

Bullying Prevention Handbook
Walden Green Montessori School

Compiled on April 15, 2010

Effective May 3, 2010

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Overview & Rational

Childhood is characterized, by many adults, as a time of opportunities to enjoy life, learn and grow. The reality is that childhood can be a difficult and trying experience, especially if the child is the victim of bullying. It is estimated that nearly 81% of boys, ages 10-13 and 72% of girls, in the same age range, have been victims of bullying incidents (Casey-Cannon, Hayward & Gowen, 2001). Bullying has become a major concern for safety in many schools - and for all affected, a concern for the long term emotional growth and development of the child.

Traditional approaches to bullying have focused on the bully and the victim as individuals. More recent research has focused on a core assumption that points to the social and environmental context. As a result, this context leads us to look at not just the individuals involved; but to the peer group, classroom, the school, the family and the greater community. Involving all of these groups in the consideration and implementation of a bullying prevention plan will ensure greater success in reducing the incidence of bullying and improve the school experience of the child (<http://www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/adults/tip-sheets/tip-sheet-24.aspx>.)

Everyone in the school environment will benefit from implementation of an effective bullying prevention program. Strong administrative leadership and an ongoing commitment of the adults in the school community are critical to the success of the program.

Other Key Considerations:

- Those programs that show the most promise are comprehensive in approach. They involve the entire school community, including families, and can take the forms of school-wide interventions, classroom activities, and individual interventions.
- Effective bullying prevention programs should have “no end date” but should become part of the life of the school. Ongoing staff development is important to sustain bullying prevention.

In keeping with the legislation indicated below, and the philosophy of Dr. Montessori’s desire for Peace Education to be an essential part of the daily operations of the classroom, Walden Green will use innovative guidelines to establish a positive, safe, and respectful environment for all children, staff, and families of the Walden Green Community. This approach will take into consideration Montessori’s holistic characteristics of the social/emotional, physical, and cognitive nature of a child’s development. It will be the utmost purpose of this prevention plan to safeguard any negative elements that may intentionally affect the holistic development of the child. This plan has been drawn from current legislation on both the federal and state levels, as well as incorporating current research and findings that related to effective bullying plans, intervention strategies, and tools for best practices for the prevention and identification of bullying in schools.

Source: Recreated from the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, WWW.Olweus.org. 1

Bullying Legislation

Federal Anti-Bullying Legislation

The Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act is part of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. It provides federal support to promote school safety but does not specifically address bullying and harassment in schools. [H.R. 284](#) requires states, districts and schools to develop bullying and harassment prevention policies and response programs as part of their existing violence prevention obligations and as a condition of federal funding.

H.R. 284 requires that schools and districts:

- include prohibitions against bullying and harassment within discipline policies
- establish complaint procedures for students or parents who seek to report bullying or harassment
- provide an annual notice to parents, students, and staff regarding anti-bullying and anti-harassment policies and procedures

Schools and school districts may:

- use federal funds to provide professional development regarding bullying prevention and effectively intervening when bullying and harassment occur
- use federal funds to implement student education programs

Michigan Anti-Bullying Legislation The State Board of Education's [Policies on Bullying](#) recommends that all schools develop a plan designed to prevent and react to bullying and adopt an anti-bullying program to promote a positive school atmosphere. Federal and state bullying prevention programs are designed to address:

- Supervision of students
- Encouragement of student involvement in the program
- Educating teachers and staff about the effects of bullying on students
- Training teachers and staff how to intervene when bullying occurs
- Providing individualized interventions
- Meaningful communication between teachers and parents

Source: Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, www.olweus.org.

Definitions of Bullying: A Correlation with the Principles of Montessori & Holistic Learning

As a school that has adopted the principles and foundations of Montessori education, it is imperative that we not only foster the development of the whole-child, but also protect and safeguard anything that may threaten a child's holistic growth. Therefore, bullying at Walden Green Montessori is defined as any behavior that violates a persons physical, social/emotional, or cognitive well-being.

Bullying that affects the *physical well-being* of the child is characterized as any type of behavior that is intended or carried out that physically harms another individual.

Bullying that affects the *social/emotional well-being* of a child is characterized as any type of behavior that is found to adversely affect the victim's emotional or social stability and personal outlook or self-esteem.

Bullying that affects the *cognitive well-being* of a child is characterized as any type of behavior that is intended to cause harm to the victim's outlook on their personal academic achievement or creates barriers that directly affect learning in the classroom.

***For specific types of behavior that relate to the developmental areas above please refer to page 5.**

Degrees of Bullying



Source: Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, www.olweus.org.

Specific Types of Behavior that Violate the Holistic Well-Being of Children

Physical Violence (Tier 1 or Tier 2 Consequence)

Includes slapping, hitting, poking, punching, kicking, biting, pinching, pushing, scratching, twisting limbs, damaging or destroying intended person's personal property. This could result in a Tier One or Two Consequential Action on the part of the school (please see page 13 for more information).

Verbal & Written Bullying (Tier 1 or Tier 2 Consequence)

Includes name-calling, cruel criticism, racist slurs, sexually suggestive or abusive remarks, abusive phone calls or emails, taunting, malicious rumors and gossip, notes containing threats. If the remarks are deemed threatening, this type of bullying could result in a Tier One or Two Consequential Action on the part of the school (please see page 13 for more information).

Cyber-Bullying (Tier 1 or Tier 2 Consequence)

Includes mean, 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, intentionally excluding someone from an online group (Willard, 2005). If the remarks are deemed threatening and directly affect the well-being and learning of the victim, this type of bullying could result in a Tier One or Two Consequential Action on the part of the school (please see page 13 for more information).

Relational Bullying (Tier 2 Consequence)

Includes ignoring, isolating, excluding, shunning and rumors. Can be aggressive stares, rolling of eyes, sneers, snickers and hostile body language. This type of bullying could result in a Tier Two Consequential Action on the part of the school (please see page 14 for more information).

Source:

Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, WWW.Olweus.org.

Bullying Commonalities

1. Bullying shows an imbalance in real or perceived power
2. Bullying is intended to hurt or harm
3. Bullying is a patterned behavior that is seen over short or long periods of time (i.e. A person is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more persons.

Sources:

Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, WWW.Olweus.org.

Teasing Versus Taunting

Normal conflict is not bullying. This may include teasing, arguing and concerns related to rules and fairness.

Teasing is not taunting.

- Teasing is a fun exchange between friends
 - Teaser and person teased easily swap roles
 - Innocent in motive
 - Not intended to hurt the other person
 - Is discontinued when person teased becomes upset or objects to the teasing
- Taunting is a choice to bully someone for whom you have contempt
 - An imbalance of power is present
 - There is an intent to harm
 - The motive to taunt is sinister
 - Involves humiliating, cruel and demeaning behavior
 - Continues even when targeted child becomes distressed

Source:

Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, WWW.Olweus.org.

Impacts of Bullying

If behavior that violates the holistic well-being of children in schools is not addressed, victims, bullies, and the school environment are negatively impacted in the following ways:

Victims:

- Low self-esteem
- Feeling of isolation
- Fearful behavior
- Anti-Social behavior
- Destructive behavior
- Often become bullies themselves
- Feel unsafe in school and reluctant to attend
- Lose interest in school

Bullies:

- Children of bullies often become bullies themselves
- More often to commit crimes and be abusive to others later in life
- Encourage others to join bullish behavior
- Develop poor social skills that continue into adulthood
- Develop a false sense of power

School Environment and Climate:

- Perceived negative climate
- Dislike of school
- No accountability for negative behavior
- School is perceived as an unsafe, unreliable environment
- School develops a sense of disrespect and fear

Source:

Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, WWW.Olweus.org.

Possible Warning Signs that a Child is being Bullied

- Comes home with torn, damaged, or missing pieces of clothing, books, or other belongings;
- Has unexplained cuts, bruises, and scratches;
- Has few, if any friends, with whom he or she spends time;
- Seems afraid of going to school, walking to and from school, riding the school bus, or taking part in organized activities with peers (such as clubs);
- Takes a long, “illogical” route when walking to or from school;
- Has lost interest in school work or suddenly begins to do poorly in school;
- Appears sad, moody, teary, or depressed when he or she comes home;
- Complains frequently of headaches, stomachaches, or other physical ailments;
- Has trouble sleeping or has frequent bad dreams;
- Experiences a loss of appetite; or
- Appears anxious and suffers from low self-esteem.

Source: <http://www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/adults/tip-sheets/tip-sheet-07.aspx>

Bullying Perpetrated Towards Children and Youth with Disabilities and Special Needs

Research indicates that children with disabilities and special needs may be at particular risk of being bullied by their peers. For example,

- Although little research has been conducted on the relation between learning disabilities and bullying, available information individuates that children with LD are at greater risk of being teased and physically bullied (Marlew & Hodson, 1991; Mishna, 2003, Nabuzoka & Smith, 1993; Thompson, Whitney & Smith, 1994)
- Children with ADHD are more likely than other children to be bullied. They also are somewhat more likely than others to bully their peers (Unnever & Cornell, 2003)
- Children with medical conditions that affect their appearance (e.g., cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy and spina bifida) are more likely to be victimized by peers (Dawkins, 1996)

Bullying may cross the line to become “disability harassment” which is illegal under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. According to the U.S. Department of Education, disability harassment is “intimidation or abusive behavior toward a student based on a disability that creates a hostile environment by interfering with or denying a student’s participation in or receipt of benefits, services, or opportunities in the institution’s program (U.S. Department of Education, 2000). This behavior can take different forms including verbal harassment, physical threats, or threatening written statements.

Bullying Perpetrated by a Student with Disabilities and/or Special Needs

Students with disabilities that are found bullying other students are subject to the same consequences as general education students. However, additional steps will be taken before any determination of bullying or consequential action occurs with special needs students. If a child has a documented IEP, medical condition, behavioral contract, or any other documentation that could help deepen the understanding of the cause of the bullying infraction, a collaborative committee of parents, teachers, special education, and support staff will meet to analyze any appropriate documents before a consequence is decided. This team will look at the relationship between the disability and the infraction before pursuing any formal action. If an instance warrants an at home suspension, the student must have full and equitable access to any materials needed to do work at home. If a pattern of behavior is found to be related to the disability, a Positive Behavior Support Plan will be developed. If there is no pattern of behavior and the inappropriate behavior is not related to the disability, an out of school or in school suspension may take place. If there is an indication that the student may be suspended up to ten school days, an Individualized Educational Planning Team meeting will be scheduled to discuss the problems and develop a Positive Educational Intervention Plan.

Definitions of In-School Suspension, At-Home Suspension & Expulsion

The two types of suspension for bullying and cases of expulsion have differing definitions and implementations. Below are the definitions. When and how these consequences are implemented depend on the severity and amount of incidence incurred by each individual that is displaying bullsh behavior. The consequential plans on the next page outline how consequences are implemented in each classroom according to best practices for the developmental needs of students. The plans were created by Walden Green teachers who are experts in the ages groupings in which they teach.

In-School Suspension:

If “in-school” suspension is determined, students will work away from their classrooms in isolation from other students. Students will be placed in an area that has direct supervision of a staff member but that prevents them from talking or interacting with their peers or any other students. The general education classroom teacher or assistant will check in with the student to make sure they have all the material, instruction, and direction they need to be successful with their work. Common areas, the kitchen, quiet rooms, or the office area are often used for this type of suspension.

At-Home Suspension:

If “at-home” suspension is determined, the student will collect all work from the general education teacher to be sent home before their departure. If it is not possible to gain access to these materials in a timely matter, the materials will be ready for pick up in the office the next morning by 8:30 a.m. during drop-off. Students are still required to do classroom work and any homework they missed due to their absence.

Expulsion:

Expulsion is only used in extreme cases where it is determined that the student is a threat to students and staff. This could include but is not limited to bringing a weapon to school, talking about bringing a weapon to school, and/or extreme physical, verbal, or written threats with intent to harm. In cases where multiple incidences of bullying have been determined and documented, the classroom teacher could make a suggestion to administration for a recommendation for expulsion. If approved by administration, the process is sent to the Board or Directors for final determination. The student and parents have a right to a Board hearing for appeal if expulsion is ratified.

Implementation In the Classroom

Each Classroom will establish a developmentally appropriate peace plan for the classroom at the beginning of every year. The children will be involved in creating and implementing this plan with the help of teacher facilitation.

1. Hold a class meeting to address the importance of peaceful behavior.
2. Develop a Peace Mission or Constitution for classroom conduct.
3. Develop a Conflict Resolution Strategy for behavior that is not peaceful.
4. Implement two Peace Projects each year from the AMS website or other prevention sources.
5. Get a guest speaker to come in twice a year to talk about bullying prevention.
6. Each classroom will designate an area of the classroom and/or a system to support peace education.

Teacher's Roles & Responsibilities

Attend in-service training to learn more about the issue of bullying at the beginning of each year. All staff that interacts with students will be included in the training program. The additional need for such training and workshops will be at the discretion of administration.

Establish a confidential reporting system that allows students to report victimization and that records the details of bullying incidents.

Follow through with the developmentally appropriate consequence sequence created by each classroom level if bullying occurs (see classroom consequences for further guidance).

Ensure that immediate action is taken when bullying is observed. All teachers and school staff must let students know that they care and will not allow anyone to be mistreated. By taking immediate action and dealing with students who bully, adults support students who are bullied and those who are bystanders to bullying.

Notify the parents of all involved students when a bullying incident occurs and seek to resolve the problem expeditiously at school.

Reflection & Modification Plan

Each staff member will fill out a survey at the end of each year to reflect on the overall effectiveness of our Bullying Prevention Plan. Our goal will be to reduce the number of incidences of bullying in our school using the above elements of Peace Education explicit in the teachings of Dr. Montessori. This will enable us to make sure we are addressing the prevention and proper handling of bullying in our school. Additionally, through yearly reflections and evaluation, the prevention strategies above can be considered a working plan that can be changed or amended as deemed appropriate by administration and/or the Board of Education at Walden Green Montessori.

Developmentally Responsive Consequences to Acts of Determined Bullying

*Developed by the Teachers and Staff of Walden Green Montessori
January 2010*

Introduction and Clarifications to Tiered Consequences

At the beginning of each year it takes time to get to know all of the children as well as the classroom dynamics, as they change every year. In light of this, if a child shows signs of behavior issues and/or has been evaluated that that these behaviors are interfering with their learning and disrupting the classroom community, teachers, parents, and specialists will meet to discuss and implement a behavior management plan. This will be the first step taken when dealing with a child that is displaying signs of behavior issues in the classroom. Therefore, a home suspension or further consequential action that could lead to expulsion will not take place until a student continues to violate their behavior management plan and the teacher and school have exhausted all strategies and resources. However, if a child has a behavior management plan in place, and that child displays a form of physical violence that poses an immediate threat to the classroom environment, the child will be sent home immediately.

Additionally it should be noted that the consequences below are only initiated after a student is showing a pattern of behavior that is defined as bullyish and the student is not making any effort to change this pattern after teacher and school intervention. Both parent and student will be notified of the determined form of consequential action that will take place as outlined below.

Note: Consequential courses of action are not carried over from one year to the next. However, prior behavior may or may not be factor in determining the course of action taken if a pattern seems to be developing. This will be left to the discretion of the administration.

Tier One Consequential Action- Immediate at-home suspension of student due to physically harming another student(s) or verbal or written intent to harm other students, staff, or the physical environment of the classroom or school. Please see *Types of Bullying* on page 5 for further clarification.

Physically Violent Behavior

Walden Green has a zero “0” tolerance for the physical harm of a student. Violent behavior is defined as any physical action that is intended to harm another’s personal well-being. Episodes of violence will be dealt with by immediately removing all parties involved in the physical act of violence from the classroom environment. If physically violent behavior occurs, an immediate dismissal from school (suspension) will occur for that given day and the day after. If the parents or legal guardians are not available or unwilling to pick up their child, students will be taken out

of the classroom and held in in-school suspension and not allowed back the following day. A reentry meeting with parents and student will take place before the student is allowed back into the classroom. Depending on the severity of the physically violent behavior, the total number of days suspended will be at the discretion of administration.

Written or Verbal Forms of Violence

Any written or verbal forms of violence that indicate a threat, harm to others or the school environment will also go under Walden Green's zero "0" tolerance Tier One Consequential Action. This will be dealt with swiftly and all parties involved will be sent home immediately or held in in-school suspension until picked up by a parent or legal guardian. A reentry meeting with parents and student will take place before they can reenter the classroom community. Depending on the severity of the written or verbal violence, the total number of days suspended will be at the discretion of administration.

Tier Two Consequential Action- Developmental classroom steps for infractions in the areas of verbal, cyber, and relational forms of bullying. Please see *Types of Bullying* on page 5 for further clarification.

Children's House (Young 5's & Kindergarten)

1st Offense: A call goes home and a classroom consequence will be put in place immediately after infraction.

2nd Offense: A call goes home and student is placed in a quiet isolated place in the classroom for a half of day (3 1/2 hours) starting immediately after infraction to do his/her work.

3rd Offense: A call goes home and the student is taken out of the classroom and put in in-school suspension for a full day (7 hours) immediately after infraction. If infraction happens in the middle of the day the student will spend part of the next day in in-school suspension until they have reached a full 7 Hours.

4th Offense: 1 day suspension the following day of infraction and in-school suspension for the remainder of the day of infraction. A call home and parent notification will be sent home. A reentry meeting with parents and student will take place before the student is allowed back into the classroom.

*If behavior continues after the 4th offense, the classroom teacher and administration will consider bringing the issue to the Board for determination of expulsion.

Lower Elementary (Grades 1-2)

1st Offense: A call goes home and a classroom consequence will be put in place immediately after infraction.

2nd Offense: In school suspension for a full day (7 hours) starting immediately after infraction. If infraction happens in the middle of the day the student will spend part of the next day in in-school suspension until they have reached a full 7 Hours. A call home and parent notification will be sent home.

3rd Offense: In school suspension for 2 full days (14 hours) starting immediately after infraction. If infraction happens in the middle of the day the student will spend the next two days in in-school suspension until they have reached a full 14 Hours. A call home and parent notification will be sent home.

4th Offense: 1 day suspension the following day of infraction and in-school suspension for the remainder of the day of infraction. A call home and parent notification will be sent home. A reentry meeting with parents and student will take place before the student is allowed back into the classroom.

*If behavior continues after the 4th offense, the classroom teacher and administration will consider bringing the issue to the Board for determination of expulsion.

Middle Elementary (Grades 3-4)

1st Offense: Reflection Slip & Call goes home and brought back the next school day with a parent signature. In addition, a classroom consequence will be put in place. This will all take place immediately after infraction.

2nd Offense: In school suspension for a full day (7 hours) starting immediately after infraction. If infraction happens in the middle of the day the student will spend part of the next day in in-school suspension until they have reached a full 7 Hours. A call home and parent notification will be sent home.

3rd Offense: 1 day suspension the following day of infraction and in-school suspension for the remainder of the day of infraction. A call home and parent notification will be sent home. A reentry meeting with parents and student will take place before the student is allowed back into the classroom.

*If behavior continues after the 3rd offense, the classroom teacher and administration will consider bringing the issue to the Board for determination of expulsion.

Upper Elementary (Grades 5-6)

1st Offense: A call home and a classroom consequence immediately after infraction.

2nd Offense: In school suspension for a full day (7 hours) starting immediately after infraction. If infraction happens in the middle of the day the student will spend part of the next day in in-school suspension until they have reached a full 7 Hours. A call home and parent notification will be sent home.

3rd Offense: 1 day suspension the following day of infraction and in-school suspension for the remainder of the day of infraction. A call home and parent notification will be sent home. A reentry meeting with parents and student will take place before the student is allowed back into the classroom.

*If behavior continues after the 3rd offense, the classroom teacher and administration will consider bringing the issue to the Board for determination of expulsion.

Middle School (Grades 7-8)

1st Offense: In school suspension for a full day (7 hours) starting immediately after infraction. If infraction happens in the middle of the day the student will spend part of the next day in in-school suspension until they have reached a full 7 Hours. A call home and parent notification will be sent home.

2nd Offense: 1 day suspension the following day of infraction and in-school suspension for the remainder of the day of infraction. A call home and parent notification will be sent home. A reentry meeting with parents and student will take place before the student is allowed back into the classroom.

3rd Offense: 3 day suspension the following day of infraction and in-school suspension for the remainder of the day of infraction. A call home and parent notification will be sent home. A reentry meeting with parents and student will take place before the student is allowed back into the classroom.

*If behavior continues after the 3rd offense, the classroom teacher and administration will consider bringing the issue to the Board for determination of expulsion.

Incident Report & Bullying Determination Form

Reporting Details

Class: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____

Name of person(s) making report: _____

Name of person(s) being reported: _____

Name of person taking report: _____

Incident Details

Date: _____ Time: _____ Location: _____

Explain Incident (attach additional comments or findings as needed):

Witnesses? Yes _____ No _____ Names: _____

Witnesses Observations of Incident (attach additional comments or findings as needed).

Findings

Name of person(s) reporting findings: Name: _____ Title: _____ Date: _____

Does the incident involve one of the following definitions of bullying (please check any or all that apply):

- Bullying that affects the physical well-being of a student(s)
- Bullying that affects the social/emotional well-being of a student(s)
- Bullying that affects the cognitive well-being of a student(s)
- Bullying that shows an imbalance in real or perceived power
- Bullying that is intended to hurt or harm
- Bullying that is a patterned behavior

Briefly describe why the incident that has occurred does or does not constitute bullying (attach additional comments or findings as needed).

Determination

Check one:

Not bullying: Incident not deemed bullying under the definitions of bullying adopted by the Walden Green Montessori Board of Education above.

Explain: _____

Bullying: Incident meets the requirements of bullying under the definitions of bullying adopted by the Walden Green Montessori Board of Education above.

Explain: _____

Developmentally Appropriate Consequences Issued: ____ Yes ____ No

Explain: _____

Follow-Up Requirements

The following requirements have been completed immediately after proper determination that the incident indicated an act of bullying.

Parents or legal guardians notified: ____ Yes

Written communication sent to parents or legal guardians: ____ Yes

Additional Follow-Up Comments: _____

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