



CIRCLE OF
RESPECT™

Dear Parent or Guardian,

It may surprise you that bullying is the most widespread form of violence in our society, one that plagues our schools and communities—and a problem that is unfortunately growing even more common as cyberbullying becomes ever more prevalent. Previously, educators have addressed this unacceptable antisocial behavior reactively in the schools. But there is a new awareness today that bullying is not an unavoidable “phase” but a learned behavior, one that can be *unlearned*—and prevented.

Bullying is so common that almost no one is untouched by it: between 15 and 30 percent of students are either bullies or victims. Unfortunately, bullying—which research has identified as a “gateway” behavior that can lead to future criminal activity—is an unacceptable antisocial behavior that too often been considered almost as a rite of passage. It is time to reverse the culture that has made bullying an almost-acceptable behavior.

That is why the **Circle of Respect** was developed. A new program from the National Crime Prevention Council (known for decades for its animated anti-crime character McGruff the Crime Dog), Circle of Respect is designed to protect young people from bullying. It goes beyond intervention on behalf of victims alone to reach the bullies as well. The objective of Circle of Respect is to break the cycle with a positive message, one that promotes respect and consideration for others. Its method is to give school administrators, teachers, and families a unified, pro-social approach to bullying.

YOUR ROLE IN THE CIRCLE OF RESPECT

The most important teacher in any student’s life is his or her parent. The attitude change that will eliminate bullying in the schools and online begins in the home—where parents can encourage respectful, considerate behavior. Parents can reinforce positive patterns and model appropriate interaction. Parents will be the first to see the signs of bullying or victimization by bullies, and thus they will be the first to intervene with positive feedback for acceptable behavior. Most important, parents can lead their children inside a positive environment that we call the *Circle of Respect Zone*.

Working together with our schools, you can help us ensure that your child and other school children stay inside the *Circle of Respect Zone* and prevent bullying and other forms of aggressive behavior, including cyberbullying.

Thank you in advance for your support in promoting respect for oneself and others.

Please visit our website to learn more and join the Circle of Respect:

www.circleofrespect.org



www.ncpc.org

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