

Introducing the *Steps to Respect* Program

The students spotted Julie just as she came around the corner. They whispered to each other. Julie knew they were talking about her again, just like they had since the first day of school. Sometimes they laughed and pointed at her. When Julie tried to sit with them at lunch, they told her to go away. When Julie told her teacher about the problem, they found out, and everything just got worse.

Like Julie, many children face bullying each day. Many children believe that adults can't or won't help. They also worry that reporting bullying is the same as tattling. Research shows that bullying can be reduced greatly, but only when the whole school (staff, students, and parents) tackles the problem together.

Steps to Respect: A Bullying Prevention Program is one way to do that. The primary goal of this schoolwide program is to help create a safe, caring, respectful learning environment in which bullying is not tolerated.

As part of the *Steps to Respect* program, students in your child's class will learn new skills to help them build friendships and deal with bullying. For example, they will learn how to:

- Make friends.
- Join group activities.
- Manage conflicts.
- Recognize, refuse, and report bullying, whether it happens to them or someone else.

Family involvement is an important element in the program. Throughout the program, you will receive updates about what your child is learning. Please watch for these interesting and informative handouts. Try the suggested ideas to help your child practice *Steps to Respect* skills. And join us in creating and maintaining a safe, positive school environment!

