



Bullying Prevention

OVERVIEW

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is, or can be, repeated over time. Bullying includes threats, spreading rumors, physical or verbal attacks, and intentional exclusion or marginalization. Bullying can take place in or outside of school. Cyberbullying takes place via phones or computers, can happen anytime, and can be as harmful as in-person bullying.

State officials are concerned about the long-term effects of bullying and many now require that schools address both in-school and out-of-school bullying. State legislators have also recognized that bullying does not always take place only between classmates and have introduced legislation that would address bullying that takes place outside of the school administrator's purview.

AAP POSITION

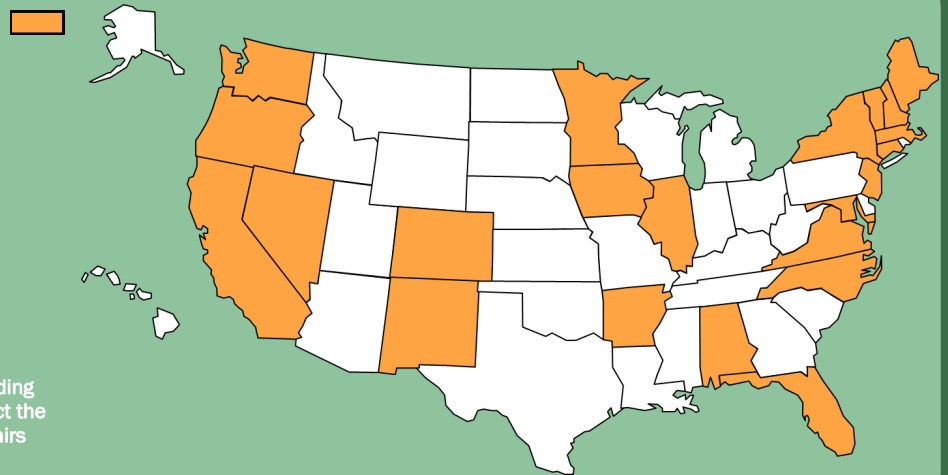
- The AAP recommends that pediatricians advocate for bullying awareness by teachers, education administrators, parents, and children, and supports adoption of evidence-based prevention programs.
- Effective state policy clearly defines the role and the authority of the school officials, teachers, and other school employees to address bullying and would require a zero tolerance policy for bullying based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religious beliefs, and other personal attributes.
- The policies should apply to students in all schools, both on or off campus, or through the use of technology (ie, cyberbullying).

FACTS

- More than 160,000 US students stay home from school each day from fear of being bullied.
- Bullying directly affects a student's ability to learn.
- Students who are bullied find it difficult to concentrate, show a decline in grades, and lose self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-worth.
- Students who are bullied report more physical symptoms, such as headaches or stomachaches, and mental health issues, such as depression and anxiety, than other students.
- Students can be especially effective in bullying intervention. More than 55% of bullying situations will stop when a peer intervenes. Student education of how to address bullying for peers is critical, as is the support of adults.

PROGRESS

- 22 states – comprehensive bullying prevention laws



For information on current law or pending legislation in your state, please contact the AAP Division of State Government Affairs at stgov@aap.org

MORE

- [AAP Policy–Role of the Pediatrician in Preventing Violence](http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/124/1/393.full) – <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/124/1/393.full>
- [Connected Kids–Bullying–It's Not Okay](http://www2.aap.org/connectedkids/samples/bullying.htm) – www2.aap.org/connectedkids/samples/bullying.htm
- [It Gets Better Project](http://www.itgetsbetter.org) – www.itgetsbetter.org
- [National Association of School Psychologists–Bullying Prevention Resources](https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/school-safety-and-crisis/bullying-prevention) – <https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/school-safety-and-crisis/bullying-prevention>
- [US Department of Education–Stop Bullying Now](http://www.stopbullying.gov) – www.stopbullying.gov