

...that students in a safe school building can feel unsafe?

Students, as young as ten years old, report feeling **unsafe even in schools that are physically safe and protected** according to the National Association of Nurses. Many middle and high school students report feeling unsafe due to **pervasive bullying, harassment and threats to their well-being** by peers. The national media has reported on several students taking their lives due to relentless harassment from peers and classmates.

School staff are doing their best to address the pressures and stresses that make students feel unsafe and that impair their ability to learn and grow. Actions are in place to assure students' well-being. Some of these actions include:

- 1) Providing training in understanding the extent of student stressors and pressures
- 2) Communicating school commitments to the core values of students' physical, emotional and social safety
- 3) Addressing student stressors (bullying, harassment, victimization) school-wide and at an individual student level
- 4) Providing students with the opportunity to connect to a concerned staff member who can provide support at school
- 5) Emphasizing open communication patterns, a positive school climate and clearly specified behavioral and academic expectations
- 6) Emphasizing restorative practices, advocacy, and self-advocacy to promote positive peer relationships.



Advocacy and self-advocacy are important skills for students to make their own and others' support needs known. Parents can support their students as they learn to manage their emotions and advocate for their own and others physical and emotional safety. Parents can talk to their students and encourage them to stand up for their own and for others' physical and emotional safety.



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