

## What You Need to Know About Bullying

### What is Bullying?

- Bullying is *unwanted, aggressive* behavior that causes significant harm to the target and involves a real or perceived *power imbalance*.

*What Is an Imbalance of Power?* Kids who bully use their power – such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity – to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.

- Bullying behavior is when it happens repeatedly, or the target has a reasonable fear that it will be repeated.
- Bullying may be based on, but is not limited to, a *specific personal characteristic* such as race, gender, national origin, color, sexual orientation, personal appearance, disability, gender identity or expression, or familial status.

### Behaviors That Can Escalate Into Bullying

Verbal	Physical	Social	Electronic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• teasing</li><li>• name-calling</li><li>• inappropriate sexual comments</li><li>• taunting</li><li>• threatening to cause harm</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• hitting</li><li>• kicking</li><li>• pushing</li><li>• pinching</li><li>• spitting</li><li>• rude gestures</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• purposefully leaving someone out</li><li>• telling others not to be friends with someone</li><li>• spreading rumors about someone</li><li>• embarrassing someone in public</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• mean or threatening messages sent through text, email, Facebook or other social media</li><li>• rumors posted on social networking sites</li><li>• embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles</li></ul>

### It Takes a District: Preventing Bullying in DC

- Support all youth, pay attention to which youth may be at-risk, and always address inappropriate behavior so it does not escalate.
- Provide support to youth who are bullied or who bully others, because both can lead to serious and long-lasting problems.
- All schools, DC youth-serving agencies and non-profit organizations are required to have a bullying prevention policy. Ask to see it, so you can help prevent bullying in your community.