Adults seldom are present in the online environments frequented by children and youth. Therefore, it is extremely important that adults pay close attention to cyber-bullying and the activities of children and youth when using these new technologies.

**Tips to Help Prevent Cyber-Bullying:**

- Keep your home computer(s) in easily viewable places, such as a family room or kitchen.
- Talk regularly with your child about online activities he or she is involved in.
  1. Talk specifically about cyber-bullying and encourage your child to tell you immediately if he or she is the victim of cyber-bullying, cyber-stalking or other illegal or troublesome online behaviors.
  2. Encourage your child to tell you if he or she is aware of others who may be the victims of such behavior.
  3. Explain that cyber-bullying is harmful and unacceptable behavior. Outline your expectations for responsible online behavior and make it clear that there will be consequences for inappropriate behavior.
- Although adults must respect the privacy of children and youth, concern for your child’s safety may sometimes override these privacy concerns. Tell your child that you may review his or her online communications if you think there is reason for concern.
- Consider installing parental control filtering software and/or tracking programs, but don’t rely solely on these tools.

It is the goal of the Socorro Independent School District to change the norms around bullying behavior and to restructure the school setting so that bullying is less likely to occur or be rewarded.

OBPP has been more thoroughly evaluated than any other bullying prevention/reduction program so far, producing the following documented results.

- Average reductions of 20 to 70 percent in student reports of being bullied and bullying others. Peer and teacher ratings of bullying problems have yielded roughly similar results.
- Marked reductions in student reports of general antisocial behavior, such as vandalism, fighting, theft, and truancy.
- Clear improvements in the classroom social climate, as reflected in students’ reports of improved order and discipline, more positive social relationships, and more positive attitudes toward schoolwork and school.

OBPP is recognized by the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence as one of only seven Blueprints Model Programs and by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) as a Model Program – two of the highest honors a prevention program can attain.

For additional information on OBPP in SISD and your child’s school, please contact the school counselor or the Office of State and Federal Programs at 915-937-1609.

For more information on the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, including tips for parents, please visit the program Web site at www.olweus.org.

Information quoted from the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program online and print materials.
The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP) is the most researched and best-known bullying prevention program available today. Backed by more than thirty-five years of research and successful implementation in many different countries, the OBPP is a whole-school program that has been proven to prevent or reduce bullying throughout a school setting. OBPP is designed for students in elementary, middle, and junior high schools.

OBPP is used at the school, classroom, and individual levels and includes methods to reach out to parents and the community for involvement and support. School administrators, teachers, and other staff are primarily responsible for introducing and implementing the program with the goals of improving peer relations and making the school a safer and more positive place for students to learn and develop.

The goals of the program are to:
• reduce existing bullying problems among students
• prevent the development of new bullying problems
• achieve better peer relations at school

What is Bullying?
A person is bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more persons, and he or she has difficulty defending himself or herself.

1. Bullying is aggressive behavior that involves unwanted, negative actions.
2. Bullying involves a pattern of behavior reported over time.
3. Bullying involves an imbalance of power and strength.

There are several different forms of bullying, including:
• verbal bullying
• social exclusion or isolation
• physical bullying
• bullying through lies and false rumors
• having money or other things taken or damaged
• threats or being forced to do things
• racial bullying
• sexual bullying
• cyber bullying (via cell phone or the Internet)

How to report bullying:
The Socorro Independent School District is committed to the safety of its students. Last school year, the District purchased K12 Anonymous Alerts, an online reporting tool that students can access either through the district website or through their smartphones via the K12 Alerts app. During this second year of implementation with this new tool, the District has seen an increase in incident reports. Campus administrators receive these incident reports immediately via email or text, so they can respond quickly. The tool provides two-way communication between the campus administrator and the person initiating the report, all the while maintaining the anonymity of the reporter.

The K12 Anonymous Alerts reporting tool also reaches beyond the scope of bullying. Students can also report other sensitive issues such as drug and alcohol abuse, stealing, self-injury, cheating, depression, family issues, fighting, sexual harassment, peer pressure, or any other sensitive issue which may affect a student.

If you (or your child) have a smartphone, we ask that you download the free app. You will need the following login and password to access the system:

Login: SISD
Password: SISD

Parents and students can also access the system on a home computer by logging on to the district website at www.sisd.net. Once there, they may click on “Bullying Prevention”, then click on “Report Bullying.” This is where a report can be submitted. Please keep in mind that, although a report can remain anonymous, any false report can be investigated to determine where the report came from. False claim charges may be filed.

Tips for Parents: What to Do If Your Child is Being Bullied

If your child is being bullied at school, this can be a very painful experience for your child and your family. Here are some things you can do to support your child if he is being bullied:
• Never tell your child to ignore the bullying
• Don’t blame your child for the bullying. Don’t assume your child did something to provoke the bullying.
• Allow your child to talk about his or her bullying experiences. Write down what is shared.
• Empathize with your child. Tell him or her that bullying is wrong, that this is not his or her fault, and that you are glad he or she had the courage to tell you about it.
• If you disagree with how your child handled the bullying situation, don’t criticize him or her. It is often very difficult for children to know how best to respond.
• Do not encourage physical retaliation.
• Check your emotions. A parent’s protective instincts stir strong emotions. Although it is difficult, step back and consider the next steps carefully.
• Contact a teacher, school counselor, or principal at your school immediately and share your concerns about the bullying that your child has experienced.
• Work closely with school personnel to help solve the problem.
• Encourage your child to develop interests and hobbies that will help build resiliency in difficult situations like bullying.
• Encourage your child to make contact with friendly students in his or her class, or help your child meet new friends outside of school.
• Teach your child safety strategies, such as how to seek help from an adult.
• Make sure your child has a safe and loving home environment.
• If you or your child need additional help, seek help from a school counselor and/or mental health professional.