

Buddy's Bullying Information

Rec-PAC's WOLF PAC

As a wolf *pac* we: **Protect All Campers.**

As a *pac* we are: **Positive, Affirming (Assisting), Caring.**

Wolves **HOWL: Help, Obey, Welcome (anti-bullying), Listen.**

Information on Bullying

Bullying can negatively affect the atmosphere of Rec-PAC and disrupts the learning environment. Bullying is not something camp staff should accept under any circumstances.

It takes the entire Rec-PAC program to create an inviting camp where everyone feels they belong and are safe. Working together, program manager, area supervisors, directors, leaders and CIT's can help stop bullying in our program.

Each day an estimated 160,000 students in the USA refuse to go to school because they dread the physical and verbal aggression of their peers.

Many more attend school in a chronic state of anxiety and depression. It's reported that 6 out of 10 American youth witness bullying at least once a day.

Bullying can result in reluctance to go to school and truancy, headaches and stomach pains, reduced appetite, shame, anxiety, irritability, aggression and depression. Bullying is a direct attack on a student's status, sense of belonging and core identity, and often results in low self-esteem. The effects of bullying often continue many years into adulthood. In the most extreme cases, targets have taken out their anger and despair through school shootings or by committing suicide. While the target of the bullying bears the brunt of the harm, there are negative consequences to everyone as well.

Students who habitually bully miss the opportunity to learn an alternative to aggression. Research tells us that they often develop a habitual tendency to abuse power and are increasingly shunned as they reach the higher grades. Approximately 25 percent of school bullies will be convicted of a criminal offense in their adult years.

Students on the sidelines (the "bystanders") commonly report extreme discomfort at witnessing bullying, but say that they do not know how to prevent it. Many are silenced by their fear that they will be the next target of bullying if they dare speak out. Often they grow up believing that they are powerless to stop abusive behaviors in others.

Warning Signs of Bullying

There are many warning signs that could indicate that someone is involved in bullying, either by bullying others or by being bullied. However, these warning signs may indicate other issues or problems as well.

- Torn, damaged, or missing pieces of clothing, books, or other belongings
- Has unexplained cuts, bruises, and scratches
- Has few, if any friends, with whom he or she spends time
- Seems afraid of walking to and from camp, or taking part in organized activities with peers
- Appears sad, moody, teary, or depressed
- Complains frequently of headaches, stomachaches, or other physical ailments
- Experiences a loss of appetite
- Appears anxious and suffers from low self-esteem

When You Suspect Bullying

If you are not sure what you witness or hear about is bullying, or if bullying is reported to you, here are some actions you may want to consider:

- **Intervene immediately.** Separate the students involved. Do not immediately ask about or discuss the reason for the bullying or try to sort out the facts.
- **Request more information.** Get the facts. Speak to students involved (participants and observers) in the incident separately and ask what happened.
- **Tell the students you are aware of their behavior.** Talk to the students involved separately.
- **Make it a teachable experience.** Helping bystanders understand what has happened and why may be important for preventing future incidents.

Refrain from Labeling

When trying to understand the situation, refrain from labeling the incident bullying, or the individuals involved as bullies or victims. This helps encourages everyone to share information openly.

Talk with Your Camper

Tell your child that you are concerned and that you'd like to help. Here are some questions that can get the discussion going:

Some direct questions:

- "I'm worried about you. Are there any kids at camp who may be picking on you or bullying you?"
- "Are there any kids at camp who tease you in a mean way?"
- "Are there any kids at camp who leave you out or exclude you on purpose?"

Signs of a Bully

Bullies are often loud-mouthed large children who enjoy scaring, threatening, and intimidating weaker or younger children. Most likely bullies are compensating for their own fears.

- Becomes violent with others
- Gets into physical or verbal fights with others
- Gets sent to the principal's office or detention a lot
- Has extra money or new belongings that cannot be explained
- Is quick to blame others
- Will not accept responsibility for their actions
- Has friends who bully others
- Needs to win or be the best at everything