We, the participants at the Joint Efforts Against Victimization Conference in Kandersteg in June 8th to 10th, 2007 pledge our long term commitment and determination to promote healthy relationships and prevent bullying and victimisation in children and youth.

Considerations

- Today, an estimated 200 million children and youth around the world are being abused by their peers.
- Every child and youth has the right to be respected and safe. Bullying is a violation of this basic human right.
- It is the moral responsibility of adults to ensure these rights are honoured and that healthy development and citizenship are promoted. Many adults want more understanding and strategies to address bullying problems effectively.
- Bullying is a form of aggression, involving the abuse of power in relationships. It is recognised globally as a complex and serious problem. It has many faces, including the use of emerging technologies, and varies by age, gender and culture.
- Children and youth involved in bullying suffer. Bullying and victimisation problems begin early in life and for some last a lifetime.
Many risk and protective factors associated with bullying are known and prevention programs are being implemented in several countries with encouraging results.

The mental and physical health, social and academic consequences of bullying have an enormous impact on human and social capital. The costs of bullying burden our education, health care, social services, and criminal justice systems, as well as work force productivity and innovation.

Bullying concerns and affects us all.

**Actions to be taken**
- Stop bullying now in all the places where children and youth live, work and play.
- Start prevention efforts early and continue these through childhood and adolescence, targeting known risk and protective factors and promoting healthy relationships.
- Educate and empower all adults involved with children and youth to promote healthy relationships and prevent bullying.
- Use policy and prevention programs, based on scientific research, that are appropriate for age, gender and culture, and that involve families, peers, schools and communities.
- Provide ongoing assessment and monitoring necessary to evaluate the success of policy and programs and to guarantee the rights of children and youth.

*Kandersteg, Switzerland
Jund 10, 2007*

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**WHAT IS BULLYING?**

Bullying is deliberate, repeated behaviour by an individual or group of individuals that cause distress, hurt or undue pressure on an individual. Bullying can take many forms:

**Verbal** - such as name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats, racist or homophobic or gender based remarks.

**Physical** - such as hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting, taking other’s belongings, throwing objects.

**Social** - such as ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures, forcing others to act against their will.

**Psychological** - such as spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions.

**Electronic** - such as malicious SMS, “sexting”, cyber bullying, chat mail and email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones and camera’s, abusive or threatening phone calls.
WHAT IS NOT BULLYING?

1. **Arguments**: arguments are heated disagreements between two (or more) people or groups. Disagreement is a natural response, as people have different views and opinions. The argument itself is not a form of bullying, although some people turn arguments into bullying because they want to win. It is important to identify the difference between natural disagreements and bullying during an argument.

2. **Isolated acts** of harassment, aggressive behaviour, intimidation or meanness. Anything that happens once is NOT an act of bullying. It is important to use the Grievance Procedure when/if this occurs.

3. **Not liking someone**: It is natural not to like everyone, and unpleasant as it may be to know, not everyone will like you. Saying things like “I don’t like you” is NOT an act of bullying.

4. **Accidentally bumping into someone**: Sometimes accidents happen without bad intention and it is important not to create a big conflict because it was NOT an act of bullying. This is particularly so in the playground or when playing sport.

5. **Making other children play games a certain way**: It is very natural behaviour for children to want to set the rules in games. To make sure children do not fall into a pattern of ‘bossy’ behaviour we need to ensure that all children can be assertive.

HOW DO WE KNOW IF SOMEONE IS BEING BULLIED?

Students experiencing bullying may be scared to tell anyone or feel ashamed about being bullied so they may try to hide what is going on.

Some signs that someone is being bullied are:

- Lack of motivation.
- Vagueness (especially around certain topics).
- Unusual behaviour.
- Seeing the person be hassled.
- Physical injuries.
THE ROLE OF STUDENTS

At Meningie Area School students will:

- Respect and value the rights of others and take responsibility for own actions in line with Meningie Area School Student Behaviour Management.
- Not bully and harass other students or members of staff.
- Understand what bullying behaviour is and take action to report bullying done to others.
- Use the Meningie Area School Grievance Procedure to report bullying.
- Engage positively in all school learning opportunities.
- Engage positively in programs aimed at developing social skills.
- Attend and participate in anti bullying programs as identified by the school.
- Take part in the Bully Audit.
- Use technology, particularly mobile phones and the internet in line with the Meningie Area School Policy.
- Develop an understanding that bullying of any form or for any reason can have long term effects on those being bullied, including bystanders.

THE ROLE OF TEACHERS

At Meningie Area School teachers will:

- Use Program Achieve to build a school culture reflecting our values.
- Explicitly teach anti bullying strategies and proactive social skills.
- Listen and respond to student grievance in a timely manner.
- Build a safe positive classroom working environment respectful of all stakeholders.
- Teach explicit understandings of bullying behaviours including the role of bystander.
- Teach child protection.
- Work within the Code of Conduct, and be clear about duty of care.
- Teach Child Protection.
- Actively support DECD/site intervention programs for targeted students such as Friends for Life, ICAN Mentoring, Drumbeat Program.
- Actively carry out yard duty.
- Develop positive relationships with students and regularly communicate with parents/caregivers.
- Report incidents of bullying and harassment to line manager/sub school manager in a timely manner.
- Respond to and intervene as soon as aware of alleged bullying.
**THE ROLE OF LEADERS**

At Meningie Area School leaders will:

- Ensure all staff are familiar with Program Achieve.
- Budget for resources to support student well being (attend to culture).
- Ensure all staff have appropriate and up to date training in Responding to and Reporting Abuse Child Protection.
- Regularly collect and analyse data that relates to Bullying (Self-Review, Bully Audit, Attendance Data).
- Resource DECD/Site programs to counter Bullying e.g. Friends for Life, ICAN Mentoring, Drumbeat Program.
- Work with DECD regional interagency support team to case manage students at risk.
- Ensure all staff understand the policies and procedures that support anti-bullying within the school.
- Respond and intervene in a timely manner to allegations of bullying; documenting incidents and investigating grievances.
- Seek advice and report to the police incidents of concern.
- Communicate in a timely manner with parents and caregivers in issues of bullying.
- Ensure all stakeholders are familiar with the Meningie Area School Grievance Procedure.

**THE ROLE OF PARENTS/CAREGIVERS**

At Meningie Area School parents are responsible for:

- Seeing that their children are at school daily so that he/she can build positive trusting relationships with teachers and students.
- Encouraging their children to actively participate in the school learning community.
- Taking an active interest in what your children are doing at school and regularly engage in conversations about school issues.
- Encouraging positive friendships with students at the school and look for opportunities to extend these out of school hours.
- Listening to what your children are telling you and raise issues or concerns with the school Grievance Procedure.
- Letting your children know that telling you about bullying or harassment is the right thing to do.
- Look for signs that your children may be being bullied or harassed such as:
  - Changed attitude or unwillingness to attend school
  - An emerging pattern of headache or stomach aches.
  - Reduced ability to concentrate or learn.
  - Unwillingness to discuss or secrecy about on line use.
SUPPORT

If harassment continues parents and students can contact:

HOMEGROUP TEACHER

SUBJECT TEACHER

YEAR LEVEL COORDINATORS
Junior School Team Leader: Wendy Starling
Middle School: Kathy Quinn
Senior School: Kathryn Hese

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION & SUPPORT
Isobell Koolmatrie (ACEO)

DEPUTY PRINCIPAL
Mal Jurgs

PRINCIPAL
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NEED MORE INFORMATION?

See the ‘Bullying and Harassment at School’ (advice for parents and caregivers) pamphlet.

All parents want their children to be safe and happy and to do well at school.

This pamphlet provides advice if you think your child is being bullied or harassed, or may be bullying or harassing others.

Copies available from the front office.