

# Bullying: What Parents Need to Know

## *How is bullying different from conflict and why does it matter?*

**Bullying** is defined as: A pattern of behavior when a person **repeatedly** uses power in an intentional manner, including verbal, physical, or written conduct or intentional electronic communication against one or more students.

Ask yourself: Was it intentional? Is there an imbalance of power (physical, social, or emotional)? Was the action meant to hurt? Is the behavior a repeated (pattern of behavior)? Does the target have trouble defending himself or herself? Was the target threatened with retaliation if he/she told?

**Conflict** is defined as: A struggle between two or more people who perceive they have differing goals or desires. Conflict occurs naturally as we interact with one another. It is a normal part of life that we will not always agree with other people about the things we want, what we think, or what we want to do. Most conflicts arise in the moment because people of the same relative amount of power see the same situation from two different points of view.

**Why It Matters** – Bullying is not normal and bullying behaviors are always classified as inappropriate. However, conflict is normal, but individuals sometimes behave in inappropriate ways. Knowing the difference determines the school response. There are processes in place to address parent concerns regarding bullying or inappropriate response to conflicts.

## *Where can parents get help to deal with bullying?*

*By linking to the resources below, BCPS is not endorsing any specific prevention product.*

### [What to do if your child is being bullied](#)

Get tips for supporting your child through this very painful experience.

Spanish version: [Consejos para los padres: Qué Hacer si su Hijo o Hija es Objeto de la Intimidación y del Abuso por Parte de Otros Estudiantes](#)

### [What to do if your child bullies others](#)

If your child bullies others at school, it needs to stop. Find out what you can do at home.

Spanish version: [Consejos para los padres: Qué Hacer si su Hijo o Hija Intimida y Abusa de los Demás](#)

### [What to do if your child witnesses bullying](#)

Empower your child to take positive action in bullying situations and help prevent further bullying.

Spanish version: [Consejos para los padres: Qué Hacer si su Hijo o Hija es Testigo de Actos de Intimidación y Abuso](#)

### [What can parents do to prevent and address cyber-bullying?](#)

Protect your child from indirect forms of bullying that use text messaging, Web sites, and cellular phones.

### ***How can students and parents report bullying?***

- Report concerns regarding conflict and/or bullying to a staff member.
- Bullying, Harassment, Intimidation Reporting Form –
  - ✓ Written
  - ✓ [Electronic](#)

### ***Where can parents learn more about bullying?***

[Maryland State Department of Education Bullying Prevention Resources](#)