

A Program for Our Entire Community

September 2, 2009

Dear Foster Families:

Today your child started their day with a kickoff event to celebrate the implementation of the **Building Foster Friends [BFF] Bullying Prevention Program** at Foster School. The school-wide celebration was followed by individual classroom meetings to address bullying prevention at our school. These meetings will occur weekly from 8:55-9:20 every Wednesday morning and are a part of our bullying prevention program. In addition to their weekly classroom meeting, students who stay for lunch will also meet briefly to discuss utilizing bullying prevention skills during lunch and recess. Included in this packet are copies of the information that we will be sharing school-wide with all of the children at developmentally appropriate levels.

The first form that you will see is a **Bullying Prevention Pledge**. We are asking each student and parent to sign and return to their classroom teacher (by this Friday, 9/4). This form will be replicated in a very large format and signed by all students. The faculty, staff and administration of Foster will also sign this large-sized pledge with the children. This Pledge will be a visual reminder that we are a school community supporting each other!

Another form that is included in this packet is **Foster's Rules Against Bullying**. A copy of these rules will be posted in each classroom and throughout Foster School as reminders of behavioral expectations/practices for use throughout the school day.

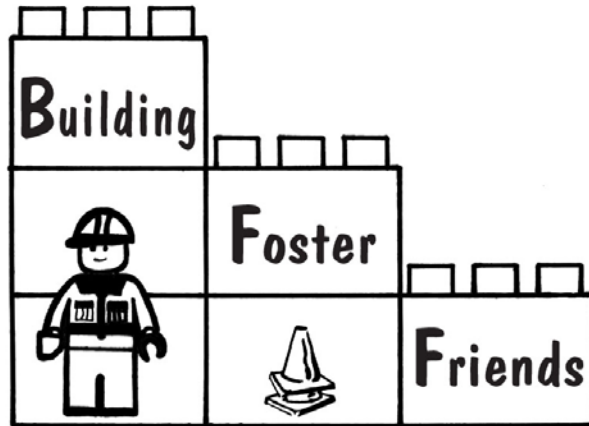
Please also find copies of the **Foster School Behavior Grid** as well as the **Foster School Bullying Notification** form. The chart outlines bullying behavior and consequences. The additional pages following the chart outline responsibilities related to bullying behavior for the children, staff members, principal and parents. Most importantly, this form is a reminder that to conquer bullying, we all need to work together to support the children in accepting responsibility for their bullying behavior and developing stronger pro-social behaviors. You will notice that you may receive a phone call from your child to report his or her bullying behavior directly to you.

The **Think-About-It** form will be completed by students when their behavior does not align with Foster's School Rules Against Bullying or the behavioral expectations of all students. A staff member will support your child in completing this form and will discuss it with your child upon completion. The Think-About-It form asks the children to identify the behavior, what he/she was trying to accomplish, and how he/she will try to solve this problem in the future without hurting another child or themselves. Upon completion, the Think-About-It form may be sent home for a signature.

Finally, please find a copy of the **Mt. Lebanon School District Policy** regarding bullying.

Thank you for supporting Foster in conquering bullying!

Foster School's Bullying Prevention Pledge



A Program for our Entire Community

I PLEDGE:

1. I will not bully anyone.
2. I will help anyone who is bullied.
3. I will include anyone who is left out.
4. I will tell an adult when I see anyone being bullied.

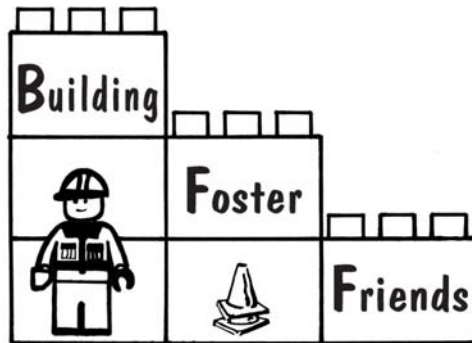
Name _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Homeroom Teacher: _____

(Please sign and return to school by Friday, September 4th!)

Foster's Rules Against Bullying



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1. We will not bully anyone.
2. We will help anyone who is bullied.
3. We will include anyone who is left out.
4. We will tell an adult when we see anyone being bullied.

Foster School Behavior Grid

Because bullying is defined as repeated behavior, begin to use this grid once a student has received two Foster School Bullying Notification Forms. That is, upon the third offense, follow the "first time" column below.

Behavior	First Time	Second Time	Third Time	
Verbal (name calling, or other behavior that would hurt others' feelings and make them feel bad about themselves. If incident rises to the threshold of verbal harassment (ethnic, racial, sexual) then proceed directly to "Third Time" column)	One lost lunch recess where student will complete and process a "Think About It" form Student to call parents	Two lost lunch recesses where student will complete and process a "Think About It" form Student to call parents	Three lost lunch recesses where student will complete and process a "Think About It" form Student to call parents	After the third time a student demonstrates bullying behavior in one school year, Foster's Principal, Faculty and parents develop an individual behavior plan
Physical (hitting, pushing, punching, slapping, kicking, grabbing, stealing)	One lost lunch recess where student will complete and process a "Think About It" form Student calls parents	Three lost lunch recesses where student will complete and process a "Think About It" form Student calls parents	Five lost lunch recesses where student will complete and process a "Think About It" form Student calls parents	

Relational (Intentional dirty looks, gossiping, starting or spreading rumors, humiliation, excluding others.)	One lost lunch recess where student will complete and process a "Think About It" form Student to call parents	Two lost lunch recesses where student will complete and process a "Think About It" form Student to call parents	Three lost lunch recesses where student will complete and process a "Think About It" form Student to call parents	
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Note: Students in grades K, 1 and 2 may receive additional warnings/prompts as these are teachable social moments and students will benefit from the directed instruction rather than the negative consequences.

Responsibilities of Faculty and Staff:

1. Anyone observing aggressive behavior or hearing about it from students will complete a Foster School Bullying Notification form.
2. The Principal or his/her delegate will investigate (if the behavior was reported by students and not seen by Faculty or Staff) and identify the appropriate consequence. The student and the Principal will call parents at that time.
3. The school counselor or other staff member will assist the child as needed to complete the Think-About-It Form while sitting out during lost lunch recess time.

Foster Elementary Discipline Procedures

Our strength as a school community is our ability to maintain positive relationships with our students and not to take their behaviors personally. We maintain good behavior best when we greet students, tell them specifically what they do right, and have clear, specific expectations in our classrooms, in the lunchroom and during recess. We maintain good relationships with parents by telling them what their children are doing right on a regular basis. In dealing with misbehavior, the most important strategy is a mental one - remembering that a student's misbehavior or refusal to do schoolwork is not about us. That focus helps us to discipline with a positive tone and without anger or frustration.

Student misbehavior falls into six categories. Each type of behavior requires a different response.

- 1.) **Low level peer problems:** mutual friendship conflicts not involving name-calling, exclusion, rumors, threats and hitting. These behaviors are best responded to with a suggestion of a few ways to resolve the problem. For example: play with someone else, tell the person that you want to be their friend, meet with the teacher/counselor together.
- 2.) **Quiet non-disruptive refusal to do schoolwork:** Notify parents after two incidents. Set up a conference to include parents in the process of supporting their student at school.
- 3.) **Risky or other "inappropriate" but not aggressive or unsafe behaviors:** Rough play or swearing not directed at another child, for examples. These behaviors are best dealt with by staff created consequences (remove from activity, missed recess period, call/email parent).
- 4.) **Bullying:** Name calling, exclusion, rumors, threats, or hitting. Write student up via Foster Bullying Notification form if you see, hear, or have these behaviors reported to you. Faculty does not have to investigate students' reports, though you may ask for more information if you have time to address the situation. Principal or Counselor will investigate. Use your judgement in reporting rumors, exclusion and "fighting". Please report these behaviors if they seem to be one-sided and likely to hurt. For students in Kindergarten and First Grade, a more immediate teacher-directed response/consequence is appropriate.
- 5.) **Class Disruption: Disrespect to teacher or disrupting the learning environment for other students.** Interventions: Warning (depending upon the behavior), sitting away from classmates, etc. If the behavior continues, inform the Principal, Counselor and parents. Student will complete a "Think About It" form for these incidents. Copies of the completed form will go to the teacher and parents.
- 6.) **Severe Behavior:** Putting self or others' safety at risk; continued disruption of teaching/learning environment; refusal to leave the room; continued or increased aggression. Call Principal or Counselor immediately.

Responsibilities of all Faculty and Staff Schoolwide:

- Acknowledge effort, courtesy, consideration for others, and any other positive behavior. Let students know what they are doing right.
- Maintain a positive feeling/tone in interactions with students and parents

- Greet and talk with students in the halls
- Be a silent mentor to all students - model pro-social behaviors
- If students report friendship troubles that are not against our school rules, help them to think about how to solve these problems or ask for help from Counselor
- Keep Foster Notification Forms handy
- If you supervising recess or lunchroom, have clear expectations ...listening to adults, playing safely, eating neatly, using kind words, staying within the boundaries of the recess field, transitioning from lunch to recess/recess to lunch. When these expectations are not met, use appropriate consequences and talk with the student about the behavior.

Responsibilities of the Classroom Teacher:

- Have clear classroom behavioral expectations
- Facilitate one 20 minute weekly class meeting focusing on pro-social/anti-bullying
- Use consequences for disrupting the classroom learning environment or disrespecting the teacher (see page one for suggestions)
- Communicate with parents about behaviors.
- Send specific notes/emails home regarding positive behaviors

Responsibilities of Special Subject Teachers, Support Faculty and PCA's:

- Attend weekly grade level classroom meetings
- Special Subject Teachers and Support Faculty: Communicate with parents about behavior - both positive and negative

Responsibilities of the Counselor:

- Work to help students resolve peer conflicts
- Assist teachers
- Attend weekly classroom meetings
- Review aggressive and disruptive behavior with students
- Work with students to teach pro-social skills and strategies that are developmentally appropriate
- Support parents
- Teach classroom guidance lessons, small group and individual support for students

Responsibilities of the Principal:

- Investigate all reports of aggression toward peers
- Determine consequences from rubric
- Assist the student in calling home

- Assist teachers in developing interventions for students who are habitually disrespectful, defiant or disruptive
- Attend weekly classroom meetings as schedule allows
- With teachers, parents, and counselor, develop and find ways to implement individual plans for students who are repeatedly disrespectful, defiant or disruptive
- Clearly communicate behavioral expectations and discipline process/rubric to parents and students at the start of each school year

Responsibilities of Parents:

- Acknowledge positive behaviors. Let your child know what they are doing right.
- Talk with your children about school and friends.
- Model pro-social behaviors when responding to phone calls home from child regarding bullying behavior
- When children report friendship troubles that are not against school/family rules, help them to think about how to solve these problems
- Establish clear expectations. When these expectations are not met, use appropriate consequences and talk with your child about their behavior.
- Communicate questions and concerns with the classroom teacher, counselor or principal

Think - About - It

Name: _____ Date: _____

Faculty Signature/Location of Incident: _____

1. **What did you do that doesn't fit with our Foster School Rules?** (Be specific and start with "I")

2. **Why was this behavior wrong or hurtful to others?**

(Who did you hurt? How do you know you hurt that person?)

3. **What problem were you trying to solve?**

(Think about it...were you trying to have fun? Did you want someone to listen to you or leave you alone? Were you trying to impress your friends? Were you angry about something else?)

4. **Next time you have that problem, how will you solve it without hurting someone else?** (Please list at least three ways and choose one)

5. **How can you apologize to those you hurt?** (Kind words, a note, an act of kindness toward others, etc.)

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Top Copy - Parent

Bottom Copy - Return signed to Classroom Teacher