



## APPENDIX A : Bullying Prevention

### Helpful Handout for Parents and Carers

Parents and other carers have a key role in preventing and responding to bullying. You can:

- Learn [what bullying is](#) and what it is not. This is the first step in talking about how to prevent or respond to bullying with your child. 'Bullying' is a word that is used for many things that are not actually bullying. These other behaviours may be just as serious, but may require different responses.
- Talk about the value of [diversity](#) within the community and understanding that each individual is unique and brings with them individual qualities that should be valued and respected.
- [Talk about bullying](#) with your child at home to make it easier for them to tell you if something happens. Make sure they know what bullying is and how they can respond. Help prepare your children to [prevent online bullying](#) and to know what to do if it happens.
- Start [when your child is young](#) to guide them to develop the social and emotional skills they will need to build positive relationships throughout their lives, including [problem-solving skills](#).
- Recognise the [warning signs of bullying](#). Although there may not be an issue, you should talk to your child if you have any concerns. Raise the topic generally if you don't want to ask directly. Be aware that many times children and young people won't ask for help, so it is important to know the warning signs.
- Learn about how to respond appropriately [if your child tells you about bullying](#). You can reassure your child by remaining calm and being supportive.
- Find out as much as you can about what has happened by [talking calmly](#) with your child. A good understanding about what has happened can also help you in communicating with the school about the situation.
- Contact [the school if bullying has occurred](#) and the school needs to be involved. Read about how you and the school can [work together](#) to support your child, whether your child was bullied, bullied others, or witnessed bullying.
- [Get involved](#) in what your school is doing to prevent bullying.

#### **What is Bullying?**

*Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.*

*Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records). Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects for those involved, including bystanders.*

*Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.*

#### **There are four main types of bullying behaviour:**

- **Physical** – examples include: hitting, pushing, shoving or intimidating or otherwise physically hurting another person, damaging or stealing their belongings. It includes threats of violence
- **Verbal/written** – examples include: name-calling or insulting someone about an attribute, quality or personal characteristic
- **Social** (sometimes called relational or emotional bullying) – examples include: deliberately excluding someone, spreading rumours, sharing information that will have a harmful effect on the other person and/or damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance
- **Cyberbullying** – any form of bullying behaviour that occurs online or via a mobile device. It can be verbal or written, and can include threats of violence as well as images, videos and/or audio.

# Warning signs of bullying

Changes in mood, behaviour and physical appearance can all be warning signs of being bullied, however, some students may not display any warning signs at all.

## Warning signs at school

*If a student is being bullied at school they may:*

- become aggressive and unreasonable
- start to get into fights
- refuse to talk about what is wrong
- have unexplained bruises, cuts, scratches, particularly those appearing after recess or lunch
- have missing or damaged belongings or clothes
- have falling school grades
- be alone often or excluded from friendship groups at school
- show a change in their ability or willingness to speak up in class
- appear insecure or frightened
- be a frequent target for teasing, mimicking or ridicule.

## Warning signs at home

*A parent may observe changes in their child's behaviour at home which they can report to the school.*

*Their child may:*

- have trouble getting out of bed
- not want to go to school
- change their method or route to school or become frightened of walking to school
- change their sleeping or eating patterns
- have frequent tears, anger, mood swings and anxiety
- have unexplained bruises, cuts and scratches
- have stomach aches or unexplained pain
- have missing or damaged belongings or clothes
- ask for extra pocket money or food
- arrive home hungry
- show an unwillingness to discuss, or be secretive about, their online communication

## It might not be bullying

Some changes in behaviour may also be a result of other student issues such as depression or substance abuse, which may require a different response. Whether it involves bullying or other student issues, please speak to the school if you have any concerns.

## Reporting concerns to Warragul North Primary School

*Bullying complaints will be taken seriously and responded to sensitively at our school.*

Students who may be experiencing bullying behaviour, or students who have witnessed bullying behaviour, are encouraged to report their concerns to school staff as soon as possible.

Our ability to effectively reduce and eliminate bullying behaviour is greatly affected by students and/or parents and carers reporting concerning behaviour as soon as possible, so that the responses implemented by W.N.P.S. are consistent, timely and appropriate in the circumstances.

We encourage students to speak to their teacher, Assistant Principal or Principal. However, students are welcome to discuss their concerns with any trusted member of staff including other teachers, office staff or School Chaplain. Parents or carers who develop concerns that their child is involved in, or has witnessed bullying behaviour at W.N.P.S. should contact the Principal or Assistant Principal, by phone on 5623 4066, or by email directed to [warragul.north.ps@vic.gov.au](mailto:warragul.north.ps@vic.gov.au)

You can get more information about bullying for parents/carers and students at the following websites/organisations.

- [Bully Stoppers](#)
- [Kids Helpline](#)
- [Lifeline](#)
- [Bullying. No way!](#)
- [Student Wellbeing Hub](#)
- [Office of the eSafety Commissioner](#)
- [Australian Student Wellbeing Framework](#)

Sources: [www.education.vic.gov.au](http://www.education.vic.gov.au)  
[www.Kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.Kidshelpline.com.au)  
[www.bullyingnoway.gov.au](http://www.bullyingnoway.gov.au)