



**Umbrella Family and
Child Centres of Hamilton**

1.8 BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION POLICY

MANUAL	Child Care Centre Program Policy Manual
SECTION	1- Belonging
POLICY	1.8 Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy
LAST REVISED	June 19, 2024

RATIONALE

UFCC believes that everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect and to feel safe within the child care environment. Freedom from bullying enhances a sense of well-being and belonging for children, families and staff members. These values are embedded in our Program Statement and reflected in our day-to-day work. We believe that it is everyone's responsibility to stop bullying within the child care and school communities.

Bullying will not be tolerated at any UFCC program, during transitions to school, off-site activities or family events where engaging in bullying behaviour will have a negative impact on healthy relationships and the child care climate.

RESPONSIBILITY

All staff.

PROCEDURE

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined as aggressive and typically repeated behaviour by an individual where the behaviour is intended by the individual to have the effect of, or the individual ought to know that the behaviour would be likely to have the effect of:

1. Causing harm, fear, or distress to another child, including physical or social harm, harm to the child's reputation, harm to the individual's property;
2. Creating a negative environment at the centre(s) for another child; and,
3. The behaviour occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance between the children involved based on factors such as sex, strength, age, intelligence, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, gender identity, gender expression, race, disability or the receipt of special education or special needs supports

For the purposes of the definition, "bullying" behaviour includes the use of any physical, verbal, electronic written or any other means. Children and adults who bully are learning to use power and aggression to control and distress others.



Children and adults use power in many ways:

- Size, strength, intelligence, age
- Social status
- Economic status
- Knowledge of another person's vulnerability
- Membership in a dominant group

Children who are victimized become increasingly powerless and find themselves trapped in relationships in which they are being abused.

Types of Bullying Behaviours

Physical: may include but not be limited to, hitting, pushing, slapping, tripping, kicking, shoving, beating up, stealing, or damaging another person's property.

Verbal: name-calling, mocking, humiliating, teasing, threatening, racist comments, sexual harassment.

Social: rolling of the eyes, excluding others from the group, gossiping, spreading rumours or images, humiliating others, making hurtful comments verbally or electronically, and damaging another person's friendships or family relationships.

Electronic/Cyber including:

- Creating a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person
- Impersonating another person as the author of content or messages posted on the internet
- Communicating material electronically to more than one individual or posting material on a website that may be accessed by one or more individuals
- Use of any social or electronic media such as email, cell phones, text, internet, and web sites to threaten, harass, embarrass, socially exclude, or damage friendships or family relationships, or any other type of social bullying using electronic media

Racial: aggression, or repeatedly saying negative things, or repeated name calling directed to a person or persons or their family because of their race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, religious beliefs, or background.

Religious: aggression, exclusion, or negative comments directed to a person or persons or their family because of their religious beliefs, background, dress code or observances; repeatedly calling a person or persons names or making fun of their religious beliefs, background, dress code or observances.



Sexual: leaving a person or persons out, or treating them badly because of their gender, gender identity or gender expression, repeatedly making sexist or transphobic comments or jokes, or grabbing someone in a sexual way; repeatedly spreading sexual rumours about a person or persons or their family.

Sexual orientation: Repeatedly leaving a person or persons out or treating them badly because of their sexual orientation or of someone in their family; repeatedly making crude comments about a person or person's sexual behaviour, repeatedly calling a person or persons derogatory or inappropriate names regarding their sexual orientation.

Disability: Repeatedly excluding a person or persons or someone in their family or treating them badly because of a disability or need for special education or special needs supports; repeatedly making comments, or jokes to hurt a person or persons with a disability; mocking or teasing those who use assistive technology.

Staff, Child and Parental Responsibilities

Staff:

Along with the expectations set out in the *Rights and Expectations of Children, Families, and Staff* document, all staff are expected to individually and collaboratively work with Hamilton Wentworth District School Board staff to:

- Model caring, respectful interactions.
- Raise awareness of bullying behaviour and its long-term effects on all children.
- Recognize that creating a positive climate is key in the prevention of bullying behaviours in child care and schools.
- Develop and share a clear and developmentally appropriate definition of bullying behaviour based on the definition in this policy directive.
- Include bullying prevention as a regular item on staff meeting agendas.
- Provide support to new children and families to ensure that they understand expectations and routines.
- Provide developmentally appropriate leadership opportunities for all children.
- Encourage children and families to report bullying behaviours. Teach children the difference between tattling/ratting (getting someone into trouble) and telling (helping someone who is in trouble).
- Develop a safe and anonymous way for families and children to report bullying (e.g., drop box, contact phone number, website).
- Take every report of bullying seriously.
- Respond to all incidents of bullying, if it is safe to do so in their opinion, by labelling and intervening quickly to any bullying behaviour of which they are aware.
- Engage bystanders—teach skills needed to deal with bullying situations positively and safely.



- Work with children and families to resolve bullying issues in a timely and developmentally appropriate manner.
- Teach children pro-social behaviours and prompt and reinforce them throughout the child care and school day.
- Ensure the provision of intervention and support to assist children who engage in bullying behaviours to change their behaviour both within UFCC and the broader community.
- Communicate to families and older children that engaging in bullying conduct will be subject to a range of interventions which could include termination of services.
- Report incidents of bullying to the school Principal when a kindergarten or school aged is involved.

Children:

Along with the expectations set out in the *Rights and Expectations of Children, Families, and Staff* document, all children enrolled in UFCC programs are expected to:

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- Develop a developmentally appropriate awareness and understanding of bullying behaviour and its long-term effects.
- Realize that bullying behaviour is never acceptable.
- Report incidents of bullying whenever they see it.
- Engage in developmentally appropriate positive leadership opportunities.
- Provide support to new children who may be alone/friendless.
- Endeavour to disengage from being a bystander to bullying behaviours.
- Actively support UFCC's bullying prevention and intervention programs with the support of staff.
- Support a positive centre and school climate by working collaboratively with UFCC partners.

Parents and Families:

Along with the expectations set out in the *Rights and Expectations of Children, Families, and Staff* document, all parents and family members of children enrolled in UFCC Centres are expected to:

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- Report incidents of bullying behaviour whenever they see it.
- Raise their awareness of bullying behaviour whenever they see it.
- In partnership with UFCC staff, work to address and rectify incidents of bullying behaviour (whether they, their child or their family is a victim, person engaging in bullying or bystander to bullying incidents).
- Create awareness among their children that bullying is never acceptable.
- Endeavour to get appropriate social/emotional help for their child if necessary.
- Support UFCC's anti-bullying initiatives.



- Encourage their children to report incidents of bullying behaviour.
- Model caring and respectful interactions.
- Teach their children to be respectful and caring individuals.

Staff Response to Incidents That May Lead to Bullying

All UFCC employees must respond to any inappropriate and disrespectful behaviours by children or families including bullying that are likely to have a negative impact on the child care and school climate if it safe to do so in the employee's opinion.

Responding may include asking the child or family member to stop the behaviour, naming the behaviour and explaining why it is inappropriate or disrespectful.

Reporting of Bullying Incidents

All UFCC staff will report incidents of bullying to their supervisor. The supervisor will inform the UFCC Program Manager and if the incident involves a kindergarten or school aged child, the principal of the school. The purpose of this report is to ensure that the principal is aware of any activities taking place within the school and to help ensure a positive climate within both the child care and school programs.

Providing Notice to Parent/Guardians

The supervisor will inform both family and or parent/guardian of both the child/children and/or family members who may have been harmed by a specified activity and the child/children or family members who has engaged in the activity that resulted in harm. This conversation should be documented in the child's confidential file with a reference in the centre's daily journal.

The following information should be disclosed to parents of children who have been harmed:

- The nature of the activity that resulted in harm to the child.
- The nature of the harm to the child.
- Steps taken to protect the child's safety including any involvement of the school staff.
- Supports that will be provided for the child in response to the harm that resulted from the activity (e.g., a safe intervention plan).

* Name(s) and identifying information of the other child(ren) involved will not be shared.

The following information should be disclosed to parents/guardians of children who have engaged in bullying incidents:

- The nature of the activity that resulted in harm to the other child.
- The nature of harm to the other child.



- Follow-up plans to discourage future involvement in bullying incidents.
- Supports that are available to the child in response to their engagement in the activity (co-ordinated with the school when a school attender is involved).

* The name and identifying information about the other child(ren) will not be shared.

Adapted from the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy Directive (December 2012).

Policy Attachments: Accident/Incident Report Form, Rights and Expectations of Children, Families, and Staff Document