

What is Bullying?

Bullying is what happens when someone hurts another person “on purpose”...often again and again.

Bullying can be with the **body**, like:

- Hitting, poking, kicking, spitting, shoving or following someone
- Crowding or bumping on purpose against someone in the hall or on the bus
- Taking someone’s things without permission
- Kicking someone’s locker or desk
- Touching someone when they don’t want to be touched

Bullying can be with **words**, like:

- Starting nasty rumors
- Passing mean notes about someone
- Picking on someone who has a disability or difference with their mind or body
- Using “put downs” about how someone looks, their way of dressing, clothing, religion, country of origin, accent, sexual orientation, etc.
- Making fun of someone who has a hard time with school work, or who is good at school work.

Some people say this kind of talking isn’t bullying, it is “just teasing.” Teasing only happens when both people are having fun. If even one person isn’t having fun, it is not teasing--it is bullying.

Bullying can be with **actions**, (this is the most common form of bullying in middle school) like:

- Leaving someone out of games and other activities on purpose
- Giving mean looks to others
- Refusing to let someone sit at a table at lunch, or leaving the table if they sit there

What is Hamilton doing to stop bullying?

Hamilton is making sure everyone at the school knows the rules about “No bullying or harassment”:

- Someone from the school will step in to help a student if they are being bullied or harassed.
- A student has the right to make an official complaint.
- It is against the rules for anyone to take action (retaliate) against a student who says they are being bullied or says they saw bullying.
- Students who bully others will be disciplined.

What can families do to stop bullying?

Families can remind their kids to:

- Calmly tell a bully to STOP what they are doing.
- Write down what happened and tell an adult.
- Hang out with friends. Stay away from kids who bully.
- If they see bullying, tell an adult.
- Don’t laugh at putdowns or mean jokes, or follow along with other kids who do

Families can also help:

- Take bullying seriously, even if it sounds like what everyone called teasing when you were a kid.
- Talk to kids about bullying. Let them know it is not OK.
- Listen and watch for signs of bullying or being bullied. Believe your kid and help them tell the school if they are being bullied.

Hamilton is a Bully-Free Zone

- We do not bully others.
- We help others who are being bullied.
- We include others who are easily left out.
- If we are being bullied or see others being bullied, we tell an adult at school and home.