# Responding to parent reports about bullying workshop package

## Presenter’s Notes

## Introduction

The *Responding to parent reports about bullying workshop* package was developed for use by Australian schools by the Australian Safe and Supportive School Communities (SSSC) Working Group in consultation with Karyn Healy. It is based on an original workshop by Karyn Healy presented at the National Centre Against Bullying Conference 2016.

## About the package

The aim of the workshop is to provide different perspectives on bullying from parents and staff and to provide some initial responses to parents. The package looks at ways to respond to parents who are in heightened emotional states and provides information about further training and resources for staff.

Through this workshop, participants will have an opportunity to discuss how we can all contribute to responding to bullying.

There will be an opportunity to look at school protocols, when and how to report and document interactions.

## How to use the package

It is recommended to deliver the package as a unit on a pupil free day or other staff development day. It is possible for the package to be segmented, however there are significant benefits to running the session as a single session.

It is important that all staff (including office staff) have an opportunity to participate and contribute.

There is also the potential to do a full day of professional development focused on the broader school approach to preventing and responding to bullying and include this workshop as one component. This may include how to ensure all students have a safe and supportive learning environment, student wellbeing and/or school processes and policies.

Please familiarise yourself with the package and the presenter notes on the slides prior to presenting. There are videos embedded within the presentation. Please ensure that QuickTime has been downloaded and that the videos are able to play prior to commencing the presentation.

Please note: the sessions are about general strategies and do not allow time for discussion of individual cases.

**Sessions**

The presentation is split into two sessions.

* **Session 1** is designed for training of all school staff and is anticipated to be completed within approximately 2 hours. The session is split into the following sections:
1. Bullying and the serious risk it poses to students
2. Challenges to identifying bullying behaviour
3. Appreciating the parental perspective
4. Establishing good relationships in advance with parents
5. Ways other staff can build good relationships with parents
6. Responding if a parent is angry
7. Responding to a parental report: initial steps
* **Session 2** has a more targeted audience and provides additional training for staff who manage reports of bullying and is anticipated to be completed within approximately 1 hour. The session is split into the following sections:
1. Moving a parental concern into early problem-solving
2. Handling tricky questions
3. Investigation and further steps

Where participants are required to reflect on a question and discuss, the following icon will appear in the top right hand corner. This indicates for the facilitator to allow a few minutes for participants to discuss the question.

## Presenter notes

All slides contain presenter notes providing brief additional notes and ideas as to where discussion may lead. These notes are provided as a guide to presenting this package, however, you are encouraged to consider including additional information about the benefits of building strong parent relationships as well as providing specific jurisdiction and school context to the presentation.

**Parent engagement**

It is encouraged that you discuss the importance of building strong relationships with parents and understanding the communication needs of the families that you are communicating with.

Consider discussing the following:

* Engaging and partnering with parents and communities is vital in supporting successful learning and wellbeing outcomes for all children.
* By working together with parents and parent groups as equal partners, it is possible to have a collective impact that supports all students.
* Research indicates that early school-based parent engagement is linked to improved self-regulated learning behaviours, an important individual factor in supporting school success.
* Research also indicates that there are a range of barriers that restrict or prevent parents from being involved, particularly in relation to families from minority and marginalised backgrounds (Woodrow, et al., 2016). Identifying these barriers and working with key stakeholders to eliminate them is paramount to successful parent engagement.
* Only 14% of learning is undertaken in the classroom, therefore the majority of learning is done either at home or in the community, usually with the parent/carer. The sharing of knowledge is vital in building a stronger connection between home and school and ultimately improving learning outcomes for all students.
* Tailoring communication materials to the specific needs of families is essential to ensure parents and carers are receiving and understanding important messages. Examples include providing language options or easy English versions or Braille if this is the requirement of the parent/carer.
* Providing parents with an opportunity to provide input into relevant policies and procedures (e.g. Bullying and behaviour policies), complaints and communication processes, codes of conduct etc. ensures parent voice is heard and reflected in these important documents.

**School context**

There are opportunities throughout the package where the presentation can be contextualised. Suggested items for discussion during this time include:

* The relationship between staff, students and parents and your approach to student behaviour matters when responding to bullying and any other behavioural issue
* Mention the context of what else is in place in the school; could allude to wellbeing and behavioural management approaches of the school including the pastoral care, confidentiality policies, rights and responsibilities of the child and legal obligation
* This workshop is part of school’s effort to make a difference to students; it’s not just about dealing with parents.
* Context of school-family relationships: parent (primary educators of their child, partner to the school), student (right to be heard, co-contributor for learning) and the teacher (facilitator for learning, mentor).

**Jurisdictional context**

It is important that the package is presented within the context of jurisdictional information and processes, particularly complaints and dispute resolution.

Links to specific jurisdiction information about bullying and complaints processes are provided below to help familiarise yourself with your jurisdictions material prior to presenting:

## Federal Government

Relevant Federal policies can be located on the Australian [Department of Education and Training](https://www.education.gov.au/) website. The [Parent Engagement Research and Resources](https://www.education.gov.au/parent-engagement-research-and-resources) page provides links to key resources as well as a list of research material to support parent engagement.

***Australian Capital Territory***

* [Education Directorate](http://www.education.act.gov.au/school_education/safe_supportive_schools)
	+ Safe and Supportive Schools Policy
	+ Complaints processes: <https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/corporate-policies/school-administration-and-management/complaints/complaints-policy>
	+ Parent engagement in ACT schools: <https://www.aracy.org.au/publications-resources/area?command=record&id=256&cid=6>
* [Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn](http://cg.catholic.edu.au/)
* [Association of Independent Schools of the ACT](http://www.ais.act.edu.au/)

[***New South Wales***](http://www.bullyingnoway.gov.au/teachers/school-strategies/blank)

* [Department of Education](https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library)
	+ Student Discipline in Government Schools
	+ Student Welfare Policy
	+ Bullying: Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy
	+ Anti-Racism Policy
	+ Complaints processes: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/rights-and-accountability/complaints-compliments-and-suggestions>
	+ School A to Z – practical tips for parents: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/practical-help-for-parents-and-carers>
* [Catholic Education Commission NSW](http://www.csnsw.catholic.edu.au/)
* [Association of Independent Schools of NSW](http://www.aisnsw.edu.au/Pages/default.aspx)

### Northern Territory

* [Department of Education](https://nt.gov.au/learning/primary-and-secondary-students/health-and-wellbeing-of-students)
	+ Health and wellbeing of students
	+ Bullying, cyberbullying and cybersafety
	+ Behaviour management for students and parents
	+ Complaints processes: <https://education.nt.gov.au/education/policies/complaints>
	+ [Northern Territory Catholic Education Office](http://www.ceont.catholic.edu.au/)
* [Association of Independent Schools of the Northern Territory](http://www.aisnt.asn.au/)

***Queensland***

* [Department of Education](https://education.qld.gov.au/initiatives-and-strategies/behaviour)
	+ Safe, Supportive and Disciplined School Environment Policy
	+ Code of School Behaviour
	+ Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students
	+ Parent and community engagement framework
	+ School-wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS)
	+ Inclusive Education Policy
* Complaints processes: <https://www.qld.gov.au/education/schools/information/contact/complaint>
* [Queensland Catholic Education Commission](http://qcec.catholic.edu.au/)
* [Independent Schools Queensland](http://www.isq.qld.edu.au/)

***South Australia​***

* [Department for Education](http://www.education.sa.gov.au/)
	+ Cyber-safety, bullying and harassment
	+ Behaviour management and safety
	+ Complaints processes: <https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/education-and-learning/general-information/feedback-and-complaints/schools-and-preschools>
	+ Parent engagement in education <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/parenting-and-child-care/parent-engagement-education>
* [Government​ of South Australia​](http://www.sa.gov.au/topics/education-skills-and-learning/schools/school-life/behaviour-management-and-discipline)
* [Catholic Education South Australia](http://www.cesa.catholic.edu.au/)
* [Association of Independent Schools of SA](http://www.ais.sa.edu.au/)

***Tasmania***

* [Department of Education](https://www.education.tas.gov.au/)
	+ Respectful Schools and Workplaces Framework
	+ Respectful Student Behaviour Process
	+ Student Behaviour Policy
	+ Complaints processes: <https://www.education.tas.gov.au/parents-carers/parent-fact-sheets/grievances/>
	+ Parent Fact Sheets:
		- [Student Behaviour](https://www.education.tas.gov.au/parents-carers/parent-fact-sheets/student-behaviour/)
		- [Staying Safe](https://www.education.tas.gov.au/parents-carers/parent-fact-sheets/staying-safe/)
		- [Online Safety](https://www.education.tas.gov.au/parents-carers/parent-fact-sheets/online-safety/)
* [Tasmanian Catholic Education Office](http://catholic.tas.edu.au/)
* [Independent Schools Tasmania](http://www.independentschools.tas.edu.au/)

***Victoria***

* [Department of Education and Training](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/prinprevent.aspx)
	+ Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance
	+ Student Engagement Policy
	+ Student Behaviour
	+ Bully Stoppers <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/default.aspx>
	+ Complaints processes: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/contact/Pages/complaintslanding.aspx>
	+ Dimension: parents and carers as partners: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/management/improvement/Pages/dimension4parents.aspx>
* [Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd](http://www.cecv.catholic.edu.au/)
* [Independent Schools Victoria](https://www.is.vic.edu.au/)

***Western Australia***

* [Department of Education](http://det.wa.edu.au/studentsupport/behaviourandwellbeing/detcms/portal/)
	+ Student Behaviour Policy and Procedures
	+ Positive Behaviour Support
	+ Guidelines for Preventing and Managing Bullying in Schools
	+ Complaints processes: <http://det.wa.edu.au/standardsandintegrity/detcms/navigation/complaints-management/information-for-parents/?page=2&tab=Main>
* [Catholic Education Western Australia](http://internet.ceo.wa.edu.au/Pages/default.aspx)
* [Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia (Inc)](https://www.ais.wa.edu.au/)

## Additional information

Links to other relevant information on the Bullying No Way! website include:

* The school response flow chart: https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/RespondingToBullying/Documents/flowchart-for-responding.pdf#search=school%20response%20flow%20chart;
* First responses flow chart: <https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/RespondingToBullying/HowAustralianSchoolsRespond/Pages/The-first-response.aspx>
* Method of Shared Concern and other methods intended to restore relationships: <https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/RespondingToBullying/HowAustralianSchoolsRespond/RestoringRelationships/Pages/Method-of-shared-concern.aspx>