

What is “bullying”?

Bullying behavior is determined by the following:

- The intent to cause harm- an unwanted, aggressive behavior. A behavior that will cause emotional or physical harm, hurt or humiliation to another.
- An imbalance of power- Students who bully use their power to control or harm others. This power can be physical strength, age, access to personal information, or popularity. A power imbalance is also present when there are numerous bullies against lesser student(s).
- Repetition- Bullying behaviors typically happen more than once or **have the potential to happen more than once.**

Examples:

- Verbal: teasing, name calling, inappropriate sexual comments, taunting and threatening
- Social: Spreading rumors, excluding others on purpose, telling other students not to be friends with someone and embarrassing another in public
- Physical: Hitting, punching, kicking, shoving, spitting, pinching, pushing, tripping and taking someone's personal belongings.
- Cyber: Happens on an online platform (group chat, snapchat, facetime, gaming platforms) that threaten students safety.



How does Niagara Charter School handle bullying?

At any point that a student or parent believes bullying is occurring they can notify any school staff. This teacher or staff member will complete a DASA reporting form. This form will be provided to the DASA Coordinator, Dean Granto. Dean Granto will



investigate the situation, including interviewing students that were involved and/or witnessed the event. Dean Granto will then identify if the situation is considered bullying or if it is a conflict in which both cases will be handled first with Restorative Practices. A Restorative Practice's circle (meeting) may potentially be used in cases when the target feels comfortable meeting with their bully.

During this circle, the target and the offender have a chance to explain their actions and feelings while also identifying how to move on in a positive manner while in a safe space. Oftentimes the Restorative Circle may involve additional support such as Mr. Curren (School Counselor).

After this process, both students will work one-on-one with Dean Granto to create an action plan to prevent a future occurrence. Dean Grnato will also continue to check in with these students as well as make other teachers aware. All parties' parent/guardian will be contacted following an incident. If an incident warrants a disciplinary consequence, the Dean Granto, will contact the student(s) parent/guardian regarding this.



What is DASA?

DASA stands for Dignity for All Students Act. This is a New York State Department of Education act created for the prevention and intervention of student discrimination, harassment and bullying. If a reported behavior is found to be bullying, the school is mandated to report to the state department of education of this occurrence and DASA forms used throughout the investigation will remain on file within the school.

What are we doing for prevention?

Niagara Charter School is constantly working collectively to continue to create and maintain a positive school climate that will prevent bullying. We do this through PRIDE spotlight, using the habits of scholarship in our everyday lessons, providing informative and interactive kindness lessons in all classrooms, Having conversations around kindness and anti-bullying in morning crew, engaging in anti-bullying activities during National Bullying Prevention Month as well as throughout the year, and simply by creating lasting and positive relationships with our students. Please remember we are here first to prevent this behavior, however; in the case that bullying occurs we will make it our priority to support all students involved. Please encourage your child to notify school teachers/staff if they believe they are being bullied.

