

## National Safe Schools Week

# What You Should Know

### What is bullying?

The definition of bullying on dictionary.com is “to treat in an overbearing or intimidating manner”. Stop Bullying Now!, a national campaign by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services defines bullying as, “Aggressive behavior that is intentional and that involves an imbalance of power or strength. Typically, it is repeated over time.”

Some parents may remember what bullying is from when they were children and typically think of the bigger kids on the playground pushing down the smaller or younger ones. This is a form of physical bullying. However, the times are changing, and so has bullying. Bullying can be verbal or physical and has now extended to the new technologies available. There is an increase in cyberbullying, which extends bullying to technologies such as the internet and telephones.

### Who is being bullied?

- According to the report **Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2008** by the National Center for Education Statistics, about 32 percent of students reported being bullied at school.<sup>1</sup>

- 79 percent of those students reported being bullied inside the school building, 23 percent reported being bullied on school grounds, and 4 percent reported being cyberbullied.<sup>1</sup>

- According to the **2001 National Crime Victimization Survey** by the U.S. Department of Education, there were no major differences found between the number of boys and girls being bullied.<sup>2</sup>

- There were also no major differences found between the number of students being bullied in public and private school.<sup>2</sup>

- However, fewer students reported being bullied in schools where a security guard or police officer was present.<sup>2</sup>

### What are the effects of bullying?

- Students who were bullied are more likely to take a weapon to school for protection.<sup>2</sup>

- Bullied students are also more likely to get involved in a physical fight.<sup>2</sup>

- Bullied students are more likely to receive lower grades than those students who are not being bullied.<sup>2</sup>

- Bullied students are more likely to suffer from anxiety and depression, health problems, and mental health problems.<sup>3</sup>

### What does this tell us?

**Bullying can happen anywhere and to any child. This is what makes bullying such an important issue. However, there are measures that schools, teachers, parents, and children can take to prevent or stop bullying and the first step is to become informed on bullying and its effects.**

#### About National PTA<sup>®</sup>:

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