



Children's Home Association of Illinois

2130 Knoxville Ave.
Peoria, IL 61603
(309) 685-1047
CHAIL.org

Academy for Autism Students

Prevention of and Response to Bullying and Other Aggressive Behaviors

Bullying (as defined below) diminishes a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Such conduct interferes with a student's educational environment, safety, and academic performance. Preventing students from engaging in these aggressive and disruptive behaviors and providing all students equal access to a safe, non-hostile learning environment are important Academy for Autism goals.

Students are expected to act respectfully toward their peers and to avoid bullying and aggressive behaviors in their interactions with other students. Academy for Autism prohibits and will not tolerate aggressive student behavior, including bullying conduct of any type or on any basis, as defined below. Further, Academy for Autism will protect students against retaliation for reporting incidents of aggressive behavior and bullying and will take disciplinary action against any student who participates in such conduct.

Bullying includes *cyber-bullying* and means any physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or student's person or property;

1. Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or student's person or property;
2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or student's physical or mental health;
3. Substantially interfering with the student's or student's academic performance; or
4. Substantially interfering with the student's or student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Bullying may take various forms including, without limitation, one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. This list is not meant to be an exhaustive list.

Aggressive conduct toward other students that is not severe or pervasive shall not be deemed as bullying but may constitute gross disobedience or misconduct leading to discipline.

Cyber-bullying means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photo-electronic system or photo-optical system, including without limitation, electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. *Cyber-bullying* includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects listed in the definition of *bullying*. *Cyberbullying* also includes the distribution by electronic means of communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of *bullying*.



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Restorative measures mean a continuum of school-based measures, such as suspensions and expulsions, that: (i) are adapted to the particular needs of the school and community, (ii) contribute to maintaining school safety, (iii) protect the integrity of a positive and productive learning climate, (iv) teach students the personal and interpersonal skills they will need to be successful in school and society, (v) serve to build and restore relationships among students, families, schools and communities and (vi) reduce the likelihood of future disruption by balancing accountability with an understanding of students' behavioral health needs in order to keep students in school.

School personnel means persons employed by Academy for Autism or who volunteer at Academy for Autism including, without limitation, school administrators, teachers, school therapists, teacher assistants, 1:1 aides, crisis staff, school nurses, cafeteria workers, and custodians.

In addition, bullying is prohibited on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, military status, unfavorable discharge status from the military service, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender-related identity or expression, ancestry, age, religion, physical or mental disability or marital status; association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics; or any other distinguishing characteristic.

Bullying is **prohibited** in each of the following situations:

1. During any school-sponsored education program or activity
2. While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities
3. Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment
4. Through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a non-school-related location, activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by Academy for Autism if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school. This paragraph (item #4) applies only in cases in which a school administrator or teacher receives a report that bullying through this means has occurred. It does not require Academy for Autism to monitor any non-school-related activity, function, or program.

Bullying Prevention and Response Plan

Academy for Autism administration or designee shall develop and maintain a bullying prevention and response plan that advances Academy for Autism's goal of providing all students with a safe learning environment free of bullying and harassment. This plan must be consistent with the requirements listed below, which reflect the required policy components in 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(b).

1. Bullying is contrary to State law and the policy of Academy for Autism. However, nothing in the bullying prevention and response plan is intended to infringe upon any right to exercise free expression or the free exercise of religion or religiously based views protected under the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution or under Section 3 of Article I of the Illinois Constitution.
2. Making a Report or Complaint: Students are encouraged to immediately report bullying. A report may be made orally or in writing to Academy for Autism's Administration or any staff member with whom the student



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is comfortable speaking. Anyone, including staff members, parents/guardians, who have information about actual or threatened bullying is encouraged to report it to Academy for Autism's administration or any staff member. Anonymous reports are also accepted. District Leadership will insert and update into this policy the names, office addresses, and contact information for the District's Non-Discrimination Coordinator and Complaint Manager.

Non-Discrimination Coordinator

Mr. Scurry Miller, Chief Executive Officer

2130 N. Knoxville Avenue
Peoria, IL 61603
smiller@chail.org
309-687-7218

Complaint Manager

Mrs. Michelle Taylor, VP of Education
404 NE Madison Ave.
Peoria IL, 61603
mtaylor@chail.org
309-687-7236

3. Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, Academy for Autism's Administration or designee shall promptly inform the parents or guardians of all students involved in the alleged incident of bullying within 24 hours after the Academy for Autism's administration is made aware of the student's involvement in the incident and discussing, as appropriate, the availability of social work services, counseling, school psychological services, other interventions, and restorative measures. Academy for Autism shall make diligent efforts to notify a parent or legal guardian, utilizing all contact information the school has available or that can be reasonably obtained by the school within the 24-hour period.
4. Academy for Autism's Administration or designee shall promptly investigate and address reports of bullying by, among other things:
 - a). Making all reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within **10 school days** after the date the report of a bullying incident was received and taking into consideration additional relevant information received during the course of the investigation about the reported bullying incident.
 - b). Involving appropriate school support personnel and other staff persons with knowledge, experience and training on bullying prevention, as deemed appropriate, in the investigation process.
 - c). Notifying the Vice President of Education as soon as possible after the report is received.
 - d). Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, providing parents/guardians of the students who are parties to the investigation information about the investigation and an opportunity to meet with Vice President of Education to discuss the investigation, the findings of the investigations and the actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying.
5. Academy for Autism shall use interventions to address bullying that may include, but are not limited to, social-emotional skill building, counseling, and community-based services.
A reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying **is prohibited**. A student's act of reprisal or retaliation will be met with disciplinary consequences and appropriate remedial actions consistent with this policy.



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6. A student will not be punished for reporting bullying or supplying information, even if the investigation concludes that no bullying occurred. However, knowingly making a false accusation or providing knowingly false information will be met with disciplinary consequences and appropriate remedial actions.

7. Academy for Autism's bullying policy and procedures align with The Children's Home Association of Illinois's Client Rights and Staff Rights.

8. The bullying prevention and response plan must be based on the engagement of a range of school stakeholders including students and parents/guardians.

9. This policy shall be included in the student handbook; and, where applicable, posted where other policies, rules, and standards of conduct are currently posted. The policy also must be distributed annually to parents/guardians, students, and school personnel, including new employees when hired.

10. Academy for Autism's Administration shall review and re-evaluate this policy to make necessary and appropriate revisions every two years and file its updated policy with the Illinois State Board of Education. Academy for Autism's administration shall evaluate and assess this policy's outcomes and effectiveness. This process shall include, without limitation:

- a. The frequency of victimization;
- b. Student, staff, and family observations of safety at a school;
- c. Identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs;
- d. The types of bullying utilized; and
- e. Bystander intervention or participation.

The evaluation process is consistent with the policies of Academy for Autism and may include the use of relevant data and information that Academy for Autism already collects for other purposes. Academy for Autism policy all instances of bullying, as well as all threats, suggestions, or instances of self-harm determined to be the result of bullying, are to be reported to the parents or legal guardians of those involved under the guidelines provided. Academy for Autism shall post the information developed as a result of the policy evaluation on Academy for Autism's publicly accessible internet website, or if a publicly accessible internet website is not available, the information must be provided to school administrators, referral districts, school personnel, parents/guardians and students.

LEGAL REF: 405ILCS49/, Children's Mental Health Act
105 ILCS 5/10-20.14, 5/24-24 and 5/27-23.7
23Ill. Admin. Code 1.240 and 1.280

ADOPTED: _____

Reviewed 02.17.2025 MT