

Dear Parents/Guardians of Sunset Students,

As the School Counselor, one of my biggest responsibilities is to ensure students feel safe when they are here at school. If students are not feeling safe then it makes it difficult for them to focus on the main reason they are at school, which is to learn. Being or feeling safe includes being safe from bullying and harassment from others.

In the beginning of the year I visit every classroom to discuss with students that we have a “NO Bullying Policy” at our school. I explicitly explain it is not okay to tease, make fun of, intimidate, or harass another student either physically, verbally, or in any other manner. We talk about how to recognize bullying and what a student can and should do if they are feeling bullied. As part of our scheduled classroom guidance program students are taught strategies they can use if they are being harassed or pressured by their peers, as well as, what they can do if they are a bystander in that kind of situation. Students are encouraged to report bullying to an adult here at school and to inform their parents. Research shows that bullying does not go away if you ignore it.

Bullying occurs when someone verbally, physically, or mentally picks on another student whether in person (face-to-face) or behind their back (rumors, over social-media, etc.). Usually there are three components to bullying 1) intentional 2) repeated over time (though it can be a one-time incident) 3) power difference (someone is bigger, older, or there may be 2 or more students picking on another student).

At Sunset we have 3 school rules;

- Be Safe
- Be Respectful
- Be Responsible

When I talk with students I emphasize that EVERYONE deserves to be treated with respect.

What is true, is that it is the responsibility of all of us (parents, children, educators, and community) to teach our children the importance of being kind and considerate to others. Here are some resources that might help in forging discussions with our youth about bullying and the importance of treating others with respect.

Anti-Bullying Resources

[www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov)

[www.cyberbullying.us](http://www.cyberbullying.us)

Respectfully,

Ms. Ralstin

Sunset Guidance Counselor