

Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying (HIB)

Definition, Policy, & Procedure

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Anti-Bullying Coordinator

According to the NJ Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act, HIB means:

- * Any gesture,
- * Any written, verbal, or physical act,
- * Or any electronic communication,
- * Whether it is a single incident or series of incidents

Definition continued

* That is reasonably perceived as being motivated by an ACTUAL or PERCEIVED CHARACTERISTIC such as:

- * Race
- * Color
- * Religion
- * Ancestry
- * National Origin
- * Gender
- * Sexual Orientation
- * Gender Identity
- * Mental, physical, or sensory disability
- * ANY OTHER DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTIC

Definition of HIB continued

- * That takes place on school property
- * Any school sponsored function
- * Or off school grounds
 - * That substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or rights of the student.

HIB Definition continued

- * Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any **STUDENT** or **GROUP OF STUDENTS**, or
- * Creates a **HOSTILE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT** for the student by interfering with a student's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student.
- * The ABRA provides for student-to-student and adult-to-student incidents, not student-to-adult or adult-to-adult. Staff members can be subjected to a HIB investigation if a student claims to be the victim of HIB.

Types of Bullying Behaviors

- * **VERBAL**- includes taunting, name-calling, malicious teasing, or making threats
- * **PSYCHOLOGICAL**- includes spreading rumors, purposefully excluding people from activities, or breaking up friendships
- * **PHYSICAL**- includes hitting, punching, shoving, spitting, or taking personal belongings
- * **CYBERBULLYING**- includes using the internet, mobile phone, or other digital technologies to harm others.

(U.S. Department of Justice 2011)

Conflict vs. Bullying

- * Conflict is a mutually competitive or opposing action or engagement, including a disagreement, or an argument which is a normal part of human development
- * Bullying is one-sided, where one or more students are victims of one or more person's aggression, which is intended to physically or emotionally hurt the victim(s).
- ** A conflict has the potential to transform into bullying if what was once a mutually competitive or opposing act or engagement becomes a one-sided act of aggression. This happens when one party has "moved on" from the conflict while the other has not, and continues to engage in inappropriate behaviors.

Characteristics of Conflict vs. Bullying

Normal Conflict	Bullying
Equal Power	Imbalance of power
Accidental	Purposeful
“Mutually” competitive	One-sided
Less serious- often a part of growing up	Serious threats with physical or emotional harm Intent to hurt or humiliate.
Equal emotional reaction	Strong emotional reaction from target, and not from bully
Not seeking power, attention	Seeking power/control
Remorse/takes responsibility	No remorse, often manipulative
Effort to solve problems	No acknowledgement of problem or willingness to solve the problem

What about Teasing?

- * Teasing qualifies as **VERBAL** bullying if it cause emotional harm.
 - * Taunting, name-calling, malicious teasing, or making threats.
- * **REMEMBER:** when confronted with “teasing” behaviors, **A REASONABLE PERSON (YOU)**, should know **UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES**, that the behavior will have the effect of *emotionally* harming a student or place a student in reasonable fear of emotional harm.

“I was just kidding!”

- * According to the ABRA, A REASONABLE PERSON must know the difference between playful joking and malicious teasing. If the intent is to cause harm, no matter how delicately it is disguised, it must be stopped.
- * “Just kidding” or “He knows I am kidding” does not excuse the behavior. If it is mean spirited, with the potential to cause emotional harm, it is wrong.

The “H” word, “I” word, or “B” word

- * As soon as the word harassed, intimidated, or bullied is used, a HIB report must be filed.
- * Do NOT pre-screen HIB, meaning do not use your own judgment or “personal definition” of HIB to determine whether or not the incident should be reported.
- * Every allegation of HIB must be investigated.

Let's take a moment to look over the following scenarios

***As you read each scenario, decide if it is a normal student conflict or bullying? How can you tell? Think about what immediate responses are needed to manage or resolve this situation, and who needs to be involved?**

Scenario A

- * Angela is a star track and soccer athlete at Jonestown Middle School. She grew up with three brothers and has always been very active in athletics since childhood. Angela has a very short haircut (because she got tired of dealing with washing her long hair everyday after sports when she was younger). She dresses casually, usually in jeans and t-shirts and she never wears dresses or make-up. Angela has many friends, both male and female, and is somewhat popular in school because she is such a good athlete. Nonetheless, while in the hallways at school, Angela sometimes hears comments made by other female students referring to Angela as a “lesbo,” “dyke,” or “boy” because she has a “butch” haircut and never wears dresses. Angela usually ignored these comments until one day, a cheerleader made a loud comment in the cafeteria about Angela being a “boy” playing on the girls’ soccer team. Furious, Angela walked up to the girl, slapped her, and called her a “cross-dressing boy in a skirt with pom-poms.”

Should this be reported?

* YES!!

*WHY?

- * It demonstrates an imbalance of power
- * Involves one of the protected classes
- * Focuses on a distinguishing characteristic
 - * This malicious teasing

Scenario B

*** A group of two or three girls have repeatedly coaxed Joan, a special education student who has a developmental disability, into performing acts that constitute a violation of the school's discipline policy. Realizing that Joan would be unable to comprehend fully or consent to the activity, the girls told her that they would be her friends if she would do as they instructed her. These acts included stealing money from another student's backpack and vandalizing school property.**

Should this be reported?

* YES!!

*WHY?

- * It demonstrates an imbalance of power
- * Involves one of the protected classes
- * These reasonable students should know the emotional harm

Scenario C

*** Edgar is in 8th grade and is much taller and heavier than most of his peers. However, because he has a tremendous sense of humor, he is very popular and well-liked by most of his peers. One day during a game of dodge ball, Edgar trips on the ball and falls down. Steven, an 8th grader, yells, “Look at the beached whale on the playground!” and Steven and the other 8th graders with him laugh. Edgar turns red but picks himself up and starts to get ready to play again. Several of Edgar’s friends get angry and tell Steven and his friends to “shut up.” A shouting match ensues until a teacher comes over to break it up.**

Should this be reported?

* YES!!

*WHY?

- * He is being teased for his distinguishing characteristic- his weight
- * It may sound like a conflict, but since his weight was involved, the ABS must investigate to get to the bottom of it.

Scenario D

- * Kate and Annie have been friends since first grade. They live in the same neighborhood and their parents are friends too. When they started high school they were thrilled to be in the same hall. By November, Annie had made some new friends that Kate didn't connect with. The Monday following a weekend trip to the mall, Annie opted to move to a different lunch table and didn't ask Kate. Kate ate lunch alone that day and when approached by a caring teacher on lunch duty, she reported that Annie dumped her for the new lunch bunch. The teacher referred Kate to guidance.

Should this be reported?

* NO!

* WHY?

* The teacher did what she should have done- Referred the student to guidance

* It may have hurt her feelings that she was losing a friend, but we cannot force people to be friends with one another

INTERVENTION

- * It is the responsibility of EVERY REASONABLE PERSON (all school staff) to INTERVENE and STOP HIB behaviors, and then to immediately report the HIB incident to the Principal and the District Anti-Bullying Coordinator.

Palisades Park HIB Procedures

- * **Verbal & Written report**- ALL acts of HIB will be reported verbally to the Principal on the SAME DAY you witnessed or received information regarding an incident, accompanied by a written HIB report. The initial HIB report shall be given to the Principal, but should also be submitted to the District Anti-Bullying Coordinator (ME). You can scan and send it via email with the subject labeled CONFIDENTIAL, or you may send it through interoffice mail; again, you should label it CONFIDENTIAL.
- * **Investigation**- The Principal will provide the Anti-Bullying Specialist with your written report, and an investigation will begin. Both staff and students can be questioned.
- * **Parent Contact**- The Principal must inform the parents of all the student offenders and victims involved in the alleged incident, and may discuss, as appropriate, the availability of counseling and other intervention services.

PREVENTION

- * A change is **NEEDED**...
- * The key to preventing HIB is to establish and maintain a school climate that promotes **KINDNESS, RESPECT, and CIVILITY**.
- * Teasing, hurtful jokes, sarcasm, and insensitive/rude comments **POLLUTE** the overall climate of a school.

E.C.C.'s AntiBullying Specialists

***Dr. Sandy Vazquez**

***201-947-2761, ext. 1422**

***Ms. Erin Rudolph**

***201-941-1100, ext. 3432**

Lindbergh's AntiBullying Specialists

***Mrs. Laura Pieratos**

***201-947-3556, ext. 2412**

***Ms. Annette McCarthy**

***201-947-3556, ext. 3433**

PPHS's AntiBullying Specialists

***Mr. Frank Donohue**

***201-941-1100, ext. 3417**

***Mrs. Joanne Retkwa**

***201-941-1100, ext. 3431**

District's AntiBullying Coordinator

***Mrs. Jillian Vivanco**

***201-947-2761, ext. 1401**

Acknowledgement of Receipt

- The Palisades Park School District is committed to providing every employee and student with a workplace free of Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying.
- Every employee is required to read and become familiar with the district's HIB policies.
- Any questions you may have should be directed to Jillian Vivanco, AntiBullying Coordinator.
- Please sign this Acknowledgement of Receipt form to confirm receipt and view of the training. Failure to sign this form does not relieve an employee of the responsibility to understand and adhere to the provisions of the Policy and Procedures.
- A copy of the signed form will be filed.

Position Title: _____

- _____
- Employee's Name (Please Print) _____

- _____
- Employee's Signature _____

School: _____

- _____
- Date _____