

# WHAT IS BULLYING?

**“Bullying”** means any written or verbal expression, or physical act or gesture, or a pattern thereof that is intended to cause distress upon one or more students in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated school bus stop, or at school activities or sanctioned events. The school district’s policy shall include a reasonable balance between the pattern and the severity of such bullying behavior.

*-State of Colorado, 2001 Legislative Session  
Senate Bill 01-080*

**Bullying or victimization** can be generally defined in the following way: A student is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students. Such negative actions include intentionally inflicting, or attempting to inflict, injury or discomfort upon another. These behaviors can be carried out physically (e.g., hitting, kicking, pushing, choking), verbally (e.g., by calling names, threatening, taunting, malicious teasing, spreading nasty rumors), or in other ways, such as making faces or obscene gestures, or intentional exclusion from a group.

Bullying is thus characterized by the following three criteria: (a) it is aggressive behavior or intentional “harmdoing;” (b) it is carried out repeatedly over time; and (c) it occurs within an interpersonal relationship characterized by an imbalance of power

*-Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence,  
University of Colorado, Blueprints programs*

**Bullying** among children is commonly defined as intentional, repeated hurtful acts, words, or other behavior, such as name-calling, threatening and/or shunning committed by one or more children against another. These negative acts are not intentionally provoked by the victims, and for such acts to be defined as bullying, an imbalance in real or perceived power must exist between the bully and the victim.

*-Preventing Bullying; A Manual for Schools and  
Communities  
United States Department of Education*

**Bullying** is comprised of direct behaviors, such as teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting, and stealing that are initiated by one or more students against a victim. In addition to direct attacks, bullying may also be more indirect by causing a student to be socially isolated through intentional exclusion. While boys typically engage in direct bullying methods, girls who bully are more apt to utilize these more subtle indirect strategies, such as spreading rumors and enforcing social isolation. . .the key component of bullying is the physical or psychological intimidation occurs repeatedly over time to create an ongoing pattern of harassment and abuse.

*-Bullying in Schools. ERIC Digest  
Ron Banks, 1997*