

Opening the door to a safe school requires a team effort among state legislators, Department of Education officials, school administrators and personnel, other adults working with children, students, and—most importantly—you, the parent or guardian.

*We encourage you to:*

- Verify that school personnel have had the proper training to handle incidents of aggression before they happen.
- Encourage your child to report harassment, hazing, and bullying incidents to an adult at school and to you at home.
- Keep personal records of the event (dates, times, places, persons involved, witnesses, etc.) from your and your child's point of view.
- Have another adult of your choice (relative, friend, clergy) present when meeting with school administrators and teachers to act as support, witness, and to add perspective to the situation.
- Ask others to follow your lead and report suspected incidents to school officials.



## Harassment is...

*Vermont state law 16 VSA*

*§11(a)(26) defines harassment as:*

“ an incident or incidents of verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct, including any incident conducted by electronic means, based on or motivated by a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity, that has the purpose or effect of objectively and substantially undermining and detracting from or interfering with a student's educational performance or access to school resources or creating an objectively intimidating hostile, or offensive environment. ”

*Contact your school for more information and assistance or contact us at:*

**Vermont Partnership for Fairness and Diversity**

18 Town Crier Drive  
Brattleboro, Vermont 05301

[info@vermontpartnership.org](mailto:info@vermontpartnership.org)  
[www.vermontpartnership.org](http://www.vermontpartnership.org)

**(802) 254-2972 (Voice)**

**(802) 254-0075 (Fax)**

HARASSMENT  
BULLYING • HAZING

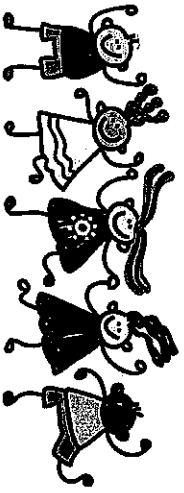
**What Should  
Happen When  
Your Child  
Reports  
School-Based  
Aggression**



**Vermont Partnership  
FOR FAIRNESS AND DIVERSITY**

[www.vermontpartnership.org](http://www.vermontpartnership.org)

Your child deserves an education free of harassment, bigotry, and bullying at school...*it's the law!*



Vermont schools follow state law 16 VSA 5570a(a)(7) and 16 VSA 5570c(7) and federal anti-discrimination laws (Title VI and IX of the Civil Rights Act) to prevent harassment and ensure that the school's response to allegations of harassment comply with the law.

There are *Designated Employees* at each school specially trained to handle harassment, hazing, and bullying complaints. Call the district superintendent's office or your school principal for local contacts.

### ***NO bystanders!***

Any person who witnesses or has knowledge that conduct that they reasonably believe might constitute hazing, harassment, and/or bullying should promptly report the incident to the child's school.

### ***What should happen?***

If your child becomes a target and the incident is reported, the following events must take place within 24 hours:

- The school personnel notified of the incident by your child or any other person or by any means must notify the school's *Designated Employee* responsible for handling complaints.
- The *Designated Employee* must put the complaint in writing.
- The school must notify you that your child has been involved in an alleged incident as either an alleged victim or alleged perpetrator.
- The school must give you a written copy of its harassment, hazing, and bullying policies and procedures at the time of its notification to you.
- Unless special circumstances are present and documented, the *Designated Employee* must initiate or cause to be initiated an investigation of the allegations.

No later than five school days from the filing of the complaint, unless special circumstances are present and documented, the investigator must submit a written initial determination to the principal or superintendent and inform the students that the investigation is complete.

The school can only investigate, make determinations, and determine appropriate courses of action when they know about an incident. This is why you must encourage your child to report incidents to both you and the school.

***Do not assume the school already knows— report!***

If you are dissatisfied with how the school handled the harassment complaint you have the right to:

- request in writing within 30 days and receive an independent review of the case (by the Complainant only)
- request an appeal within 10 days (by the Defendant only)
- request mediation or other alternative dispute resolution from the school district
- consult with a private attorney
- consult with the Safe & Healthy Schools Team of the Vermont Agency of Education at (802) 828-0371

### ***Other resources...***

Vermont Human Rights Commission  
14-16 Baldwin Street  
Montpelier, VT 05633-6301  
(800) 416-2010 (Voice) • (802) 828-2480 (Voice)  
(877) 294-9200 (TTY)

U.S. Department of Education  
Office for Civil Rights, Boston Office  
5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor  
Boston, MA 02109-3921  
(617) 289-0111 (Voice) • (877) 521-2172 (TTY)  
(617) 289-0150 (Fax)  
ocr.boston@ed.gov

Vermont Bar Association Lawyer Referral Service  
(800) 639-7036 (Voice)  
info@vtbar.org