

## Definitions of Peer Aggression and Bullying

### PEER AGGRESSION

**Verbal Aggression** involves words that hurt and/or humiliate, including but not limited to teasing, name calling, and/or insulting. The following are categories of verbal aggression.

1. *Careless hurtful remarks* appear to be thoughtless rather than malicious; repetitive “careless hurtful remarks” are probably not thoughtless, but in fact may be “verbal or written teasing/taunting.”
2. *Verbal or written teasing/taunting* is the expression of language which is deliberately hurtful to a target’s feelings, and can either be made directly to the target or within his/her or other children’s hearing or sight.
3. *Verbal or written threats or taunts* are explicit remarks threatening future harmful behavior.
4. *Encouraging such aggression* is also a type of verbal aggression.

**Physical Aggression** involves physical actions that are hurtful. The following are categories of physical aggression.

1. *Physical threats* include physical gestures used to convey to a target that he/she will be hurt, such as but not limited to raising a clenched fist or drawing a finger across the throat.
2. *Physical harassment* involves physically touching a target in a hurtful way that is unlikely to cause injury, including by not limited to pinching, pulling off hats, grabbing books, and/or blocking one’s way.
3. *Physical attacks* include, but are not limited to, pushing, shoving, kicking, hitting, punching, or pinning down.
4. *Taking or damaging someone’s property* is another form of physical aggression.

**Relational Aggression** involves convincing one’s peers to exclude or reject certain persons and cut them off from their social connections.

### BULLYING

**Bullying** is a word, action, or other direct or electronic communication or behavior that is:

1. Aggressive, cruel, and/or threatening
2. Repetitive
3. Characterized as an imbalance of physical, psychological, and/or emotional power. Children who engage in peer aggression have more power than the target. The power advantage may be due to social status, age, size, ability, and/or popularity.

## **CYBER-BULLYING**

*Cyber-bullying* is when the Internet, cell phones or other electronic devices are used to send or post text or images intended to hurt or embarrass another person. Cyberbullying is a situation when a child, tween or teen is repeatedly 'tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another child or teenager using text messaging, email, instant messaging or any other type of digital technology.

Cyber-bullying can be as simple as continuing to send e-mail to someone who has said they want no further contact with the sender, but it may also include threats, sexual remarks, racial remarks, ganging up on victims by making them the subject of ridicule in forums, and posting false statements as fact aimed at humiliation.

Cyber-bullies may also send threatening and harassing emails and instant messages to the victims, while others post rumors or gossip and instigate others to dislike and gang up on the target.