**Elementary Bullying Prevention Information**

This section provides a program outline specific to bullying prevention targeted for elementary schools. An overview of developmental characteristics of elementary students is included to assist with the development of age-appropriate instruction. The outline offers a three-tiered approach when responding to the requirements of P.L. 285-2013: a) tier one minimally meets the requirements of the law, b) tier two builds upon minimum requirements to offer additional program components that contribute to increased program effectiveness, and c) tier three contains all elements of tiers one and two. Additionally, tier three provides strategies to help schools build a data-driven comprehensive bullying prevention and intervention program. This data-driven programming provides administrators with the information necessary for informed decision-making and continual program improvement that best meets the needs of their students. Resources to aid in a school’s program development are also offered. Please use these resources as you find appropriate.

**Developmentally Appropriate Instruction**

Anti-Bullying education should be delivered in a developmentally appropriate way.

For all developmental levels, the following core components should be considered:

**Knowledge about child development and learning**

Having knowledge of general characteristics at each age and stage of early development is crucial. This knowledge, based on research, helps us decide which experiences are best for children’s learning and development.

**Knowledge and skills in individualized instruction**

It is important that we have an understanding of the individual characteristics, strengths, and challenges of the students in our classrooms. By continually observing children’s play and interaction with the physical environment and others, we learn about each child’s interests, abilities, and developmental progress so we may customize our instruction delivery and interventions.

**Knowledge and skills in culturally appropriate instruction**

Educators need to acknowledge and address cultural differences among their student population. We should make an effort to get to know the children’s families and learn about the values, expectations, and factors that shape their lives at home and in their communities and allow these values to permeate within learning. This background information helps us provide meaningful, relevant, and respectful learning experiences for each child and family.

**The following pages provide an overview of developmental characteristics specific to elementary aged students.**

**Elementary Developmental Characteristics**

**Grades K-1**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Physical**   * Developing hand/eye coordination * Enjoy small group cooperative play/games * May require rest after high energy play * Large motor skills developmentally rapidly, fine motor skills develop more slowly | **Cognitive**   * Understand language better than they speak * Eager to learn * Ask many questions * Enjoy rule-based games * Increasingly able to use mental representation and symbols, such as words, to "figure things out." However, the child's ideas about the world are often illogical and much limited by the inability to understand other points of view. * Primarily concrete in thinking | **Social/Relational**   * Eager to receive praise * Enjoy dramatic play * Enjoy working with older children * Prefer play in small groups * Like to be given responsibilities they can be successful at * Learning cooperative play; may at times display selfish behavior * Enjoy dramatic and imaginative play |

**Grades 2-3**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Physical**   * Improved gross and fine motor skills * Possess a high activity level * Enjoy game based instruction | **Cognitive**   * Like to talk, uses language to express feelings/storytelling * Problem-solving capabilities * Better able to understand differences of opinion * Developing ability to understand logical principles | **Social/Relational**   * Enjoy group belongingness * Like taking on responsibility * Rigid sense of right and wrong * Need help accepting peers that are left out of group * Like to have a best friend |

**Grades 4-6**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Physical**   * Girls may begin early signs of puberty and have rapid growth spurt * May be careless about personal hygiene * Posses a high activity level * Motor skills are developed * Enjoy physical activities that require a level of mastery | **Cognitive**   * Alert and poised; beginning to argue logically * Asks questions and expect thoughtful answers * Can often understand other’s perspectives * Developing personal talents and hobbies * Beginning to understand jokes by infusing sarcasm | **Social/Relational**   * Highly selective in friendships; may have one best friend; important to be "in" with the gang; may develop hero worship * Enjoy smaller peer-dominated groups * Anxiety associated with “growing up” * Strong peer loyalty * Beginning to be self-conscious of talents/abilities * Desire for individuality and independence |