect, and model empathy.

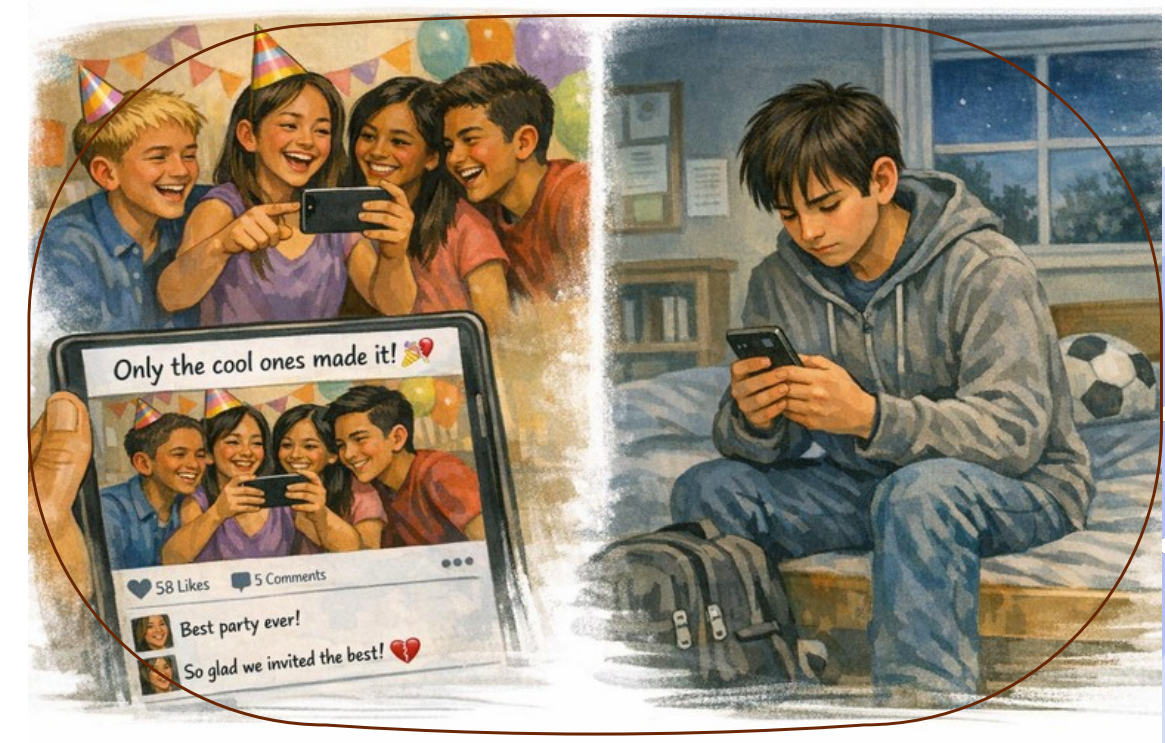
What are some non-verbal cues that might indicate verbal bullying?

- Non-verbal cues: sudden silence, hesitation to speak, or avoidance of group work.

SOCIAL/EXCLUSION BULLYING – Scenario

SCENARIO:

A group of students decides not to invite a classmate to a birthday party and later posts pictures of the event on social media with captions like, “Only the cool ones made it.”



SOCIAL/EXCLUSION BULLYING – Reflection Q&A

REFLECTION Q&A:

Why is this form of bullying often overlooked by adults?

- It's often dismissed as “friend drama” or social choice.

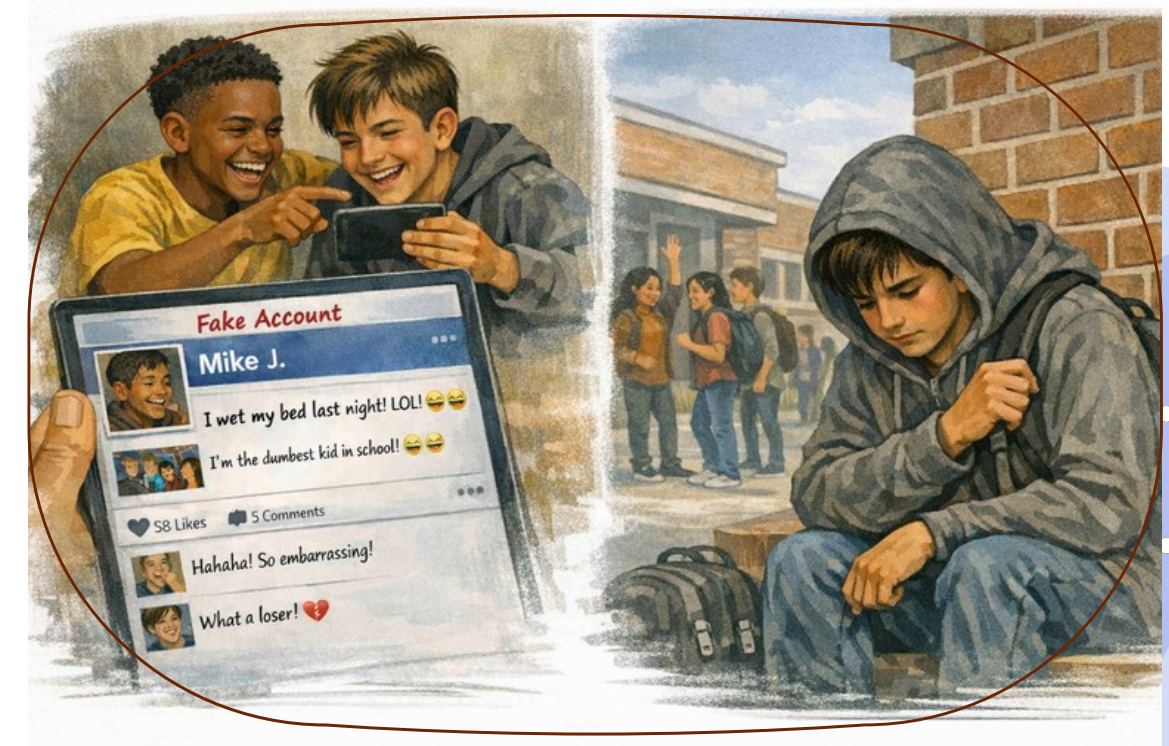
How can schools create inclusive environments to prevent social exclusion?

- Promote inclusive classroom culture, encourage empathy, and facilitate group rotations.

CYBERBULLYING – Scenario

SCENARIO:

After a disagreement, a student creates a fake social media account pretending to be their classmate and posts embarrassing messages. The victim begins missing school out of fear of ridicule.



CYBERBULLYING – Reflection Q&A

REFLECTION Q&A:

How can schools and parents monitor online behavior while respecting privacy?

- Encourage open communication, digital citizenship lessons, and awareness programs.

What steps should students take if they witness or experience cyberbullying?

- Students should save evidence, report to trusted adults, and avoid retaliation.

UNIQUE CONCERNS ASSOCIATED WITH CYBERBULLYING

- **Persistent**
 - Digital devices provide a means to immediately and continuously communicate 24 hours a day.
- **Permanent**
 - Most communications are public and permanent if not reported and removed.
- **Hard to notice**
 - Because parents and teachers may not see or overhear cyberbullying taking place, it can be harder to identify.



LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Department duties: Model Policy -

(10) A procedure for publicizing local board policy through publication in the student handbook, including providing notice that **the policy applies to behavior occurring** off of school property and to participation in school-sponsored functions, **whether the conduct occurs on or off school property, online, or electronically.**

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES – School Duties



School duties:

1. Develop and implement **evidence-based practices to promote a school environment** that is free of harassment, intimidation, violence, and threats of violence.
2. Develop and implement **evidence-based practices to prevent harassment, intimidation, violence, and threats of violence based**, as a minimum, on the criteria established by this chapter and local board policy, **and to intervene when such incidents occur.**



LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES – School Duties cont.

School duties:

3. **Incorporate into civility, citizenship, and character education** curricula awareness of and sensitivity to the prohibitions of this chapter and local board policy against harassment, intimidation, violence, and threats of violence.
4. **Report** statistics to the local board of actual violence, submitted reports of threats of violence, and harassment.

DID YOU KNOW?

What are the potential penalties for cyberbullying?

While schools address cyberbullying with policies, severe cases can also involve criminal charges under general harassment/stalking laws, classifying some acts as Class C misdemeanors with fines and jail time.

Which children are most at risk of being bullied?

Generally, children who are bullied have one or more of the following risk factors:

- Are perceived as different from their peers, such as being overweight or underweight, wearing glasses or different clothing, being new to a school, or being unable to afford what kids consider “cool”
- Are perceived as weak or unable to defend themselves
- Are depressed, anxious, or have low self-esteem
- Are less popular than others and have few friends
- Do not get along well with others, seen as annoying or provoking, or antagonize others for attention
- However, even if a child has these risk factors, it doesn't mean that they will be bullied.



CAUTION!

No single factor puts a child at risk of being bullied or bullying others. Bullying can happen anywhere to any student.

SUPPORTING VULNERABLE STUDENTS

Build Relationships

- Have regular check-ins with vulnerable students to develop trust and open communication

Foster Belonging

- Encourage participation in school and community activities

Create Safe Spaces

- Ensure that classroom environments promote physical and psychological safety

Encourage Peer Mentorships

- Connect vulnerable students to your school's peer helpers program

PROMOTE A BULLY-FREE SCHOOL CLIMATE

- Emphasize good behaviors and high academic performance regularly.
- Teach, promote, and reward politeness, cooperation, and helpfulness.
- Reward random acts of kindness.
- Utilize teachable moments, examples of successful conflict resolution, or acts of kindness.

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