

WHAT A PARENT CAN DO:

If your child is involved in unfriendly or bullying behaviour, he or she needs your confidence, understanding and support.

If your child is mentioning that someone is being unfriendly:

- ◆ Encourage talking; it may be difficult but be patient.
- ◆ Try to remain open minded until all of the facts are presented or clarified.
- ◆ Give assurance that the situation will be changed.
- ◆ Assure your child that it happens to most people at some time. We learn to avoid it, cope with it or confront it.
- ◆ Reassure your child that it is not happening because there is something wrong with him or her.
- ◆ Identify reasons why these actions are hurtful.
- ◆ Report the matter to a staff member, even if unsure of the extent of the behaviours. The staff member/school is now alerted to the possibility of a problem.
- ◆ Tell your child that physical or verbal retaliation on their part is NOT the answer.

Always try to work through the school, but talk with your child about what you are doing and why.

IF YOUR CHILD IS BULLYING OTHERS:

- ◆ Make it clear that bullying for any reason is unacceptable.
- ◆ Help your child to understand the difference between assertive and aggressive behaviour.
- ◆ Make it clear that hurting or distressing another person unable to defend him or herself is unacceptable.
- ◆ Explore the possibility that the child is seeking attention and love. Are there home or school situations that are contributing to these behaviours? Sensitive discussion may indicate that the person bullying may also be being bullied.
- ◆ Explore the need for development of self-confidence and success in another area to counter poor self-esteem.
- ◆ Talk with other parents, friends, teachers and share ideas and experiences.

WHAT CAN I DO?

(Suggested strategies to discuss with your child)

If it happens to me:

- ◆ Tell the student who is being unfriendly to stop. State quite clearly that the behaviour is unwelcome and offensive.
- ◆ Ignore them and walk away.
- ◆ Seek help. Talk about it to someone you trust.
- ◆ Report it to a member of staff, a trustworthy friend or buddy. Feel confident that an incident can be solved.
- ◆ Talk it over openly with your parents - they can help you make the best decision.
- ◆ Do NOT retaliate with physical or verbal abuse.
- ◆ If you are experiencing unfriendly behavior on the way to or from school, tell your parents and walk home with a friend.

If it happens to someone else:

- ◆ Tell the person to stop.
- ◆ Be a friend to the person who is being targeted.
- ◆ Encourage the person to inform someone.
- ◆ Seek help. You can decide to do something about it and help to protect others.
- ◆ Talk it over with the teacher.

More information can be found at:

www.friendlyschools.com.au

Our Approach to Restoring Relationships

At Harmony Primary School, all members of the school community are entitled to a safe, secure and caring environment.

Is it Bullying?

When someone says or does something **unintentionally** hurtful and they do it once or twice, that's **RUDE**.

When someone says or does something **intentionally** hurtful and they do it once or twice, that's **MEAN**.

When someone says or does something **intentionally** hurtful and they keep on doing it even when you tell them to stop or show them that you are upset—that's **BULLYING**.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Rights

To feel safe

To learn

To be respected

To be valued

Responsibilities

To respect yourself

To respect others

To use common sense

To support others

It is your right and your responsibility to report unfriendly behaviour and bullying, whether it happens to you or to someone else.

IT'S REALLY UNCOOL TO BE UNFRIENDLY OR TO BULLY AT SCHOOL

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is the willful, conscious desire to **repeatedly** hurt, threaten or embarrass someone.

For example, when a person:

- ◆ hits, slaps or punches
- ◆ kicks, pushes or strangles
- ◆ spits, bites, pinches or scratches
- ◆ throws objects
- ◆ gets another person to harm someone
- ◆ name-calls
- ◆ teases or makes fun of
- ◆ demands money, food or possessions
- ◆ forces another to do something
- ◆ threatens to harm
- ◆ spreads rumours
- ◆ tries to get other students not to like someone
- ◆ threatens and/or uses obscene gestures
- ◆ intimidates or uses threatening body language
- ◆ deliberately excludes someone from a group or activity
- ◆ removes and hides and/or damages others' belongings

THE SHARED CONCERN APPROACH

We use the 'Shared Concern Approach' to deal with incidents of unfriendly behaviour, especially if they escalate to bullying.

Briefly this approach consists of the following:

- [1] Individual meetings are held with each of the students involved in the situation, e.g. the student or students being unfriendly, the person who is being treated disrespectfully and any bystanders who may have seen what has happened.
- [2] Each student is asked about the problem and to suggest ways in which he or she personally could help to improve the situation.
- [3] The person who is being treated disrespectfully is also given the opportunity to discuss what happened and is encouraged to think of ways to improve the situation.
- [4] Follow-up meetings, discussions and planning give students the opportunity to change and improve their attitudes and behaviour and to put these into practice in a supportive environment.

Bullying can be a complicated problem which takes time and patience to resolve properly. Using this approach, we are committed to the safety, well being and privacy of all students. You can feel confident that the school is continuously monitoring and addressing any reported incidents.

CONTINUED INCIDENTS WILL RESULT IN REFERRAL TO AN ADMINISTRATOR FOR THE POSSIBLE APPLICATION OF BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT CONSEQUENCES.

PARENTS CAN HELP

Take an active interest

- ◆ in your child's social life.
- ◆ in what is happening at school.
- ◆ **ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD**
 - to bring friends home.
 - to accept and tolerate differences in others.
- ◆ **BUILD HIS OR HER SELF CONFIDENCE**
 - by recognising and affirming his or her positive qualities.
 - by valuing him or her for who he or she is.
- ◆ **SET AN EXAMPLE**
 - be firm but not aggressive in setting limits.
 - be positive in the things you say and do.
- ◆ **BE ALERT FOR SIGNS OF DISTRESS**
 - unwillingness to attend school.
 - dropping off in the quality of school work.
 - damaged clothing or frequent loss of personal property.
 - loss of confidence or mood changes.
 - withdrawal from social activities.
 - pattern of illness.
 - requests for extra money.
- ◆ **ACT**
 - If your child is being treated in an unfriendly manner or is being bullied, discuss the issue with the class teacher or member of the administration team.
 - Do not deal directly with the other children or their parents.