

# The Regina Catholic School Division: Bullying Prevention

Page 1 of 4

“Love one another as I have loved you.” -**John 15:12**

“Truly I tell you, just as you did to one of the least of those who are members of my family, you did to me.” -**Matthew 25:40**

“Do to others as you would have them do to you.” – **Matthew 7:12**

“It is almost certain that, in this era dominated by individualism and selfishness, our children and adolescents will be confronted by the reality of bullying or the temptation to bully. How will they react? Will they have the courage to take a firm stance? If they have learned from their parents to recognize that other kids are God’s children just as much as they are, they will no doubt ask themselves: ‘What would Jesus do?’ And they will find in their heart the strength to act and react in order to give life as well as to protect, respect and encourage life.” -**Adapted from *Bullying: A plague to combat together* (Copyright © COLF, 2013. Page 7)**



## Preamble

The Regina Catholic School Division believes that all people have the right to learn and interact in a safe, affirming environment. Bullying behaviour will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in a serious and timely manner. Everyone will be treated with respect and dignity. We work with parents and the community to teach children how to build relationships based on a spirit of respect and concern for all. Our actions and relationships with each other reflect our Catholic faith.

Prevention of bullying behaviour is the ultimate goal, and strategies to achieve this goal are ongoing. They include offering a broad range of educational experiences for students, staff, parents/guardians, and the community; establishing a common language and understanding of bullying; and creating an environment of open communication and collaboration in our schools.

On November 14, 2013, the Government of Saskatchewan released its Action Plan to Address Bullying and Cyberbullying. The plan defined bullying and outlined the government’s plan to address bullying and cyberbullying.

Paralleling the release of the province’s plan, the Regina Catholic School Division revised its own Bullying and Cyberbullying action plan. Relevant Administrative Applications, Bullying Prevention 9240 and Bullying Incidents 9241, were updated to reflect best practice.



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# The Regina Catholic School Division: Bullying Prevention

Page 2 of 4

## Definition of Bullying

According to *Saskatchewan's Action Plan to Address Bullying and Cyberbullying*, bullying is a relationship issue where one person or group repeatedly uses power and aggression to control or intentionally hurt, harm or intimidate another person or group. It is often based on another person's appearance, abilities, culture, race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation or gender identity. Bullying can take many forms; physical, emotional, verbal, psychological or social. It can occur in person or through electronic communication.

In other words, bullying behaviour includes:

**'Physical bullying behaviour'** that may take the form of actions such as hitting, pushing, shoving, kicking, pinching, assault, and other physically harmful acts; taking or damaging belongings; or non-verbal gestures such as eye-rolling, hand blocking, and/or threatening looks.

**'Psychosocial / relational / sexual bullying behaviour'** that may include intimidation, exclusion and isolation, rejection, humiliation, extortion, damaging or manipulating relationships, revealing someone's secrets, unwanted physical contact, staring, leering and aggressive gestures, or sexually abusive comments/messages. It may also be communication of oral and written language such as name calling, insults, put downs, threats, taunting, making fun of others; rumours, gossip, graffiti and messages intended to hurt; sending/delivering messages to harass or intimidate, demeaning jokes, disparaging sounds; this includes ethno-cultural, sexist and other discriminatory comments or messages.

It includes intimidation by threats of, or actual, physical violence; the creation by whatever means of a climate of hostility or intimidation, and/or exclusion; the use of language, conduct or symbols in such a manner as to be commonly understood to convey hatred, contempt, or prejudice or to have the effect of stigmatizing an individual. It includes, but is not limited to, such actions that may be based on ethnicity, gender, culture, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, family status, or disability.

**'Cyber-bullying behaviour'** that may include the use of information and communication technologies, such as email, cell phones, instant messaging, personal websites to support deliberate repeated and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others.



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Catholic Schools**

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# The Regina Catholic School Division: Bullying Prevention

Page 3 of 4

## Application

**1. We share with pupils, parents/guardians, and community members the responsibility to promote school environments that are caring, respectful, and safe. Consequently, members of the school community including staff, pupils, parents/guardians and community members:**

- a. have a right to feel emotionally and physically safe;
- b. have a responsibility to contribute to a caring, respectful and safe school environment; and
- c. have a responsibility to assist and support the development of the local anti-bullying and harassment administrative application that is consistent with the school division policy.

**2. The school division is responsible to:**

- a. support victims of bullying and their families in a caring, compassionate, and confidential manner;
- b. promote caring, respectful and safe schools where all children and youth, their families, school staff and community members feel welcome, included, and affirmed;
- c. provide educational opportunities for school/community members that develop an awareness of issues relating to bullying and harassment and a commitment to address bullying and harassment problems;
- d. engage school staff, pupils, parents/guardians and community members in developing a school division anti-bullying and harassment administrative application to address all forms of bullying and harassment;
- e. annually inform school staff, pupils, parents/guardians, and community members about the anti-bullying and harassment administrative application and the division and school level strategies to reduce problems of bullying and harassment;
- f. support the use of evidence-based practices and tools at the school level to reduce instances of bullying and harassment; and
- g. engage school staff, pupils, parents/guardians, and community members in a regular review of the anti-bullying and harassment policy to promote accountability and continuous improvement at the school and division level.

**3. School staff are responsible to:**

- a. participate in creating a caring, respectful, and safe school and classroom environment;
- b. model, teach, and reinforce appropriate social behaviour;
- c. participate in developing a school level anti-bullying and harassment administrative application in support of the division policy;
- d. involve the pupils in creating a caring, respectful, and safe classroom and school environment that does not tolerate bullying and harassment in any form;
- e. respond to reported instances of bullying and harassment and affirm the individual's or group's right to feel safe and not bullied or harassed;
- f. talk with parents/guardians about instances of bullying and harassment that involves both the child and parents/guardians in the solution;
- g. report, record, and monitor instances of bullying and harassment and their resolutions;
- h. engage the school community in the monitoring and regular review of school level procedures and practices to reduce bullying and harassment.



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Catholic Schools**

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# The Regina Catholic School Division: Bullying Prevention

Page 4 of 4

#### 4. Pupils are responsible to:

- a. respect the safety, well-being, and property of fellow pupils;
- b. be accountable for their behaviour and responsive to reasonable and respectful consequences;
- c. participate in creating a caring, respectful, and safe school and classroom learning environment;
- d. participate in developing and supporting the school-level anti-bullying and harassment program; and
- e. report instances of bullying and harassment to a school staff member and work to resolve the problem.

#### 5. Parents/guardians are responsible to:

- a. model, teach, and reinforce appropriate social behaviour;
- b. participate in creating a caring, respectful, and safe environment at the school and classroom environment;
- c. participate in developing an anti-bullying and harassment program at the school;
- d. work with the school to reduce instances of bullying and harassment;
- e. assert their child's right not to be bullied and harassed; and
- f. report instances of bullying and harassment to their child's teacher and to work with their child and school to address the issue.

#### 6. Community members are responsible to:

- a. participate in creating a caring, respectful, and safe community;
- b. participate in developing a school / school division anti-bullying and harassment program;
- c. work with the school to reduce instances of bullying and harassment; and
- d. report instances of bullying and harassment to school staff and/or the police when appropriate.



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