

BULLYING PREVENTION

MINDFULNESS & DE-ESCALATION



A RESOURCE GUIDE FOR
OUR SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS
& MONITORS

IMPACT ON STUDENTS
RECOGNIZING BULLYING
MINDFULNESS
VISUALIZATION
RESOURCES
SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

What is the Impact of Bullying on Students?

The issue of bullying on school buses has significant effects on students' well-being and performance at school.

Reports indicate that students who are bullied on the bus experience heightened levels of anxiety, fear, and depression, which can spill over into their school day.

Long-term effects of bullying can also extend beyond school, affecting individuals' mental health and social skills into adulthood. Bullying issues need to be addressed by bus drivers and monitors to ensure the safety and well-being of all students.

**13,000,000
STUDENTS**

*in the United States
may experience some
form of bullying this
school year*

mbfpreventioneducation.org



Recognizing Bullying Behaviors

EXAMPLES OF DIRECT BULLYING

Every student has the right to feel safe at home, at school, and on the school bus. And when that feeling of safety is damaged or destroyed, the school day can be an intimidating or scary place.

Recognizing the signs of bullying can help you protect our students and uphold our promise to provide safe environments for all children.

- HITTING OR SLAPPING
- ELBOWING OR SHOVING
- KICKING
- RESTRAINING
- PINCHING
- STEALING
- ATTACKING WITH FOOD OR OTHER OBJECTS
- DAMAGING OR DEFACING PERSONAL BELONGINGS
- NAME-CALLING OR INSULTING REMARKS
- TEASING
- RACIST REMARKS
- THREATS OR INTIMIDATION





Recognizing Bullying Behaviors

EXAMPLES OF INDIRECT BULLYING

- Turning friends against each other
 - Destroying reputations
 - Humiliating & embarrassing others
 - Gossiping about others
 - Spreading rumors & lies
 - Excluding others
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SIGNS A CHILD IS BEING BULLIED

- Fear of riding the school bus
- Sad, depressed, or angry mood when entering/exiting the bus
- Torn clothes or missing possessions
- Sitting alone
- Switching from seat to seat
- Frequent absences from the bus

Mindfulness for De-escalating Bullying Situations

Mindfulness is the practice of being fully present and aware of your thoughts, emotions, and surroundings without judgment. Mindfulness can be effective in de-escalating bullying situations on the school bus.

Here's why...

STAYING CALM:

Mindfulness encourages bus drivers and monitors to manage their own emotions, preventing them from reacting in the moment with anger or frustration, which could escalate the situation further.

MODELING POSITIVE BEHAVIOR:

By staying present and composed, bus drivers and monitors demonstrate emotional regulation and empathy, encouraging students to follow their example. A calm tone and body language can help set an example for students.

ACTIVE LISTENING:

Teach both students and bus staff to practice active listening during disputes. This means giving their full attention to the person speaking without interrupting, which can defuse misunderstandings and foster respect.

CREATING A PAUSE:

Mindfulness techniques like deep breathing create a moment of reflection, helping students become aware of their actions and emotions, which can defuse tension.

PROMOTING EMPATHY & KINDNESS:

Mindfulness encourages self-awareness and empathy, helping students recognize how their actions affect others, making them less likely to continue bullying. Recognize and reward students who handle conflicts peacefully or show kindness to others, helping to promote a culture of positive behavior.

FOCUS ON SOLUTIONS, NOT BLAME:

Asking "How can we fix this?" shifts the mindset toward problem-solving. It redirects attention from the conflict to more positive behaviors, like kindness and respect, fostering a calmer and more respectful environment.

Mindfulness allows individuals to manage fight-or-flight responses, promoting safety and connection. It creates space for students to reflect on their actions and emotions, helping prevent situations from escalating into more harmful behaviors.

Visualization Exercise

Your training has equipped you to recognize bullying and follow appropriate protocols. However, it's also important to consider the emotions involved - yours, the bully's, the victim's, and those of other students observing the incident. These emotions can significantly influence the unfolding of the situation and the overall atmosphere on the bus.

By preparing ahead and planning your reactions, you can respond mindfully in the moment. Here's a visualization exercise to practice:

VISUALIZE CALM: Before starting your route, take a moment to visualize yourself in a calm state, handling a challenging situation smoothly.

RECOGNIZE SIGNS: Imagine noticing the early signs of bullying—subtle changes in noise, students' body language, or direct observations.

PAUSE & ASSESS: Visualize yourself taking a deep breath to center your emotions, assessing the situation without immediate reaction.

ENGAGE MINDFULLY: Think about using a calm and firm voice to address all students, reminding them of respect and safety without singling anyone out immediately. Ask them to take a deep breath and consider re-directing into a positive conversation.

FOLLOW PROTOCOL: Envision yourself following the established protocols for reporting and resolving the incident, maintaining a focus on safety and respect.



Bullying Prevention & Awareness Resources

WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT MINDFULNESS? CHECK OUT THESE FREE RESOURCES:

MINDFULNESS APPS: Free apps like Insight Timer, Smiling Mind, and MyLife offer guided meditations and mindfulness exercises.

YOUTUBE CHANNELS: Channels like Headspace, The Honest Guys, and Mindful Peace Journey provide free guided meditations and mindfulness tutorials.

PODCASTS: Listen to podcasts like The Mindful Kind, 10% Happier, or On Being for mindfulness practices and insights.

ONLINE COURSES: Platforms like Coursera, edX, and Udemy offer free courses on mindfulness and meditation basics.

MINDFULNESS BLOGS & ARTICLES: Websites like Mindful.org and Greater Good Magazine share articles, tips, and exercises to help practice mindfulness.

LIBRARY RESOURCES: Check out eBooks, audiobooks, or DVDs from your local library on mindfulness. Community Groups: Some local community centers or wellness groups may offer free mindfulness or meditation sessions.



SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

AWARENESS & OBSERVATION

Do I regularly monitor the students on my bus, during loading, unloading, and while in transit?

Yes **No**

Am I aware of all of the areas on the bus where bullying might occur (back seats, areas out of direct view)?

Yes **No**

Do I make a conscious effort to notice changes in student behavior that could indicate bullying (sudden withdrawal, fear of riding the bus)?

Yes **No**

PROACTIVE PREVENTION

Have I established and clearly communicated the rules and expectations for behavior on the bus?

Yes **No**

Do I consistently enforce these rules in a fair and unbiased manner?

Yes **No**

Do I create a positive and inclusive environment by greeting students and encouraging respectful behavior?

Yes **No**

INTERVENTION & DE-ESCALATION

When I observe potential bullying, do I intervene immediately in a calm and non-confrontational manner?

Yes **No**

Do I use de-escalation techniques effectively to defuse tense situations on the bus?

Yes **No**

Am I able to redirect the focus of students involved in conflicts without escalating the situation?

Yes **No**

Do I address both the bully and the victim with empathy, ensuring that both understand the importance of respectful behavior?

Yes **No**

SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

COMMUNICATION & REPORTING

Do I encourage students to report bullying or other inappropriate behavior to me or another trusted adult?

Yes **No**

Am I comfortable discussing bullying incidents with school administrators, parents, or guardians when necessary?

Yes **No**

Do I document and report bullying incidents according to school policy, ensuring that all relevant details are included?

Yes **No**

SUPPORT & COLLABORATION

Do I collaborate with school staff to address ongoing bullying issues?

Yes **No**

Do I support initiatives or programs at the school that promote anti-bullying and positive behavior?

Yes **No**

Am I proactive in suggesting improvements or changes to the bus environment that could reduce bullying?

Yes **No**

STUDENT RELATIONSHIP & TRUST

Do I strive to build trusting relationships with all students, making them feel safe and supported while on the bus?

Yes **No**

By regularly using this checklist, bus drivers and monitors can stay proactive in creating a safe and respectful environment on their bus, minimizing bullying incidents, and ensuring students feel safe on their ride to and from school each day.

- What areas do I do well in?
- What areas do I need to improve on?
- What actions will I take to enhance my ability to prevent and address bullying on the bus?

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