



Healthy Relationships – Belief Statement

The Solon Community School District believes healthy relationships are vital to both creating and supporting a safe learning environment. (...a culture of learning.)

A Healthy Relationship is based on...

- **mutual respect** - each person values the other
- **trust** - if a student believes he/she is being disrespected (by another student, parent or teacher), the student trusts the individual will stop being disrespectful when the issue is addressed
- **honesty** - it's tough to trust someone when one of you isn't being honest
- **support** - in a healthy relationship, another is available to help you effectively meet your needs
- **fairness/equality** - you need to have give-and-take in a relationship (When a relationship turns into a power struggle, with one person fighting to get his or her way all the time, then there is an imbalance of power and the relationship is no longer equal.)
- **make compromises** - in a healthy relationship, everyone needs to make compromises
- **good communication** - as each person speaks, the other person listens
(From kidshealth.org)

The majority of relationships are healthy. Yet, sometimes peer interactions are inappropriate or hurtful. When an inappropriate or hurtful interaction occurs, it is important to differentiate between rude, mean, and bullying behaviors.

- **rude** - unintentionally saying or doing something that hurts someone
- spontaneous, unplanned, inconsiderate, poor manners; no intent to hurt someone
- **mean** - intentionally saying or doing something to hurt someone once or even twice
- criticism, angry words, put down; intent to hurt someone, yet remorseful
- **bullying** - intentionally aggressive behavior, repeated over time, imbalance of power
- targeted acts or threats; intent to hurt someone, no regret or remorse
(Source: Signe Whitson - author, child & adolescent therapist; Trudy Ludwig - author)

Bullying behavior includes these three elements...

- **intent to harm** - through physical aggression, verbal insults, rumors or gossip, threats of exclusion
- **repeated activity where someone is singled out**
- **power imbalance** - based on age, size, peer support, higher status
(definition based on *Steps to Respect* and *Second Step* curriculum)

Students who believe that they have been bullied should:

- Communicate to the bully they would like the action to stop
- If the bullying does not stop, or the student does not feel comfortable confronting the bully, the student should tell a teacher, counselor or principal

The student should report:

- what, when, and where it happened
- who was involved
- exactly what was either said or done
- witnesses to the incident
- how the student felt
- how the bully responded