

# Preventing Bullying



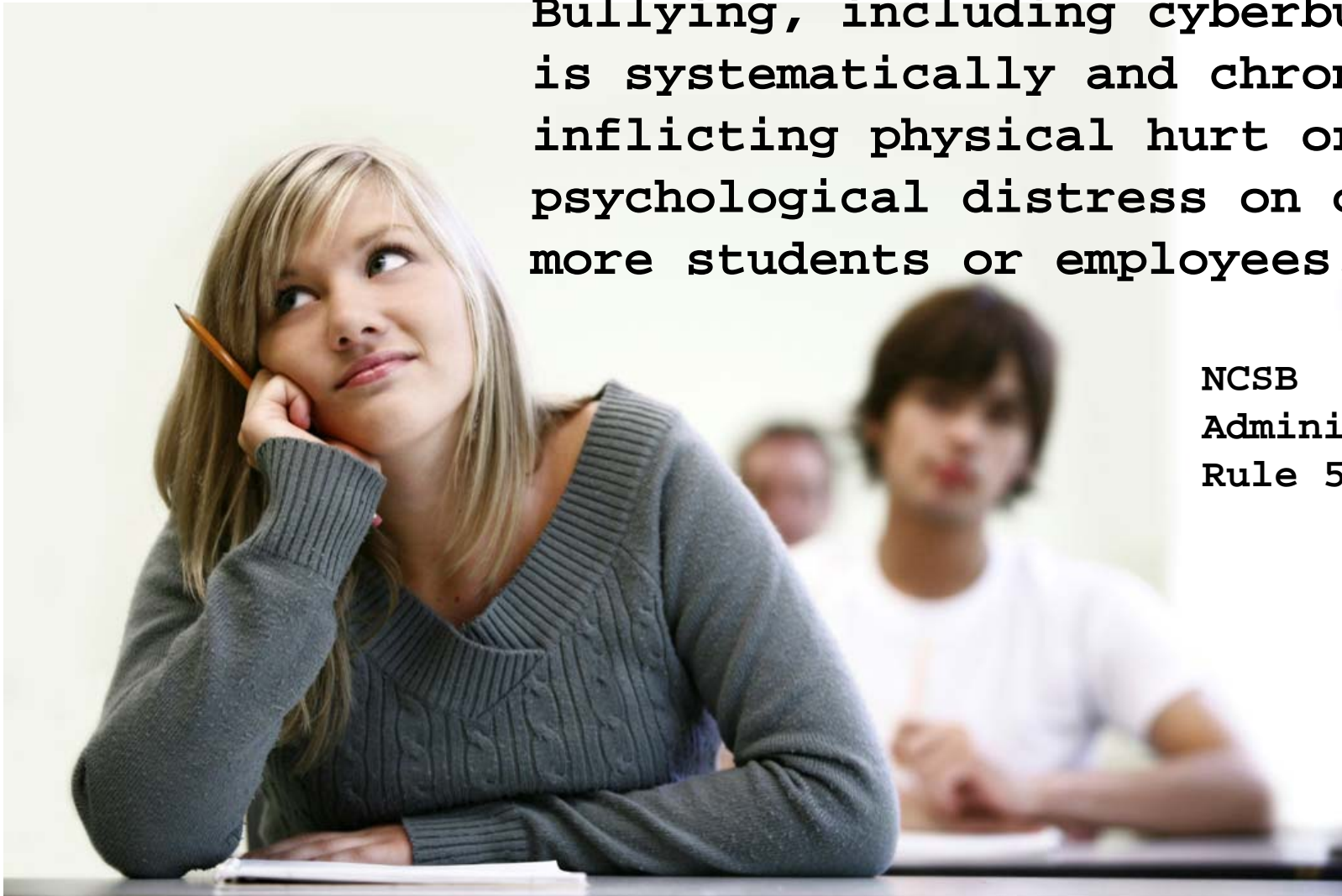
*What  
Everyone  
Needs to  
Know*



# What Is Bullying?

Bullying, including cyberbullying is systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees.

NCSB  
Administrative  
Rule 5.49



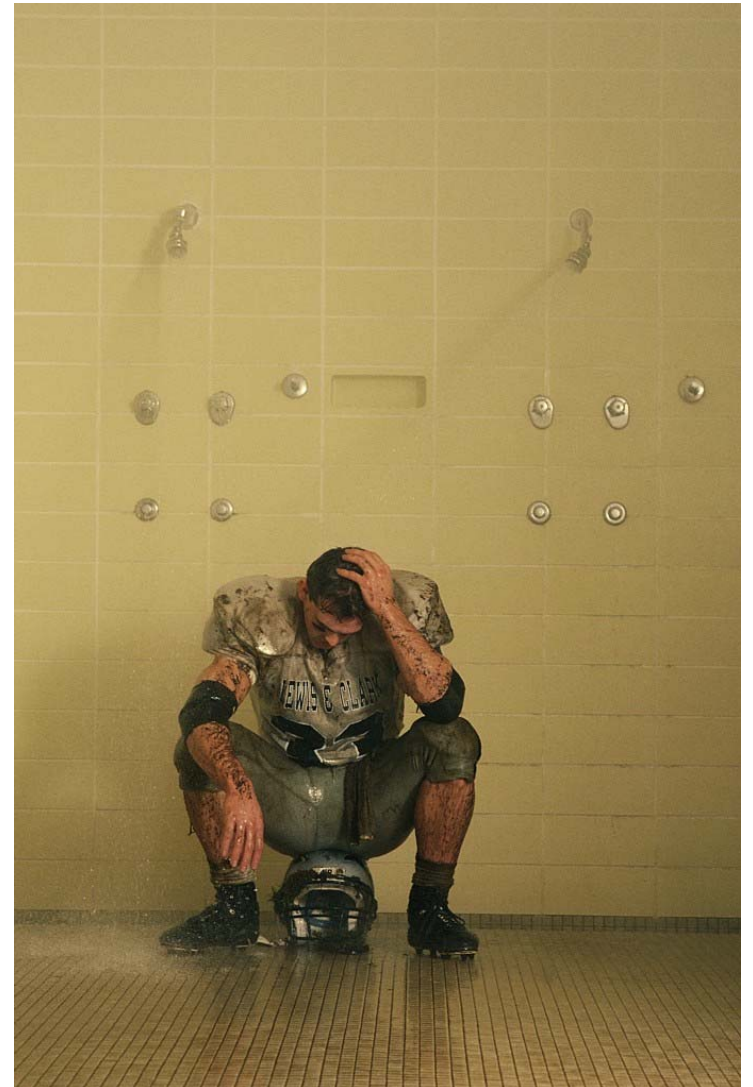
# How Do We Know It's Bullying?



- The bully intends to hurt the victim and enjoys doing it.
- It's severe enough or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.
- The behavior is repeated.
- It unreasonably interferes with the victim's school performance or participation.
- It occurs in a relationship where one individual has perceived power over another.

# What Are Some Examples?

- Unwanted teasing or taunting
- Social exclusion
- Threat
- Intimidation
- Stalking
- Physical violence
- Theft
- Sexual, religious, or racial harassment
- Public or private humiliation
- Destruction of property
- Cyberstalking



# Cyberbullying

- The term bullying includes cyberbullying whether or not specifically stated.



Instagram



# What is Cyberbullying?

- Cyberbullying means bullying through the use of technology/electronic communication; creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person; the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages; distribution or posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions listed in the definition of bullying.



# What Is Harassment?



- Any threatening, insulting or dehumanizing gesture, use of data or computer software, or written, verbal or physical conduct directed against a student or school employee. . . .

# That...



- Places a student or school employee in reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance
- Substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a school



# Misconceptions About Bullying

#1: Our school doesn't have a problem with bullies.

On the 2014 Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey:

46.4% of Nassau County middle school students were worried about bullying.

40.0% reported being teased or taunted in the previous 30 days.

20.0% reported being kicked or shoved in the previous 30 days.

11.9% reported being a victim of cyberbullying in the past 30 days.

6.7% reported physically bullying others in the past 30 days.

17.8% reported verbally bullying others in the past 30 days.



# Another Misconception



#2: There are other safety issues that worry parents and students more than bullying.

Research shows that students put bullying ahead of many other safety issues. 21% of parents enrolling students in home education cite the school environment, including bullying, as a reason for removing their children from public schools (US Department of Education).

# Other Mistaken Beliefs



**#3: Teachers are able to see bullying whenever it happens and intervene.**

Teachers and other school staff often overestimate their effectiveness in identifying bullying and intervening. They frequently "miss" seeing incidents of bullying because many episodes occur where supervision is low and the behavior is mistaken for ordinary interaction.

**#4: Bullies are social misfits and have low self-esteem.**

Some bullies are actually popular with both peers and teachers. They may be very self-confident and use bullying to maintain their social position.

# And still more myths...

**#5: Bullies are boys - girls don't bully.**

Although they may use different means, girls do bully and their bullying can be very destructive.

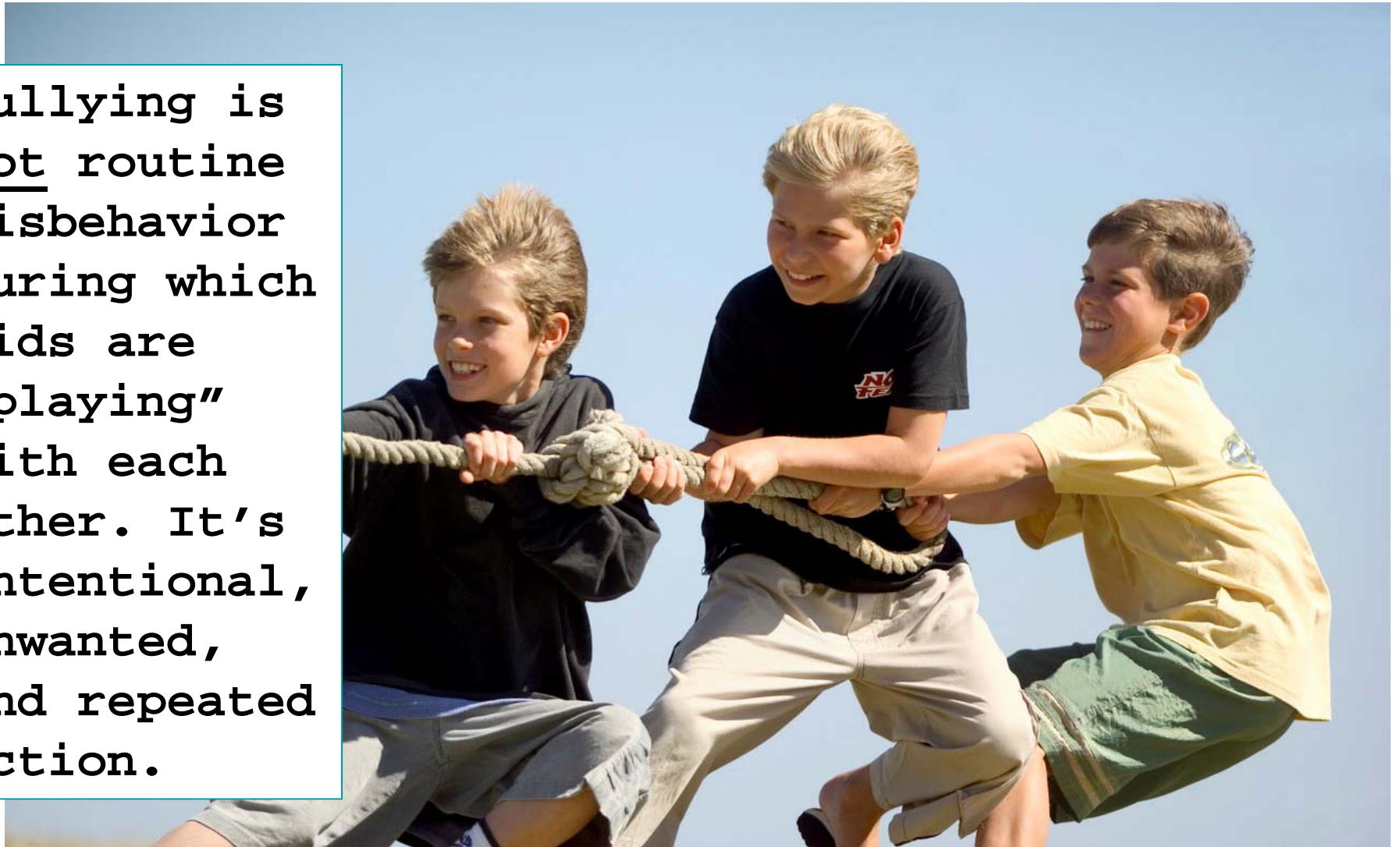
**#6: If you just ignore him/her, a bully will eventually stop.**

Bullying behavior seldom just goes away. Even if it isn't full-fledged bullying, reporting unwanted behavior allows school staff to intervene and stop it before it reaches the "bullying" level. Ignoring it results in frustration and building anger.



# Horseplay or Bullying?

Bullying is not routine misbehavior during which kids are "playing" with each other. It's intentional, unwanted, and repeated action.

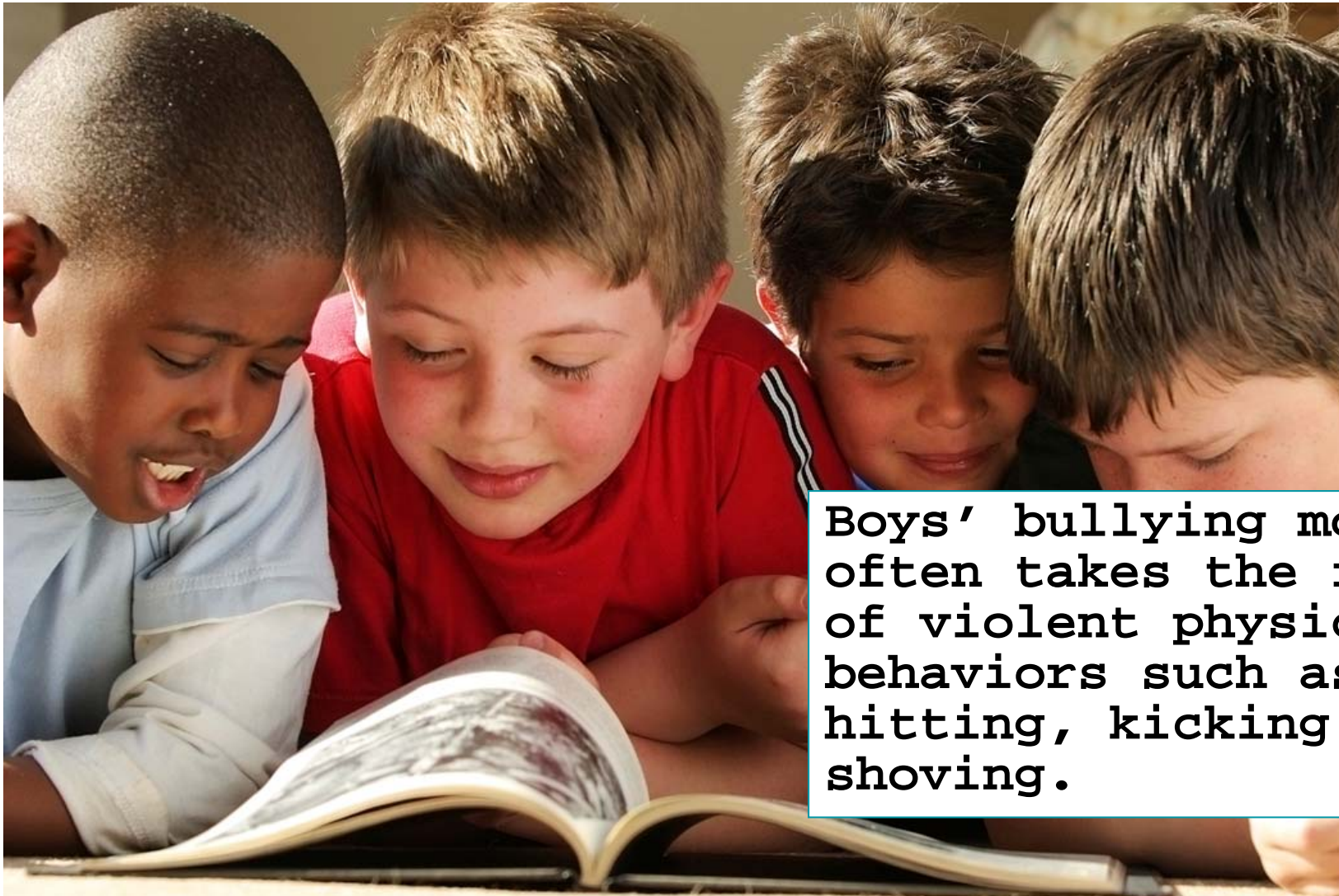


# Mean Girls



Girls who bully tend to use meanness in the form of exclusion, isolation, and rumor spreading.

# And What About the Boys?



Boys' bullying more often takes the form of violent physical behaviors such as hitting, kicking, and shoving.

# Bullying with Technology



Technology makes it easy for students to bully others anonymously and with a wider audience. Social network sites such as Twitter, Instagram and Facebook, instant messaging, three-way calling, and cell-phone texting all provide avenues.

Many times, this activity takes place outside school, but results in conflict at school.

It's very important to enforce the "cell phones must be turned off in school" rule.



# Blaming the Victim



Uninformed students and teachers may try to place the blame for being bullied on the victim. They may believe being bullied is a result of the victim's own behavior or that the victim is weak - an easy target.

# How Does Bullying Hurt?

Being a victim of bullying may have a variety of consequences, such as...

Increased illness and absence due to illness

Physical injury

Attempted suicide

Compulsion to take drastic actions such as weapon-carrying or fighting back

Feelings of isolation, exclusion, or alienation

Fear and anxiety

Difficulty forming friendships

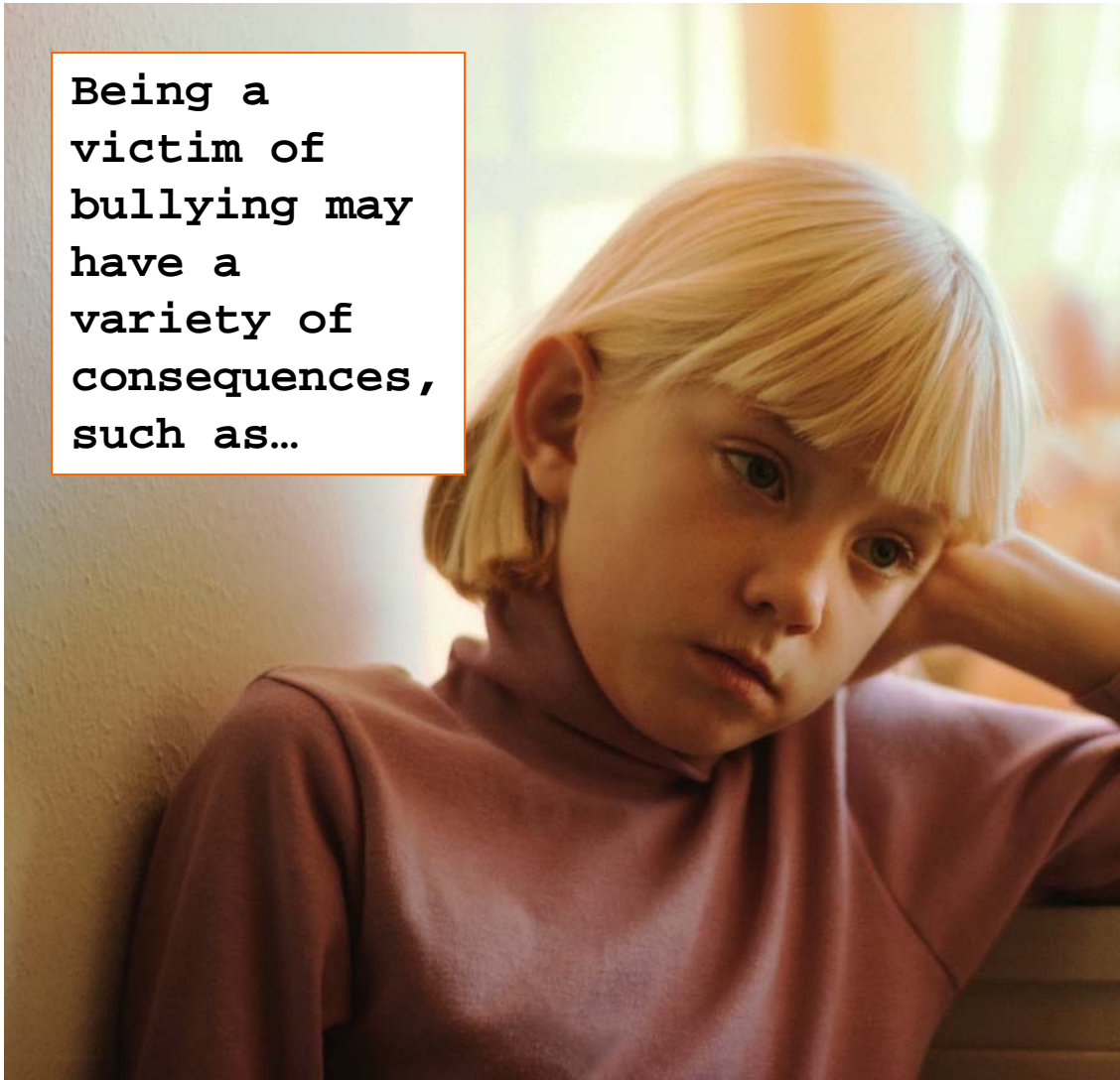
Depression

Feelings of incompetence or powerlessness

Truancy

Grades may drop

Difficulty concentrating on schoolwork



# And It's Not Just the Victims...

## Bystanders and peers of the victim:

- ✓ May be afraid to associate with the victim for fear of lowering their own status or becoming a victim themselves
- ✓ Fear reporting because they don't want to be called a "snitch" or "tattler"
- ✓ Experience guilt or helplessness for not standing up on behalf of the victim
- ✓ May be drawn into bullying behavior due to group pressure
- ✓ Feel unsafe, unable to take action, or feel a loss of control



# Bullies Are Also at Risk



**Students who bully** are more likely than others to:

- get into frequent fights
- be injured in a fight
- steal
- vandalize property
- drink alcohol
- smoke
- be truant and drop out of school
- have poor academic achievement
- perceive a negative climate at school
- carry a weapon

# Signs a Child is Being Bullied

Personal belongings are missing, damaged or scattered

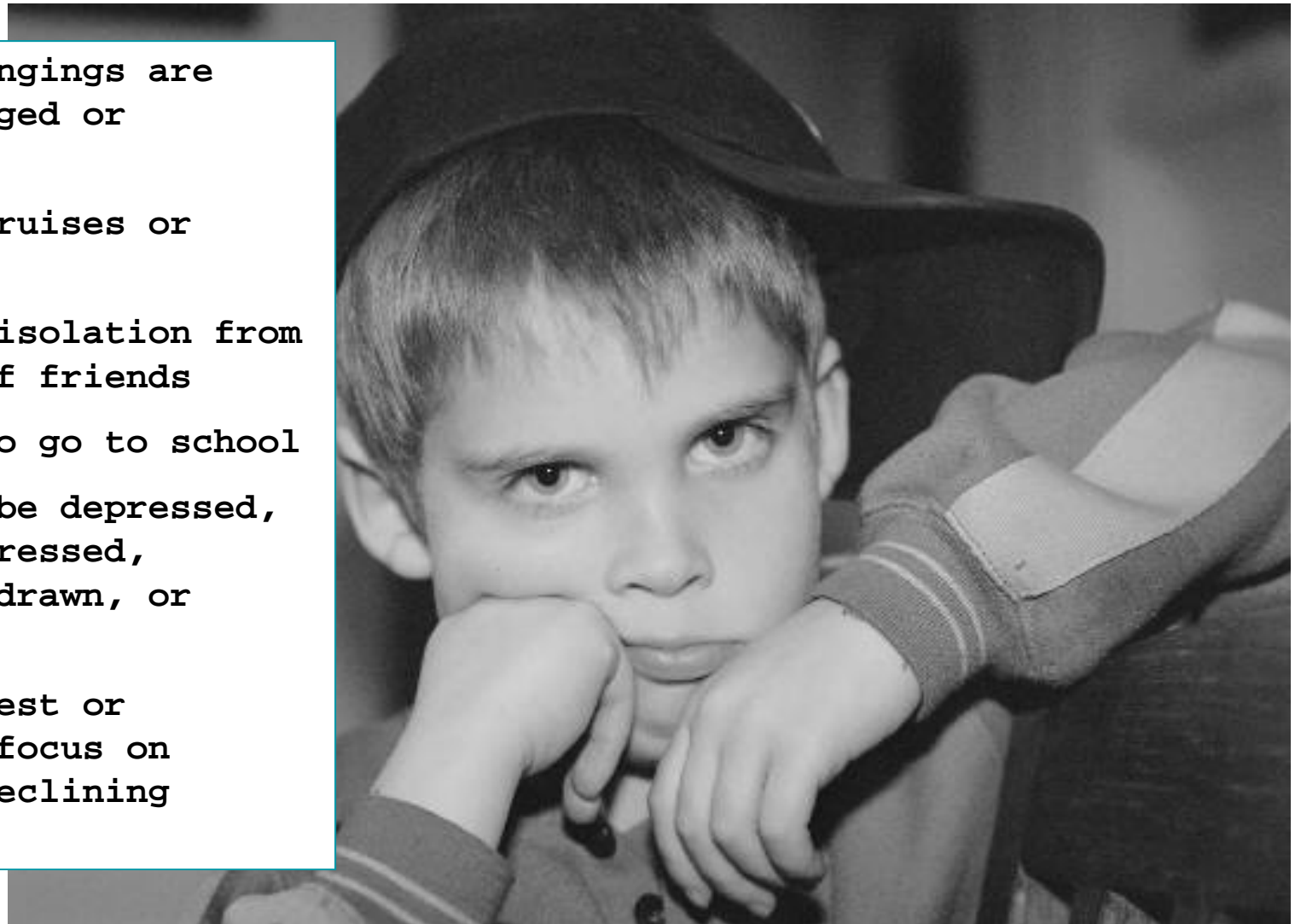
Unexplained bruises or wounds

Exclusion or isolation from peers; lack of friends

Not wanting to go to school

Appearing to be depressed, unhappy, distressed, anxious, withdrawn, or insecure

Loss of interest or inability to focus on schoolwork; declining grades



# The Code of Silence

There is an unspoken "rule" among children, especially teens, when it comes to telling on other children. They're reluctant to "tattle" on their friends or peers.

A witness may remain silent for fear of being next, out of guilt for not helping the victim, or out of fear of losing status among peers.

Many adults reinforce this code unknowingly by brushing off incidents, telling students to "work things out among themselves" or to "stop tattling." To break the code of silence, adults must show that reports will be taken seriously, reporters will not be unnecessarily exposed, and there will be consequences for bullying.



# How Can We Stop Bullying?



The Nassau County School Board's program to implement its anti-bullying and harassment policy (Administrative Rule 5.49) and procedures focuses on changing the social environment of the schools to make bullying "uncool."

We desire the norm to be that teachers and other staff serve as role models for positive social interaction, that teachers and other staff recognize and intervene in bullying situations, and that students help others.

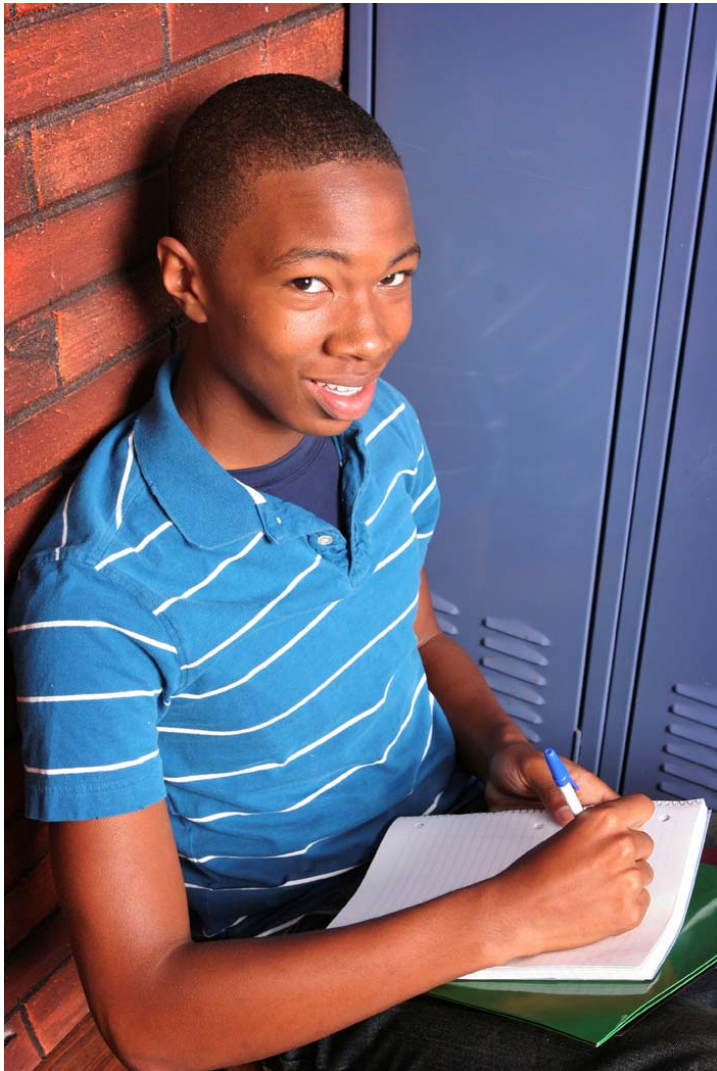
# Our Program Will Use “Best Practices”

- All school staff will be trained in bullying prevention and PBS (Positive Behavior Supports).
- We will use anonymous surveys to assess the nature and extent of bullying at each school.
- School rules and policies will be established and guidance will be given regarding enforcement. School rules will be posted and discussed with students and parents.
- Schools will maintain appropriate levels of supervision of areas where bullying tends to thrive, such as hallways, PE classes, playgrounds, etc.





# In Addition,



- School staff will be trained to recognize and intervene in bullying or suspected bullying.
- Time will be set aside on a regular basis to discuss bullying and improving peer relationships.
- Each school will use appropriate bullying prevention curriculum/ resources to reduce violence and increase prosocial behavior.
- The activities of our program will be done continuously. There is no "end" to the program.

# Our 2015-16 Focus:



## **Catch Students Doing It Right!**

We understand the value of teaching about and demonstrating respectful behavior and recognizing students when they are behaving respectfully to others.

# Remember...



**A safe, secure, orderly,  
inviting school climate  
facilitates student  
learning.**

**We seek to create/maintain  
school environments that do  
not tolerate bullying or  
harassment.**

# The Role of Educators

*"Raise awareness and do not tolerate bullying by teachers and other adults in the school. Educators let students know they care; bullies let students know who's boss. Educators teach self-control; bullies exert control. Educators diffuse minor disruptions; bullies use sarcasm to turn disruptions into confrontations. Educators privately counsel chronic discipline problems; bullies publically humiliate chronic misbehaviors."*

*-Olweus Bullying  
Prevention Program*



# Classroom Activities



**Examples of activities that can be carried out in classrooms to support bullying prevention:**

Let students talk about bullying and enlist their support in defining bullying as unacceptable behavior.

Make an action plan so students know what to do when they observe or experience bullying.

Teach cooperation by assigning projects that require collaboration.

Act promptly when bullying is observed.

Confront bullies in private.

Refer victims and aggressors to counselors.

Set up a buddy system for students so everyone has someone with whom to share class information and plans.

Avoid attempts to mediate bullying situations. The imbalance of power between bullies and victims will prevent success.

# More Classroom Strategies

Serve as a role model. Be vigilant in noticing when someone is being bullied or hurt and help them. Model respectfulness and caring.

Build empathy in students. If a book, story, movie, etc. has examples of someone being hurt, ask students how they would feel in that situation and what they could do to make it better. Point out ways characters helped out or didn't help, and have students think of other ways to help.

Help students develop social skills. Create circumstances for students to interact with others and to consider people of different ages, backgrounds, races, ethnicities, religions, and mental and physical abilities.



# School-Wide Strategies

Form a committee to plan and monitor the school's bullying prevention activities. Be creative and make it a positive experience for everyone!

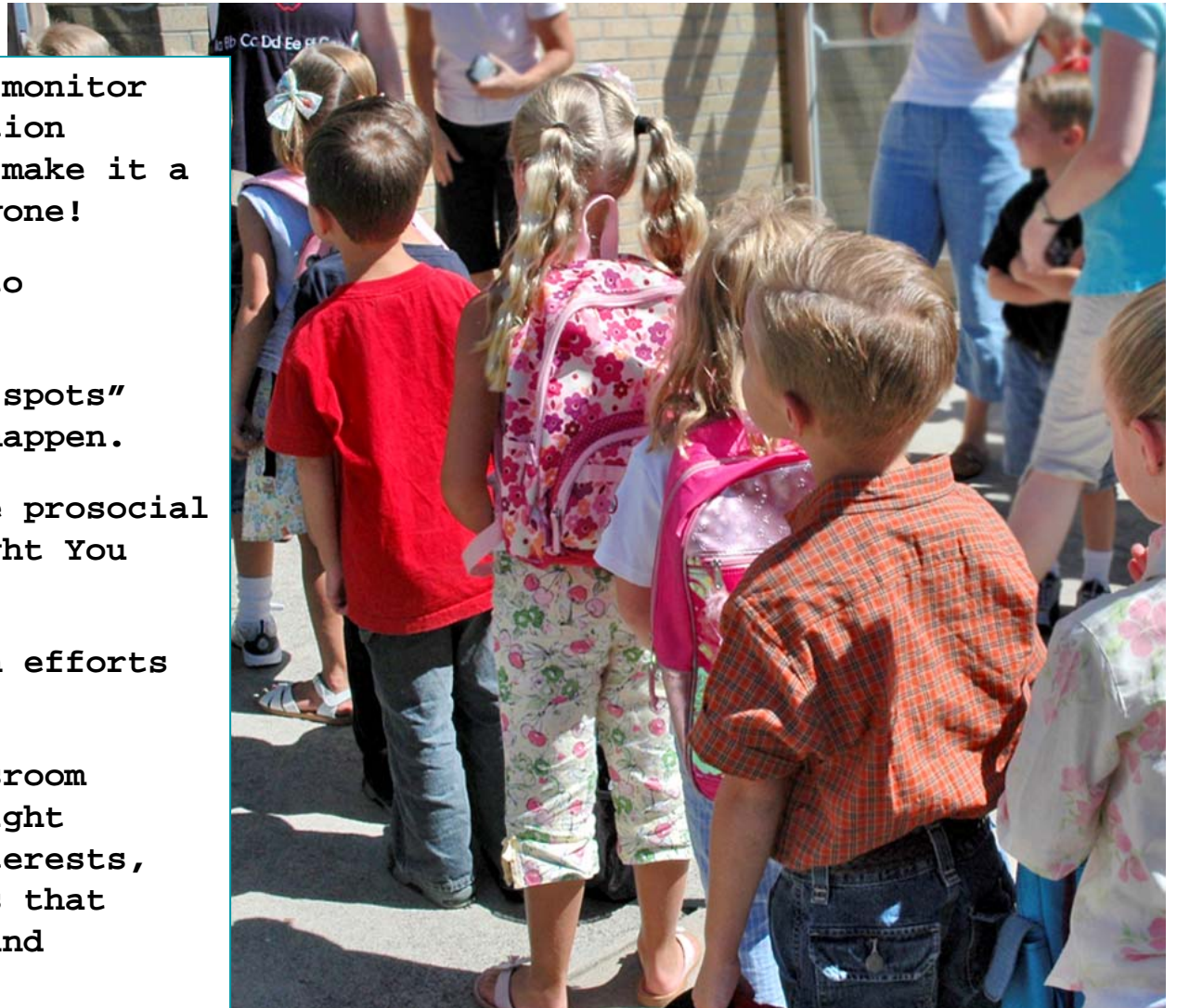
Schedule school-wide events to highlight prevention.

Increase supervision in "hot spots" where bullying is likely to happen.

Develop a system to reinforce prosocial behavior - for example, "Caught You Caring."

Highlight bullying prevention efforts at parent events.

Promote school-wide and classroom activities designed to spotlight special talents, hobbies, interests, and abilities of all students that foster mutual understanding and appreciation among students.



# Strategies for Students



Students need a variety of appropriate actions to take if they experience or observe bullying:

Seek immediate help from an adult.

Speak up or offer support to the victim.

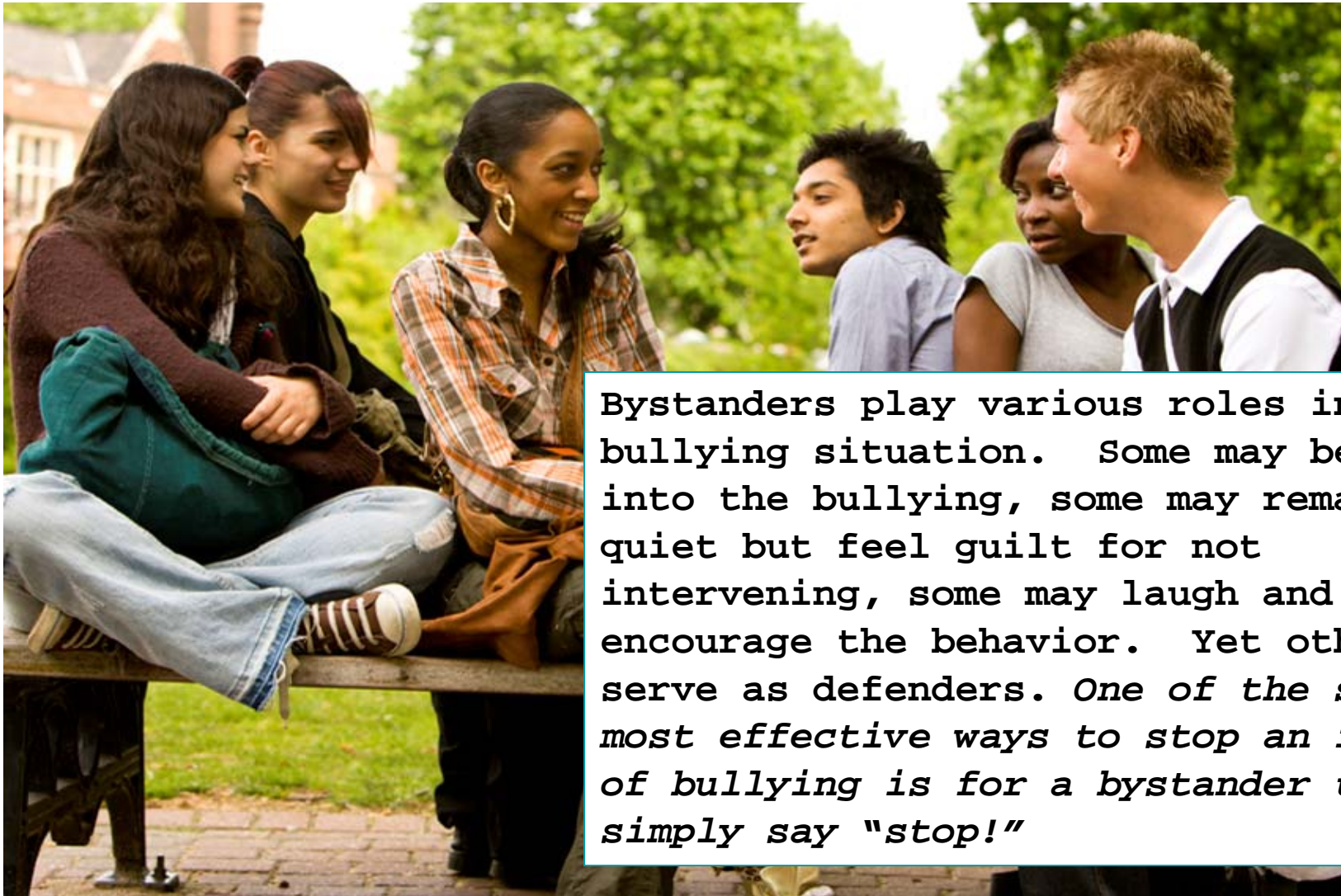
Privately support or offer words of kindness to those being hurt.

Express disapproval of bullying by not joining in on the laughter, teasing, or spreading of rumors or gossip.

Attempt to defuse problem situations by taking the bully aside and asking him/her to "cool it."



# The Role of the Bystander



Bystanders play various roles in a bullying situation. Some may be pulled into the bullying, some may remain quiet but feel guilt for not intervening, some may laugh and encourage the behavior. Yet others may serve as defenders. *One of the single most effective ways to stop an incident of bullying is for a bystander to simply say "stop!"*

# What Can Parents Do?

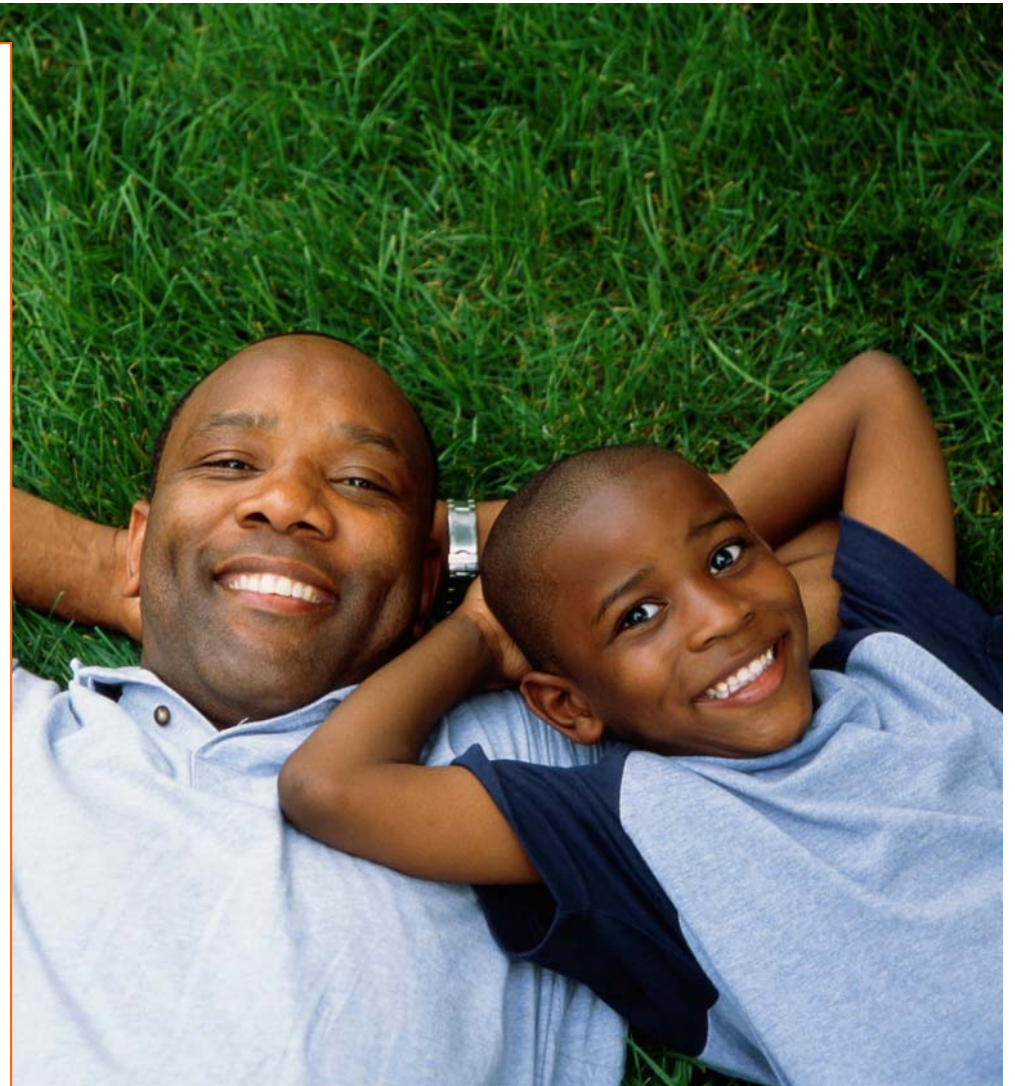
If you think your child is being bullied:

Be careful not to make a child feel that something is wrong with him/her or that he/she "deserves" abuse from peers.

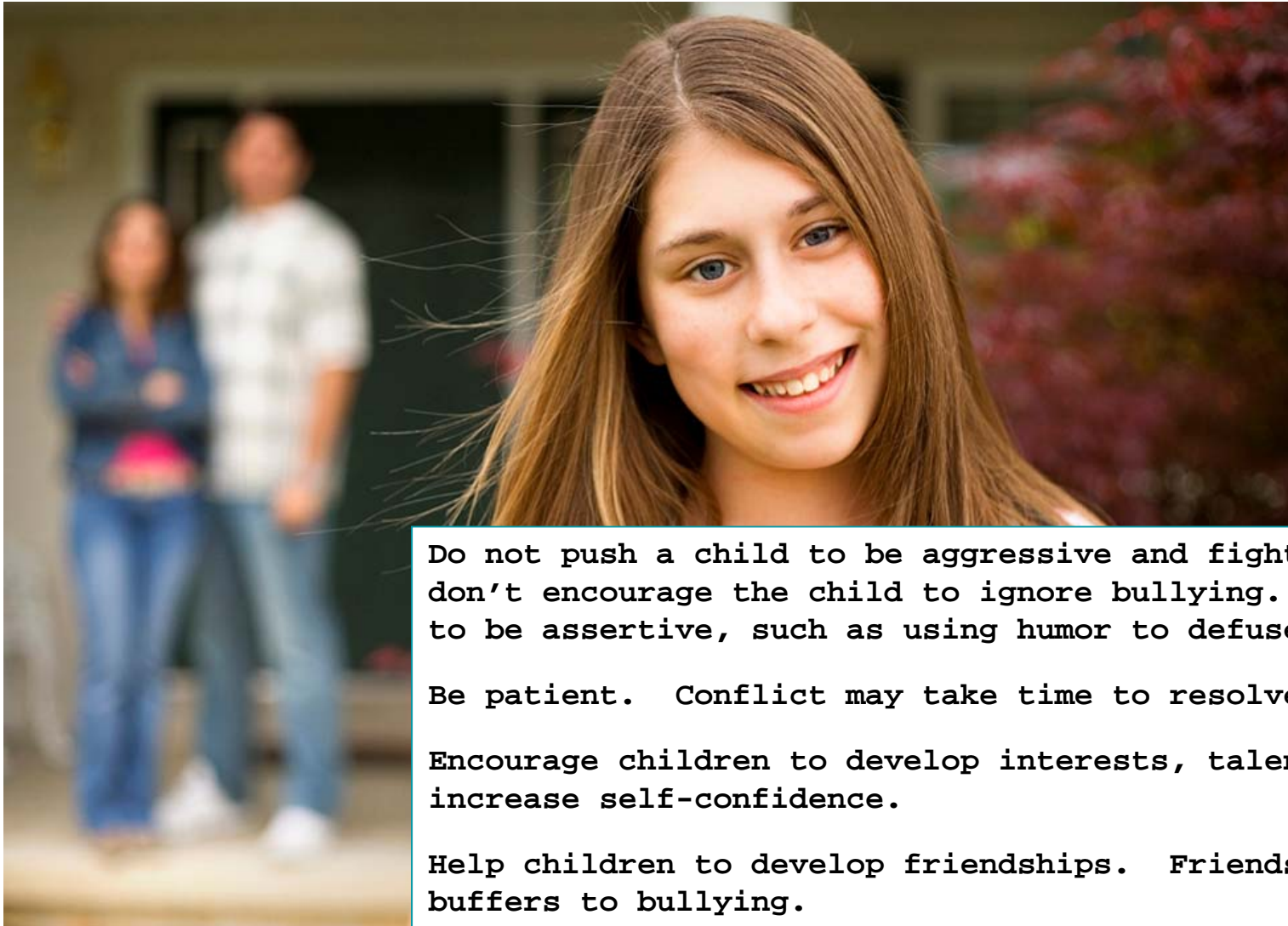
Call the school and work with the school to address the problem. Keep records of incidents so that the specific details will be remembered.

Allow school personnel to coordinate the intervention. It may be difficult to get good results from speaking directly to a bully or the bully's parent.

Offer support but encourage the child to take independent actions.



# More Tips for Parents



Do not push a child to be aggressive and fight back, but also don't encourage the child to ignore bullying. Assist a child to be assertive, such as using humor to defuse situations.

Be patient. Conflict may take time to resolve.

Encourage children to develop interests, talents, or skills to increase self-confidence.

Help children to develop friendships. Friends can serve as buffers to bullying.

# If Your Child is the Bully

It's hard for parents to believe their child could be a bully, but sometimes it happens. Parents are the best resources to help their children stop bullying and have better relationships with their classmates.



**Signs a child may be a bully:**

Lacks empathy and doesn't sympathize with others

Values aggression

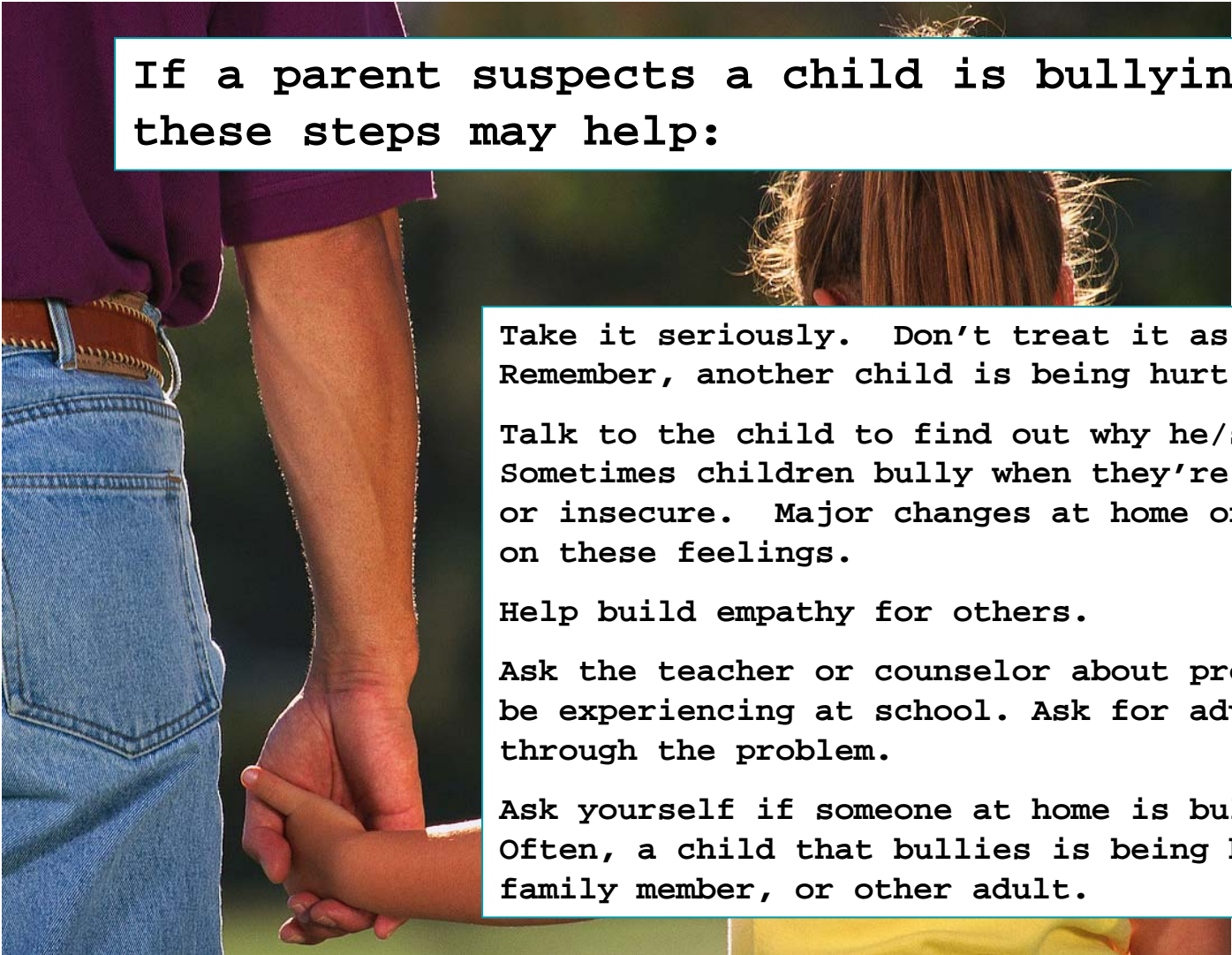
Likes to be in charge

Is an arrogant winner and a sore loser

Often fights with brothers and sisters

Is impulsive

# What Can Be Done?



If a parent suspects a child is bullying others, these steps may help:

Take it seriously. Don't treat it as a passing phase. Remember, another child is being hurt.


Talk to the child to find out why he/she is bullying. Sometimes children bully when they're sad, angry, lonely, or insecure. Major changes at home or school may bring on these feelings.

Help build empathy for others.

Ask the teacher or counselor about problems the child may be experiencing at school. Ask for advice on how to work through the problem.

Ask yourself if someone at home is bullying your child. Often, a child that bullies is being bullied by a parent, family member, or other adult.

# Legal Aspects



To reduce harm to students and to protect the school district and its employees from liability, we will follow our district policy:

We will provide regular training and education to employees, students, parents, and volunteers.

We will explain, reinforce, and uphold the standards of behavior we expect of students and adults.

We will take all reports seriously and investigate all complaints promptly and thoroughly according to a standard procedure.

# Legal Aspects, Continued

We will ensure confidentiality.

We will provide interventions appropriate for the level of seriousness of infractions.

We will protect witnesses and victims from retaliation.

We will implement appropriate consequences if allegations are substantiated.

We will promptly report suspected child abuse, sexual assault, or other criminal acts.

We will publicize our policy and our bullying prevention program.



# Resources



For further information, please see the Nassau County School District Bullying and Harassment Prevention Procedure Manual.

Other resources consulted or used in the compilation of this presentation include:

[www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov](http://www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov)

Preventing Bullying: A Manual for Schools and Communities, United States Department of Education. Available online at [www.edpubs.org](http://www.edpubs.org).

National Crime Prevention Council - [www.ncpc.org/topics/bullying](http://www.ncpc.org/topics/bullying)

McGrath Training Systems - [www.mcgrathinc.com](http://www.mcgrathinc.com)