The third full week of October is Kentucky Safe Schools Week!

Schools across Kentucky focus on school safety issues in classrooms, in their schools and in their communities.
This year's theme is “BE INCREDIBLE, Reveal Your SUPERhero!”

Being incredible is being the best you can possibly be. Every student has incredible super skills and talents that make them unique and strong. We need our students to ban together with school staff and the community to create a “family-like” culture at school. Incredible super powers can be used fighting against bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, conflict, hate and violence while spreading empathy, compassion and respect. As quoted from the Disney “Incredibles 2” movie “It’s time to make some wrong things right, help us bring Supers back into the sunlight!”
Sad fact that about $\frac{1}{2}$ say they have been bullied.

http://charactercounts.org
6 million school children have been bullied in the last 6 months.
75% of students are bullied or victimized each school year, often on the school bus.
42% of kids have been bullied online and almost 1 in 4 have had it happen more than once.
Bullies are often people who have been victims of bullying themselves.
Every 7 seconds a teen is bullied by another teen.
Each day, 160,000 students miss school for fear of being bullied.
250,000 report being bullied each month
Approximately 60% of boys as bullies in grades 6 - 9 have at least one conviction by age 24
15-25 innocent kids commit suicide every year as a result of relentless bullying
It’s Not Funny
It’s Not Cool
It’s Cruel

Bullying Stats from http://bully-no-more.org/stats.html
The Facts About Who is Bullied

• Bullying can happen to ANYONE.
• Bullying is about someone’s behavior.
• That behavior could directed at the shy, quiet student, or the class tough guy.
• Girls bully, boys bully, preschool kids bully and high school kids bully... there is no one type who gets bullied or does the bullying.
• The one sure thing is that no one EVER DESERVES to be bullied, and if someone is bullied, they have a RIGHT to be safe.
Who Does the Bullying?

• Think it’s the big guy who wears black with low self-esteem? Could be...but it could be the petite cheerleader or the quiet honor student.

• It’s not appearance that defines someone who bullies; it’s BEHAVIOR! Students who bully can be any size, age, grade or gender.
• There is a group who sees the bullying and this group is really important.
• They may not get bullied themselves, they may not be doing the bullying but their reaction has direct impact on the situation.
• Think about it...Have you ever watched a fight? The bystanders can encourage, walk away or break up a fight. These responses make a huge difference in the outcome of this bullying situation.
And to add to all of this, the role any student plays on a given day shifts the bullying situation.

And the roles the students play daily may shift... one day a student is bullied and the next he makes fun of a younger kid on the bus.

The kid who laughed at a fight one day asks a new student to sit with him at lunch today.
Bullying is different from the typical disagreements or arguments between friends or classmates.

It’s bullying if:
- One person is hurting or harming another with words or behavior.
- It is being done intentionally.
- The person being hurt has a hard time defending themselves from the behavior.
- The kids are doing it for more power.
- “Power” can include such things as being older, being physically bigger or stronger, having more social status, or when a group of kids “gang up” on someone.
CONFLICT VS. BULLYING

CONFLICT

- Equal power (peers)
- Happens occasionally
- Accidental
- Equal emotional reaction
- Not seeking power or attention
- Remorse
- Effort to solve problem

BULLYING

- Imbalance of power (or perceived imbalance of power)
- Happens repeatedly (or has the potential to be repeated)
- Purposeful
- Strong emotional reaction on part of the victim
- Seeking power, control
- No remorse – blames victim

Situations with both, Conflict or Bullying need to be addressed and a plan devised with consequences to fit the behavior.

Kentucky Center for School Safety www.kysafeschools.org
Types of Bullying

• Physical
  – This one’s easy recognize for example pushing, shoving, hitting, kicking, biting, hair pulling, inappropriate touching, breaking items or taking another’s possessions.

• Verbal
  – It’s really common because it is quick, direct and easy. Examples include teasing, name calling, threats, intimidation, demeaning jokes, rumors, gossip and slander.
Two More Types

• Emotional
  – It’s sophisticated and calculated and often done by a group. It hurts on the inside and make one feel bad about themselves. Examples...leaving someone out of a group on purpose, telling lies to hurt a reputation or humiliating someone publicly.

• Cyberbullying
  – Using technology and can include sending mean text messages, posting videos, stories or photos that ridicule someone or spreading rumors through social networking site.
As stated earlier, each day 160,000 students stay home for fear of being bullied. They lose the opportunity to learn in a safe environment and to feel safe at school.

Students who are bullied may have lower self-esteem, less self-confidence, increased fear and anxiety, depression, lower grades and often suicidal thoughts.

Students who bully grow up to have a greater risk of getting in trouble with the law. By the age of 25, one in four who have bullied will have spent time in jail.
1. Know That You Are Not Alone
   - Ever feel this bullying only happens to you? It doesn’t. Unfortunately bullying happens to a lot of kids. It happens in small schools, large schools, rural schools and city schools. It can happen in preschool and high school and everywhere in between. Some people say it is a part of growing up so just deal with it. This is not the answer. Even though it happen a lot doesn’t make it right. No one deserves to be bullied and everyone deserves respect. **THINK BEFORE YOU ACT! Develop the “Lean on me attitude... Sometimes in our lives we all have pain we all have sorrow!”**
2. Be a Self-advocate

- It means speaking up for yourself, telling people what you need and taking action. Bullying can be stopped, but you need a plan. First, think about what you can do to change your situation, and then make an action plan.

- Write down what is happening to you, when and where it takes place who is involved. You can use a tip line or bully box.

- Include what you would like to change, how things could be changed, and what would help you gain control over the situation.

- List your role in the plan and what others should do and their role.

- Discuss your plan with a trusted adult and work together to put your plan with any modifications needed in place.
Step 3...Should do the trick...

3. Assert Your Rights

– Every student has the right to feel safe at school. If the first adult you talk to doesn’t help you, don’t give up, talk to another one. Send a tip or leave a note in a bully box. You will find someone who will listen at school or home.

– Ask what can be done to make you feel safer at school and other students, too.
Look Closer at those who...Bully

• What is great about hurting someone?
  – Teasing, tripping, punching, kicking, texting, excluding, ignoring, hazing—it really says more about you than them. Think about it...

• Think no one cares if you bully someone?
  – Think again. Parents, teaches, classmates and friends all care, but mostly the person being bullied cares. The bigger question is why you don’t care?

• Think you’ll feel better about yourself if you bully someone?
  – Jealous, huh? Not as good, smart, attractive or popular as someone? Join the club. Why not try working with or learning from someone instead of bullying them and make a friend in the process?
• Think it's ok if you have been bullied?
  – How does taking out frustration on someone else make anything better? Talking with a trusted friend or adult would be much more productive than seeking the approval from the person who bullied you.

• Think you’ll get attention if you bully?
  – Think detention! If you bully, you’re likely to get caught sooner or later. Who’s attention would you rather draw...the detention officers or your skating buddies, your angry parent or your shopping gals? Why not spend your time with someone you like rather than demanding attention from someone you don’t?

• Think you’re in control?
  – Think about why you are bullying: to be liked, to get back at someone, to feel better about yourself. Whatever it is find someone you trust and start talking.
Look at Bystanders!

• “It’s none of my business—I should just ignore it and walk away—right?”
• “Wrong”
• Put yourself in the target’s place. If you were being pushed around, laughed at, gossiped about, made fun of, ignored on purpose, you’d probably want someone to help you out.
• Consider this...Tomorrow it might be YOU!
TELLING VS. TATTLING

There is a difference telling and tattling.

- Telling is done to protect yourself or another student from harm.
- Tattling is done to get the person in trouble.

Understand that it’s okay to tell an adult when you see or hear about bullying, violence or risky behavior.

Kentucky Center for School Safety www.kysafeschools.org
• At the very least….you could do is to NOT join in the bullying.
• Your non-support of someone bullying sends a clear message that you don’t agree with what’s happening.
• If you see someone being laughed at, don’t just turn your back but help the target turn their back to the bully and walk away to class or to an adult, be a buddy and show support.
In the end we will remember, not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
Show Support

• Kids who are frequently bullied feel all alone and don’t feel like anyone cares. Make a small gesture and show them that you care and support them.
  - Connect with the adults in your school.
  - Leave a tip and be a “Silent Hero” if you fear retaliation, if you are shy or afraid.
References

• Pacer for Teens
  http://www.pacerteensagainstbullying.org/
• www.STOPBULLYING.gov
• www.Kysafeschools.org
• www.charactercounts.org