

# Bullying in our Schools

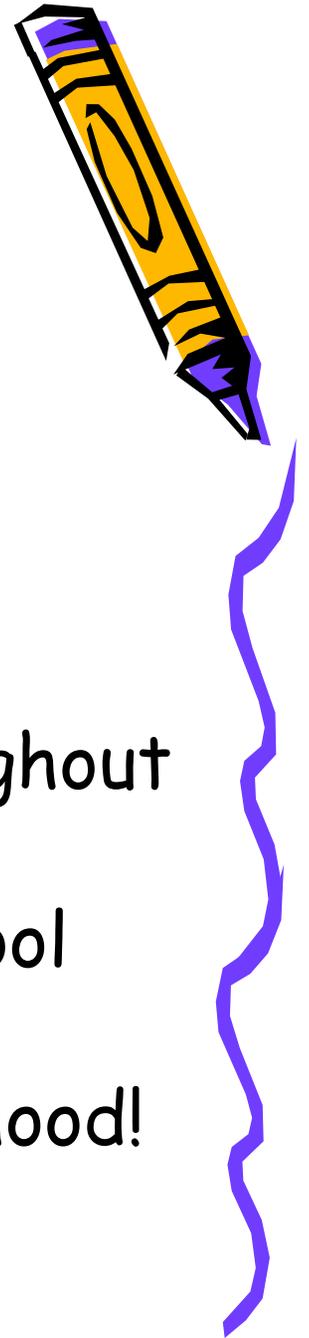
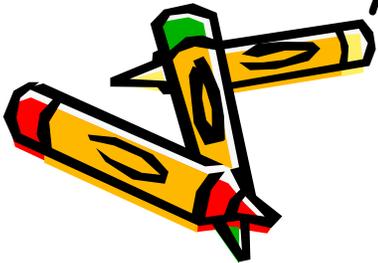
What it looks like and what to do  
about it

Department of Student Services  
Suwannee County School Board



# Why Bullying & Why Now?

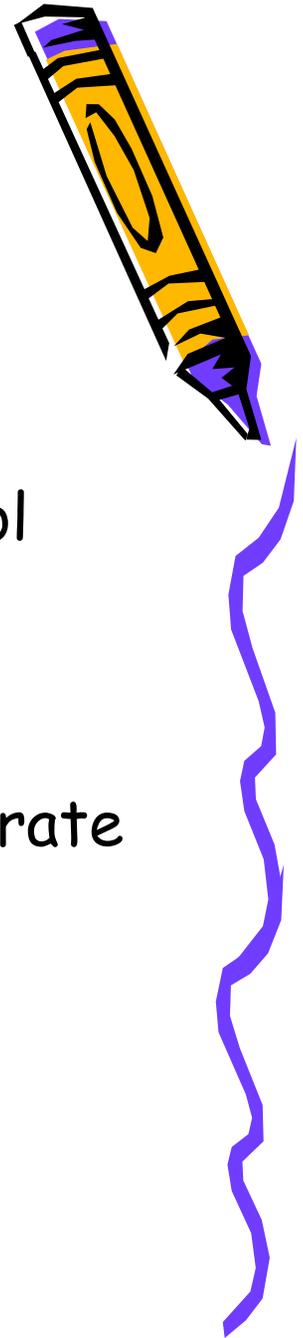
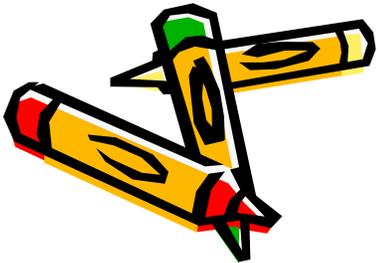
- Results of the research are available regarding the past school shootings (Columbine, Jonesboro, etc.)
- Perpetrators in nearly ALL cases had reported being victims of bullies throughout their school careers
- Victimization begins in Elementary school and gets worse as children grow up
- Bullying affects people even into adulthood!



# SCSB Policy on Bullying & Harassment

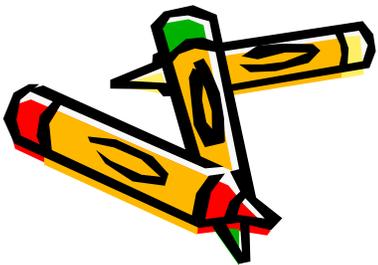
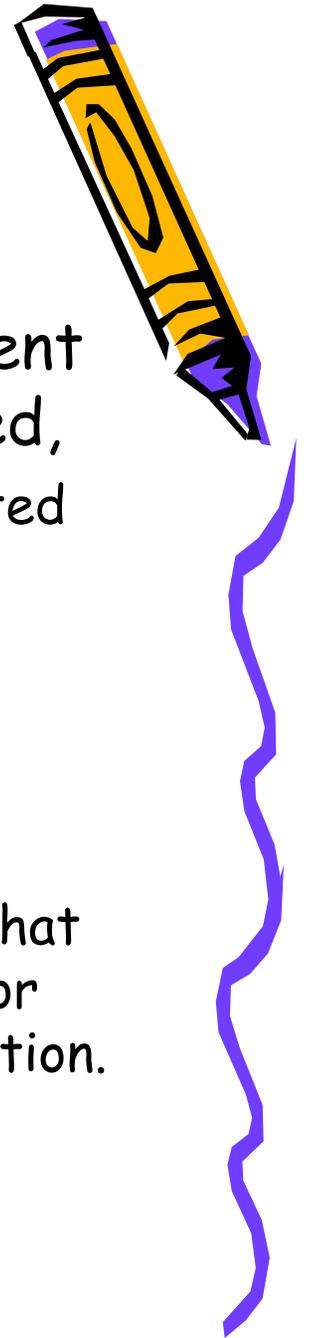
(taken directly from FL Statute 1001.41, 1001.42)

- It is the policy of the Suwannee County School District that ALL of its students and school employees have an educational setting that is safe, secure and free from harassment and bullying of any kind. The District will not tolerate bullying and harassment of any type. Conduct that constitutes bullying and harassment, as defined herein, is prohibited.



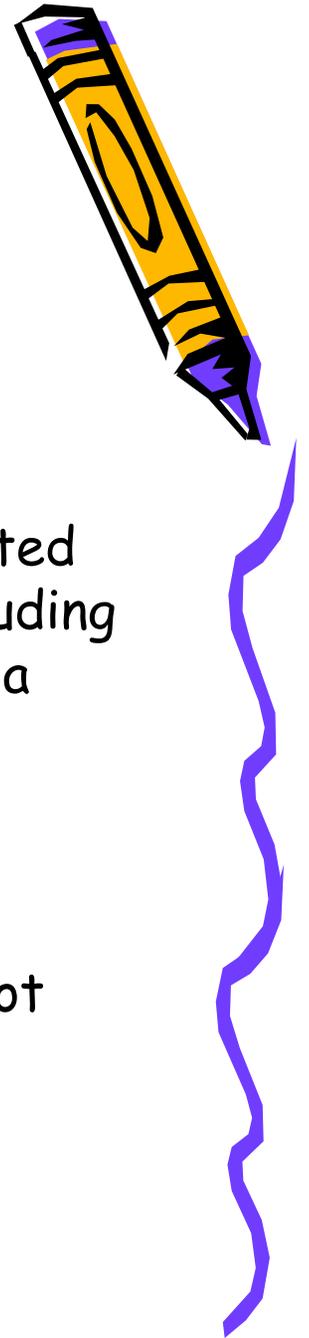
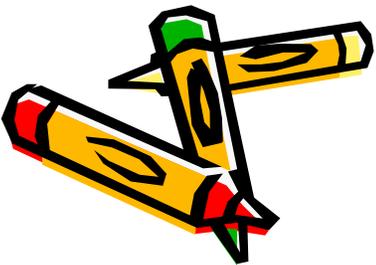
# SCSB Policy/FL Statute 1001.41, 1001.42

- The District upholds that bullying or harassment of any student or school employee is prohibited,
  - 1. During any education program or activity conducted by a public K-12 educational institution;
  - 2. During any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity;
  - 3. On a school bus of a public K-12 educational institution; or
  - 4. Through the use of data or computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network of a public K-12 education institution.



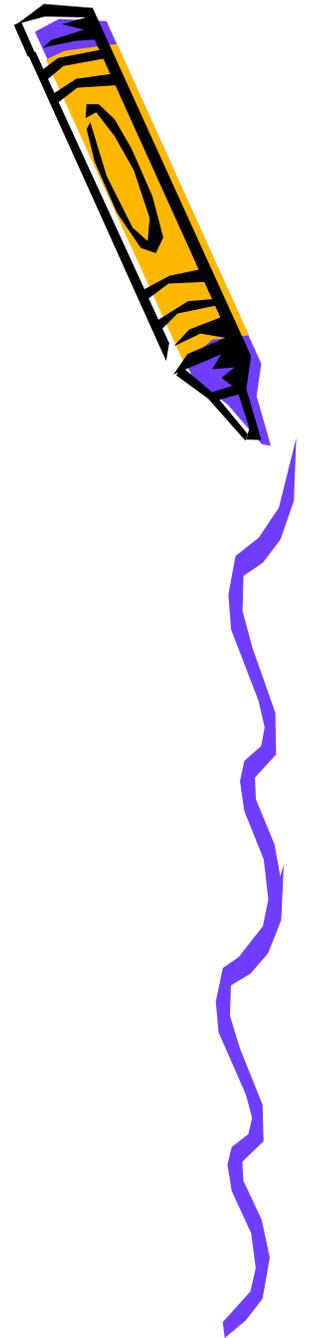
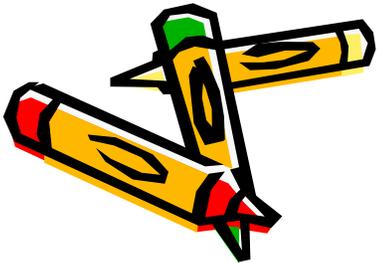
# Bullying: Defined by FL Statute

- Bullying means systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees. It is further defined as unwanted and repeated written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, by a student or adult, that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment; cause discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school performance or participation; and many involve but is not limited to:



# Bullying Defined (cont)

- Teasing;
- Social Exclusion;
- Threat;
- Intimidation;
- Stalking;
- Physical violence



# Forms of bullying

## PHYSICAL: Harm to another's person or property

- This form of bullying can be visually detected. This type of maltreatment involves physically contacting the student (kicking, hitting etc.). It can also entail stealing or hiding the belongings of the affected students.

## EMOTIONAL/VERBAL: Harm to another's self-concept

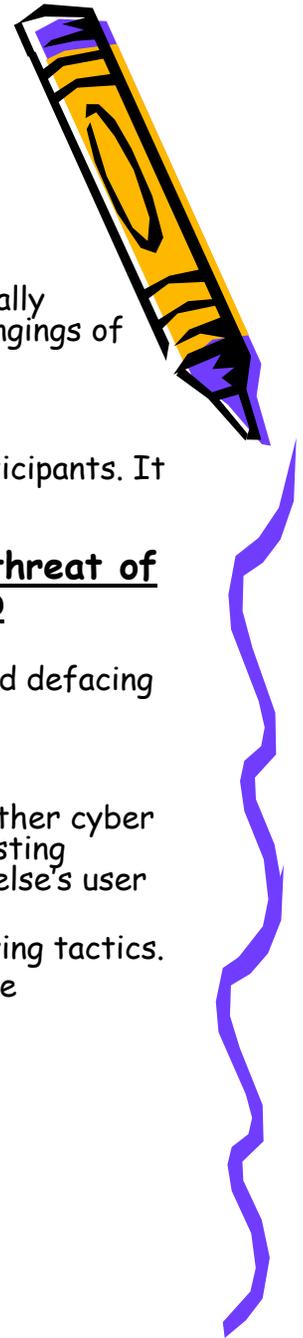
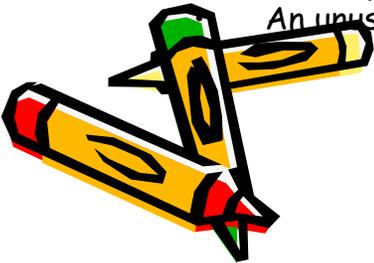
- This form of bullying is difficult to detect, unless the adult is in the presence of the participants. It involves name calling, insults, offensive and threatening language.

## RELATIONAL/INTIMIDATION: Harm to another through damage (or the threat of damage) to relationships or to feelings of acceptance, friendship or group inclusion)

- This aspect could include gestures or comments, spreading rumours or stories, graffiti and defacing property

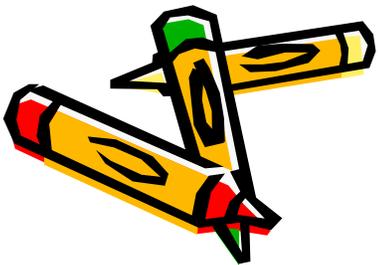
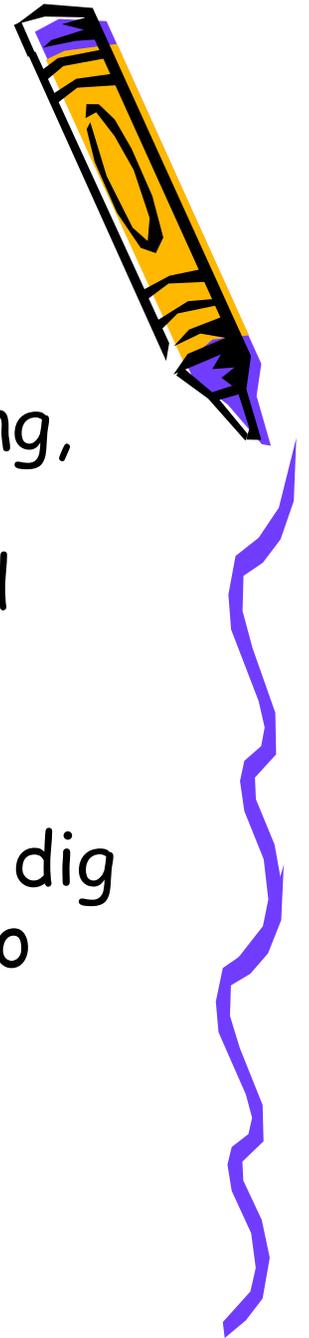
## CYBERBULLYING

- This is the modern extension of bullying. This occurs via the Internet, mobile phones or other cyber technology. This can include: (1) sending malicious text, e-mail, or instant messages (2) posting defamatory pictures or messages about others in blogs or on websites (3) using someone else's user name to spread rumours or lies about someone.
- More commonly, students are using sites such as Facebook and Myspace to carry out bullying tactics.
- It is essential that teachers be on the lookout for signs of bullying. Here are a few of the characteristics that may be displayed by a student who is being bullied:
- Unexplained bruises
- A decline in academic performance
- Anxiety in the class
- An unusual sadness or withdrawal from peers.



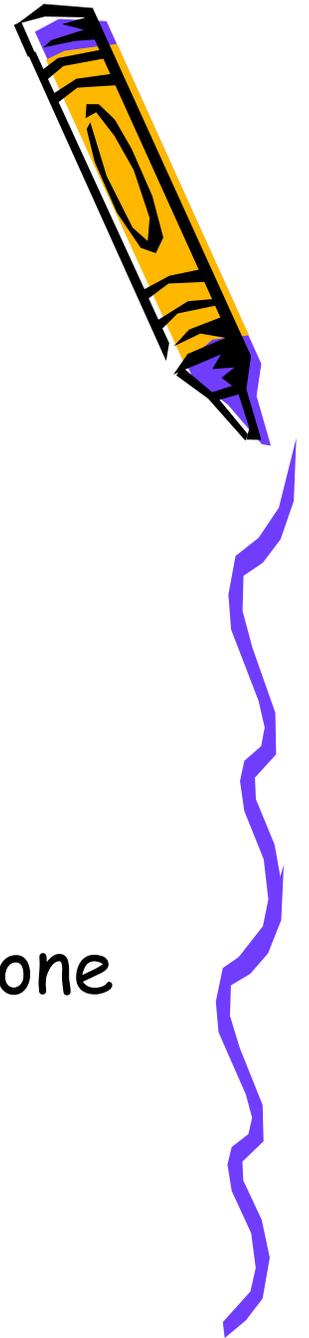
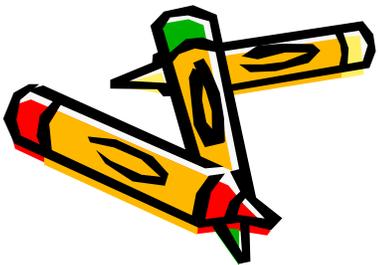
# Physical Bullying: What does it look like?

- Choking, hitting, biting, spitting, pinching, throwing objects, indian rubs, shoving, tripping, stabbing, poking, punching, and kicking are all forms of physical abuse.
- Girls may: bite, slap, scratch, pinch, or dig their nails into someone and yet are also forms of physical abuse.



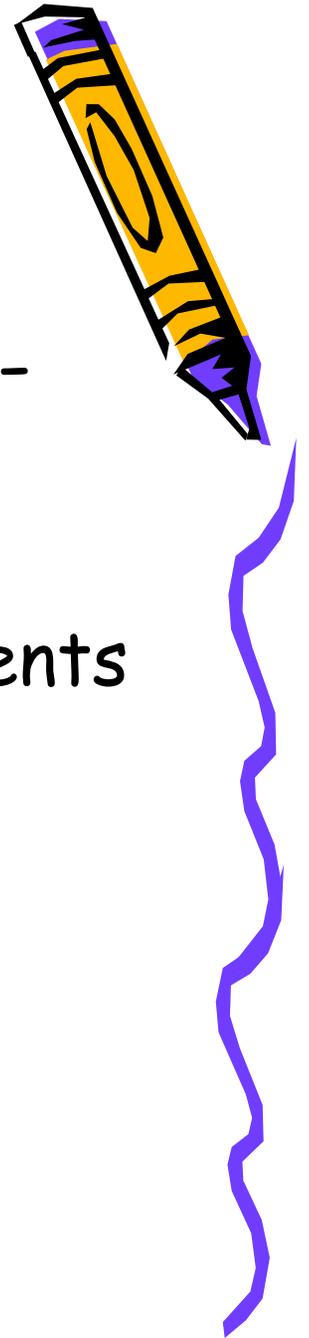
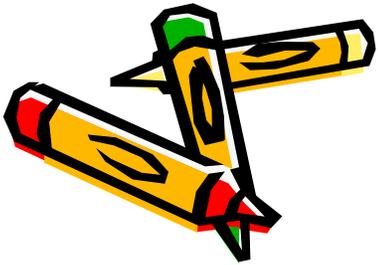
# Emotional/Verbal Bullying

- Name calling, putdowns, insults
- Gossiping, spreading rumors
- Threats
- Ridiculing, being sarcastic
- Imitating
- \*Any words that are used to hurt someone would be considered verbal abuse.



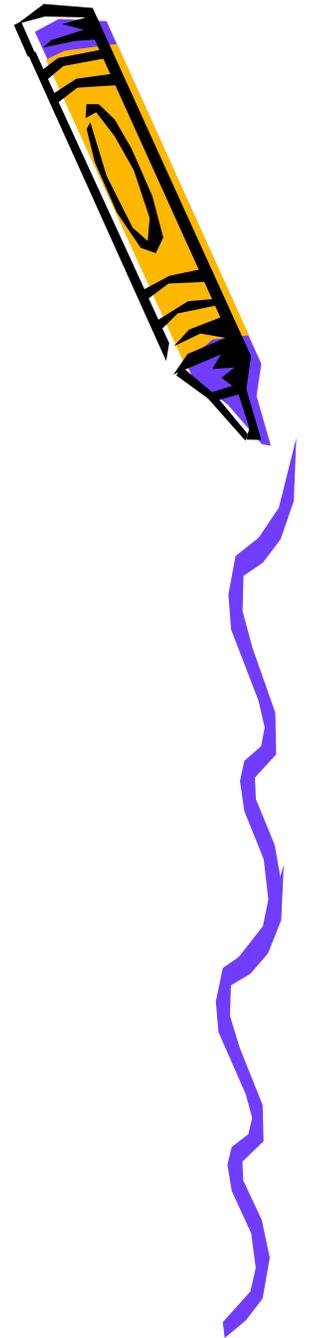
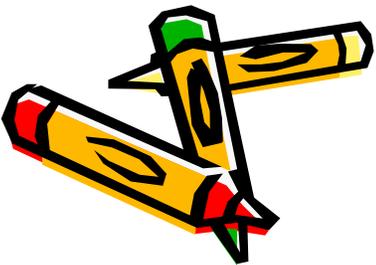
# Relational Bullying/Intimidation

- Relational Bullying (diminishes self-worth)
  - Spreading rumors
  - Writing derogatory/obscene statements on public walls
  - Rolls eyes
  - Laughs at, whispers in front of the person
  - Stares with intimidation to provoke



# Relational Bullying/ Intimidation

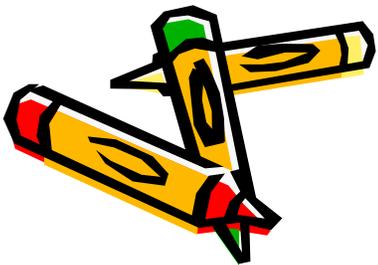
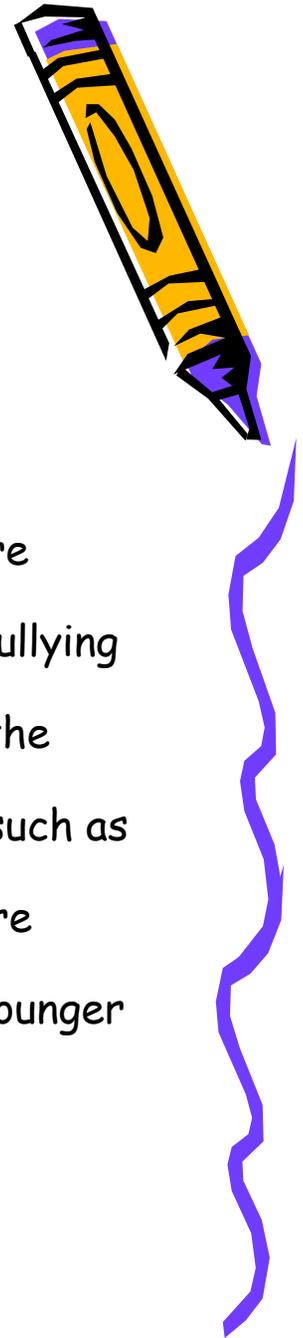
- Isolation
- Excluding from group activities
- Tell peers not to talk to him/her
- Belittle in front of peers
- Embarrass



# Bullying Statistics

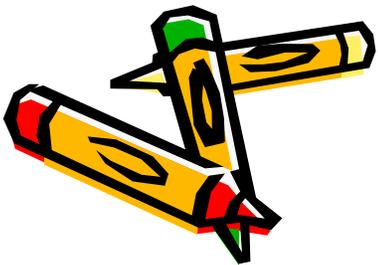
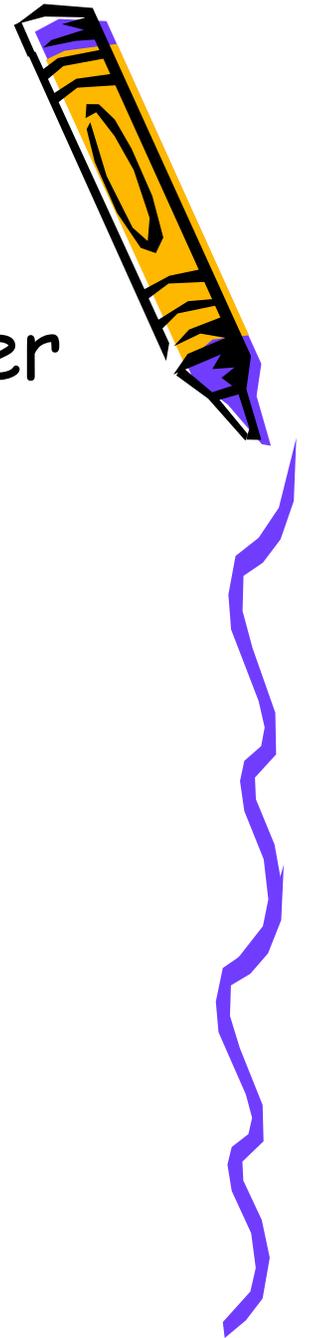
Source: [www.bullyfreeworld.com](http://www.bullyfreeworld.com)

- Bullying against boys is a more frequent occurrence than by girls.
- Around 10% of children have time off school due to bullying.
- Up to 40% of children think teachers have no clue that bullying is happening within the school.
- About 17% of all calls to child help lines are made by children who are being bullied.
- More children in the age group of 12 call child help lines regarding bullying than any other age.
- Almost one third of secondary school children have reported being the object of sexual jokes, gestures or comments.
- Victims of bullying are more likely to suffer from common illnesses such as colds, sore throats and stomach problems.
- By the average age of 23 children who had been bullied in school were found to still suffer from depression and stress related illnesses.
- Nearly 60% of boys who were classified as bullies when they were younger had been convicted of at least one crime by the time they were 23



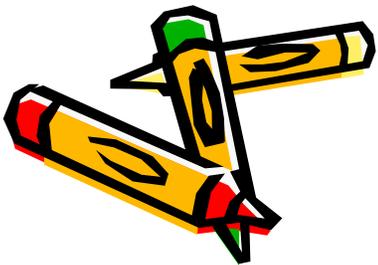
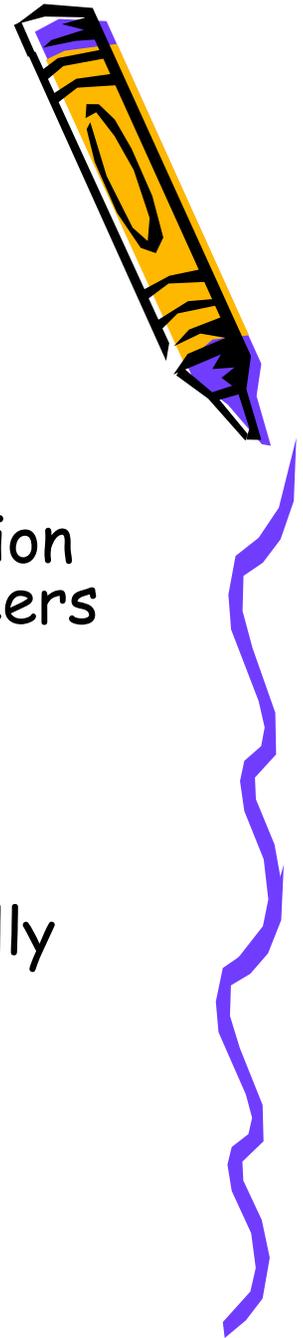
# Who are the Bullies?

- You CANNOT tell a bully by his/her looks. Bullies come in all shapes, sizes, ages, races, and genders. Bullies can be from any socio-economic class!
- You CAN tell a bully by his/her actions!!



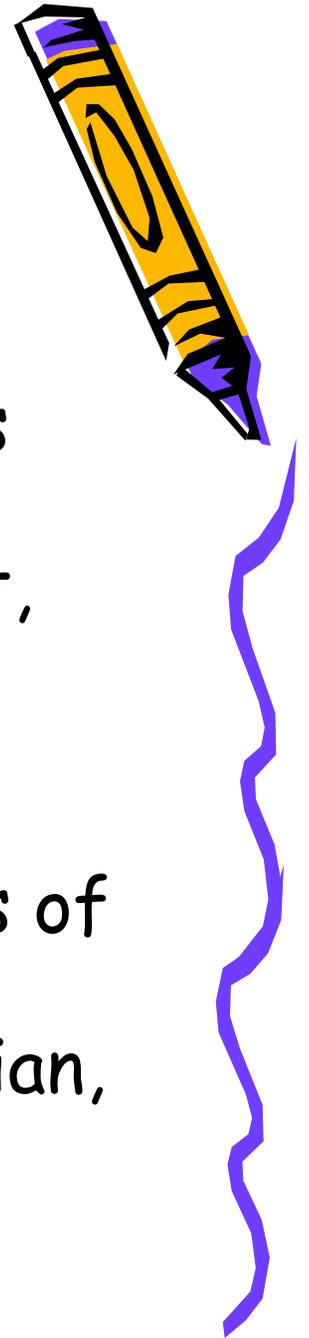
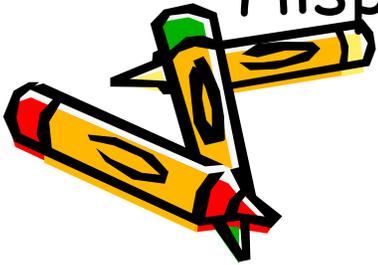
# Who are the Victims?

- Ex: Anxious, insecure, or shy
  - Those who have trouble standing up for themselves
  - Proactive victim: a child who brings attention to themselves by annoying and pestering peers
- Ex: ADHD
  - A child who may not understand social cues
- Ex: Autistic, Down Syndrome
  - Children that stand out physically or verbally
- Ex: Cerebral Palsy, overweight, wears glasses, wears out of style clothing



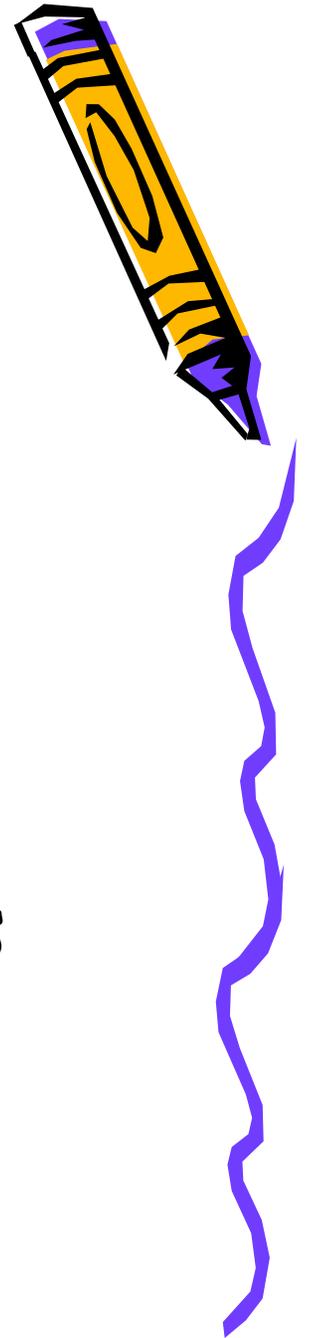
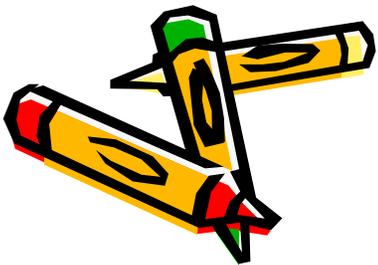
# Other Potential Victims

- The kid who is rich or poor
- The one who is shy, sensitive or anxious
- The boy/girl who wears his/her hair differently than peers (very long, short, etc.)
- The kids with skin problems (acne, psoriasis, etc.)
- The first boy/girl in class to show signs of puberty
- The child who is Caucasian, African, Asian, Hispanic, etc.



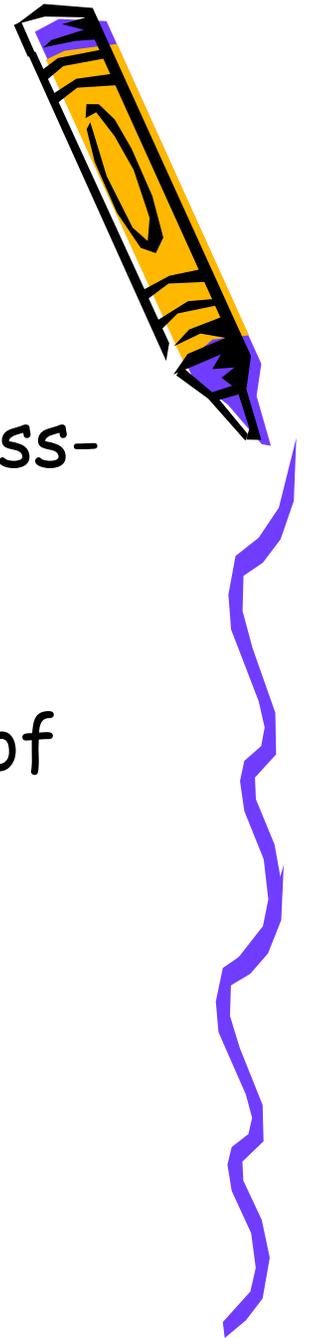
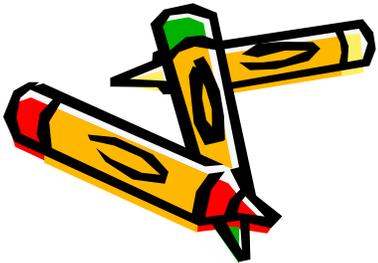
# The Impact of Bullying on Victims

- Physical Effects
- Emotional Effects
- Academic Effects
- Long-Term Effects
- Signs & Symptoms that a child has been bullied



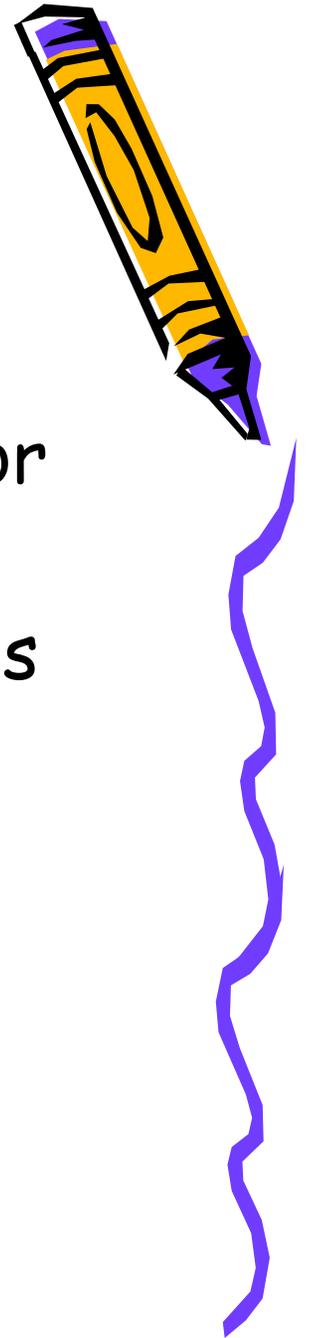
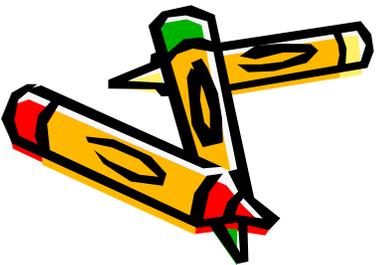
# The Impact on Victims

- Physical Effects
  - Increased illnesses, particularly stress-related disorders
  - Physical injuries that are the result of bullying incidents
  - Attempted and completed suicides



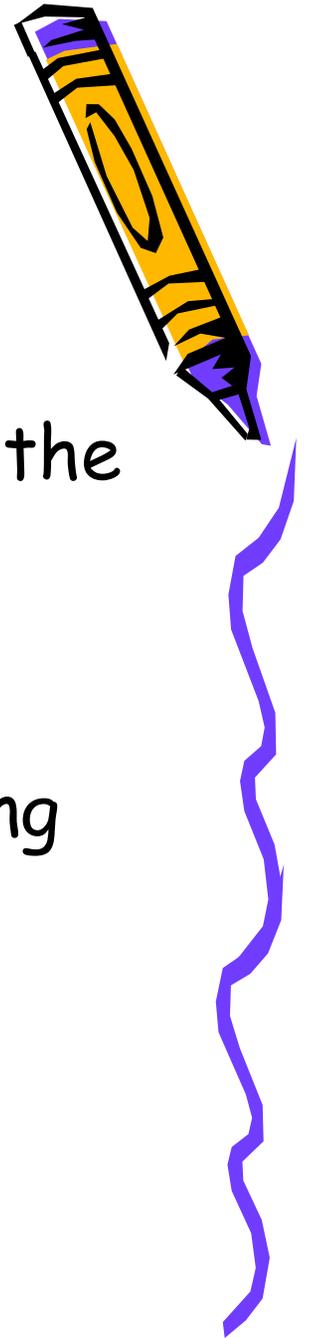
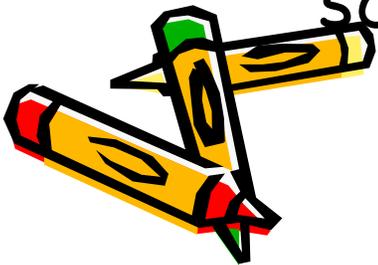
# The Impact on Victims

- Emotional Effects
  - Feelings of isolation, exclusion, and/or alienation
  - Difficulty in forming deep friendships
  - Increased fear and anxiety
  - Depression
  - Feelings of incompetence and powerlessness



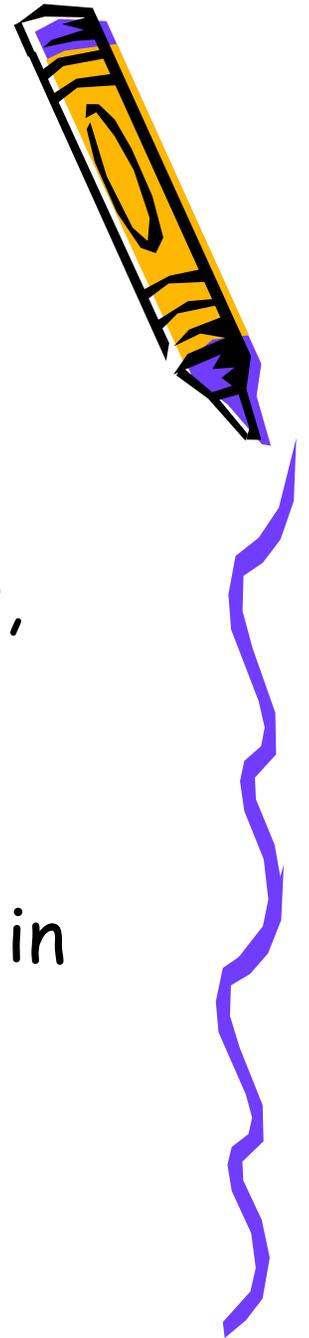
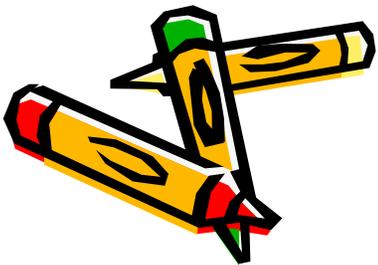
# The Impact on Victims

- Academic Effects
  - Truancy as the victim seeks to avoid the bully
  - Increased absences due to illness, particularly stress-related disorders
  - Lower academic achievement, including decreased in-class participation and lower grades
  - Difficulty in concentrating on schoolwork



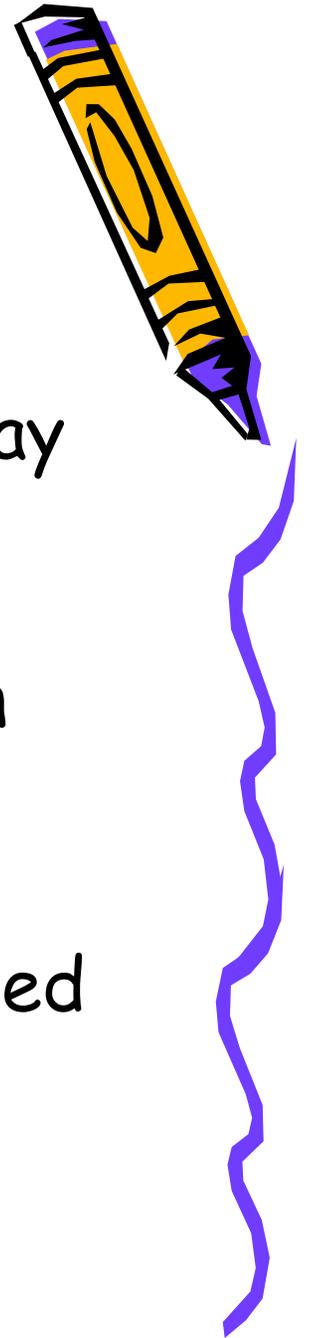
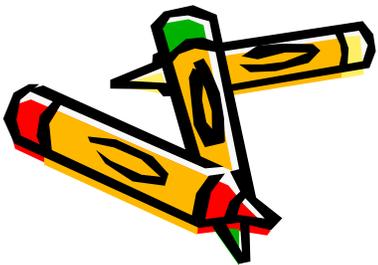
# The Impact on Victims

- Long-term Effects
  - Alterations in emotional regulation, which may include symptoms such as persistent sadness, suicidal thoughts, explosive anger, or inhibited anger;
  - Alterations in consciousness, such as forgetting traumatic events, reliving traumatic events, or having episodes in which one feels detached from one's mental processes or body;



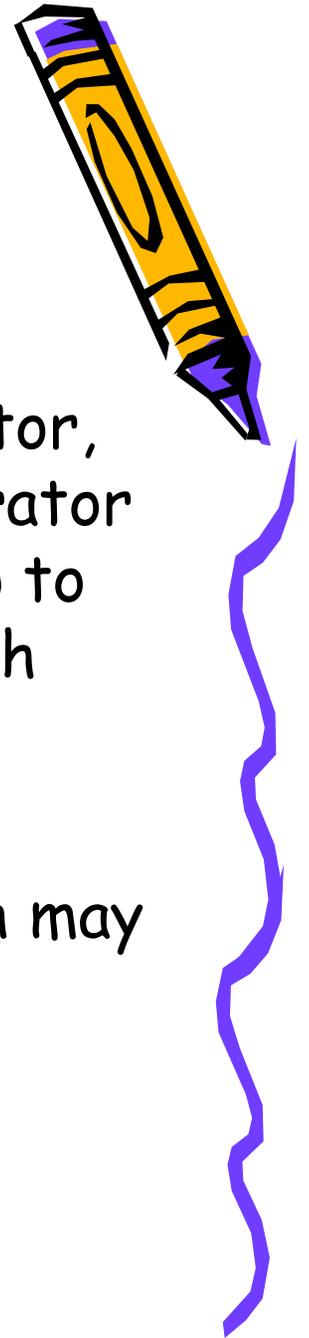
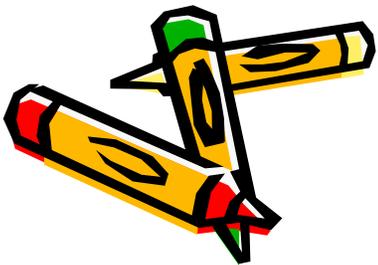
# The Impact on Victims: Long-term Effects

- Alterations in self-perception, which may include a sense of helplessness, shame, guilt, stigma, and a sense of being completely different from other human beings;
- Alterations in relations with others, including isolation, distrust, or a repeated search for a rescuer;



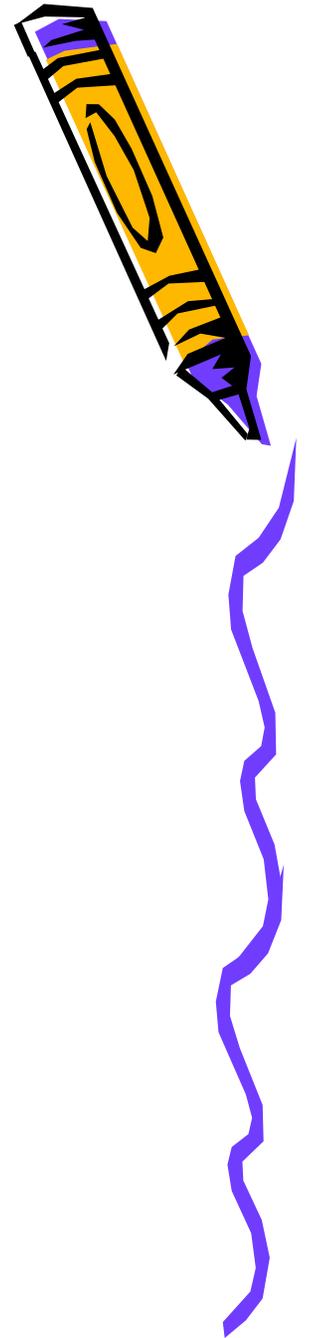
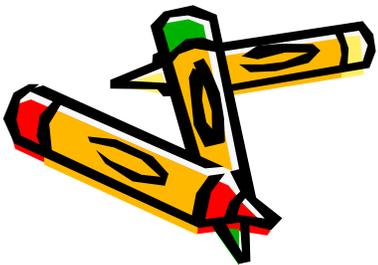
# The Impact on Victims: Long-term Effects

- Alterations in the perception of the perpetrator, such as attributing total power to the perpetrator or becoming preoccupied with the relationship to the perpetrator, including a preoccupation with revenge; and
- Alterations in one's system of meanings, which may include a loss of sustaining faith or a sense of hopelessness and despair.



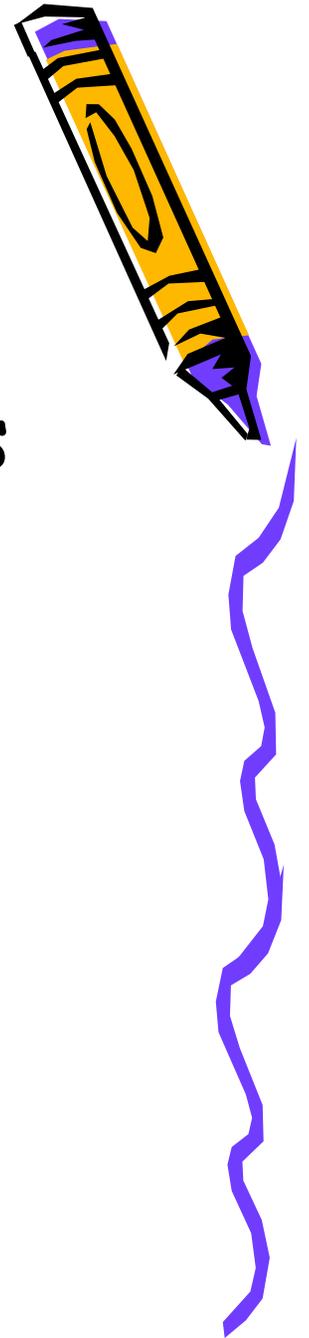
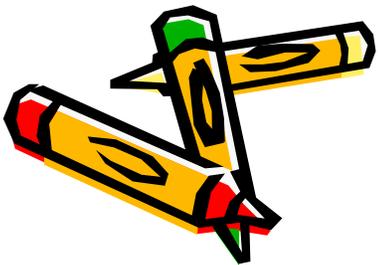
# Factors that increase bullying behavior

- Physical or verbal abuse in the home
- Lack of parental supervision
- Lack of rules or consistent discipline
- Hostile home environment



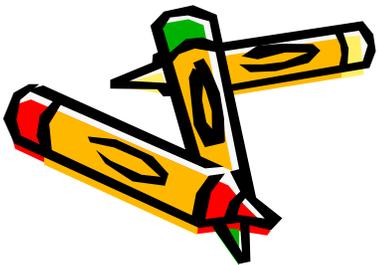
# What can we do to stop bullying?

- Common expectations of behaviors
  - Everyone on the "same page"
- Consistent consequences
- Implement specific strategies
  - Bully-free schools
  - Bully-free classrooms



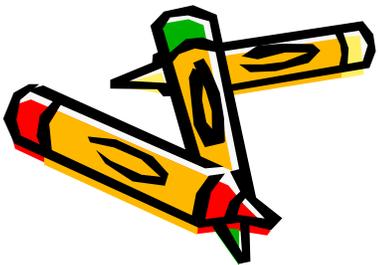
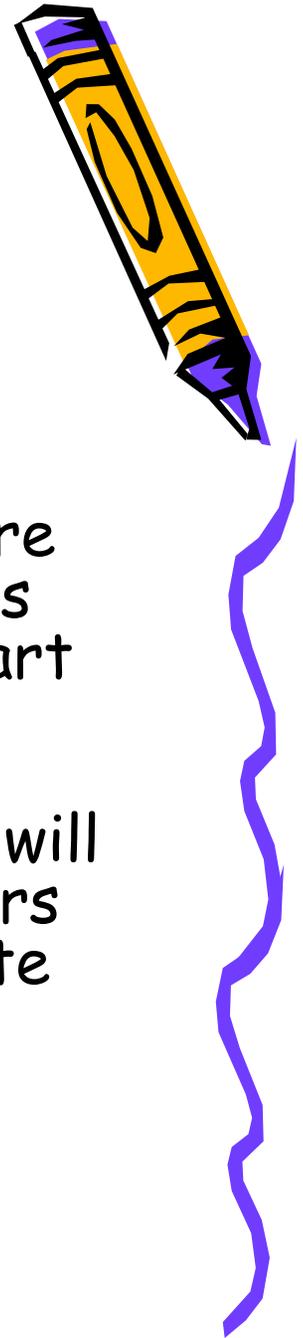
# Common Behavior Expectations

- Behavior Standards (SCSB Policy 5.101)
  - The SCSD expects students to conduct themselves as appropriate for their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students and school staff, the educational purpose underlying all school activities, and the care of school facilities and equipment.
  - The District believes that standards for student behavior must be set cooperatively through interaction among the students, parents/legal guardians, staff, and



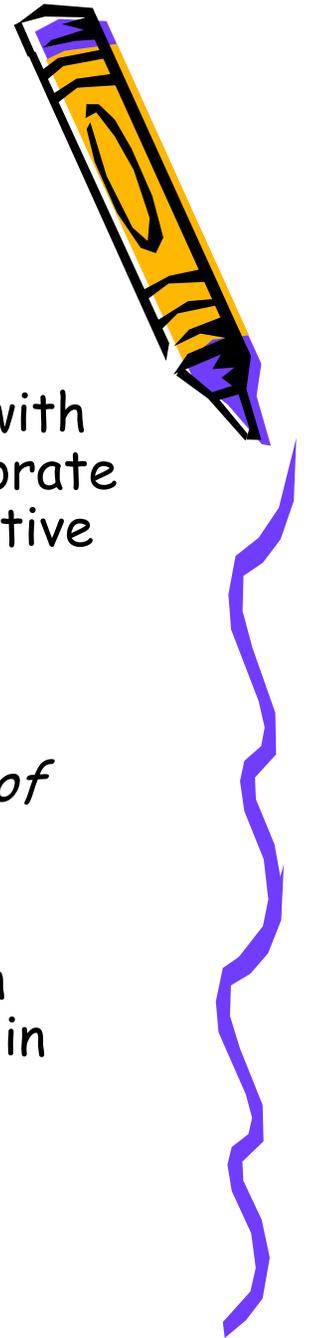
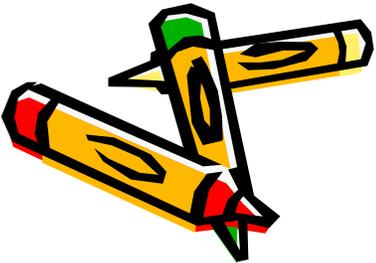
# Behavior Standards, SCSB Policy 5.101

community members producing an atmosphere that encourages students to grow in self-discipline. The development of this atmosphere requires respect for self and others, as well as for District and community property on the part of students, staff, and community members. Because students learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers will demonstrate appropriate behavior, treat others with civility and respect, and refuse to tolerate bullying or harassment.



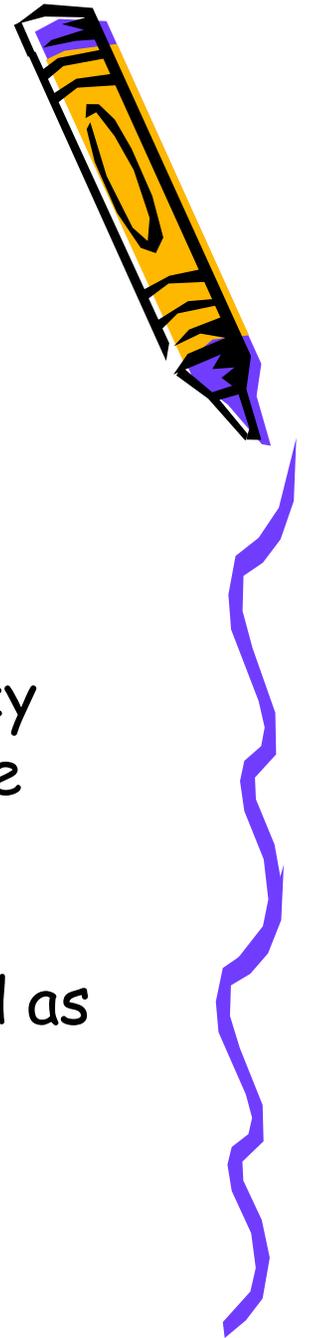
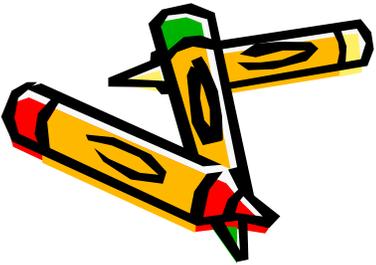
# Behavior Standards (cont)

- All administrators, faculty, and staff, in collaboration with parents, students, and community members, will incorporate systemic methods for student recognition through positive reinforcement for good conduct, self-discipline, good citizenship, and academic success.
- Student rights shall be explained in the *Student Code of Conduct*.
- Proper prevention and intervention steps shall be taken based on the level of severity of infraction as outlined in the *Student Code of Conduct*.



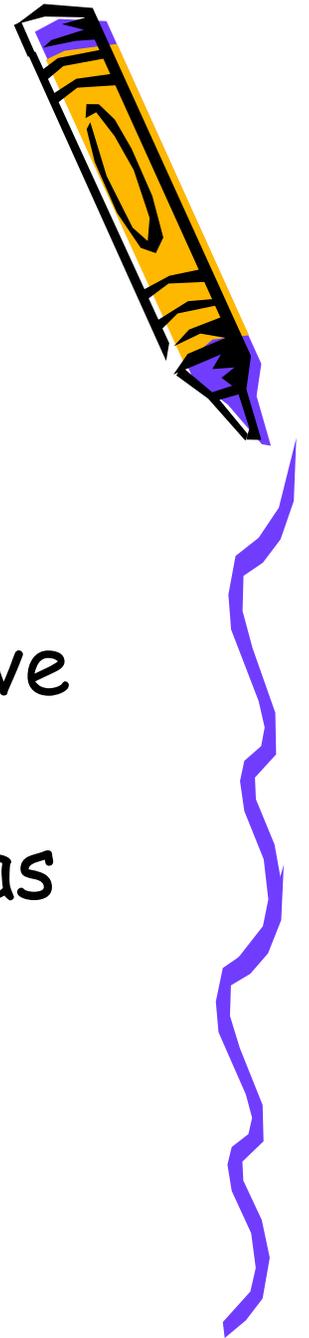
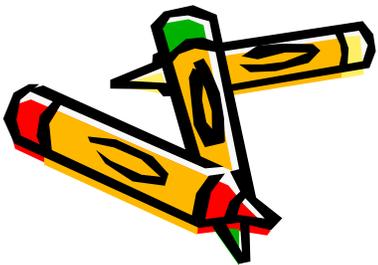
# SCSB Policy & FL Law: Consequences

- Consequences of Committing an act of bullying or harassment
  - Concluding whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all of the facts and surrounding circumstances. The physical location or time of access of a computer-related incident cannot be raised as a defense in any disciplinary action.



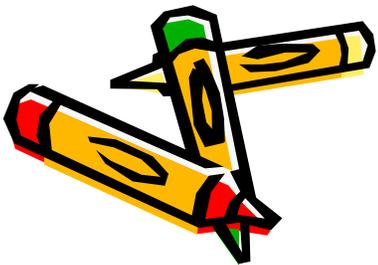
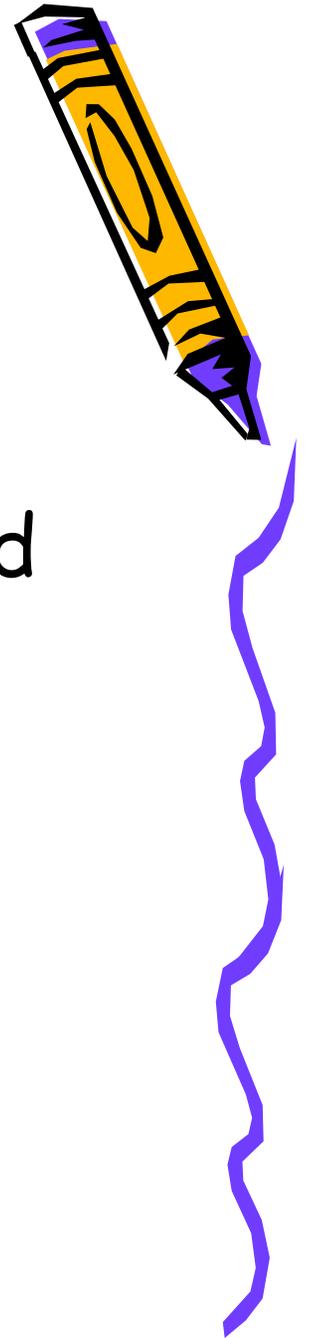
# Consequences (continued)

- Consequences and appropriate remedial action for students who commit acts of bullying or harassment may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, as outlined in the *Code of Student Conduct*.

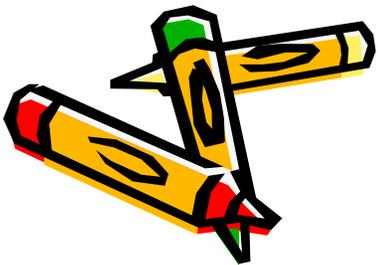
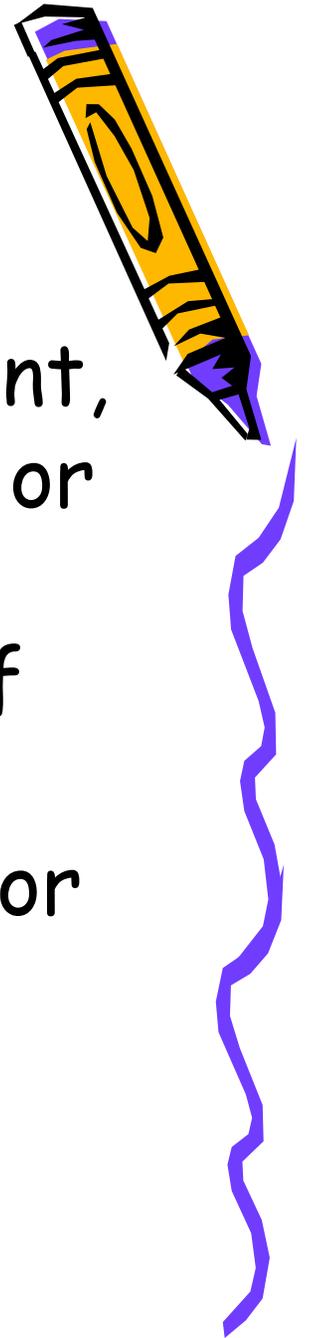


# Consequences (cont)

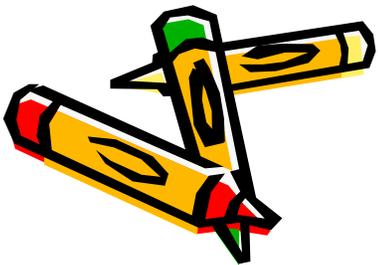
- Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a school employee, found to have committed an act of bullying or harassment, shall be determined in accordance with District policies, procedures, and agreements. Additionally,



- The victim of bullying or harassment, anyone who witnessed the bullying or harassment, and anyone who has credible information that an act of bullying or harassment has taken place may file a report of bullying or harassment.



- A school employee, school volunteer, student, parent/legal guardian or other persons who promptly reports in good faith an act of bullying to the appropriate school official and who makes this report in compliance with the procedures set forth in the District policy is immune from a cause of action for damages arising out of the reporting itself or any failure to remedy the reported incident.
- Submission of a good faith complaint or report of bullying will not affect the complainant or reporter's future employment, grades, learning or work environment, or work assignments.
- Any written or oral reporting of an act of bullying shall be considered an official means of reporting such act(s).
- Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

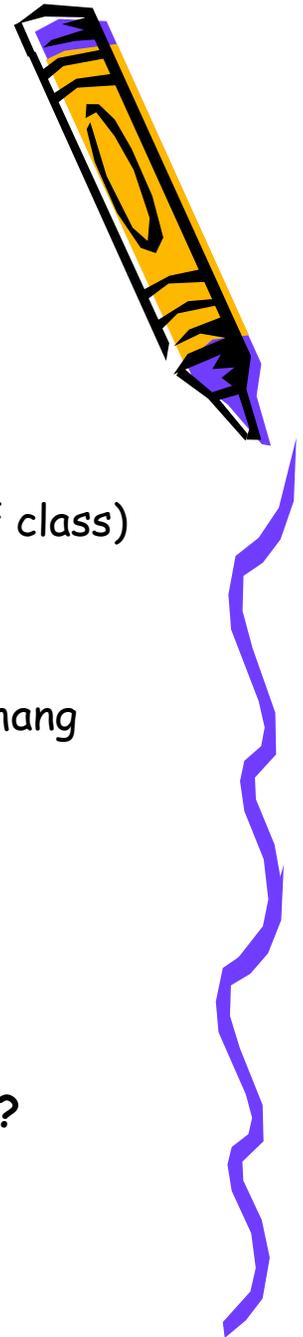
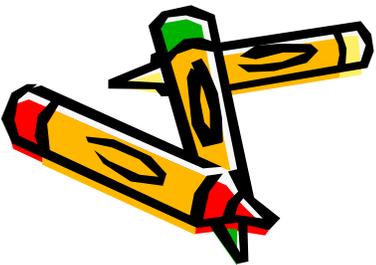


# Setting up a bully-free classroom

(Source : <http://www.bullyfree.com/resources/teachers.php>)

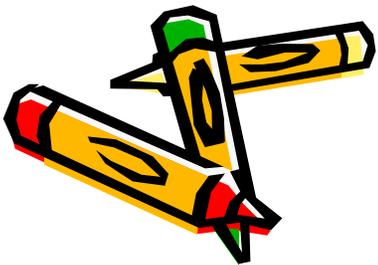
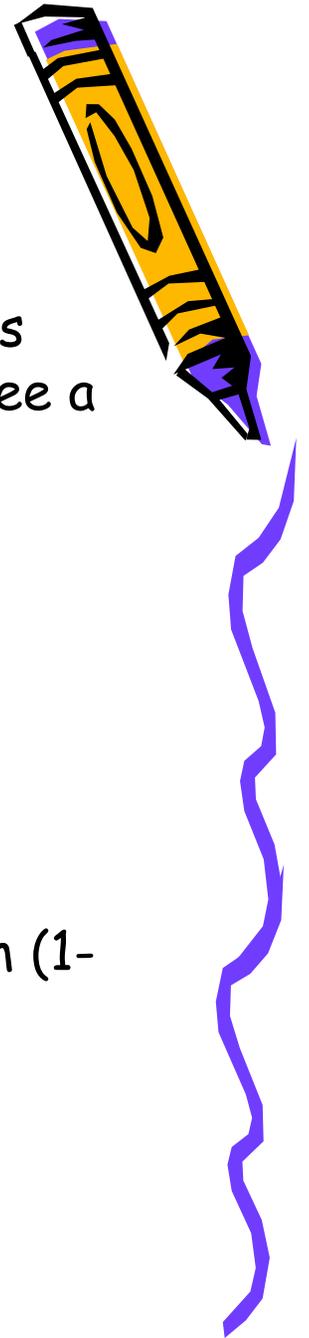
- Hang anti-bullying posters
- Talk to your students about bullying (set the tone on the first day of class)
- Make anti-bullying part of one of your lessons
- Give the students a list of anti-bullying rules that you can also hang somewhere in the classroom
- Have the students sign an anti-bullying class pledge on a banner and hang that banner in the classroom
- Train students on how to deal with bullying (ex: scenarios)
- Do activities that promote class unity
- Have an anonymous "notes-to-the-teacher" box
- Do not allow students to pick their own groups (for group work)
- Get students involved in an anti-bullying campaign
- Keep your eyes and ears open at all times!

What else can be done?



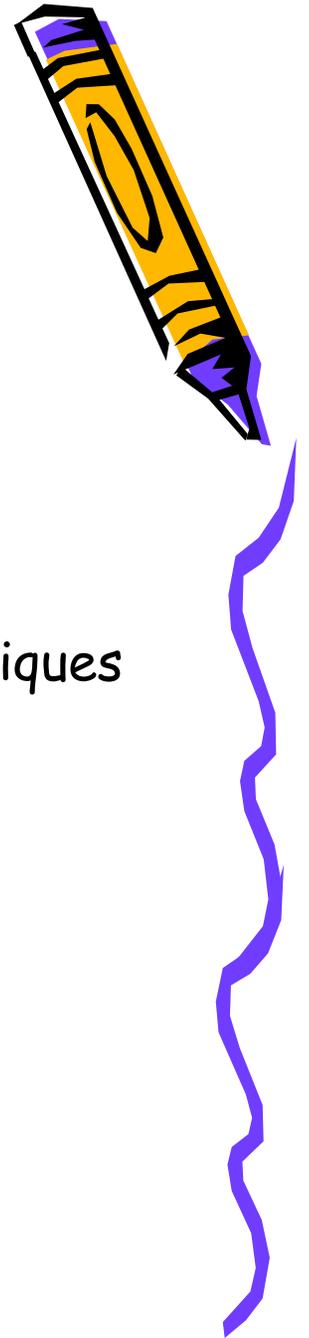
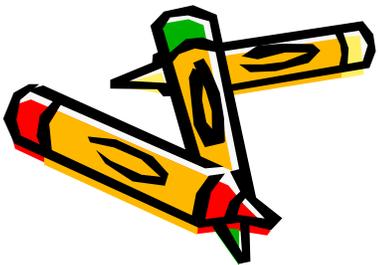
# Strategies for Teachers

- Do not allow students to choose their own groups/teams
- Have assigned seating (and change seating plan if you see a problem arise)
- Be consistent!
- Take every student's complaint seriously
- Have meetings with students to discuss bullying issues
- Get parents involved!
- Be approachable
- Create an open and safe environment
- Provide students ways to deal with bullying
- Display the "Kid's Help Phone" number in your classroom (1-800-668-6868)
- Others?



# Strategies for Students

- Ignore
- Stand up for yourself
- Use humor
- Confuse the bully
- Involve a peer mediator
- Take Karate lessons or study other self-defense techniques
- Surprise the bully
- Get an older sibling to help
- Have a comeback, "Whatever!" or, "So, I don't care!"
- Starve the bully: refuse to cry, whine, or beg
- Display confident body language (eye contact, head up)
- Stay calm and be assertive!!



**S** tay away from bullies.

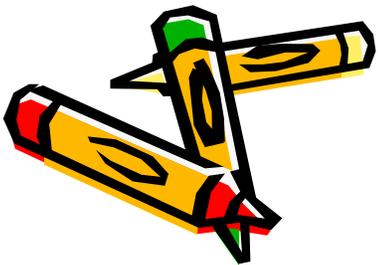
**T** ell someone.

**A** void bad situations.

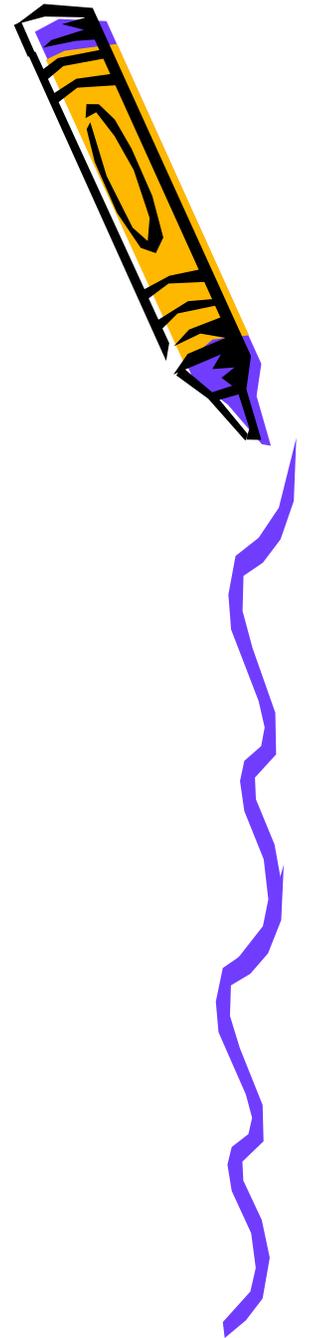
**M** ake friends.

**P** roject confidence.

**OUT BULLYING!**



Source: <http://www.bullyfree.com/resources/teachers.php>



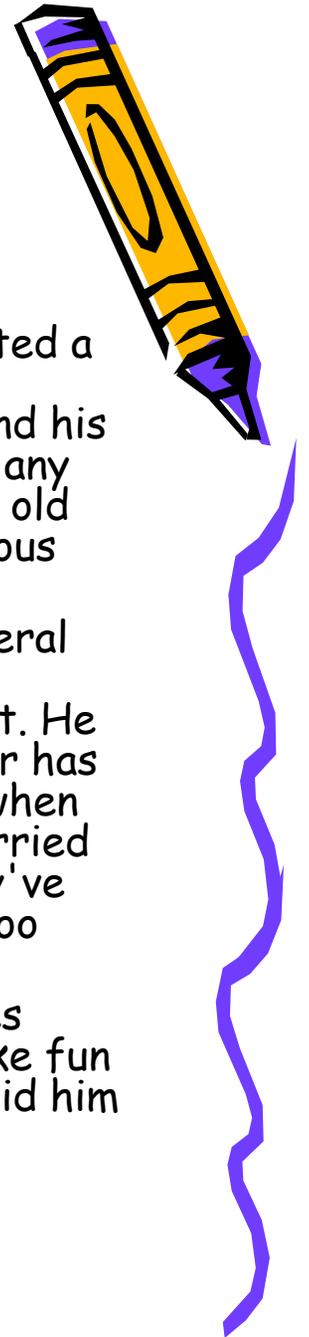
# Case Study

## Case Study #1 Source: [www.pathwayscourses.samhsa.gov](http://www.pathwayscourses.samhsa.gov)

Henry is 11 years old and attends an Elementary School which is located a few blocks from his home. He is in the sixth grade and is an average student. Henry has always been a bit shy and somewhat anxious around his peers. He just moved to this city 3 months ago and has not yet made any friends at the new school, though he does have a "best friend" at his old school. Henry is quite tall and thin for his age and is very self-conscious about his appearance.

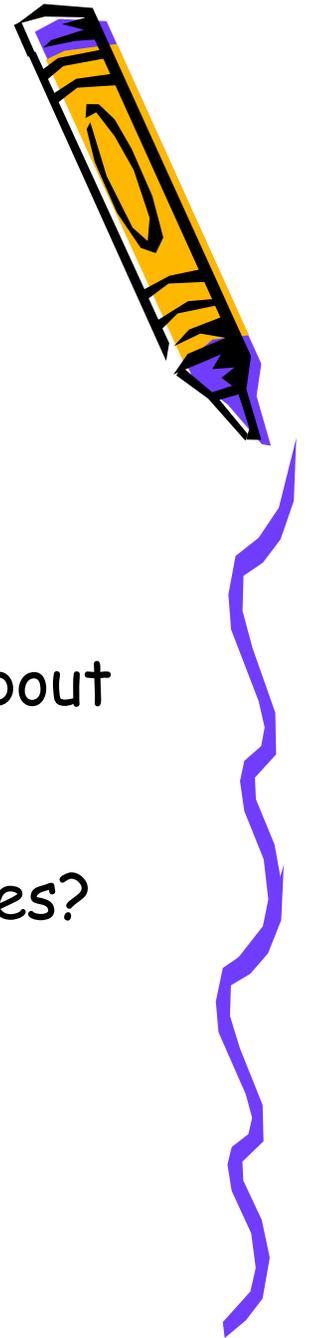
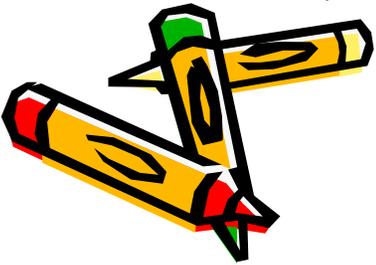
Over the past month, Henry has become increasingly withdrawn. Several weeks ago he came home with a tear in his favorite jacket. When his mother asked him what happened, he hurriedly said it was an accident. He goes straight to his room after school and shuts the door. His mother has noticed that he has become more irritable and is often tearful, but when she tries to talk to him about this, he tells her to go away. She is worried about him but, thinks this is a phase he's going through because they've just moved to a new city, etc. She also worries about making Henry too dependent on her if she gets too involved in his problems.

You hear through others that Henry is being teased by his classmates several times a week. In particular, two children -a girl and a boy, make fun of the way he looks and have convinced most of his classmates to avoid him at lunch.



# Discussion Questions

- Does a problem exist? If so, what is it?
- How could you encourage Henry to talk about what is happening?
- Who are the people you may want to talk to about this problem?
- Who are the bullies? The victim? The witnesses?
- What are some of the warning signs Henry displays?

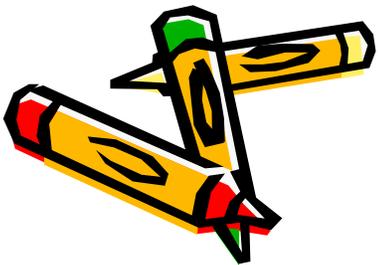


# Case Study

## Case Study #2 Source: [www.pathwayscourses.samhsa.gov](http://www.pathwayscourses.samhsa.gov)

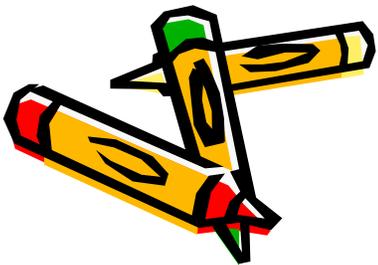
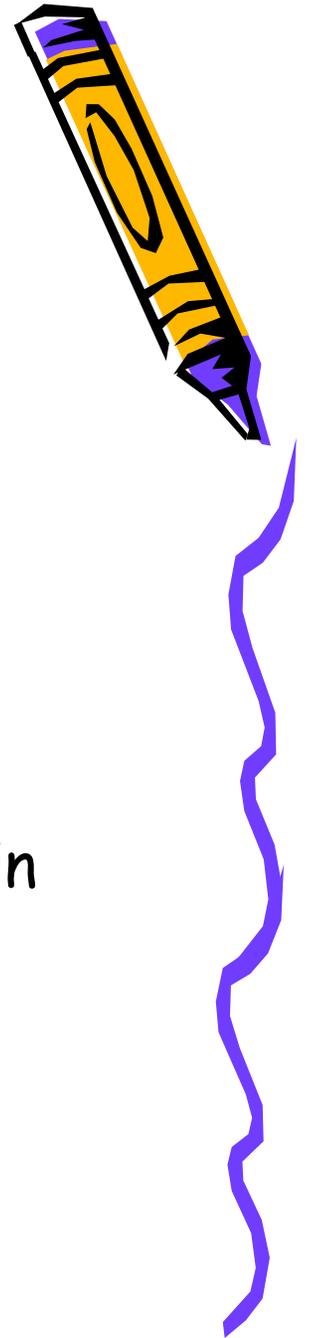
On the second day of eighth grade, a girl in Emily's class shoved her into the road. Thinking she was playing, Emily shoved her back. Rumours began circulating within the school and Emily gained a reputation. The girl was part of a group of girls who continued to spread rumors about Emily; they also began stalking her in the playground. Some of the teachers, believing the rumours about Emily, accused her of bullying the other girl, and cautioned her parents about her behavior. Roughly once every 2 weeks Emily's parents would meet with the principal to try to convince him that Emily was the victim. No one in authority admitted that bullying existed at the school. Nothing was done.

For 3 years, the bullying continued with silent phone calls, threats, and occasional physical incidents. Each time after Emily or her parents complained, the teachers would glare at her in the hallway. After the bully graduated, the rest of the group of girls continued the bullying. Once when they cornered Emily against the wall, a teacher approached them and threatened Emily with further punishment if she continued her behavior. The teacher then sent the other girls back to the playground.



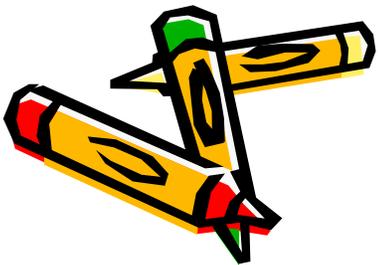
# Discussion Questions

- What can a teacher do for Emily?
- What could a counselor do for Emily?
- Who is the bully in this case?
- How might this continued abuse affect Emily in the long term?



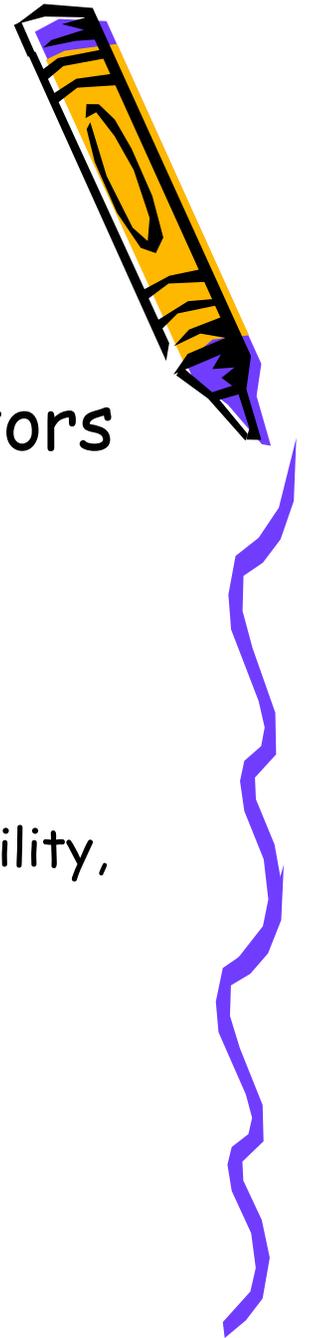
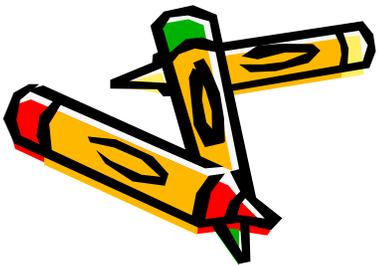
A lot of people are afraid to tell the truth, to say no. That's where toughness comes into play. Toughness is not being a bully. It's having a backbone.

- Robert Kiyosaki



# Bully Intervention & Prevention Programs

- Students United with Parents & Educators to Resolve Bullying (SUPERB)
  - [www.nochildfearschool.org](http://www.nochildfearschool.org)
- Character Counts ethics and character building curriculum program
- Value Statements (Honesty, Respect, Responsibility, Compassion, Self-Discipline, Perseverance, Giving)
- Don't Laugh At Me, Operation Respect
  - [www.dontlaugh.org](http://www.dontlaugh.org)



# References

- McGrath, M.J. (2009) *Altering the Culture of Cruelty: The McGrath Bullying and Harassment Prevention and Intervention Program*
- Olweus, D. (1993) *Bullying at school: What we know and what we can do.* Oxford, UK: Blackwell

