

St. Raphael School Anti-Bullying Policy

Our mission

St. Raphael School will practise a “no tolerance” approach to bullying in all its forms, in line with SCDSB policy, and the provisions of the Safe Schools Act. Our school endorses each teacher’s right to teach, each student’s right to learn, and the right of safety for all members of the school community. Bullying is not acceptable behaviour at St. Raphael School, and all members of the school community will be expected to uphold the Gospel values of respect, dignity and trust.

What is bullying?

As listed in Policy/Program Memorandum No. 144 released by the Ministry of Education, bullying is “a form of repeated, persistent and aggressive behaviour that is directed at an individual or individuals that is intended to cause (or should be known to cause) fear and distress and/or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, or reputation. Bullying occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance.”

Bullying is a dynamic of unhealthy interaction that can take many forms. It can be:

<u>physical:</u>	hitting, pushing, tripping
<u>verbal:</u>	name calling, mocking, or making sexist, racist or homophobic comments
<u>social:</u>	excluding others from a group, spreading gossip or rumours
<u>technological:</u>	spreading rumours, images, or hurtful comments through the use of email, cell phones, text messaging, Internet websites, or other technology

What are the results of bullying?

The results of bullying can be very serious for both the bully and the bullied student, and can effect his or her whole life. For the bullied student it may result in stress, lower academic results, truancy, anger, poor self-esteem, sleeplessness, nightmares, depression and even suicide. For the bully, bullying may lead to a belief that inappropriate and bullying behaviour is acceptable and that he/she has the right to control, dominate or abuse another human being. According to the the Provincial Code of Conduct as outlined in *The Education Act*, the following Standards of Behaviour are outlined, making it clear that all members of the school community must:

- respect and comply with all applicable federal, provincial and municipal laws;
- demonstrate honesty and integrity;
- respect differences in people, their ideas and opinions;
- treat one another with dignity and respect at all times, and especially when there is disagreement;
- respect and treat others fairly, regardless of their race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability;

- respect the rights of others;
- show proper care and regard for school property and the property of others;
- take appropriate measures to help those in need;
- respect all members of the school community, especially persons who are in a position of authority;
- respect the need of others to work in an environment that is conducive to learning and teaching.

What are the responsibilities of the school community?

St. Raphael School aims to help counter bullying in our school by using the following strategies:

Staff:

Maintain a Safe School's Team, to review and support anti-bullying programming in the school community

- Create classroom environments that do not allow hierarchies to develop and by demonstrating assertive behaviours in their interactions.
- Be alert and observant during and between classes for any bullying behaviour, specifically in washrooms, behind buildings, and in congested areas, i.e. at lockers.
- Address any name-calling or humiliation tactics openly and immediately so that the perpetrators know that this is not acceptable.
- Be punctual to all classes and other activities as this reduces opportunities for bullying to occur. Students should also feel safe outside the room.
- Be aware that bullying is more likely to occur in the washrooms, behind buildings, in congested areas during lesson changeovers eg. lockers.
- Reinforce the anti-bullying policy by linking it with the curriculum, classroom rules and the School's Progressive Discipline Policy wherever possible.
- **Take any reported incident seriously and take action as quickly as possible.**

Parents/Caregivers:

- Watch for signs that your child might be experiencing bullying. Some of the following may indicate bullying: missing the bus frequently, repeatedly late to school, wanting to miss school; a pattern of headaches or stomach aches; becoming withdrawn; nightmares; tension or unhappiness; taking it out on others at home; bruising; the disappearance of property; damaged clothing; requests for money, wanting to change schools, sudden changes in interest/sports etc.
- Maintain open lines of communication with your child and encourage them to speak with an adult they trust eg. favourite teacher, principal, vice-principal, priest if they are not interested in speaking to you
- Inform the school immediately, and ask for an interview with the school administration, if you think your child is being bullied.
- Don't be swayed by your child's plea not to interfere because of their fear of retaliation; for the student's sake, bullying needs to be addressed, and this will be most effective with the school, family and student working together. It is important for the student to feel responsible for contributing to the solution, as this lets your child regain some of the power taken by the bully.

- Encourage your child to develop friendships. A student who has friends is less likely to be bullied.
- Support your child in developing his/her talents and participate in sports or other activities that will build confidence, in a safe, supervised environment.
- Encourage your child to be assertive. Demonstrating assertive body language helps to create an impression of confidence. Hitting back or verbally abusing the bully can aggravate the situation.
- In regards to INTERNET SAFETY,
 - a) Remind your child to NEVER, under any circumstances, reveal personal information and NEVER agree to meet in person an individual met on the internet
 - b) Teach your child to stop immediately, if they see or read anything that upsets them
 - c) Locate the internet access computer in a high traffic area
 - d) Restrict access to the Internet when there is no supervision available
 - e) Consider taking a course on the use of the Internet or have your child teach you
 - f) Be sensitive to and aware of the actions of your child on the Internet
 - g) Consider drafting a contract with your child for the privilege of using the Internet

Useful information can be found in "*The bully, the Bullied and the Bystander*", Barbara Coloroso 2002." or by calling the Crime Prevention Unit of the Sudbury Regional Police at 675-9171

What can students do if they are being bullied?

- Report it - remember that the bullying will continue if those responsible think they can get away with their behaviour.
- Try not to show that you are upset. Bullies feel great if they have upset you.
- Try to be assertive - look and sound confident.
- If students have been calling you names or teasing etc. - reassure yourself that you're ok, and that those students are the ones with the problem.
- Talk to a friend/friends about it.
- Avoid 'risk' situations where possible, or stay close to adults or friends.
- Consider whether you have been bullying yourself e.g. have you been name-calling, annoying, threatening, showing off, etc? If you have, change what you are doing.
- If bullying continues after reporting it, report it again.
- If you feel or think that you are different in any way, be proud of it-individuality and diversity, within the rules, are important.
- Consider talking to any adult in the school, who will help you to develop skills which can be useful in a bullying situation.
- If the bullying continues, report it again-the bullying can be stopped.

What can you do if someone else is being bullied?

- If you know of bullying, report it. The person bullied may be too scared or upset
- Remember that nobody deserves to be bullied.
- Show the bully that you and your friends strongly disapprove of his/her actions.
- Seek help.
- Students who are being bullied will benefit from sympathy and support.
- Be careful about teasing people or making personal remarks. If you think that students might not find your comments funny, don't say them.

What will happen when incidents of bullying are reported?

When students are reported for a bullying or harassment incident, interviews will take place with all students involved by a teacher or a member of Administration. As a consequence of bullying, a range of options may be implemented depending on the students and the severity of the situation. Some of these may be:

Parental Contact

Withdrawal of Recess

Withdrawal of Bus Privileges

Suspension

Expulsion for extreme cases

Referral to the Sudbury Regional Police Bullying Mediation Program

The incident will be documented and an explanation of possible consequences if behaviour is repeated, will be outlined.

Parents of students involved will be contacted about serious or repeated bullying incidents.

Parents may also be contacted in regard to lesser bullying episodes.

May result in additional action by the Sudbury Regional Police.