

KIDSPEACE POLICY

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Title: Bullying	Chapter: Program Support Services
Policy Number: PAR.5204	Subsection: Educational Services
Initiating Authority: Gina Delluva, Director of Education	Supersedes:
Origination Date: February 17, 2020	Effective Date: December 21, 2021
Approving Authority: Bob Scheffler, Vice President PA Inpatient and Residential Services	

I. POLICY STATEMENT

KidsPeace is committed to each student’s success in learning within a caring, responsive, and safe environment that is free of discrimination, violence, and bullying. Our program works to ensure that all students have the opportunity and support to develop to their fullest potential. It is KidsPeace’s belief that bullying interferes with the learning process and may present an obstacle to the academic and social/emotional development of students. The purpose of this policy is to prohibit bullying in the milieu.

Under 1949 Act 14 of the PA General Assembly, Section 1302-A established in the Department of Education an Office for Safe Schools. Section 1302 A (7) implements the Development and implementation of research-based violence prevention programs that address risk factors to reduce incidents of problem behaviors among students including, but not limited to, bullying. This policy stipulates that the bullying Policy must be reviewed/updated every three years, including School Board approval. This is part of the mandatory reporting required for the Pennsylvania Department of Education’s Office for Safe Schools.

It is the policy of the state of Pennsylvania and the KidsPeace Governing Board that bullying behaviors are not acceptable within all our Pennsylvania programs. This policy stands to reinforce the belief that bullying is contrary to state law and KidsPeace policy.

Under 105 ILCS 5/27 – 23.7, all schools are required to develop and implement policies concerning bullying prevention.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to create a system to ensure KidsPeace provides a safe school environment for our clients/students. The KidsPeace Model of Care is based upon an established set of Core Beliefs, including Dignity, Safety, Relationships & Belonging, Empowerment, Character, and Transformation

III. SCOPE

KidsPeace Pennsylvania Lehigh Valley Schools for Illinois clients only.

IV. GENERAL

This policy will cover acts of bullying as defined by the PA General Assembly. *1

Bullying, as defined in 24 PA. Stat. 13-1303.1-A (2008)

Bullying shall mean an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act or series of acts:

1. Directed at another student or students
2. Which occurs in a school setting;
3. That is severe, persistent, or pervasive; and
4. That has the effect of doing any of the following:

- a. Substantially interfering with a student's education;
 - b. Creating a threatening environment: or
 - c. Substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.
- School setting shall mean in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, or at any activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by the school.

V. POLICY

- A. Restrictions on bullying shall not be interpreted to infringe upon a student's right to engage in legally protected speech or conduct.
- B. It shall be a violation of this policy for any student to bully another student. KidsPeace shall not tolerate any acts of bullying on school grounds or at school-sponsored events. KidsPeace encourages reporting all perceived incidents of bullying or retaliation, regardless of the offenders identity or position.
- C. At KidsPeace safety is our greatest priority. We do everything in our power to ensure the safety of the clients in our care and our associates. Our teachers and associates have been trained to effectively intervene if bullying is witnessed in their presence or brought to their attention. (Workplace bullying is covered under Policy # HR.CORP.517)
- D. All staff and associates are trained in approved use of behavioral interventions that can be used in response to a challenging behavior. (KP Policy # ORG.1114) This included, but is not limited to, training on how to complete the Scorecard/Daily Note document. The Scorecard/Daily Note is an official KidsPeace document that must be completed daily for each client. Clients are rated on the skills of safety, respect, on-task, on-time and personal goal. Threatening others, including bullying behavior, is a conduct that would lead to a point not being earned. Complete rules can be found KP Policy# SOP.PA.R.15.
- E. Teachers and other associates (including, but not limited to, teacher aides, crisis interventionists, secretaries, custodians, bus drivers, mental health technicians, etc.) who observe acts of bullying shall take reasonable steps to intervene to stop such conduct, unless intervention would threaten an associate's safety.
 - a. The nature of the intervention will vary depending upon the age of the student (both victim and aggressor), the severity of the bullying and the student's involvement in prior acts of bullying. The purpose of the intervention is to take prompt remedial steps to ensure observed acts of bullying cease and to teach students that bullying is not acceptable behavior.
 - b. A crisis team is available to assist/step in, to diffuse a situation threatening the safety of others.
- F. Each student shall be responsible to respect the rights of his/her fellow students and to ensure an atmosphere free from all forms of bullying. Students are required to report instances of bullying that occur on school grounds and/or at school-sponsored events. Such reports should be made directly to the student's teacher, clinician, education leadership or a counselor. Students are able to speak with an associate of their choosing, when available, to report acts of bullying. The student may also choose to fill out a confidential grievance form. This form may be turned in to the student's teacher, clinician, education leadership or a counselor.
 1. Reports from outside the KidsPeace campus can be made via telephone at 610-799-8000 or toll free at 800-25 PEACE.
 2. Grievances that cannot be handled in the above manner, can be directed to Jill Schaller, Executive Director of PA Residential and Education. Jill.Schaller@kidspeace.org or Gina Delluva, Director of Education, Gina.Delluva@kidspeace.org
- G. Anyone who falsely accuses others of bullying will face appropriate consequences in accordance of the KidsPeace Model of Care and Behavioral Intervention policy.
- H. All allegations of violations of the bully policy are fully investigated, if these allegations are validated, information is sent to the appropriate supervisor and action is taken to safeguard the client's safety and rights. If the alleged behavior is found to meet the definition of bullying, written documentation through the grievance procedure of the complaint/incident must be

submitted to the education leadership. The incident review must be completed within 10 school days. These investigations will align with all related board policies governing appropriate behaviors and the KidsPeace Model of Care.

- I. Consistent with federal and state HIPAA guidelines, parents/guardians of all students involved in the alleged incident of bullying will be informed and, as appropriate, will be informed of availability of counseling, clinical support, school and other interventions.
- J. This anti-bullying policy will be reviewed with students at least once every school year.
- K. Associates shall receive training on the Policy at least once every school year, including, but not limited to during new hire training.
- L. KidsPeace Education Department shall review and re-evaluate this policy every two (2) years and be updated to reflect any necessary and appropriate revisions. Acceptable documentation to satisfy the re-evaluated policy submission includes one of the following, as applicable:
 - a. An updated version of the policy with the amendment/modification date included in the reference portion of the policy
 - b. If no revisions are deemed necessary, a copy of board minutes, or a signed statement from the board president indicating that the policy was re-evaluated and no changes were deemed to be necessary.

VI. NOTIFICATION AND POSTING

This policy will be posted, where applicable, where other policies rules or standards of conduct are posted in the school, on KidsWeb, and on the KidsPeace website.

The policy will be distributed annually to parents, guardians, students, and school personnel, including new employees during new hire training, and students upon admission to the program.

*1 **Bullying**, as defined in 105 ILC 5/27 – 23.7, including “cyberbullying” as any severe or pervasive 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:

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