



The Chicago  
Lighthouse

**Children's Development Center  
Anti-Bullying Policy**

### **Purpose**

Bullying, intimidation, and harassment diminish a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Preventing students from engaging in these disruptive behaviors and providing all students equal access to a safe, non-hostile learning environment is imperative to The Chicago Lighthouse Children's Development Center (CDC). It is the goal of the CDC to create a learning environment in which all students are not only safe, but have the freedom to learn, explore, develop and embrace their individuality, and grow into well-rounded, caring citizens.

This Policy is based on the engagement of a range of school stakeholders, including students and parents/guardians. The Chicago Lighthouse School Administrator or its designee will re-evaluate this Policy every two (2) years based on an assessment of its outcomes and effectiveness, including, but not limited to, factors such as the frequency of victimization; student, staff and family observations of safety at school; identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs; the types of bullying utilized; and bystander intervention or participation. The information developed will be made available on the Chicago Lighthouse Children's Development Center website.

### **Community Commitments**

The Chicago Lighthouse Children's Development Center students, families, and staff commit to uphold the following community commitments as we continually work to support and uplift our educational community.

- **We commit to creating and sustaining an environment that embraces and celebrates differences**
- **We commit to stand for the fair treatment of all within our school community**
- **We commit to speaking out and reporting bullying, harassment, discrimination and any forms of unfair treatment that we witness**



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**Scope**

Bullying is contrary to Illinois law and this Policy is consistent with the Illinois School Code. This Policy protects Chicago Lighthouse students against bullying and harassment on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, physical or mental disability, military status, sexual orientation, gender-related identity or expression, unfavorable discharge from military service, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic.

The Chicago Lighthouse recognizes the particular vulnerability of students with actual or perceived disabilities and those who identify as or are perceived to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Nothing in this Policy is intended to infringe upon any expression protected by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution or Section 3 of Article I of the Illinois Constitution.

**Bullying is prohibited:**

During any school-sponsored or school-sanctioned program or activity

In school, on school property, on school buses or other Home District -provided transportation relative to the Chicago Lighthouse.

Through the transmission of information from a Chicago Lighthouse computer, computer network, or other electronic school equipment.

When communicated through any electronic technology or personal electronic device while on school property, on school buses or other School provided transportation, at bus stops, and at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities

When it is conveyed that a threat will be carried out in a school setting, including threats made outside school hours with intent to carry them out during any school-related or sponsored



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program or activity or on Home School District and/or Chicago Lighthouse-provided transportation

When it is a student behavior that occurs off campus that disrupts any student's education

**Definitions**

**"Bullying"**

means any severe or pervasive (repeated over time) 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 one or more of the following effects:

- (1) placing the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property;
- (2) causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health;
- (3) substantially interfering with the student's academic performance; or
- (4) substantially interfering with the 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 meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

Bullying behaviors may also qualify as other inappropriate behaviors. When deciding whether inappropriate behavior constitutes bullying, administrators should consider the student's intent, the frequency or recurrence of the inappropriate behavior, and whether there are power imbalances between the students involved. While bullying is often characterized by repeated acts, sometimes a single incident constitutes bullying depending on the student's intent and power imbalances.

**"Cyberbullying"**

means using information and communication technologies to bully. This definition includes cyberbullying by means of technology that is not owned, leased, or used by the school district when an administrator or teacher receives a report that bullying through this means has



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occurred. This Policy does not require a district or school to staff or monitor any non-school-related activity, function, or program.

**"Retaliation"**

means any form of intimidation, reprisal including but not limited to the submission of knowingly false bullying allegations, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying. Retaliation is prohibited and will result in the imposition of appropriate interventions/consequences according to this Policy and the SCC.

**"Peer Conflict"**

means disagreements and oppositional interactions that are situational, immediate and developmentally appropriate. When school employees are aware of peer conflict, they are expected to guide students in developing new skills in social competency, learning personal boundaries and peaceably resolving conflict, and to model appropriate social interactions. These interventions are designed to prevent Peer Conflict from escalating to Bullying.

**"Restorative Measures"**

means a continuum of school-based alternatives to exclusionary discipline that are adapted to the particular needs of the school and community, contribute to maintaining school safety, protect the integrity of a positive and productive learning climate, teach students the personal and interpersonal skills they will need to be successful in school and society, serve to build and restore relationships among students, families, schools, and communities, and reduce the likelihood of future disruption by balancing accountability with an understanding of students' behavioral health needs.

**Intervening to Address Bullying**

Responsibilities of Chicago Lighthouse Children's Development Center Employees and Contractors:



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All Chicago Lighthouse Children's Development Center (CDC) employees and contractors, including security officers, lunchroom staff, and bus drivers, who witness incidents of bullying or school violence or who possess reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that a person is a target of bullying, must:

- Intervene immediately in a manner that is appropriate to the context and ensures the safety of all people involved;
- Report the incident of bullying or retaliation to the Principal/Designee as soon as practicable, but within 24 hours.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of the incident and in implementing any safety plan established by the Principal/Designee.

### **Responsibilities of Students, Parents and Guardians**

No student who witnesses bullying may stand by or participate in the bullying, but must notify an adult at school and an adult at home as quickly as practicable. Any parent or guardian who witnesses or is notified of bullying has an obligation to advise the Principal/Designee as quickly as practicable. Reports can be made to any Chicago Lighthouse employee or contractor in person, by completing Attachment A and submitting it to the Principal/Designee. Anonymous reports will be accepted by the Principal/Designee. No disciplinary action will be taken on the sole basis of an anonymous report.

### **Investigation**

- The Principal shall select a designee, knowledgeable about bullying prevention and intervention, to perform the investigation.
- Investigation of a bullying incident shall be initiated within five school days of receipt of a report and completed within 10 school days, unless the Principal grants in writing an additional 5-day extension due to extenuating circumstances. The Principal/ Designee shall document the extension in the investigation report and shall notify the parties involved.
- The investigation shall include:



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- Identifying the perpetrator(s), target(s) and bystander(s), as well as any adult who witnessed the incident or may have reliable information about it.
- Conducting an individual interview in a private setting with the alleged perpetrator and target. The alleged perpetrator and target should never be interviewed together or in public. Individual interviews shall also be conducted in private with student and adult bystanders.
- Determining how often the conduct occurred, any past incident or continuing pattern of behavior, and whether the target's education was affected.
- Assessing the individual and school-wide effects of the incident relating to safety, and assigning school staff to create and implement a safety plan that will restore a sense of safety for the target and other students who have been impacted.
- Comprehensively documenting the details of the investigation and when appropriate, preparing a Misconduct Report identifying his/her recommendation for individual consequences..

**Notification**

On the same day the investigation is initiated, the Principal/Designee shall report to the parent/legal guardian of all involved students, via telephone, personal conference and/or in writing, the occurrence of any alleged incident of bullying, and shall document these notifications in an Incident Report. When the investigation is complete, the Principal/Designee shall notify the parents/legal guardians of all students involved of the outcome of the investigation. Parents/legal guardians of the students who are parties to the investigation may request a personal conference with the Principal/Designee to discuss the investigation, the findings of the investigation, the actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying, and any resources available in or outside the school to help the students address the underlying reasons for the bullying (see "Referrals" section below).

If the investigation results in the imposition of consequences, the Principal/Designee may advise the parent/legal guardian of students other than the perpetrator that the Bullying Policy was followed and that consequences according to the investigation may be enacted. S/he may not advise them of the specific consequence imposed, as that would violate the confidentiality of school-record information required by law.

When communicating incidents of bullying to the target's parent/guardian, the Principal/Designee should consider whether the student may want to keep certain information confidential. For example, if a student is bullied after coming out as gay, the Principal/Designee



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shall not disclose the student's sexual orientation to the parent/guardian without the student's permission, unless there is a legitimate, school-related reason for doing so.

If the target is a student with a disability, the school shall convene the IEP Team to determine whether additional or different special education or related services are needed to address the student's individual needs and revise the IEP accordingly. For example, if the student's disability affects social skill development or makes the student vulnerable to bullying, the Principal/Designee shall ask the student's IEP Team to consider whether the IEP should include provisions to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying.

If the student who engaged in bullying behavior is a student with a disability, the school shall convene the IEP Team to determine if additional supports and services are needed to address the inappropriate behavior and consider examining the environment in which the bullying occurred to determine if changes to the environment are warranted. For example, the IEP Team should consider a behavior intervention plan for the student or review a current behavior intervention plan and revise if necessary. The Principal/Designee shall comply with the Procedural Safeguards for Discipline of Students with Disabilities/Impairments when considering interventions and consequences for students with disabilities.

**Assigning Interventions and/or Consequences**

Many Peer Conflicts can be resolved immediately and do not require reporting or creation of a Misconduct or Incident Report. If, however, a conflict is ongoing and meets the definition of bullying, the investigation procedures in this Policy must be followed.

Schools must respond to bullying in a manner tailored to the individual incident, considering the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the student, and the student's history of problem behaviors and performance. Schools should avoid using punitive discipline (detention, suspensions, and expulsions) if any other method or consequence can be used with fidelity school-wide prevention practices for student misconduct.

When an investigation determines that bullying occurred, the Principal/Designee shall explain the consequences in a non-hostile manner, and shall impose any consequence immediately and consistently. The Principal/Designee shall keep communicating and working with all parties involved until the situation is resolved. Some key indicators of resolution include:

- The perpetrator is no longer bullying and is interacting civilly with the target.
- The target reports feeling safe and is interacting civilly with the perpetrator.



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- School staff notice an increase in positive behavior and social-emotional competency in the perpetrator and/or the target.
- School staff notice a more positive climate in the areas where bullying incidents were high.

#### **What Not To Do**

- Solicit an apology from the perpetrator to the target, use peace circles, victim/offender conferences, or any form of mediation that puts the perpetrator and target in contact with one another in an immediate attempt to resolve the bullying. Restorative measures may be helpful to repair relationships between the perpetrator and target, but only if used after other interventions have balanced the power differential between the perpetrator and target.
- Dismiss bullying as typical student behavior or assume it is not serious.

#### **Referrals**

Interventions with bullies should not focus on feelings, but changing thinking. The Principal/Designee may refer students who bully to positive-behavior small-group interventions (for anger management, trauma or social skills), social work, counseling or school psychological services within the school, if necessary, to reinforce the behavioral expectation they violated and increase their social-emotional competency.

The targets of bullying need protection from bullies, but may also need support and help in changing their own behavior. The Principal/Designee shall ask a school mental health professional to work with these students in potential individual or group therapy where they can openly express their feelings about their bullying experience, social-skills training and/or groups where they can practice assertiveness and coping mechanisms, or social work, counseling or school psychological services available within the school.

#### **Appeal**

Any party who is not satisfied may request an internal Chicago Lighthouse appeal within 15 calendar days of notification of the Principal's decision. The Executive Director shall render a final determination regarding such in a timely fashion. The Executive Director may return the incident to the Principal or their designees for further investigation or reconsideration of the consequence(s), direct the imposition of other consequence(s), or deny the appeal.





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**Consequences for Chicago Lighthouse Employees and Contractors**

When it is determined that an employee or contractor was aware that bullying was taking place but failed to report it, the employee/contractor will be considered to have violated this Policy. The Principal shall consider employee discipline for such violations, making reference to any applicable avenue including performance evaluation or disciplinary action up to and including possible loss of position and pay. Remedies for offending contractors should be imposed according to their Chicago Lighthouse Agency Contracts and their agency or personal contract may be repealed temporarily or permanently pending outcome of the investigation, by the Chicago Lighthouse Principal.

**Notice and Dissemination of Requirements**

Principals shall post this Anti-Bullying Policy in the school building as well as disseminating and presenting this Policy to school staff, students and parents as part of pre-school-year professional development and school year orientation and Policy and Procedure Packet.

**Training and Professional Development**

**Staff**

Professional development will be offered to build the skills of all Chicago Lighthouse Children's Development Center employees, contractors and volunteers to implement this Policy. The content of such professional development shall include, but not be limited to:

- Developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent incidents of bullying and to intervene immediately and effectively to stop them;
- Information about the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among a perpetrator, target, and witness to the bullying;
- Research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk, and any specific interventions that may be particularly effective for addressing bias-based bullying; and
- Information about Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying.



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**Student Internet Safety Education**

In accordance with the dictates of safety education for our students The Chicago Lighthouse School Programs shall incorporate into the school curriculum a component on General Safety including safety from bullying and Internet safety to be taught at least once each school year to all students. The Principal shall determine the scope and duration of this unit of instruction and topics covered. At a minimum, the unit of instruction shall address:

- Safety on the Internet;
- Appropriate behavior while online, on social networking Web sites, and in chat rooms
- Cyberbullying awareness and response.