



School Social Work Association of America
Resolution Statement

HELP TO PREVENT BULLYING

The School Social Work Association of America (SSWAA) is intent on stemming the tide of bullying behaviors in schools throughout the United States. School Social Workers have a long and successful history of intervening on behalf of, and supporting students who may be picked on, teased, beaten up, or excluded by their fellow students. School Social Workers often work directly with students who bully to assist them to develop positive social skills and to decrease bullying behavior. School Social Workers are often utilized by schools to help implement classroom, school, or district wide interventions to address this troubling and dangerous behavior.

Bullying can no longer be passed off as a normal aspect of childhood or as behavior victims should be encouraged to ignore. The consequence of this type of faulty thinking has resulted in violence, including lethal violence, which has become far too commonplace in our nation's schools. Reports indicate students who have been repeatedly bullied and isolated felt compelled to respond violently toward those whom they perceived as their tormentors. Bullying is not exclusively limited to boys. Bullying among girls, while generally believed to be primarily verbal, has included physical violence as well. All students should be entitled to a safe and secure learning environment. Vulnerable populations frequently find their days in school unbearable. When the learning environment is not safe, learning cannot happen. Particular ethnic or racial groups, religious groups, those with either physical or educational disabilities, and students who may be or are thought to be gay, lesbian, bisexual, or questioning, find themselves at considerable risk of bullying by others.

SSWAA encourages the Congress and the Department of Education to address directly the bullying issue. Any bill or department regulation aimed at addressing the issue of bullying must include specific language related to harassment regarding sexual orientation, either real or perceived. This is one of the more frequent complaints of students who are bullied. SSWAA believes that all students must be provided with the skills, resources, and support of caring and courageous peers and adults to prevent bullying. In addition, students need to have someone intervene on their behalf when bullying occurs. All members of the education community must work to stop this insidious form of violence, which without adequate response, may escalate to even more dangerous levels in our schools.

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Approved by the SSWAA Board of Directors on July 19, 2003
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