

**Traut Core Knowledge School**

**Character-Based Bullying  
Prevention and Education  
Program  
Parent Handbook**

**Character Education Committee  
April 2005**

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March 1, 2005

Dear Parents,

Whew!! What a job it is raising our children! Probably one of the more frustrating issues that a parent can have to deal with is the issue of bullying. While we like to think that it doesn't happen as often in our school as it does in other schools, the fact of the matter is, the phenomenon is present at TCKS as well. And we're determined as a school to continue striving for the best for our children, not in comparison to other schools, but in pursuit of the highest standards to provide the finest education possible for our children.

Our children can come home complaining about another child, and at times, we're not sure what to say or do. We hesitate to label it bullying, but it may seem like more than just two children not getting along. Well, the Character Education Committee has some help for you. We just spent 3 years researching bullying and developing strategies to address its variety of forms—and this handbook is the result. It will help you recognize bullying situations and what role your child may be playing in them, as well as offering you steps you can take at home to contribute to a safe school environment.

We believe that bullying is **not** an acceptable part of growing up. It causes immense damage to all involved and reduces the ability of the children involved to be successful in the future. Bullying behavior also affects our families, and as parents, we have a huge impact on how our children treat others. This handbook encompasses the approach that TCKS is taking to make our school a safer place—both physically and emotionally.

Please read this handbook and join us in making bullying at TCKS a problem no one ever has to endure.

*The TCKS Character Education Committee*

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## 2. The Vision

“Imagine a school that openly, directly enforces a zero-tolerance, [bullying prevention] policy, instructing and encouraging children to call witnesses and to back each other up when a bullying incident occurs. Imagine students being instructed that they are responsible for their fellow human beings and that it is right and noble to get involved when someone is being hurt. Imagine a student being able to attend school knowing that his or her classmates, whether friend or stranger, are there for them if the need should ever arise.

If the school leadership, from the outset, establishes a policy of mutual respect at all levels and backs it up with rules, instruction, procedures and example, we just might have a safer, more ennobling school environment and a few more compassionate human beings walking our streets after graduation.”

Frank Peretti in No More Bullies

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### 3. Reality and Impact of Bullying Behavior: Summary of Research

*“The school’s most powerful moral influence,” observes psychologist and character educator Marvin Berkowitz, “is the way people treat each other.” In many schools, most of the adults are making a conscientious effort to treat students with love and respect. But in those same schools, even schools that are ostensibly committed to character education, children are often devastatingly cruel to each other.*

*When peer cruelty goes unchecked, it’s a very serious problem for many reasons. The school is sending the message that the law of the jungle rules. This threatening atmosphere interferes with learning; students won’t be focused on schoolwork if they’re worried about getting cut down in their classroom, harassed in the hallway, ostracized at recess, or bullied on the bus. Cruelty at the hands of their schoolmates deprives them of what every child needs: the experience of being accepted and valued by peers. Peer rejection, one study found, is more likely to cause a child to leave school than academic difficulties.*

*Much more pervasive than classical bullying (a stronger child picking on a weaker victim) are the everyday emotional cruelties—teasing, taunts, gossiping, rumor-spreading, and exclusion. In a nationwide survey of nearly 70,000 students in grades 6-12, only 37% said “students in my school show respect for one another.” The problem facing a great many schools is now a general peer culture where disrespect and meanness have become the norm.*

*Schools have no higher moral obligation to students and their parents than to do everything in their power to prevent peer cruelty and create a culture of kindness and respect. There is no more important measure of the effectiveness of a character education program than its progress toward this goal.*

*(Tom Lickona, author of Character Matters)*

Studies reported in the book The Bully, The Bullied, And The Bystander, by Barbara Coloroso have the following information about the effects of bullying:

- 160,000 students skip school every day because they feel threatened.
- 70% of students believe that teachers handle bullying poorly.
- Children who are bullied are five times more likely to be depressed than other children.
- Bullied boys are four times more likely to be suicidal.
- Bullied girls are eight times more likely to be suicidal.

#### **Survey results of 70 Traut 6<sup>th</sup> graders:**

29% stated physical bullying occurs.

66% stated verbal bullying occurs.

89% stated relational bullying occurs.

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- Suicides by bullied children have become common enough to warrant its own name: “bullycide”.
  - Three-quarters of the attackers in the school shooting cases have been children who were seriously bullied.
  - Nearly 60% of boys classified as bullies in grades six through nine were convicted of at least one crime by the age of 24; 40% of them had three or more convictions by age 24.
  - Evidence suggests that without early intervention, emotional and behavioral problems in young children may become crystallized patterns of behavior by age eight (Enron,1990), beginning a trajectory of escalating academic problems, school drop outs, substance abuse, delinquency and violence. (Snyder, 2001; Tremblay, Mass, Pagani, & Vitaro, 1996)
  - Research has shown that a significant relationship exists between poor peer relationships in early childhood, early onset conduct problems and long-term social and emotional maladjustment. (Loeber, 1985)
  - Intervening at a young age can help children develop effective social skills early and reduce their aggressive behaviors before these behaviors and reputations develop into permanent patterns. (Carolyn Webster-Stratton & M. Jamila Reid, University of Washington)

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## 4. The Traut Experience

Consistently in annual surveys of Traut parents, positive marks reflect on most of what is happening at school. One area where some parents have expressed a desire for improvement is in the children's behavior during less structured times, notably in the lunchroom, at recess, and after school. The concern expressed was that these are times when students are more apt to be verbally aggressive or hurtful. **While it is true that, at Traut, there are not many instances of physical aggression, that is not the only kind of bullying that occurs. Studies show that verbal and relational bullying account for the majority of bullying behavior, and that is even truer here. Where our standards for behavior are so high, our deviations are more covert.** Relational bullying includes spreading rumors, forming cliques, and excluding or isolating an individual.

The following survey results and studies support this belief:

1. **Elementary Student Attitude Survey, Spring 2003**
  - a. Forty percent of 70 sixth-grade students at Traut agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "Students in my school treat each other with respect". ***Sixty percent strongly disagreed, disagreed, or were uncertain with this statement.***
  
2. **TCKS Parent Survey, Spring 2002**
  - a. **Thirteen percent of parents at Traut disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement:** "Based on my child's experience, the behavior of children towards each other is appropriate on the playground and in the cafeteria." This would imply that some students don't treat each other according to the high standards that are set when they are in less-structured and less-supervised settings. This indicates that there is a greater potential for verbally and relationally aggressive behavior in these settings. **This question scored the most unfavorably of all 45 questions on the survey.**
  - b. Of the five most unfavorable responses to questions in this survey, three of them have to do with student behavior, supervision, and discipline.
  
3. **Student Advisory Board** - In this unscientific survey, representatives of the SAB polled various classrooms in Spring 2003. Despite the informal nature, the students had important things to say about bullying.
  - a. Second graders said they know what bullying is and that it happens at school. They said they would go to older students or adults for help.
  - b. Sixth Grade teachers took the time to ask several questions and had 70 students write their responses.
    1. **Do you know what to do if you see someone being bullied?**  
47% of students said they would tell an adult.
    2. **Would you know what to do if you were being bullied?**  
41% of students said they would tell an adult.
    3. **Does physical bullying happen at Traut?**  
49% said "no," 23% said "sort of" or "a bit," 29% said "yes"
    4. **Does verbal bullying happen at Traut?**  
16% said "no," 17% said "sort of" or "sometimes," 66% said "yes"
    5. **Does relational bullying happen at Traut?**  
4% said "no," 6% said "sort of," and 89% said "yes"
    6. **Do you feel prepared to deal with possible bullying in the future?**  
13% students do not

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## 5. The Purpose of the Handbook

In a 2003 meeting regarding the issue of bullying, TCKS staff had expressed a concern and a desire for bullying to be addressed in a systematic way. The response of the school to parent concerns is also a crucial factor. Tom Lickona writes:

*“When a student is the victim of peer cruelty and the school does nothing to respond to a parent’s complaints, it damages the partnership.”*

From *CHARACTER MATTERS: How to Help Our Children Develop Good Judgment, Integrity, and Other Essential Virtues* by T. Lickona (Touchstone, Feb., 2004)

Finally, 81% of the sixth grade students took the time to write their ideas about ways adults can and should help in response to the question “What do you need from adults in order to feel safe in reporting bullying or being bullied”. This high response tells us that these students care about this issue and have ideas on solutions. Their thoughts are included in the strategies outlined in this handbook. The opportunity for students to help each other was another reason there was a need to teach all students skills and strategies for dealing with bullying behavior.

The Traut Core Knowledge School Character Education Committee was given the job of (1) determining TCKS compliance with state and local mandates regarding bullying prevention and safe-school environment and then (2) establishing anti-bullying language, strategies, and solutions within the healthy environment of Traut, its covenant, and its governing system.

We were motivated by two desires: the desire to operate a school of excellence which is in compliance with all state and district requirements, and the desire to offer the best achievable education for our children, academically, socially, and emotionally.

Therefore, this handbook is the result of three years of extensive research, spearheaded by parent partner, Heidi Baker. This research focused on bullying: the incidence, the impact on the students involved, and strategies for staff, parents, and students.

It is our hope that this is a viable document that impacts the Traut community and especially the students in a significant, life-long way. It is our goal that Traut students will acquire the knowledge and skills to confront bullying behavior in themselves and others in their school, neighborhoods, communities and eventually their workplace.



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## 6. Definition of Bullying

### **The State of Colorado defines bullying as:**

“Any written or verbal expression, or physical act or gesture, or a pattern thereof, that is intended to cause distress upon one or more students in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated school bus stop, or at school activities or sanctioned events.”

### **Poudre School District defines bullying as:**

“Any written or verbal expression, physical act or gesture, or a pattern thereof, that is intended to cause distress upon one or more students in the school environment. The school environment includes school buildings, grounds, vehicles, bus stops and all school sponsored activities and events.”

### **Traut Core Knowledge School defines bullying as:**

“Bullying” is a verbal or written expression or physical act, or a **pattern** of behavior, which lacks empathy and intentionally intimidates or causes distress to one or more members of the school community from door to door. Bullying is a willful, deliberate and hostile activity. It can include physical harm, verbal abuse and forms of exclusion.

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## 7. Glossary of Bullying Prevention Terms

### Term:

1. anecdotal
2. anti-bullying
3. antidote
4. Appreciation of Individual Strengths & Cultural Backgrounds
5. assertive
6. assessments
7. bullied
8. bully
9. bullycide
10. bullying
11. (cyber) bullying
12. (physical) bullying

### Working Definition:

1. personal experiences
2. to be against the act of bullying
3. to relieve or lessen the severity
4. being considerate of others without compromising your own values (TCKS)
5. knowing what you need, asking for what you need, knowing where your limits are
6. a measurement used to determine rate/amount of effectiveness. Tools may include: statistics, surveys, observation, empirical data, written assignments and dialogue
7. “the victim”, the one being assaulted
8. “the aggressor” in the act of bullying, predatory aggression
9. suicides by bullied children
10. a verbal or written expression or physical act, or a pattern of behavior which lacks empathy and respect and intentionally intimidates or causes distress to one or more members of the school community. It is about contempt. (TCKS Character Education Committee)
11. involving the use of cyberspace, the Internet, in the act(s) of bullying (verbal, relational, and possibility of threat
12. predatory aggression ranging from light to moderate pushing to extreme physical harm

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13. (relational) bullying	13. attacking a person relationally, a subtle form of bullying, however, extremely hurtful. (cliques, shunning, excluding, isolating, spreading rumors)
14. (verbal) bullying	14. words spoken or written to intimidate or cause personal harm
15. bystander	15. “a witness” to an act(s) of bullying. categories: past bullies, followers, supporters, passive supporters, onlookers, possible defenders
16. Character Education	16. to give instruction, to develop character
17. Citizenship	17. learning what our democratic system is and being ready to help as needed to make it work.(TCKS)
18. clique	18. exclusive group of people, bonded set
19. compassion	19. to be aware of someone’s distress, the act of helping someone in a distressing situation
20. confidential	20. containing information not to be disclosed at present time (or ever)
21. confide	21. to share information with a trusted party knowing they will act or your behalf
22. consequences	22. unpleasant and/or positive actions or results to a choice made or an action done, opportunities are given to learn, grow and build something new
23. contempt	23. a powerful feeling of dislike toward someone considered to be worthless, inferior or undeserving of respect
24. Cooperation	24. working well with others. (TCKS)
25. curriculum	25. a course of study
26. desensitize	26. to remove emotional response of, to be or become numb
27. devalue	27. to lessen the value or importance of an object, person, action or situation

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28. discipline	28. age appropriate training which “gives life” to learning, restorative, invites reconciliation, goal oriented, constructive and compassionate
29. discipline	29. “...in the true sense of the word is positive, encouraging, and even proof of “tough love.” Is rendered with respect for the individual student and not at the expense of the child’s dignity. Requires wisdom.” (TCKS Door-to-Door Handbook)
30. discipline	30. “...is a tool for teaching the values of respect and responsibility. The ultimate goal is self-discipline, the kind of self-control that underlies voluntary compliance with just rules and laws, that is a mark of mature character, and that a civilized society expects of its citizens. Without moral education it is merely “crowd control” – managing behavior without teaching morality. (Dr. Thomas Lickona)
31. empathy	31. the ability to identify with and understand another person’s feelings or difficulties. To take another person's perspective, can relate feelings to actions, to develop forethought.
32. entitlement	32. feeling that one is deserving of the right to control, dominate or abuse. Also, feeling that you deserve something
33. excuses	33. to try to remove blame, or to shift blame
34. exclusion (see # 73)	34. to leave out
35. Honesty	35. being truthful in our words and in our actions. (TCKS)
36. Humility	36. having a clear understanding of your abilities and limitations. (TCKS)
37. influence	37. to affect the change in a situation or in a person’s idea/opinion, to modify
38. initiative	38. the ability to act on your own, or make your own choices, to make decisions without the help or see a need, and more to act to advice of others. To bring a solution or change.
39. integration	39. to integrate, to include in, to immerse

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40. Integrity	40. learning what is right and wrong, and choosing to do what's right. (TCKS)
41. intervene	41. to become a third party to an event or incident, to help bring or maintain control, to bring constructive actions
42. intervention	42. steps to identify the problem(s)
43. intimidating	43. to make another fearful, to exude power over another through threats, insults or aggressive behaviors, both subtle and overt
44. intolerance	44. unwilling to grant equal value or rights
45. jurisdiction	45. the power or right to exercise authority or control
46. Kindness	46. having a friendly, generous nature that builds up and encourages those around you. (TCKS)
47. matrix	47. graph/chart to show what is included
48. no	48. a negative absolute, not at all
49. objectives	49. strategic position, plan or a goal to obtain
50. Patience	50. the ability to wait calmly. (TCKS)
51. Perseverance	51. staying with a task until it is completed even when it is unpleasant or difficult. (TCKS)
52. prevent	52. actions to keep a problem from not occurring, continuing, or existing.
53. punish	53. punitive actions for a wrong done, results in the "art of being more sneaky" for the bully...the goal now becomes..."how to bully without being caught."
54. rational	54. explanation of the controlling principles, the underlying reason why something is being done
55. reconcile	55. to build a new relationship, process of healing a relationship with the person harmed and/or parties involved

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56. resolution	56. create anew; what to change so it won't happen again, find a new way to meet needs.
57. Respect	57. polite consideration for ourselves, others, property and those in authority.
58. Responsibility	58. being in charge of what we say and do, accepting the consequences of our actions, and be accountable for our own learning. (TCKS)
59. restitution	59. to fix what you "broke"
60. restore	60. (restitution), to repent, fix the damage, apologize
61. ridicule	61. deliberate act of belittling another, to mock
62. stop	62. to end or cause an end to
63. target	63. "a victim", the object of criticism or bullying
64. tattling	64. only gets someone in trouble, the motive is not to relieve someone's pain or hurt
65. taunting	65. is based on an imbalance of power and is one-sided, is intended to harm, involves humiliating, cruel, demeaning, or bigoted comments thinly disguised as jokes, involves laughter directed at the "target," is meant to diminish self-worth, induce fear, continues even when the "target" becomes upset or objects.
66. teasing	66. allows teaser and person being teased to swap roles easily, is not intended to hurt, maintains basic dignity of both of the parties, picks fun in a light-hearted, benign way, is innocent in motive, is discontinued when one of the parties is upset or objects.
67. telling	67. helping, "reporting", to get someone out of a mess...either yourself or a victim.
68. terrorizing	68. to incite fear, to threaten, to harm
69. tormenting	69. to inflict pain to the mind, emotion, or body.

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70. trivialize	70. to make less than, to diminish the importance of, reduce to “just playing”
71. Self-control	71. being able to manage our words, actions, and emotions properly, by our own initiative, and without supervision. (TCKS)
72. shame	72. painful emotion of guilt, shortcoming, disgrace, to cause someone to feel guilty or “less than”
73. shunning	73. intentionally ignoring or excluding someone, invalidating his or her presence.
74. strategies / tools	74. tools / resources to carry out a plan or action, to meet a goal
75. values	75. intrinsic worth, drives one’s personal choices and decisions, moral compass
76. victim (see target)	76. a person hurt or abused

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## 8. Cooperation Statements

### **Purpose**

The following cooperation statements are part of the foundation to the Bullying Prevention program. Tom Lickona, author of Character Matters, refers to the importance of such a statement. He states that they are not all that is needed to elicit and strengthen moral commitment, but they can help to bridge the gap between *knowing* what is right and *doing* what is right. He reports that a student involved in an elementary-level character education initiative called BACKFIRE stated that “this isn’t just about making good decisions ourselves—it’s about influencing other people to make good decisions, too!”

The Cooperation Statements reflect both general character education values as well as statements specific to the prevention of bullying. All of the Traut community is encouraged to participate by signing the statements at the beginning of each school year.

### **Samples**

The following pages contain samples of the staff, parent and student cooperation statements.



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## Cooperation Statement – Staff

We, the staff of Traut Core Knowledge School agree to join together to prevent bullying at our school.

I believe that everybody should enjoy our school, and feel safe, secure, and accepted regardless of color, race, gender, popularity, appearance, athletic ability, intelligence, religion and nationality.

“Bullying” is a verbal or written expression or physical act, or a pattern of behavior, which lacks empathy and intentionally intimidates or causes distress to one or more members of the school community from door to door. *Bullying is a willful, deliberate and hostile activity. It can include physical harm, verbal abuse, and forms of exclusion. It is never justified.*

*The victim is never responsible for being the target. Responsible bystanders intervene by reporting the incident to an adult, reaching out to the victim, and/or trying to stop the bully.*

*Character qualities important to bullying issues are: integrity, respect, kindness, self-control, responsibility, citizenship, humility, cooperation, honesty, and appreciation of individual strengths and cultural backgrounds. Another valuable character quality to the issue of bullying is empathy, “taking the perspective of another person and feeling what he or she feels”.*

**By signing this Cooperation Statement, I, as a member of the staff of Traut Core Knowledge School, agree to:**

1. Learn about bullies, victims, and bystanders, and our school’s approach to dealing with bullying.
2. Integrate “empathy” into my lessons when appropriate.
3. Create an environment where students feel safe and confident reporting bullying incidents.
4. Teach students that all forms of bullying are unacceptable.
5. Provide support to victims and bystanders (listen, believe, affirm, protect).
6. Provide support to a bully to encourage improved behavior.
7. Encourage and empower all children to stand up for themselves and each other.
8. I will be a good example.

I will do my best to uphold these character qualities through my actions, words, and attitudes.

Signed by \_\_\_\_\_

Print name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Revised 1/25/05

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## Cooperation Statement – Parents

We, the parents of Traut Core Knowledge School agree to join together to prevent bullying at our school.

I believe that everybody should enjoy our school, and feel safe, secure, and accepted regardless of color, race, gender, popularity, appearance, athletic ability, intelligence, religion, or nationality.

“Bullying” is a verbal or written expression or physical act, or a pattern of behavior, which lacks empathy and intentionally intimidates or causes distress to one or more members of the school community from door to door. *Bullying is a willful, deliberate and hostile activity. It can include physical harm, verbal abuse, and forms of exclusion. It is never justified.*

*The victim is never responsible for being the target. Responsible bystanders intervene by reporting the incident to an adult, reaching out to the victim, and/or trying to stop the bully.*

*Character qualities important to bullying issues are: integrity, respect, kindness, self-control, responsibility, citizenship, humility, cooperation, honesty, and appreciation of individual strengths and cultural backgrounds. Another valuable character quality to the issue of bullying is empathy, “taking the perspective of another person and feeling what he or she feels”.*

**By signing this Cooperation Statement, I, as a parent at Traut Core Knowledge School, agree to:**

1. Be informed and aware of the Bullying Prevention policy.
2. Read and understand the Door-to-Door Handbook, which explains the expectations for behavior.
3. Work in partnership with the school to encourage and promote positive, pro-social behavior, including the consistent demonstration of empathy through integrity, respect, kindness, self-control, responsibility, citizenship, humility, cooperation, honesty, and appreciation of individual strengths and cultural backgrounds.
4. Encourage open communication with my child(ren) by discussing regularly his or her feelings about school and friendships.
5. Alert staff of bullying I become aware of.
6. Cooperate with the school in an atmosphere of mutual support if an incidence of bullying should involve my child.
7. Be a good example for my child(ren) and others.

I will do my best to uphold these character qualities through my actions, words, and attitudes.

Signed by	_____	Signed by	_____
Print name	_____	Print name	_____
Date	_____	Date	_____

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## Cooperation Statement – Older Students (Grades 3-6)

We, the students of Traut Core Knowledge School agree to join together to prevent bullying at our school.

I believe that everybody should enjoy our school, and feel safe, secure, and accepted regardless of color, race, gender, popularity, appearance, athletic ability, intelligence, religion or nationality.

“Bullying” is a verbal or written expression or physical act, or a pattern of behavior, which lacks empathy and intentionally intimidates or causes distress to one or more members of the school community from door to door. *Bullying is a willful, deliberate, and hostile activity. It can include physical harm, verbal abuse, and forms of exclusion. It is never justified.*

*The victim is never responsible for being bullied.*

*I am responsible for intervening by telling an adult or trying to stop the bully. I will be helpful by being kind and empathetic to the victim.*

*Character qualities important for dealing with bullying are: integrity, respect, kindness, self-control, responsibility, citizenship, humility, cooperation, honesty, and appreciation of individual strengths and cultural backgrounds. Another valuable character quality to the issue of bullying is empathy, “taking the perspective of another person and feeling what he or she feels”.*

**By signing this Cooperation Statement, I, as a student at Traut Core Knowledge School, agree to:**

1. Be part of the solution!
2. Refuse to be a bully. I have self-respect and integrity; I will stand up for myself and for others.
3. Value individuals and treat everyone with respect and kindness.
4. Eliminate taunting and exclusion from my behavior. I have self-control, and I am kind. I will do my best not to let my words, attitudes, or actions hurt others.
5. Try to stop bullying when I see it. I am a good citizen, and I am honest. I can talk to the bully, reach out to the victim, or tell an adult about the incident.
6. Not see myself as more important than anyone else. I am humble. I appreciate individual strengths and cultural backgrounds.
7. Be vigilant to prevent bullying when adults are not close by. I will participate positively in class and in all school-related settings. I will cooperate with adults and with classmates.
8. Show empathy. I will endeavor to understand how it feels to be bullied.
9. I will be a good example.

I will do my best to uphold these character qualities through my actions, words, and attitudes.

Signed by \_\_\_\_\_

Print name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Revised 1/25/05

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## Cooperation Statement – Younger Students (Grades K-2)

I am a student at Traut Core Knowledge School. I don't want any students acting like bullies at my school.

I think that everybody should enjoy our school and feel safe and accepted no matter what you look like, what you are good or bad at, or anything else.

Bullying is anything you say, write, or do to someone else to scare them, hurt them, or make them sad or lonely.

*Bullying is a mean thing that someone chooses to do. It is not an accident. It is meant to hurt someone, scare someone, or make someone sad or lonely. It is never o.k. It is not ever the fault of the person who feels hurt, scared, or lonely.*

*If I see someone being bullied, I will help that person. I can tell a grown-up or I can ask the person being mean to stop. I will be kind.*

*Character qualities important for dealing with bullying are: integrity, respect, kindness, self-control, responsibility, citizenship, humility, cooperation, honesty, and appreciation of individual strengths and cultural backgrounds.*

*Another valuable character quality is empathy, "understanding how another person feels".*

### **By signing this Cooperation Statement as a student at Traut Core Knowledge School, I agree to:**

1. Refuse to be a bully. I have self-respect and integrity; I will stand up for myself and anyone else who needs help.
2. Treat everyone with respect and kindness.
3. Not let my words or actions hurt others. I have self-control.
4. Try to stop any bullying by asking the bully to stop, or by telling an adult. I am a good citizen, and I am honest. I am helpful and kind.
5. Not see myself as more important than anyone else. I have humility; I appreciate that everyone is good at something.
6. Show empathy. I will try to understand how it feels to be bullied.
7. Be helpful and kind to everyone around me. I will be a good example.

I will do my best to uphold these character qualities through my actions, words, and attitudes.

Signed by \_\_\_\_\_

Print name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Revised 1/25/05

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## 9. Empathy and the Strategies for Development

### Role of Empathy

The lack of empathy is a significant issue for the child who bullies.

- Barbara Coloroso states that the single most important character quality that determines a person's likelihood of becoming a bully is empathy.
- Thomas Lickona states that peer cruelty—especially toward children who are “different”—almost always reflects a lack of empathy.

**In promoting empathy as a critical aspect of the Bullying Prevention program, we are endorsing the development of emotionally competent people.**

- Empathy is the heart piece of the “head, heart and hands” philosophy in character education.
- Empathy connects us with others.
- It is what allows us to stand up for the threatened and the vulnerable.

**In promoting empathy we are also supporting the cognitive development of the student.**

- Program evaluation results have shown that schools where students are involved in programs designed to increase empathy and create “caring communities” have higher scores than comparison schools on measures of higher-order reading comprehension. (Kohn 1991)
- It is also a critical skill in making good decisions, as the ability to accurately interpret actions and behaviors of others, is a piece of good decision making.
- Empathy fosters the intellectual virtue of understanding and the capacity to fully consider another person and his or her circumstances.
- By the age of 8 or 9 years, children begin to focus on inner processes and can reflect on the other person's inner experience of emotion.
- The most advanced level of empathy occurs in late childhood (Hoffman, 1990). A child has the ability to see him/herself and others as having separate identities.
- Complex cognitive activity shapes the empathetic response.
- Researchers have identified significant correlations between student's scores on measures of empathetic understanding and their grade point averages.
- Review of research related to empathy training/instruction indicates that this instruction enhances both critical thinking skills and creative thinking.

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## Strategies for Developing Empathy in Students

- When seeking to increase the ability of children to assume another’s perspective, it is most fruitful to have them focus first on their own feelings—the different kinds of feelings they have and what feelings are associated with what kinds of situations. (Black and Phillips 1982; and Dixon 1980)
- Activities which focus children’s attention on similarities between themselves and another person are effective in increasing affective and cognitive empathy.
- Positive trait attribution—or “dispositional praise”—refers to the practice of emphasizing to children that the reason they exhibit prosocial behavior is that it is their nature to do so. Positive trait attribution has been shown to be a powerful means of enhancing empathetic understanding and behavior.
- **The use of literature that depicts cruelty and the suffering it causes is a valuable tool for fostering empathy.** The integration of empathy instruction as it relates to the existing 12 character traits in the TCKS Character Education Matrix, is one strategy for the development of empathy in students.

The following form is used by the Traut staff to document opportunities to teach empathy throughout the curriculum.

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**TCKS's Character Education**  
**Bullying Prevention / Empathy Integration Log**

<b>Content Area</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Type of Bullying / Empathy</b>

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## 10. Recognizing Bullying Behavior

By six weeks into the school year, bully-victim interaction patterns may have been established. Teachers sometimes have difficulty distinguishing between true bullying and normal peer conflict. Elementary children are generally not mature enough to handle real bullying situations independently. Research found that the single most effective deterrent to bullying is adult authority. Therefore, the staff must be able to recognize bullying behavior and intervene. Statistics state that in an average classroom, there are likely to be three children who are either a bully or a victim—and in need of adult intervention.

### Recognizing Bullying: Teasing vs. Taunting

#### Teasing:

- Allows teaser and person being teased to swap roles easily.
- Is **not** intended to hurt
- Maintains basic dignity of everyone involved
- Is meant to get both parties to laugh
- Is discontinued when one becomes upset or objects to teasing
- Is instrumental in learning about relationship building and effective communication, builds community
- Leaves room for apologies

#### Taunting:

- Is **BASED** on an imbalance of power and is one-sided
- Is **intended** to harm
- Involves humiliating, cruel, demeaning, or bigoted comments thinly disguised as jokes
- Includes laughter directed **at** the target
- Is meant to diminish the self worth of the target
- Continues especially when target becomes distressed or objects
- Is intended to isolate



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## **Recognizing Bullying: Types of Bullying**

- Physical – usually involves boys
- Verbal – this accounts for 70% of bullying, involves both boys and girls
- Relational – includes cliques, rumors and exclusion, usually involves girls

### **Relational bullying can include:**

- Destroying and manipulating relationships
- Destroying status within peer group
- Destroying reputations
- Making someone look foolish
- Public humiliation
- Intimidation
- Gossiping, spreading nasty and malicious rumors and lies about someone
- Hurtful graffiti
- Excluding someone from a group
- Negative text messages
- Negative body language (eye rolling, sighs, turning away or pretending not to see someone)
- Threatening gestures
- Notes passed around, anonymous notes
- Silent treatment
- Forming cliques, where others are excluded

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## Recognizing Bullies

Children likely to be bullies generally have some of these characteristics:

- Like the rewards that aggression brings (attention, control over someone, material possessions)
- Lack compassion/empathy for others
- Lack guilt
- Like to be in charge, like to get their own way, to dominate others
- Are bullied by a parent or sibling
- Misperceive how others treat him/her
- Believe the victim provoked and deserves his/her attack
- Has sense of entitlement
- Uses blame, criticism, and false accusations to project inadequacies on his/her target
- Intolerant of differences
- Fails to develop healthy relationships, but usually has peers who encourage, admire and model them; not loners
- Views him/herself as powerful and well-liked, an unrealistically positive self-image
- Takes pleasure in excluding others
- Selfish; wants pleasures without regard to others' needs, feelings, wants or rights
- Use others to get their way
- Act when not being supervised
- Lack foresight to predict consequences of their behavior
- Crave attention
- View weaker peers and siblings as prey
- Are at least average academically
- Can be any size

When bullies are caught, they tend to:

- Deny any wrongdoing, refuses to accept responsibility
- Trivialize the event (“just playing”)
- Counterattack the victim (“she/he started it”)
- Claim victim status (cries or accuses) and tries to make victim look like the bully
- Counts on the support of bystanders to corroborate the story

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# Recognizing Victims

**Children likely to be victims of bullying generally have some of these characteristics:**

- Shy
- Lack social skills
- Isolated
- Learning disabled
- Use money or toys as bribes to protect themselves
- Survived past trauma
- Are repeatedly bullied
- Look different

**Children who are being bullied will begin to show some of these changes:**

- Drop in self-esteem, become self-defeating and fearful
- Show anxiety, fear, sadness, self-hatred, possible depression
- Disruption in academic performance
- Loss of interest in school
- Excessive absences
- Physical symptoms such as stomach aches, headaches, fatigue
- Panic, irrational retaliation
- Focus on revenge or else isolation

Becoming the victim of bullying is a loss experience for the victim; there is a loss of personal safety, self-esteem, of belonging, and/or control of his/her own life.

**Why victims do not tell:**

- Shame
- Fear
- Helplessness
- Hopelessness
- Belief that it is a normal part of growing up (NOT TRUE)
- Do not want to “tattle”
- An adult either is the bully or is minimizing the problem; therefore, adults aren’t viewed as a possible solution.

**Tattling vs. Telling**

**Tattling** only gets someone in trouble, it does not relieve anyone else’s pain.

**Telling** gets someone (self or other) out of a mess and will possibly get help for both the victim and the bully.

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## Recognizing Bystanders

“Thou shalt not stand idly by. The opposite of love is not hate, but indifference; indifference creates evil. Hatred is evil itself. Indifference is what allows evil to be strong, what gives it power.”  
- Holocaust Survivor

### Types of bystanders:

- Bullies – start it and take an active part
- Followers – don’t start it but take an active part
- Supporters – Support the bullying but don’t take an active part
- Passive supporters – like the bully or the bullying but don’t show open support
- Disengaged onlookers – watch and do nothing
- Possible defenders – dislike the bullying and think they ought to help, but don’t

### What happens to bystanders:

- Those who observe bullying are more likely to imitate bullying behavior if the bully is perceived as cool, strong, and popular.
- Bystanders are likely to become desensitized to cruelty; they begin to view prejudice and discrimination as an acceptable world view. These values hinder empathy and compassion.
- Bystanders’ self-confidence and self-respect erodes as they struggle about whether to get involved and with moral responsibility to help the victim.
- In one study, peers reinforced the bully in 81% of cases, and were more respectful of the bully than the victim.

### Why are so many children (who would not instigate bullying) willing to turn away from a victim??

- They are afraid of becoming a target (victim)
- They are afraid of making the situation worse
- The bully is a friend
- “Not my problem, not my fight”
- The victim is not my friend
- Victim is a loser, or deserved it
- Bullying will “toughen up” the victim
- They don’t want to be blamed for getting the bully in trouble; don’t want to be a tattler
- They have personal safety in the “in” group and don’t want to risk defending an outcast
- It is too much trouble, too difficult, scary, painful to get involved
- And very often, **they do not know what to do to handle it.**

Even though these are legitimate reasons, they do not prevent erosion of the bystander’s self-confidence and self-respect. These fears and inadequacies can turn a bystander towards apathy, which is “a potent friend of contempt” since contempt flourishes in a climate of indifference. We are mostly socialized to “mind our own business”. Holocaust

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experts note the inherent danger of this excuse: “Indifference finally goes lethal; the act of turning away, however empty-headed and harmlessly, remains nevertheless an act.”

**What Bystanders can do to become Witnesses:**

- Refuse to be part of the group
- Support the victim (publicly or privately)
- Talk to the bully (publicly or privately)
- Don't repeat rumors
- Be inclusive
- Don't laugh at derogatory jokes
- Offer kindness and concern
- Tell an adult
- Stand up to the bully (with or without a group)
- Share, care, help, serve
- Show courage and moral independence
- Be altruistic

**Bystanders: If you aren't a part of the solution, you are part of the problem!**

**Bibliography for Chapter 10**

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# 11. Strategies for Managing Bullying Situations

## Strategies from the Research

Barbara Coloroso states that the four antidotes to bullying are:

- A strong sense of self.
- Being a friend.
- Having a friend (at least one good friend).
- Being able to get into a group (and out of one that is behaving in ways that are not right).

The five personality factors that seem to protect children from being targets:

- Friendliness
- Willingness to share (and perhaps be the first to offer)
- Willingness to cooperate
- Skill in joining the play of others
- Possessing a sense of humor

These suggestions involve the development of friendship skills. This is an easy-to-use list of behaviors that will help in the development of the skills:

### Top 10 Ways To Keep Your Friends

1. Show them kindness and respect.
  2. Stick up for them.
  3. Be supportive when they need help or advice.
  4. Tell the truth. Be kind about it.
  5. If you hurt a friend, say you're sorry.
  6. If a friend hurts you and apologizes, accept the apology.
  7. If you make a promise, keep it.
  8. Put effort into your friendships.
  9. Don't try to change your friends. Accept them for who they are.
  10. Treat them the way you want to be treated.
- AND, always be thankful for your friends!

### DO:

- Become knowledgeable about bullying, especially the kinds that are more covert.
- Ask about your child's social skills at the parent conference.
- Become involved at the school and take opportunities to observe your child in social situations.
- Use teachable moments to promote empathy and inclusion.

### DON'T:

- Assume your child would never be a bully.
- Set up situations where your child publicly excludes another (i.e. the dreaded birthday party invitations. Please do not have your child pass out invitations or

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give verbal invitations to an outside activity while at school. These are better done by phone or mail.).

The following is a list of ideas for strategies to be used when managing bullying situations. Much of this information came from Thomas Lickona's writing, as well as Barbara Coloroso's book on bullying.

Just as with other difficult issues that must be dealt with in the classroom, clear classroom rules and expectations are a prominent feature of success in addressing bullying. Barbara Coloroso writes that successful school (and home) environments are characterized by: warmth, positive interest, and involvement from adults. Firm limits must be asserted as to unacceptable behavior, with consequences for aggression that are inevitable, predictable, and escalating; and in case of violations of limits and rules, consistent application of non-hostile, non-physical sanctions is necessary (discipline as opposed to punishment).

**If a child confides in you that he or she is being bullied, DO say:**

- I hear you,
- I believe you,
- you are not alone,
- it is not your fault, and
- there are things you can do.

The child needs to be able to trust that you will treat the information seriously and confidentially (not secretly).

**Antidotes to Bullying**

- A strong sense of self
- Being a friend
- Having a friend (at least one good friend)
- Being able to get into a group (and out of one that is behaving in ways that are not right)
- Get help.
- Assert yourself – (such as “I am not up for this. I’m outta here. No more.”)  
Victims are seldom effective by returning aggression; this excites the bully into further attacks. Assertion, rather than aggression, is more effective.
- Use humor – laugh with the bully, it defuses the power of the taunt.
- Avoid potential bullying situations.
- Positive self-talk (such as “I am a good person. I didn’t deserve this. The bully has made a mistake and is trying to meet his/her needs in a mean way. I am OK”)
- “Own the taunt.” – (such as “Yes, my glasses do make me look like a bug, don’t they! My Mom makes me wear them.”)

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### **Personality Factors That Seem To Protect Children From Being Targets**

- Friendliness
- Willingness to share (and perhaps be the first to offer)
- Willingness to cooperate
- Skill in joining the play of others
- Possessing a sense of humor
- Kindness
- Look for ways to be and do good for others
- Have an older buddy
- Choose good friends. Choose a good group to be a part of.

### **Tips for Joining a Group**

- Think about which children are friendly.
- Think about which children like the same things as you like.
- It is easiest to join one person or a group of four or more
- Remember that “No” does not always mean “Never”. It could mean “not right now” or “try again later”. So try at least three different times to join a group of children (not always on the same day).
- Observe the activity you want to join. Try to fit in by imitating what the others are doing. Do not try to change what the other children are playing.



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## Strategies from Traut Staff

On November 18, 2004, the Character Education Committee asked the Traut staff to work by grade level to complete a questionnaire about their techniques for bullying prevention strategies and the handling of bullying incidents. This section contains the compiled comments from the staff, by grade level.

### 1. How do you present vocabulary which is related to bullying prevention to your class?

- Using the character qualities especially “Respect, kindness, integrity, empathy, compassion as vocabulary and in word games.
  - ◆ Use character quality descriptions; reinforce descriptions; consistency of descriptions.
  - ◆ By referring back to the character qualities during reading, spelling and history.
- Vocabulary
  - ◆ Empowerment
  - ◆ Choice; friendship
  - ◆ Empathy
  - ◆ Refer routinely to kindness and to respect for authorities and each other.
  - ◆ Teasing
  - ◆ Taunting
  - ◆ Introduce what the word bully means
  - ◆ Choices; opportunities to say something positive
  - ◆ Define what a "bystander" is; what you can do
- Literature
  - ◆ Discrimination is bullying ie. Trail of Tears
  - ◆ 100 Dresses
- During teachable moments, especially in history and literature
- Role modeling the vocabulary and use of vocabulary during problem solving
- Sayings
  - ◆ Fish out of water; how it feels to be uncomfortable; how others can help that person
  - ◆ Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Referred to constantly; fits all situations (takes practice)
  - ◆ "Hurts your heart"; band-aid; other kinds of hurt besides physical
  - ◆ Helping hands, hurting hands
  - ◆ Sixth grade motto: "Integrity has no need for rules" Constantly referred to
  - ◆ "Who has thought of someone else in this class? They think of you too!"
  - ◆ “How would you like to be thought of or remembered?"
- Use vocabulary when dealing with student conflicts or lack of empathy situations
- Role modeling proper tone of voice

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**2. In cases of bullying within your classroom, or with students in other areas of the school, what strategies do you use with the “bully” to prevent the situation from recurring?**

- Talking with bully
  - ◆ Talking to the bully about their behavior and how it is wrong.
  - ◆ Help the bully realize that they are victimized too i.e. their behavior doesn't help them in life.
  - ◆ Appeal to leadership skills vs. manipulation, bossiness or bullying
  - ◆ Need to want to change
  - ◆ Acknowledge success.
  - ◆ Use the term "bully" and notice bullying behaviors (not labeling child)
  - ◆ Label behavior, not child.
  - ◆ Child put him/her self in the other child's place – reinforce empathy
- Outcomes for bully
  - ◆ Perceptions were defined, consequences
  - ◆ Visit to Mr. Dillon
  - ◆ Walk the perimeter of the playground
  - ◆ Stand against the wall
  - ◆ Do chores for Mrs. Young
  - ◆ Place child in social skills group
  - ◆ Reminder bracelets for hurting hands
  - ◆ Removal of privileges, such as recess
- Restitution for victim by bully
  - ◆ Write an apology letter
  - ◆ Apologize to victim
  - ◆ Help the child "repent" by doing something nice for the victim
- Talking with bully and victim
  - ◆ Have the victim tell the bully what they don't like and that they don't want it to happen again.
  - ◆ Separate bully from bullied; help bully and bullied choose other behavior to reduce cycle (to become appropriate friends with others – maybe with each other at later time)
  - ◆ Use language to show value of the person both bullied and the bully.
  - ◆ Role modeling-verbalize feeling - correct situation if there is a way to correct it (
- Involve parents of bully
  - ◆ Parent becomes involved with a phone call from teacher
  - ◆ Character quality notes to parents
  - ◆ Talk with parent about the situation – parent education. Encourage parents to go to the source to get the whole story. Parents need to be willing to acknowledge that their child may have been involved.
  - ◆ Partnership with parent to support student's change efforts
- Communications

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- ◆ Being willing to be direct in situations i.e. labeling the behavior bullying behavior
  - ◆ Facilitate conversations between parties involved
  - ◆ Direct instruction to students about appropriate student community response– responsibility to report/support victim
  - ◆ Help students to realize what was occurring in a bullying situation.

**3. In cases of bullying within your classroom, or with your students in other areas of the school, what strategies do you use with the “victim” to prevent the situation from recurring?**

- Talking with victim
  - ◆ Give victim the words to use to confront the child doing the bullying
  - ◆ Acknowledge the child's feelings
  - ◆ Attention to victim not to bully
  - ◆ Advice to victim about who they are hanging around with
  - ◆ Tell the victim it's OK to ask for help and to stand up for themselves without getting aggressive.
  - ◆ Forgive the bully
  - ◆ Role play – what if this happens - what can you do; ie. If someone is chasing you and you don't like it, stop running and tell them you don't like it.
  - ◆ Understand why bullies act the way they do (empathy, compassion) while saying that the behavior is wrong.
  - ◆ Telling/explaining/demonstrating: you have a choice to object, to say "no"
  - ◆ Have the victim state what happened and tell the bully that they don't want that to happen again.
  - ◆ Make victim/target aware of prevention strategies and assertiveness
  - ◆ Victim recognize "bullying" behavior/situation and look for areas to reduce antagonism/reinforcement of bully/bullied relationships
  - ◆ Use language to show value of the person both bullied and the bully.
- Involve parents of victim
  - ◆ Parent conference in extreme cases

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#### 4. How do you work with your class as a whole on skills/concepts related to bullying?

- Discussions
  - ◆ Talking with class about difference between tattling and reporting if someone is truly being bullied. (1,2,Paras)
  - ◆ Okay to stand up for yourself. (1,2,Paras)
  - ◆ Okay to get help from adults; we're approachable. (1,2,Paras)
  - ◆ Nobody is the boss; we can all take turns being the leader. (1,2,Paras)
  - ◆ Talk about making good choices. (1,2,Paras)
  - ◆ Small group – Q/A – building "tool box" (3)
  - ◆ Class discussion, "teachable moments" (3)
  - ◆ Constant integrity checks: "intelligence or integrity" (6)
  - ◆ Handle it themselves first. (Specials)
  - ◆ Recognize bystanders' complicity with the bullying (6)
- Instruction/Literature
  - ◆ Written lessons to develop skills/concepts (i.e. letters of apology with 100 Dresses, paragraph on appreciation of IS and CB with Louis Braille) (3)
  - ◆ "Top 10 Ways to Keep Your Friends" (5)
  - ◆ Connections to literature (5)
  - ◆ Problem/solution walls (will explain if needed) (6)
  - ◆ Literature: Iliad, Odyssey – constantly pointed out (6)
  - ◆ Curriculum facilitates discussions and regular opportunities (3)
- Poster – strategies (3)
- Becoming "aware"; developmental (3)
- Show students that they are cared for. (Specials)
- Having all class students write a comment about what they appreciate for every other student and then assembling the best comments on a Valentine for each student (5)

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## Strategies from the Traut Students

In the spring of 2003, the 6<sup>th</sup> grade responded to a bullying survey. This section contains the compiled comments from the students. Answers are grouped by theme.

### 1. “What do you need from adults in order to feel safe from being bullied or safe in reporting an incident of bullying?”

#### CONFIDENTIALITY

That your name won't be told.....Not telling who told on them..... Tell the teacher in privacy.

Assurance that our report will be anonymous.....Don't tell who reported the incident.....Witness protection program for children.....I would need the adults to not tell who told.

#### STAFF ATTITUDE

We need to know that the staff is watching out for you.....Their understanding and trust.....Listen to what I have to say.....To be able to tell any adult.... Watch over us very well.

That they care and don't laugh or anything.....I need support and not just fake sympathy  
That you be kind and try to put a stop to bullying.....I need to feel o.k. with telling the situation to the adult.....Should be able to tell the adults and feel safe that the bullies won't be mean to us for telling on them.....I need to know that I won't be a tattler.....Comfort, authority and understanding..... We should be able to trust them.....To let us be able to talk to you....Teachers need to be nice and understanding.....Trust, empathy.....Understand that some children feel like it is their own business if they are being bullied.....Need to know that the teachers care.....Your safe with them.

#### STRATEGIES-STAFF

The teachers should watch us.....I need the adults to help the bullies so I will feel safe.....Need to start bullying counseling when you find out who they are.....Get their attention.....I need to have you not make enemies between us.....Adult in range of seeing bully.....Real assurance that the people who are bullying you won't hurt you if you tell on them.....I would like you to punish them and watch at recess or remove them from recess.....Teachers always being around and having consequences for bullying.....Keep a close watch at recess..... Watch us....Keep an eye on it so that I can report that someone is bullying me.....I need the teachers to really look carefully, and if they see someone down they should ask.....Supervision....Tell the bullies not to  
Need them to actually do something about the problem.....To make sure that when we report something that the bully doesn't harass you.....The assurance that they won't come back and bully me more after I have told an adult.....We should have adults talk with people that are common bullies.....To make sure that people don't do it again.....To take the bully influence away after it has been reported.....Have the playground and everywhere to be nice and everyone can participate.....More protection and no warning; go straight to the principal.....More teachers on the playground.....Teachers always being around, and if you get caught bullying, something bad will happen

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### **STRATEGIES-STUDENTS**

Teach us how to defend ourselves.....Teach defense against bullying....Tell other children not to be afraid to tell on the bullies.....I need to remain calm and go to an adult.....Tell them if you're worried about that person.

### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

The adults should call the parents.....The teachers need authority and a phone call to their parents.

### **EDUCATION**

Every now and then have a talk with the whole class and have a lecture.....We would need advice and help from the adults.....Tell the class that if they are caught bullying they will go to the Principal's office.

### **A CHALLENGE**

There were several students who gave an answer of "nothing." However, the most poignant was the statement "Nothing, I can't do anything."

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## 12. If Your Child is Involved in a Bullying Incident

While a healthy environment and prosocial skills are significant indicators for raising children who don't bully or aren't victims, we know that bad things can still happen. When they are courageous enough to tell, victims talk more often to parents than to teachers. As their children's most important advocates, parents must support their victimized children by working with the school to ensure their children's safety. If your child is displaying bullying behavior or is negative bystander it is doubtful they will share this with you. As a parent, it is difficult to acknowledge that your child is part of a bullying situation at all. However, we do a disservice to our children if we ignore this reality in their lives. The motivation of the Bullying Prevention program is to help these children move out of these roles. One of the strategies is to document bullying incidents. Just as with academic struggles, documentation assists in identifying the problems so there can be quick and effective intervention. If you know about a bullying situation, please contact your child's teacher. If you are contacted by the school, please know that the intention is to assist. The expectation is that the school and the parents will work together to deal with the behavior.

### Signs that your child may be being bullied:

- Child has torn or missing clothing.
- Child immediately uses bathroom when he/she gets home (school bathroom viewed as unsafe).
- Child is very hungry even though he/she had adequate lunch or lunch money.
- Child is angry or sad, including after a phone or computer conversation.
- Child exhibits out of character behavior, such as stealing, aggression, etc.
- Child has a drop in school performance or interest.

### Helping Your Child Avoid The Ways of a Bully

1. *Closely monitor TV, videos, games, computer and Internet,, music*
  - a. Violence, reality TV, and talk shows:
    - i. Desensitize
    - ii. Dehumanize
    - iii. Devalue respect, compassion, empathy
    - iv. Create apathy and callousness
    - v. Are tolerant of a rude, crude violent society
    - vi. Look at people as prey, adversaries
    - vii. Teach partakers to
      1. Overreact
      2. Be insecure – the world is not a safe place
2. *Engage in constructive, entertaining, energizing activities*
  - a. Physical challenge
  - b. Mental challenge
3. *Teach children to live a life of integrity*
  - a. Discern right from wrong
  - b. Act on what is right, even at personal cost

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## 13. Healthy Homes

Barbara Coloroso, author of *The Bully, the Bullied and the Bystander* asserts that successful school (and home) environments are characterized by:

1. Warmth, positive interest, and involvement from adults
2. Firm limits as to unacceptable behavior. Consequences for aggression are inevitable, predictable, and escalating.
3. In case of violations of limits and rules, consistent application of non-hostile, non-physical sanctions (discipline as opposed to punishment). Adults act as authorities and role models.

### **Types of Homes that Promote Healthy Social Relationships:**

- Virtues are both taught and demonstrated.
- The structure is consistent, firm, fair, calm, and peaceful.
- Children are nurtured, valued, believed in and trusted.
- There is healthy risk taking and mistakes are an opportunity to learn.
- Rules are simply and clearly stated and consequences are reasonable – also simple, valuable, and purposeful.
- Children are motivated to be all they can be and there's an atmosphere of acceptance and high expectation where they are held to high standards of conduct because they are capable of being responsible, decent, caring people.
- There is no problem so great it can't be solved and the family is willing to seek help.
- Reasoning with children about the effects of their behavior on others and the importance of sharing and being kind is effective in promoting empathy and prosocial behavior. (Clarke 1984; Kohn 1991)
- Parental modeling of empathetic, caring behavior toward children and toward others in the children's presence is strongly related to children's development of prosocial attitudes and behavior.
- When children have hurt others or otherwise caused them distress, research supports the practice of giving explanations as to why the behavior is harmful and suggestions for how to make amends.
- Parents encouraging school-age children to discuss their feelings and problems is positively related to the development of empathy.

### **On the Flip Side, Bullying is Fostered by:**

- An environment which is neglectful, hostile and uses harsh punishment. (Olweus, 1993)
- Homes where aggression between siblings is the most common form of family violence and may also be a training ground for bullying. (Patterson, 1986)
- Parents inadvertently supporting bullying by accepting it as just a normal part of growing up and leaving children to solve their own problems.



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- Homes where children are controlled and manipulated and their feelings are ignored, negated, or ridiculed. Rigid enforcement of rules by means of actual, threatened, or imagined violence or use of humiliation – sarcasm, ridicule, and embarrassment, can contribute to bullying.
  - Extensive use of threats and bribes – punishment and rewards which stunt the development of internal motivation to do what is good and right
  - An environment where there is no room for mistakes and therefore no risk taking.
  - Homes where there's no structure, consistency, boundaries or discipline.
  - Children are rescued from any problem.
  - Punishments and rewards are arbitrary and inconsistent (this feels unsafe to victims and allows impulsive behavior of bullies – they may take a chance on bad behavior because there may or may not be consequences).

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## 14. Discipline Policy for Bullying

*“With care and commitment, we can rechannel the behaviors of the bully into positive leadership activities; acknowledge the nonaggressive behaviors of the bullied child as strengths that can be developed and are honored; and transform the role of the bystander into that of a witness, someone willing to stand up, speak out, and act against injustice. A daunting task, but a necessary one.” Barbara Coloroso*

The following discipline policies for bullying are intended to be added to the existing Traut discipline format.

1. **All reports and observations of bullying behavior are to be reported and responded to by the classroom teacher of the student accused of bully behavior.** The goal of a response is to teach children that what they have to say is important. The purpose of reporting the incident to the classroom teacher is to allow for one person in authority to coordinate the response to the behavior of the bully, the victim and any bystanders.
2. As with any discipline incident at Traut, **notification to the principal and parents are up to the discretion of the teacher.**
3. The following Bullying Incident Log (see sample in Chapter 16) is designed to be used by the teacher. **The teacher should document which students were involved in the incident and their behavior.** For example, Mary was identified as the bully, Jane was the victim and Alice was a bystander encouraging Mary’s behavior. It is only through documentation that recurring behaviors can be identified and changed.
4. **Protection of the victim is vital when a student reports an incident.** The teacher may need to maintain the confidentiality of the victim until the victim feels able to confront the bully. It is not recommended that the victim confront the bully without first discussing strategies on how to do this with the teacher. It is important to remember that a victim rarely reports an incident after the first event.
5. It is important that **the student who has done the bullying is the one inconvenienced** by any steps taken to limit contact between the students.
6. **A key part of the discipline for the bully is restitution to the victim.** This piece is necessary in order to develop the ability to empathize within the student accused of bullying. It is important that the restitution be monitored in order that the victim is not exposed to further harassment.
7. **If the behavior of the student results in a visit with the principal, it is recommended that there is follow-up with the parents.** The current disciplinary practice involves sending a report home. In order to encourage parent involvement in prevention, it is recommended that parents respond to the discipline report by stating what steps were taken at home in response to the behavior at school.
8. **If students maintain their negative behaviors and do not progress, the strategies being used might not be working effectively.** It may be appropriate

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then to contact the Student Teacher Assessment Team in order to identify more appropriate strategies.

9. **The Bullying Incident Log should be taken into consideration when determining classroom placement for the following year. These logs will be given to the teacher for the next year.** Since the goal is to change the behavior of the bully, the victim and any negative bystanders, we feel this will be best accomplished if there is staff awareness of any behavior/social issues that the student is struggling with. This is the same philosophy used with academic struggles. Again, the goal is to move the students out of these roles and we are hopeful that by tracking the behavior, we will be able to assist students quickly and effectively toward appropriate character and behavior.

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## **15. Suggestions for Discipline and Consequences**

Decisive adult response to bullying behavior is therefore an effective way to help the bullies, the bullied, and the bystanders.

### **What should the consequences be?**

Since the TCKS rule established in the cooperation statements is “we will not bully,”

1. the consequences should be consistent with those for breaking other school rules; and
2. since bullying is antisocial behavior and hurts children, it works well to assign consequences that involve pro-social behavior and help other students.

### **Punishment vs. Discipline**

**Punishment** is punitive and often reflects the same violations that the bully did; physical punishment, verbal shaming, and isolation. It teaches the bully the art of being more sneaky because the goal becomes bullying without being caught. There has been no change of heart. It also affords the bully the opportunity to see himself or herself as the victim (of the punishment) and overlook the harm inflicted on another.

As defined in Educating for Character by Thomas Lickona:

“...**discipline** [is] a tool for teaching the values of respect and responsibility... The ultimate goal of discipline is self-discipline – the kind of self-control that underlies voluntary compliance with just rules and laws, that is a mark of mature character, and that a civilized society expects of its citizens. Discipline without moral education is merely crowd control – managing behavior without teaching morality.

Discipline, according to the TCKS Door-To-Door Handbook:

“Discipline in the true sense of the word is positive, encouraging, and even proof of “tough love.” Discipline is rendered with respect for the individual student and not at the expense of the child’s dignity. Moral discipline requires wisdom.”

### **Intervene Immediately with Discipline**

Children need adequate supervision; the physical presence of adults is key, and their assistance is critical. With the bully, the teacher’s role is to re-establish the firm limits of the school rules, and work the student through a process for solving the problem:

- Discuss what was wrong with the behavior specifically, and why it was hurtful. This should be constructive and handled with empathy, and thereby the teacher is a **positive role model** for the bully.

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- Resolution:
    - How and why did it happen?
    - What to change so it won't happen again?
    - Find new ways to meet needs.
  - Restitution:
    - Fix what you broke—ask student to figure out what the appropriate “fix” is.
    - Apologize.
    - Give disciplinary assignments (see **Suggestions for Disciplinary Assignments**).
  - Reconciliation (process of healing the relationship with the person harmed):
    - Allow the victim time and space.
    - The bully must take on all the responsibility for healing.
    - The bully is responsible for committing to the process.
    - Any and all inconvenience and discomfort belongs to the bully, including schedules and locations.

**Goals include:**

- Getting the bully to take ownership; no excuses!
- Stop the attacks while harming neither the bully nor the victim.
- Help the victim and the bully get out of their respective roles.

In working on the restitution, if there is conflict to resolve with the victim, the teacher can assist with problem solving and encouraging compromise. Compromise gives children an opportunity to learn that they can't always have everything they want when they want it. Through compromise, they may get **some** of what they want, **plus** the success of working out a conflict with peers. Problem solving together can bring out creative ideas and help build a new relationship.

How to Problem Solve:

1. Identify and define the problem.
2. List viable options for solutions.
3. Evaluate options – pros and cons and consequences of each.
4. Choose one option.
5. Make a plan and do it.
6. Evaluate the problem and the solution.
  - a. How did it start?
  - b. Was it solved? How?
  - c. Could it be prevented in the future?

**Considerations for Victims**

In addition to all inconvenience and discomfort being assigned to the bully, it is important to ask the victim what they need to feel safe, and to work with them on strategies for avoiding bullying. (See “Strategies from Research” section of Chapter 11.)

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## **Considerations for Bystanders**

Bystanders may have the opportunity to become part of any problem solving and restitution.

## **Suggestions for Disciplinary Assignments**

Look for opportunities to help the bully get involved in service to others, acts of kindness, and responsibilities that encourage cooperation and interdependence. The first opportunity for this may be in a disciplinary assignment. Here is a collection of consequences of varying severity that are aimed at promoting development of empathy and building character:

- Stay after school to perform a helpful act.
- Miss recess and help in the office or another classroom instead.
- Observe recess, record acts of kindness, caring, helpfulness. Could give out “I caught you caring” recognition notes.
- Make a poster for hanging in the school; the subject could be empathy, a bullying prevention message, inclusion, kindness, etc.
- Write a paragraph on why you are in detention.
- Write a paper about the incident with the roles reversed.
- Write a paragraph about at least three ways you could have handled this situation differently and not be in detention.
- Tell about your best subject in school. Tell about your worst subject. How can you improve?
- List 5 positive qualities about yourself.
- List 3 qualities you need to improve on.
- Write 3 paragraphs about your life. Discuss when you were younger, your life now, and what you plan to be doing with your life ten years from now.
- Write a paragraph about how you have helped someone else become a better person.
- Will you be returning to detention? Write a paragraph explaining your answer.
- Write a report on an altruistic leader such as Martin Luther King, Gandhi, Mother Theresa, etc.
- Assist students who need help (if trustworthy and supervised).
- Do something nice for the victim (if victim approves and bully has genuinely repented; adult supervision required).
- Clean up trash on playground .
- Community service project– in or out of the school community, aimed at developing empathy.
- Assign the student responsibility for a special job (such as mentoring a younger student or helping a specific staff member) that is contingent upon improved behavior. (This is a valuable assignment for a child who has not felt needed or valued. To develop responsibility, we should give chances for being responsible.)
- Anger management training – teach that expressing anger in healthy ways can calm you and make you stronger, but taking anger out on others is hurtful and makes them, and you, feel worse.

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### **Bibliography for Chapter 15**

1. Coloroso, Barbara. The Bully, the Bullied and the Bystander. Harper Collins, 2003.
2. Short-Camilli, Garrity, Jens, Porter, and Sager. Bullying-Proofing Your School, A Comprehensive Approach for Elementary Schools. Sopris West, 1994.
3. Lickona, Tom. Character Matters: How to Help Our Children Develop Good Judgment, Integrity and Other Essential Virtues. Touchstone. Simon and Schuster, Inc., 2004. Chapter 7 “Practice Character-Based Discipline.”







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## **Disciplinary Action Report**

**Incident Date:**

**Students Involved:**

**Description of Incident:**

**Action(s) Taken:**

**This report completed by:** \_\_\_\_\_ **(principal)**

**Recommended Follow-up:**

*Parents: Please comment on any action regarding this incident that has been taken at home. Please sign and return to principal on \_\_\_\_\_ (date)*

*Thank you.*

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## 17. Recommended Reading

1. Coloroso, Barbara. The Bully, the Bullied and the Bystander. Harper Collins, 2003.
2. Short-Camilli, Garrity, Jens, Porter, and Sager. Bullying-Proofing Your School, A Comprehensive Approach for Elementary Schools. Sopris West, 1994.
3. Lickona, Tom. Character Matters: How to Help Our Children Develop Good Judgment, Integrity and Other Essential Virtues. Touchstone. Simon and Schuster, Inc., 2004.
4. Beane, Allan, PhD. The Bully Free Classroom. Free Spirit Publishing, 1999
5. Wellman, Susan (Founder of the Ophelia Project). [www.opheliaproject.org](http://www.opheliaproject.org).