

Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation/Threats

Harassment: (attempts to cause someone harm, physical, social or emotional and usually is unprovoked)

Harassment has these components: Aggressor, Victim, Bystander or Participant

Kinds of Harassment:

- Physical (hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting, etc.)
- Emotional (put-downs, teasing, intimidation, making fun of, taunting, etc)
- Social (social exclusion, ignore, humiliate, name call, spread rumors, notes, social weapons, etc.)
- Cyber (telephone, text messages, email etc)
- Sexual (verbal, non-verbal, physical)

Reasons: race, religion, ethnic, bias, hate, disability, sexual orientation, etc.

Bullying usually begins with hostility toward someone or something different (could stem from a judgmental reaction or a personal jealousy) a lack of understanding and/or a lack of appreciation of individual differences, or a lack of tolerance for others.

Consequences for the victim: embarrassment, feeling uncomfortable, anger (often leads to retaliation and violence) anti-social behavior, depression and even suicide.

Being accepted or belonging in middle school is a basic need for students and unfortunately it is sometimes a struggle. The best advice is to live by the

Golden Rule: Treat other's the way you want to be treated.

You can not control others behavior **BUT** you can control your own reactions to others. Work at making friends (can you have too many?) and work at not creating enemies (you'll make enough of these along the way without trying).

The best way to make a friend is to be one (follow the Golden Rule).

Do's:

- Be kind and considerate
- Give praise and compliments freely
- Share interests
- Be sympathetic (middle school is a difficult time try to understand others moods)
- Practice fairness
- Do kind and caring things for others (use good manners)
- Show your appreciation when someone is kind to you (say thank you)
- Friendship is not a task it is a privilege
- Treat others with respect
- Be honest and trustworthy

Don'ts:

- Spread rumors
- Write notes
- Judge others
- Try to discipline others (leave that to teacher and administrators)
- Say hurtful things (if you can't say something nice don't say anything)
- Talk behind other's backs
- Try to control other's by socially excluding someone else
- Use cell phones, email or the internet to hurt others

Friendships are important to all of us handle them with care and know the value of good friends. Remember that friends share our lives; they help build trust, share humor, increase our personal communication (both talking and listening), share our values, share and help us learn new interests, skills and talents. Friends know us and care about us; they are sympathetic to our needs (sometimes over their own needs). They understand our faults and shortcomings and accept us for who we are and who we are becoming. Real friends multiply our joys and divide our sorrows.

Work at becoming a better friend practice the following character (**character is what we do** not what say or think) traits:

Trustworthiness

Honesty

Integrity

Courage

Fairness

Caring

Responsibility

Respect

Diligence

Citizenship

Principles of Character

1. Your character is defined by what you do – not by what you say or believe.
2. Every choice you make helps define the kind of person you are choosing to be.
3. Good character requires doing the “right” thing even when it is costly or risky.
4. You do not have to “go along with the crowd,” you can choose to be better.
5. What you do matters, and one person can make a big difference in the world.

The payoff for good character is that it makes you a better person, and it makes our community and the world a better place to live.

