

Kentucky Bullying Prevention

While October is National Bullying Prevention Month, this information can be used year-round to support students and to address bullying. The [Kentucky School Report Card](#), released in October of 2023 (data from 2023-24 has not yet been publicly released), shows there were 18,909 behavior events in the 2022-2023 school year classified as harassment or bullying. According to the [2021 Kentucky Incentives for Prevention](#) (KIP) survey, 26% of the students who completed the survey reported being the victim of bullying within the past 12 months.

Bullying is a major issue in schools, where [one in five students now report experiencing bullying behavior at school](#). Students may be bullied for their physical appearance, race/ethnicity, gender, disability, religion or sexual orientation, among other reasons.

The good news is that [research indicates that strong bullying prevention programs can help reduce bullying at school](#). These programs can help potential bullies recognize and stop their own behavior. They can also empower victims, giving them the support they need in the face of bullying. Schools implementing Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) will find it to be an effective framework for preventing and reducing bullying behavior in schools. The strategies listed here come from the resource [Reducing the Effectiveness of Bullying Behavior in Schools](#).

Kentucky's Definition of Bullying

[KRS 158.148](#) defines bullying as, “any unwanted verbal, physical, or social behavior among students that involves a real or perceived power imbalance and is repeated or has the potential to be repeated:

1. That occurs on school premises, on school-sponsored transportation, or at a school-sponsored event; or
2. That disrupts the education process.”

Research-supported bullying prevention is extremely important as victims and perpetrators of bullying are more likely to have lower academic achievement, lower attendance and be more likely to drop out of schoolⁱ. The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) provides free training on the evidence-based [Olweus Bullying Prevention Program](#). For more information, please contact [Blake Konny](#) (502-564-4772) at KDE.

Resources for schools and teachers

- [This ready-to-go flyer from the National Bullying Prevention Center](#) can be used by schools to provide information and resources to families.
- [PACER's Color Our Virtual World](#) – social media banners and badges to show support of Bullying Prevention
- [Teaching Tolerance Classroom Resources](#)
- [StopBullying.gov](#) provides information from various government agencies on [what bullying is](#), [what cyberbullying is](#), [who is at risk](#), and how you can [prevent](#) and [respond to bullying](#).

ⁱ Berthold, K. A., & Hoover, J. H. (2000). Correlates of bullying and victimization among intermediate students in the Midwestern USA. *School Psychology International*, 21(1), 65-78.

Neary, A., & Joseph, S. (1994). Peer victimization and its relationship to self-concept and depression among schoolgirls. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 16(1), 183-186.