

REJECTING SHAME: ADDRESSING BULLYING THROUGH LEGAL PROTECTION

by:

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Bullying is widespread and has the potential to impact anyone at any given moment, resulting in enduring harm. Victims often hide their experiences due to shame. Recognizing signs of bullying, such as unexplained injuries, changes in behavior, and a decrease in academic performance, is crucial. Children may be reluctant to seek help due to fear, humiliation, or social isolation. In the Philippines, laws like Republic Act No. 10627 provide legal consequences for bullies. According to Atty. Amado Aquino, targets and their parents have the option to seek legal remedies and report bullying anonymously. Failure to comply with the law can result in administrative sanctions for school administrators, including the suspension of permits for private schools.

The Official Website of DepED Division of Bataan

The prevalence of bullying is alarming, with a 21% increase in reported cases in 2014. Bullying can lead to various negative consequences, including mental health issues and, in extreme cases, suicide. It is necessary steps in protecting students and promoting a safe learning environment by understanding and enforcing the laws against bullying. Here are some tips to safeguard oneself from bullying within a school environment.

1. **Be Aware of Signs:** Understand the signs of bullying, such as unexplained injuries, changes in behavior, or declining academic performance.
2. **Confide in Someone:** Share your experiences with a trusted friend, teacher, or family member. It's essential to have a support system.
3. **Assertiveness:** Stand up for yourself assertively without resorting to aggression. Use confident body language and firm but calm communication.

4. Reporting Incidents: Promptly report any instances of bullying to school authorities. Numerous schools have established anti-bullying protocols.

5. Recording Instances : Maintain a record of bullying occurrences, noting dates, times, locations, and descriptions.

6. Use Technology Wisely: Be cautious about what you share online and report cyberbullying incidents to both school authorities and online platforms.

7. Seek Professional Help: If bullying persists, consider seeking help from a school counselor, psychologist, or mental health professional to cope with the emotional impact.

8. Know Your Rights: Familiarize yourself with school policies and national laws related to bullying.

9. Build Self-Confidence: Focus on building your self-esteem and confidence. Engage in activities that promote self-worth and a positive self-image.

10. Stay Connected: Maintain strong connections with friends and supportive peers. Being part of a positive social network can provide a sense of belonging and protection.

Remember, everyone has the right to feel safe and respected in a school environment. If bullying persists, it's essential to take appropriate steps to address the issue and seek support from trusted adults and professionals.

References:

Warning Signs for Bullying. (n.d.). StopBullying.gov. Retrieved May 10, 2019, from <https://www.stopbullying.gov/bullying/warning-signs>
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