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1. Take the issue of name-calling and teasing seriously. Rethink statements like, “Kids will be kids...” or “He didn’t mean anything by that comment; he was just kidding.”
2. Let students know that you are available to talk to them. If possible, set aside ten minutes of class time each week to discuss issues that students want to bring up. Get to know students as individuals.
3. Take time to listen. Don’t try to “fix” a situation before you have taken time to listen carefully. Avoid making the situation worse by blaming the targeted student. Make sure your actions don’t discourage students’ honesty.
4. Don’t harp on what should have been done in the past; focus on the present. Saying, “Why didn’t you tell me sooner?” is not helpful.
5. Be a role model. If students observe you gossiping or exhibiting other bullying behaviors toward students, their families, or colleagues, they will interpret it as permission to behave similarly. Remember that everyone, including yourself, has biases that can influence behavior and that your words can have a strong impact.
6. Do not belittle, tear down, or publicly embarrass students. Although these strategies are common in competitive sports, they are ineffective in motivating students to do better.
7. Help students learn how to act as effective allies. Provide time for them to learn the range of behaviors practiced by good allies. Do not communicate the expectation that students should always directly intervene when bias incidents occur. Discuss safety concerns and brainstorm effective alternative strategies with students.
8. Acknowledge when name-calling and bullying are occurring and that being the target of these incidents can be painful. Do not downplay what a student says he or she is feeling or experiencing.
9. Be proactive. Prepare your students to respond effectively to bias incidents and become a partner with their families. Discuss name-calling and bullying and school policies that outline how these situations will be handled. Explore the different roles students can take in bias incidents—target, perpetrator, bystander, and ally, and help students consider responses to situations from the perspectives of each of these roles.
10. Be discreet and, whenever possible, maintain confidentiality. Do not announce to the class when a student is having a problem with name calling, bullying, or harassment. Whenever possible, help each student privately.



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