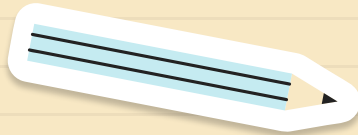


The Dignity for All Students Act

Empowering Parents & Caregivers to
Address Bullying





Hello! I am Brandi Remington



Youth Development Coordinator

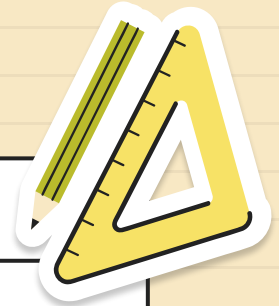
Youth Development Program, TST BOCES








bremington@tstboces.org

**I am here to Support, Illuminate,
& Celebrate.**

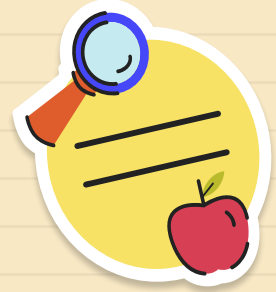


Overview



	What is Dignity?
	What is Bullying?
	Your Role as a Parent or Caregiver
	Overview of the Dignity Act (DASA)
	How to File a Dignity Act Report
	What Happens After a Report is Filed
	Q & A

What is Dignity?



A

Dignity is...

admiration for someone's actions, traits, or accomplishments. It is earned or lost through a person's actions and behaviors.

B

Dignity is...

the inherent worth and value of every human. Everyone has the same amount of dignity. It cannot be earned or lost.

C

Dignity is...

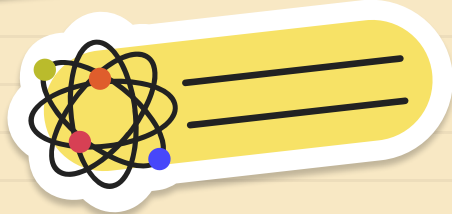
steadfast adherence to a strict moral or ethical code. It is a reflection of your inner dedication to do the right thing no matter the circumstances.

A



Sorry, this is the
definition of

RESPECT

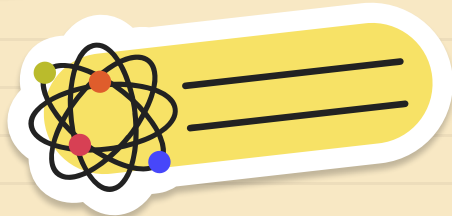


C



Sorry, this is the definition of

INTEGRITY

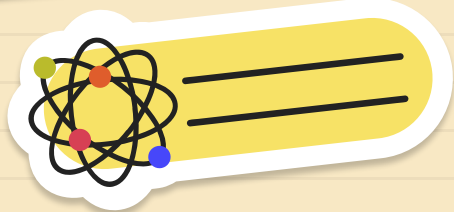


B



**Correct! This is the
definition of**

DIGNITY



Information and Resources

PACER.org



**PACER's
National Bullying Prevention Center**
Together We Can Create a World Without Bullying

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What Parents Should Know About Bullying

1 [Definition,
Impact And
Roles](#)

2 [Laws And Policy](#)

3 [Helping Your
Child](#)

4 [Working With
The School](#)

5 [Mobile And
Online Safety](#)

What is Bullying?



- Intentional
- Repeated behavior (or has the ability to be repeated)
- **Imbalance of Power.** The aggressor is trying to maintain power over the target
- Can be physical, verbal, social, or psychological.
- Can happen face-to-face or online.



Other Types of Behavior

Rude Behavior	Mean Behavior	Conflict
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rooted in poor manners, thoughtlessness, or lack of empathy.• Unintentional.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Impulsive cruelty.• Rooted in emotion.• Intention to cause harm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not planned.• In the heat of the moment.• Among those with equal power.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Throwing a snowball at someone.• Saying, "Your shirt burns my eyes" to someone wearing a neon yellow shirt.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A student argues with his parents before getting on the bus. He is sitting next to a group of kids who are in a good mood and laughing. He says to one of the students, "Shut up. You look sound like a walrus and look like one too."	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two students both try out for the school play. They want the same part. Each student loudly states their case why they should be chosen over the other in front of a group in cafeteria.





Other Types of Behavior

Remember conflict is natural. It leads to change and growth. We just need to make sure that our young people have the skills to navigate it with empathy and assertiveness.

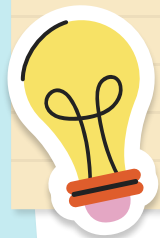




What to do if your child tells you they are being bullied.



- **Listen.** It is the child's story; let them tell it. They may be in emotional pain about the way they are being treated.
- **Breathe.** This can, and probably will be, an emotional journey for you as well.
- **Remember** this is the child's story. You are a supporting character.



Bullying: An Opportunity for Empowerment and Teamwork

- **Support your child as they regain control over the situation (not the bully).**
 - *Remember, bullying is about power and control.*
- **Ask your child what they want to see happen next.**
 - What do they need to feel happy and safe returning to school?
 - Who do they think can help?
- **Explain the next steps.**
 - What's your role?
 - What's their role?
 - Strategize. Actualize. Follow-up.



Bullying: An Opportunity for Empowerment and Teamwork

- **Let your child take the lead as much as possible.**
 - Let them write the next chapter of their story.
- **Expand your team**

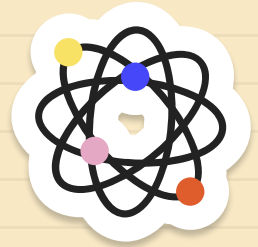


Bullying: An Opportunity for Empowerment and Teamwork

- **Be prepared for a marathon not a sprint.**
 - Prepare yourself.
 - Prepare your child.
- **Stay positive and action oriented. Your child will follow your lead.**



Reactions to Avoid



- Telling your child to stand up to the bully.
- Telling your child to ignore the bully.
- Taking matters into your own hands.
- Talking negatively about the bully, their parents, or the school.



Teamwork: Record Keeping

Be detailed and consistent.

- Who was present?
- What happened?
- Where did it happen?
- When did it happen?
- What strategy was used? Did it work?
- Any other details your child thinks is important.



Be your child's "administrative assistant."

- Take down the notes. Have them verify that they are correct and that you didn't miss anything before sharing them with the school.

Communicating w/ the School

- ★ Process your emotions with your support system (friends, partner, siblings, neighbors) before meeting with the school team to help you focus on the facts and be the best advocate (teammate) for your child.
- ★ Try to set something up in person or video call
- ★ Ask questions
- ★ Follow up
- ★ Be an active partner

Dignity Act Basics



What is it?



Who is protected?



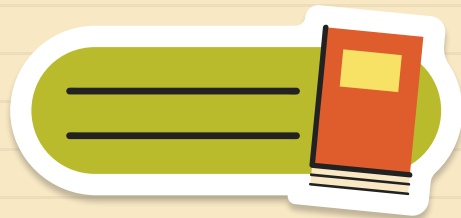
How does cyberbullying fit in?



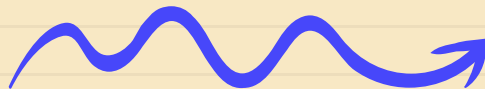
How does someone make a report?



What happens after a report is filed?



What is the Dignity for All Students Act?



Effective July 1, 2012

"New York State's Dignity for All Students Act (The Dignity Act) seeks to provide the State's public elementary and secondary school students with a safe and supportive environment free from discrimination, intimidation, taunting, harassment, and bullying on school property, a school bus and/or at a school function."

Legislative Intent

"... To afford all students in public schools an environment free of discrimination and harassment. The purpose of this...is to foster civility in public schools and to prevent and prohibit conduct which is inconsistent with a school's educational mission."

Protected Classes

The Dignity Act prohibits bullying, harassment and discrimination against a student by another student(s) and/or school employee(s), based on a student's actual or perceived:

★ **RACE**

★ **WEIGHT**

★ **COLOR**

★ **DISABILITY**

★ **GENDER**

★ **SEX**

★ **RELIGION**

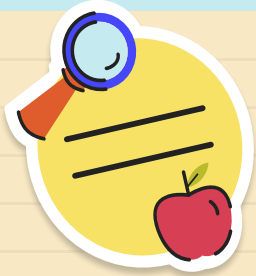
★ **RELIGIOUS PRACTICE**

★ **NATIONAL ORIGIN**

★ **SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

★ **OTHER**





True or False?

The Dignity Act only protects students in one of the named protected classes.



TRUE



FALSE

CORRECT!

All students are protected under the Dignity Act, even if they don't fit into one of the protected classes.

The “**other**” category provides the opportunity to describe the root of the power imbalance when it does not fit into one of the named categories. For example: socio-economic status or age.



FALSE



INCORRECT!

All students are protected under the Dignity Act, even if they don't fit into one of the protected classes.

The **"other"** category provides the opportunity to describe the root of the power imbalance when it does not fit into one of the named categories. For example: socio-economic status or age.

A Word on Cyberbullying...

- ★ Cyberbullying may originally occur when a student is at home on their personal computer.
- ★ However, social media influences real life interactions. It is **public** and exists at all times. It follows the student throughout the school day.
- ★ When cyberbullying is perpetrated by another student or a staff member. **It is covered by the Dignity Act.** It impacts a student's mental, emotional, and/or physical well being and interferes with their ability to focus and learn in the classroom.



Filing a Report



[TSTBOCES.ORG/YouthDevelopment](https://www.tstbooces.org/YouthDevelopment)

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SAMPLE Dignity for All Students Act (DASA)
Responding to Incidents
Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination - For District/School Files Only

PART 1. SAMPLE DASA COMPLAINT FORM

*A DASA complaint form must be posted on the District website and communicated to parents and students on an annual basis.
To be completed by person reporting the incident (or the person receiving the complaint and/or investigating the incident) and submitted to the Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC).*

School District: _____ School: _____
Dignity Act Coordinator: _____ Today's date: _____
Name and position of person reporting the incident: _____

Role of person reporting incident (Check one): Anonymous report

Student Target Student (witness) Parent/Guardian Staff Member Other _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Name of target: (student being bullied, harassed, or discriminated against) _____

Name(s) of alleged offender(s): _____

Date and time of incident: _____

What was your involvement in the incident?
 I was directly involved in the incident I observed the incident I heard about the incident

Where did the incident happen? (Check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> On school property	<input type="checkbox"/> Cafeteria	<input type="checkbox"/> On a school bus	<input type="checkbox"/> Hallway	<input type="checkbox"/> Bathroom
<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/> Gym	<input type="checkbox"/> Off school property	<input type="checkbox"/> Locker Room	<input type="checkbox"/> At a school function
<input type="checkbox"/> Electronic Communication:		<input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe):		

Type of incident (Check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> Physical contact (kicking, punching, spitting, tripping, pushing, taking belongings)
<input type="checkbox"/> Verbal threats (gossip, name-calling, put-downs, teasing, being mean, taunting, making threats)
<input type="checkbox"/> Psychological (see verbal actions: crowding, rumors, social exclusion, intimidation)

After a Report is Filed

It is expected that prompt and thorough investigation will be completed.

- The DASA Coordinator or Administrator typically lead the investigation
- Interview all involved: target, aggressor and witnesses
- Prompt action is taken to end the harassment, bullying and/or discrimination




Investigation Process



“A common misunderstanding is that the investigation is undertaken to determine a ‘perpetrator’ or ‘aggressor.’ The goal of the investigation should be to determine the impact of the incident on the targeted student and to provide a trauma-informed and supportive response.”

September 2023



CLIMATE CONNECTION
Information and strategies
linking Climate and School Safety.

Dignity for ALL Students

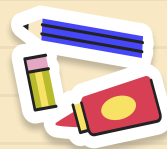
Climate Connection is a publication
of the NYS Center for School Safety.

Investigation Conclusions

- ★ Was this bullying, harassment or discrimination (a material incident)?
- ★ Was this mean behavior, rude behavior, or a conflict?
- ★ What steps need to be taken to provide to support the targeted student.
- ★ What steps can be taken to support the aggressor in changing their behavior.

Strategies & Action Plans

Student Who Was Harmed



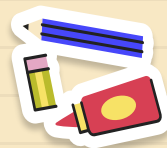
- **Student have an active role to play**
 - Checking in with a caring adult
 - Reporting another incident immediately
 - Identify trusted friends to remain close to during the school day
 - Share passwords and “friend” parents on social media to allow them to monitor interactions

- **Parents have an active role to play**
 - Monitor students’ social media accounts
 - Check-in regularly with their student
 - Check in with school staff to discuss the effectiveness of the plan

Strategies & Action Plans

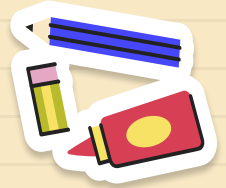
Student Who Was Harmed

- **School Staff have an active role to play**
 - Assigning a designated staff member for the student to connect with if there are any issues.
 - Inform all teaching staff connected to the student about the action plan including staff who monitor:
 - Hallways
 - Recess
 - Lunch
 - Study hall
 - After school activities
 - Keeping students involved in incident engaged and separated during classroom activities.



Strategies & Action Plans

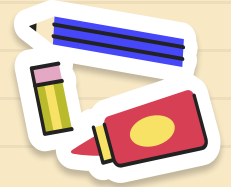
Student Who Was the Aggressor



- Punishment or suspension **is not required** by the Dignity Act
- If enacted alone, disciplinary responses **do not** prevent recurrence or ensure the safety of the targeted student
- Consequences need to address prevention, education, and intervention



Strategies & Action Plans



- **Due to student privacy laws**, you are not permitted to know the details of the action plan for the student who caused the incident.

-However-

- You can ask the school to explain **in general** the types of interventions, education, and consequences that students involved in bullying, intimidation and harassment take part in.
- You can also ask for more information on school-wide prevention efforts that the school has in place.



Teamwork: Record Keeping



★ Ask for things in writing.

★ If it was found to be bullying (a material incident) ask for an action plan with:

- Assigned actions/tasks for:
 - School staff
 - Your student
 - You
- A check-in date
- Everyone's signatures

★ If it wasn't found to be bullying ask for an email that states:

- What type of behavior it was decided to be (rude behavior, mean behavior, conflict)?
- The name of staff person that your child can connect with if they feel unsafe.
- Who you should contact if another incident occurs.

Key Takeaways



- ★ **Bullying is about gaining and maintaining power.**
- ★ **If you child is a target, focus on empowerment. Help them regain power over the situation.**
- ★ **Take care of yourself as things unfold.**
- ★ **Expand your team. Partner with your Dignity Act Coordinator and school staff.**
- ★ **The Dignity Act provides you and your child a step by step process to navigate bullying, harassment, and discrimination.**
- ★ **Other unkind behaviors take place between youth and their peers that are not bullying. These can be addressed through education, intervention, and prevention.**

Further Support



Brandi Remington

Youth Development Coordinator

Youth Development Program, TST BOCES

bremington@tstboces.org

**Find Forms, Answering
Questions, Supporting You
Through the Process**



Credits!



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