

Definition of Bullying

Bullying occurs when a person is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he or she has difficulty defending himself or herself. Bullying is aggressive behavior that involves unwanted, negative actions. Bullying involves a pattern of behavior repeated over time. Bullying involves an imbalance of power or strength and is considered bullying if it interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operations of school.

Definition of Cyber-Bullying

Cyber-Bullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group that is intended to harm others.

"Cyber-Bullying" is when a child, preteen or teen is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another child, preteen or teen using the internet, interactive and digital technologies or mobile phone.

It has to have a minor on both sides, or at least have been instigated by a minor against another minor. Once adults become involved, it is plain and simple cyber-harassment or cyber-stalking. Adult cyber-harassment or cyber-stalking is never called cyber-bullying.

Texas Law Related to Bullying

Texas Education Code, Chapter 37 Section 37.001 (a): Student Code of Conduct: requires each independent school district in Texas to have a local policy that:

- (7) prohibits bullying, harassment, and making hit lists and ensures that district employees enforce those prohibitions; and
- (8) provides, as appropriate for students at each grade level, methods, including options for:
 - A. managing students in the classroom and on school grounds
 - B. disciplining students; and
 - C. preventing and intervening in student discipline problems, including bullying harassment and making hit list

Under the requirements of 37.00 (a)(8) the school district is also required to have specific options developed under local policy that are appropriate to each grade level that provide for preventing and intervening in student discipline problems, including bullying, harassment, and making a hit list.

The Texas Education Code Chapter 37 Section 37.0832 also requires the board of trustees of each school district to adopt a policy that includes necessary procedures that address bullying.

Texas Education Code Chapter 25, Section 25.0342 also offers a parent an opportunity to transfer their child to another campus if their child has been determined by the school to have been bullied.

It is important to each student to report any bullying or threats to the nearest teacher or adult at school as soon as possible so school officials may take appropriate action.