



GOMPERS PREPARATORY ACADEMY

A UCSD PARTNERSHIP SCHOOL

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Ten Actions ALL Parents Can Take to Help Eliminate Bullying

The latest research shows that *more than half of all children are, at least on occasion, directly involved in bullying as a perpetrator, victim, or both*. And many of those who are not directly involved witness others being bullied on a regular basis. No child is immune - kids of every race, gender, grade and socio-economic sector are impacted. **But it doesn't have to be this way**. As parents you have the power to help GPA reduce bullying. Top ten actions **you** can take to help address bullying are:

1. **Talk with and listen to your kids - everyday.** Research shows that parents are often the last to know when their child has bullied or been bullied. You can encourage your children to buck that trend by engaging in frequent conversations about their social lives. Spend a few minutes every day asking open ended questions about who they spend time with at school and in the neighborhood, what they do in between classes and, who they have lunch with, or what happens on the way to and from school. If your children feel comfortable talking to you about their peers *before* they're involved in a bullying event, they'll be much more likely to get you involved *after*.
2. **Spend time at GPA.** Research shows that 67% of bullying happens when adults are not present. Whether you can volunteer once a week or once a month, you can make a real difference just by being present. Be sure to coordinate your on-campus volunteer time with our Community Liaison, Ms. Lopez, call (619) 263-2171 ext 2231.
3. **Be a good example of kindness and leadership.** Your kids learn a lot about power relationships from watching you. You have a great opportunity to model effective communication techniques.
4. **Learn the signs.** Most children don't tell anyone (especially adults) that they've been bullied. It is therefore important for parents and teachers to learn to recognize possible signs of being victimized such as frequent loss of personal belongings, complaints of headaches or stomachaches, avoiding school activities, getting to school very late or very early. If you suspect that your child might be bullied, talk with the child's teacher or find ways to observe his or her peer interactions to determine whether or not your suspicions might be correct. Talk directly to your child about the situation.
5. **Create healthy anti-bullying habits early.** Help develop anti-bullying and anti-victimization habits. Coach your children what *not* to do - hitting, pushing, teasing, being mean to others. Help your child to focus on how such actions might feel to the child on the receiving end (e.g., "How do you think you would feel if that happened to you?"). Such strategies can enhance empathy for others. Equally if not more important, teach your children what to *do* -- kindness, and empathy are critical skills for good peer relations.
6. **Establish household rules about bullying.** Your children need to hear from you explicitly that it's not acceptable, ok, or tolerable for them to bully, to be bullied, or to stand by and just watch other kids be bullied. Make sure they know that if they are

bullied physically, verbally, or socially (at school, by a sibling, in your neighborhood, or online) it's safe and important for them to tell you about it and that you will help.

7. **Teach your child how to be a good witness.** Research shows that kids who witness bullying feel powerless and seldom intervene. However, kids who take action can have a powerful and positive effect on the situation. Although it's never a child's responsibility to put him or herself in danger, children can help each other by providing support to the victim, not giving extra attention to the bully, and/or reporting what they witnessed to an adult.
8. **Teach your child about cyber bullying.** Children often do not realize what cyber bullying is. Cyber bullying includes sending mean, rude, vulgar, or threatening messages or images; posting sensitive, private information about another person; pretending to be someone else in order to make that person look bad; and intentionally excluding someone from an online group. These acts are as harmful as physical violence and must not be tolerated. We know from research that the more time a teen spends online, the more likely they will be cyber bullied – so limit online time.
9. **Spread the word that bullying should not be an acceptable part of childhood.** Some adults hesitate to act when they observe or hear about bullying because they think of bullying as a typical phase of childhood that must be endured. It is important for all adults to understand that bullying does not have to be a “normal” part of childhood. All forms of bullying are harmful to the perpetrator, the victim, and to witnesses and the effects last well into adulthood (and can include depression, anxiety, substance abuse, family violence and criminal behavior). Efforts to effectively address bullying require the collaboration of school, home, and community.
10. **Help GPA address bullying effectively.** Whether your children have been bullied or not, you should know what our school is doing to address bullying.

- ✓ Reporting, Tracking
- ✓ Social Skills Training
- ✓ Mediation, Conflict Resolution
- ✓ College Class with Director
- ✓ Parent Meetings
- ✓ Classroom Drop Box
- ✓ Eagle Hotline (619)263-2171 ext. 2227
- ✓ eaglemail@gomperscharter.org

GPA has come a long way in creating a safe and healthy environment for all children. Together, we can go even further with our mission to create a college preparatory culture.



GPA Bullying Policy

GPA prohibits aggressive behavior with intent to cause harm or distress that is repeated over time. This occurs in a relationship where there is an imbalance of power or strength. GPA prohibits the following:

Direct bullying – hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting, taunting, teasing, racial slurs, verbal harassment and threatening or obscene gestures.

Indirect bullying – getting someone else to bully someone for you. Spreading rumors, deliberate exclusion, gossip with intent to cause harm or distress, using technology to spread hurtful messages, posting comments, videos, pictures or images of others without their consent (“cyber bullying”). Harassing or intimidating students via sites such as MySpace, YouTube, Twitter, etc.

Bystander bullying – is allowing someone to be bullied without taking any action. You are witness to bullying and do not report the incident or make an attempt to resolve the situation. Students that exhibit or violate the policy for bullying will be disciplined appropriately. This may include, but is not limited to, In School Cogitation Zone (ISC), participating in a social skills class or an anger management class, and a parent conference.