

## **Crossroads Christian School: Anti-Bullying Policy and Guidelines**

Bullying Definition: "Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both children who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems."

In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- An Imbalance of Power: Kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- Repetition: Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

There are three types of bullying:

- Verbal bullying is saying or writing mean things. Verbal bullying includes:
  - Teasing
  - Name-calling
  - Inappropriate sexual comments
  - Taunting
  - Threatening to cause harm
- Social bullying, sometimes referred to as relational bullying, involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships. Social bullying includes:
  - Leaving someone out on purpose
  - Telling other children not to be friends with someone
  - Spreading rumors about someone
  - Embarrassing someone in public
- Physical bullying involves hurting a person's body or possessions. Physical bullying includes:
  - Hitting/kicking/pinching
  - Spitting
  - Tripping/pushing
  - Taking or breaking someone's things
  - Making mean or rude hand gestures
  - Intimidating someone by purposefully following them around (this can include choosing a chair/desk to sit by them to intimidate them).

Bullying can occur during or after school hours. While most reported bullying happens in the school building, a significant percentage also happens in places like on the playground. It can also happen travelling to or from school, in the youth's neighborhood, or on the Internet.

Crossroads Christian School has no tolerance for bullying—whether it be by children or adults. We want to ensure a safe place for all people physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and socially.

It is important to remember:

- There will be personality conflicts and different ways of doing things. We can think differently about things. We don't have to be close friends but we still must be kind and empathetic with one another.
- No child or human, for that matter, is perfect. Let us forgive one another.
- All children and adults are in the process of learning. We can all change if we want to! We need to encourage change and not tolerate repeated unkindness.
- In regards to child development: some behavior is age-related. Different ages have different challenges. This is how they grow and learn. Younger children are learning social cues that are different than older children therefore expectations should shift according to age appropriateness.
- However, no matter what age or gender, it is important to lead children in how to treat people with kindness and empathy as part of the social-emotional development for all ages.
- It is important to remember: social, emotional, and spiritual development is intertwined with intellectual development. Crossroads Christian School has a commitment to every child that calls this place home. Hurtful words are weapons...and CCS has a "no weapon" policy.

Conflict Resolution Exercises and Options:

Goal: We want each of you to learn the life-skill of handling offense in a godly way knowing that your value rests in what God says about you and not what anyone else says or does.

1. Walk: Walk away from the offense without reacting or retaliating. Choose to forgive and to be a person of character. Be powerful by using self-control and the wisdom to walk away.  
(Proverbs 19:11 "A man's wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offense.")
2. Talk. If you feel hurt, threatened or upset by something someone has done to you directly---use an "I" statement to tell them how you feel and a direct request for them to stop.

Example: "It hurts my feelings when you talk about me, I would appreciate it if you would stop." Or "Have I done something to offend you? If so, please let me know and I would appreciate it if we could speak to each other kindly." "You don't have to be my friend if you don't want to but please show kindness by not talking about me." If the person persists in saying unkind things to you directly, tell them 2 more times in a calm way how it is making you feel and that you would like them to stop. If you can't tell them face to face, you can write them a note—practice being a healthy person by confronting in love.  
(Matthew 18:15 "If your brother or sister sins (offends or hurts you), go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over.")

3. Reverse the negativity. Understand that you are valuable and absolutely loved regardless of what anyone says or does to you. Insecure people hurt others. Overpower negative talk with positive talk. Even if your feelings are hurt, you can make a choice to forgive, pray for someone and speak kindly about them. Do not believe or spread gossip. Real friends are growing in love and don't let each other gossip. Choose to kill gossip and slander by making a commitment to only speak what will benefit others. If someone gossips to you about someone else, say, "I am really glad that we are friends and that you trust me but I am not going to listen to negative talk about others because it ends up hurting a lot of people in the end."
4. Talk to a Teacher, Administrator, or other leader. Ultimately, you cannot control someone else's actions. After you have used these skills to confront in a healthy way and someone continues to say unkind things to you directly or is threatening you in any way—let an adult know what is going on and how it is affecting you. Let them know the steps you have taken to problem solve and ask for help.