

STANDING TOGETHER!



Creating a safe climate for every student

90%

of students in California with disabilities report being bullied, and students with neurodivergence face a similarly high risk.

Most stay silent

More than 50% don't know how to report it, and up to 75% don't tell school staff, because they're afraid of getting in trouble.

We can change this

Stopping bullying usually takes more than reporting it once. Reaching out for support is always an important step, especially if someone is in danger.

What Helps Us Grow?

The first step is knowing what puts a teen at risk and what protects them.

RISK FACTORS		PROTECTIVE FACTORS	
Social isolation Being seen as different	Individual	Strong sense of self Good social skills	
Aggressive friends Family conflict	Peers and Family	Close friends Supportive parenting	
Unfair school rules Feeling unsafe	School and Community	Caring staff Safe and inclusive environment	

*Risk factors don't mean a teen will be bullied.
We all have a role to play.*

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SET CLEAR EXPECTATIONS

Be Proactive - Establish clear, simple rules against bullying that everyone knows. Explicitly teach and model that kindness and respect are core values.

Avoid Zero Tolerance - Harsh, one-size-fits-all punishments can make students and staff less likely to report incidents. Use restorative, age-appropriate consequences that teach accountability and repair harm.

Use IEPs and 504s - These plans can include accommodations like teaching social skills, providing safe transitions between classes, or identifying a staff mentor.

DON'T ASK THEM TO "WORK IT OUT"

Bullying Isn't a Conflict - It's an abuse of power. Asking students to solve it on their own can re-traumatize the student being bullied and escalate the behavior.

It's Up to You - Trained professionals must step in to ensure safety, address the harm, and work to rebuild trust between students, not force them to be friends.

BUILD A SUPPORT TEAM

Make It Clear - Teens with neurodivergence feel safer when they know the adults in their life are connected and proactive.

Form a Bullying Prevention Team - Bring together student leaders, families, and staff to plan and teach anti-bullying strategies.

Coordinate Support - For a student with an IEP or 504, the team should regularly check that the plan includes social-emotional supports and a clear, safe way for the student to feel safe reporting.

**YOU ARE THEIR FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE.
A SAFE SCHOOL IS BUILT BY A CONNECTED COMMUNITY!**