



HARMONY CHILDCARE CENTRE

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

PURPOSE

This policy ensures consistent application of strategies related to the prevention and intervention of bullying.

APPLIES TO

This policy applies to all forms of bullying whether it is child to child, adult to child, or adult to adult.

DEFINITION

Bullying is a form of aggression where there is an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and victim. It is characterized by repeated and methodical harassment or attacks on others. It can be perpetrated by individuals or groups. Key elements of bullying are power imbalance, the intent to harm and pleasure in the distress of the victim. The incidents usually occur repeatedly over a period of time.

Bullying behaviours include, but are not limited to:

1. Physical violence such as hitting, punching, pushing, shoving
2. Verbal taunts, name-calling and insults
3. Threats and intimidation
4. Extortion or stealing of money and possessions
5. Social bullying such as spreading rumours resulting in exclusion from the peer group
6. Use of communication technologies such as social networking or text messages to harass or intimidate. Also referred to as cyber bullying.
7. Group or person hurts another person by taunting, teasing or discussing sensitive sexual issues, making homophobic comments or sexual jokes
8. Physical or verbal behaviour used to hurt another person because of their ethnic or cultural background.

PROCEDURES

Strategies for preventing bullying must be tailored to the developmental level of the child and the type of bullying behaviour. Staff must carefully observe child interactions because bullying often occurs without the knowledge of teachers and parents. Victims are reluctant to disclose bullying due to shame or fear that adults will not believe or help them. Victims may also fear further harassment from the perpetrator.

PROGRAMMING

- Organize environment to support good supervision of children at all times.
- Provide space for children to play with others or individually.
- Develop and post guidelines to support children's independence, positive communication, and conflict resolution. Develop guidelines with children.
Guidelines should:
 1. Support positive social experiences.
 2. Promote positive learning
 3. Provide time limits and sign-up sheets for popular activities
- Ensure that guidelines and time limits are consistently enforced

- Plan activities that support team work, positive communication and co-operation between children
- Plan activities to provide opportunities for all children to be a leader.
- Ensure staff role model positive communication
- Use de-escalation strategies

SUPERVISION

Ensure children are supervised at all times. Staff supervision is critical. A child should never be bullied in our care here at Harmony. If you suspect a child is being bullied, talk to the victim. Take their response seriously. Be responsive and let them know that you will help.

COMMUNICATION

- Encourage social skills and promote co-operative interactions
- Model positive interactions and approaches to conflict resolution
- Report and record all instances of bullying
- Speak with the Head Teacher and/or your Supervisor if you suspect bullying
- Follow up with the victim's parents. Express your concern and discuss your plan of action
- Identify the perpetrator(s) and advise staff and supervisor to monitor them closely
- Follow up with the perpetrator(s) parents and discuss plan of action and possible consequences.

INTERVENTION

- Intervene immediately. Stop bullying behaviour as soon as you become aware of it.
- Talk to the child demonstrating inappropriate behaviours separately from the victim. If more than one child is involved in perpetrating the bullying talk to each child separately.
- Discuss the situation with the parents of the perpetrator and the victim as soon as possible. Handle the conversation with sensitivity.
- Establish consequences for bullying behaviour in collaboration with parents, staff and supervisor
 - Consequences can include the withdrawal of services if all attempts have been made to resolve bullying behaviours and they still persist
- Reassure the victim that all possible steps have been taken to prevent further incidents
- Develop a strategic plan that responds directly to the specific incident that occurred
- Contact City of Toronto's Resource Consultant / Educator for resources and information on bullying.

REPORTING AND DOCUMENTATION

Document all incidents and meetings involving staff or parents. Note who attended, the discussion that took place and any actions that were taken as a result of the discussion. Retain documentation in an appropriate file.

All situations involving bullying must be reported as an incident. If the situation has escalated, bullying can be reported as a serious occurrence. This is an S7 "Complaint made by or about a client." In each case, a plan to address the incident is put in place. Implementation of the plan is documented.

Approved by: *The Board of Directors*

Date Approved: *October 10, 2018*

Effective Date: *November 07, 2018 – copy provided at AGM, then posted on website*

Next Review Date: *reviewed/updated, as needed*