

Montecito Union School District
Bullying Definition



Bullying is unwanted or aggressive and intentional behavior among school aged children that involves an imbalance of power. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems.

In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- ☆ **An imbalance of power:** Students who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- ☆ **Repetition:** Bullying behaviors **happen more than once**.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

There are three types of bullying:

Verbal Bullying: is saying or writing mean things. This includes:

- ☆ Teasing
- ☆ Name-calling
- ☆ Taunting
- ☆ Threatening to cause harm

Social Bullying: involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships. This includes:

- ☆ Leaving someone out on purpose
- ☆ Telling other students not to be friends with someone
- ☆ Spreading rumors about someone
- ☆ Embarrassing someone in public
- ☆ Cyberbullying

Physical Bullying: involves hurting a person's body or possessions. This includes:

- ☆ Hitting/kicking/pinching
- ☆ Spitting
- ☆ Tripping/pushing
- ☆ Taking or breaking someone's things
- ☆ Making mean or rude hand gestures

Questions to ask yourself to determine if a bullying situation is occurring:

- ☆ Has this happened before?
- ☆ Does the harm feel intentional?