

The Congregational Church of Weston Safe Church Policy 2012

Bullying Prevention and Intervention

The Congregational Church of Weston does not tolerate bullying. All incidents should be brought to the attention of the teacher, staff, or to the Safe Church chair/committee and when necessary documented and/or resolved immediately.

Bullying is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof directed at a target* that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property; (ii) places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property; (iii) creates a hostile environment* at school for the target; (iv) infringes on the rights of the target at a school/community program; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a classroom/school/program. Bullying includes cyberbullying*.

Cyberbullying is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic device.

Hostile Environment is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the student's education.

Target is a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation is directed.

Consequences and Support in Responding to Reports

There is no one prescribed response to verified acts of bullying. Actions may be age appropriate, concrete, and immediate. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the Congregational Church of Weston cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about disciplinary action taken. Actions may be accompanied by the referral to counseling or other therapeutic support.

Best Practices in Bullying Prevention

The word "discipline" comes from the same root as the word "disciple" and means "to teach." We are most likely to succeed in helping young people change their aggressive behavior when we use the principles of good teaching in our discipline interventions. We can ask questions instead of statements whenever possible so youth learn to think about their own goals and behaviors and how this relates to others.

© Stan Davis, <http://www.stopbullyingnow.com> , 2005
based on *Schools Where Everyone Belongs*, Research Press