



October Focus on Bullying Prevention

Climate Connection is a publication of the NYS Center for School Safety.

OCTOBER IS BULLYING PREVENTION MONTH

Your school climate data can be useful in developing or refining your school's bullying prevention efforts.

School climate sets the tone for the school. There are many ways to explain school climate. Some say it is the way a school feels when you walk in. Others say school climate is the measure of degrees of relationships, like temperature. Yet others say climate is the way people in the school treat each other. Students notice how adults talk to each other and to students, what the norms are for student-to-student interactions, which adults to seek out for support, and which adults to avoid. What do you and others see and hear in your school?

School climate measures are great ways to gather information about the perceptions of and tolerance for bullying in schools.

Some schools conduct ***school climate surveys*** to take the temperature or measure of school climate. These surveys can cover a range of stakeholders including students, staff, families and community and the data collected can help a school learn about the positive and negative perceptions of your school. Climate surveys can be done on a large scale or small scale, in-house or contracted out, and can be lengthy or with just a few specific questions.

Another way to take the temperature of the school is through ***focus groups***. Focus groups are a great way to gather immediate feedback from small, separate groups using a set protocol of questions or talking points during a brief period (less than 25 minutes per group). Unlike school climate surveys, focus groups might tap about ten percent of the population of students, staff, families, and community members.

Consider asking students	Consider asking adults
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you feel safe in school? • What makes you feel safe in school? • Are there places in school where you do not feel safe? • If you or a friend had a problem, is there an adult at school you would talk to? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does your child/do students feel safe in school? • What makes your child/students feel safe in school? • Are there places in school where your child does not/students do not feel safe? • If your child or a friend had a problem, is there an adult at school they would talk to?



CLIMATE CONNECTION

Information and strategies
linking Climate and School Safety.

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The information you receive from school climate surveys or focus groups is only valuable if it is used. Determine, as part of the preparation steps and before the data is collected, what your school or team will do with the information collected. What is your purpose for collecting the data, and what is your action plan to address your findings? Determine the possible formats for sharing the information gathered. Build on strengths and address needs. Focus on ways to prevent bullying before it begins.

How does your data compare?

16%

of NYS students, grades 9 - 12, in the previous year experienced cyberbullying (text or social media)

21%

of all surveyed students reported being bullied on school property in the previous 12 months.

33%

of students identifying as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual reported being bullied on school property.

Youth Risk Behavior Survey Questions - United States, 2023

For additional details on preventing bullying, access the free resources on the NYSCFSS website.

USEFUL RESOURCES

Developing a Positive School Climate: Top Ten Tips to Prevent Bullying and Cyberbullying

Supporting Students Involved in Bullying

Dignity for ALL Students

Welcoming Schools: What I Need To Succeed At School