

AIKIMMOTSIIYIK at Siksika Outreach School

We put a high priority of being kind to one another at Siksika Outreach School. One of our foundational philosophies at the school is the Circle of Courage model where the tenet of fostering a sense of belonging is the most important way to welcome and build positive relationships with our students, staff, visitors and among students. Therefore, our first goal is Aikimmotsiiyik!

In cases where this does not work we have created procedures to ensure that students will be able to learn in a supportive, caring and safe learning environment without fear of being bullied. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to identify it, report it and know that all incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

What is bullying?

Bullying occurs when an individual or group uses strength or power to hurt others. Bullying can be emotional, physical, psychological, racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, verbal or cyber. It is usually persistent and often subtle and is a conscious planned attempt to hurt, threaten or frighten someone. Bullying can take many forms including: physical, verbal, emotional, cyber-bullying, racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, ageist and disablist.

With the advance in technologies, we are aware there is an increased risk of cyber-bullying using social media inappropriately. Therefore, we take all bullying concerns seriously.

Possible warning signs that a student is being bullied:

- Changes in academic behavior and progress
- Appears anxious or nervous
- Regularly feeling sick or unwell
- Clothes/bags torn or damaged
- Money/possessions go missing
- Loss of appetite
- Change in behavior, moody, unhappy, etc.

Possible reasons why people bully:

Desire to appear powerful
Unhappy, scared
Feeling inadequate
Difficulties at home/school
Learned behavior

Who students can talk to if they have any concerns about bullying:

Bus driver
Teachers
School staff
School psychologist
Counsellors
Principal
Any adult in education
Parents
Elders
Help lines (offered at the school)

Staff responsibilities for anti Bullying procedure:

1. Offer immediate opportunity to discuss the incident/experience
2. Reassure the student
3. Offer continuous support
4. Restore self-esteem and dignity
5. Role model reactions
6. Confront the bullying action
7. Listen to all parties involved
8. Investigate the incident promptly
9. Take appropriate action
10. To make record of incident, action and results
11. Share with parents of both sides
12. Promote a range of learning styles and strategies which challenge bullying behavior
13. Promote communication and consultation where appropriate
14. To model the values of aikimmotsiyyik
15. To promote and use interventions that are least intrusive and most effective

Anti bullying strategies (used at Outreach School):

Regular promotion of anti bully presentations
Restorative justice circles

Elder intervention and presentations
Individual Dream catcher profiles supporting student with bullying challenges
Use of cameras on site in public areas
Staff circulation and supervision
Elder and peer student led talking circles
Annual student surveys
Curriculum lessons on anti-bullying
Posting of 24/7 student help lines
Citizenship and honour awards for students supporting students
Strong staff – student relationships
One on one counselling on site available
Information talks from justice, RCMP, Elders, bus drivers and peers
Information presentation on cyber bullying
Student led talking circles
Monitor, evaluate and review school procedures annually

Parental support ideas:

- A great deal of bullying is cyber-bullying. Please regularly check your child's use of social media platforms (texting, fb, twitter, Instagram, etc.)
- Continue to invite ongoing conversations with your child so they feel comfortable talking to you about anything (problems, worries, celebrations, etc).
- Listen to what they say.
- Encourage your child to feel good about themselves, realizing we are all different and equally important.
- Talk to the school if you believe your child is being bullied or is being a bully so we can explore supportive options.
- If your child is a victim, assure them it is not their fault and that we can find support.
- Be realistic in our expectations as ongoing problems can take time to resolve.
- Feel free to work with the school to resolve the problem.
- Remind your child that it is okay to ask for help and they are not expected to solve the bullying problem on their own.