Safe & Inclusive Environments

Safe & inclusive environments create a sense of belonging and encourages and supports its members with positive and specific feedback. Healthy groups celebrate the success of all members, taking pride in the collective efforts of all.

10 ways to create safe & inclusive environments:
- Know your limits
- Just say “no” to hostile environments
- Don’t judge
- Sharing is caring
- Discourage cliques/encourage peer interaction
- Step out of your comfort zone
- Beware of “group think”
- Keep it simple
- Be excited
- Know chain of command

as Simple as Respect

Simple Steps:
- Intervene before problems escalate
- Use respectful language
- Keep your cool
- Never be afraid to apologize
- Be sensitive to backgrounds different from yours
- Help others understand why something may be offensive
- Defuse tensions by listening & understanding
- Explore similarities rather than focus on differences

*Adapted from as Simple as Respect.

Programs and activities offered by the West Virginia University Extension Service are available to all persons without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, veteran status, political beliefs, sexual orientation, national origin, and marital or family status.
Bullying is any intentional, hurtful act committed by one or more people against another. It does not end when one party says “stop” and there must be an intent to harm. Bullying is not rough play, fighting between equals or interactions where no one becomes upset.

Types of Bullying:
- **Physical**—Involves punching, hitting, hair pulling, shoving, defacing personal property, theft of personal items, and mean spirited pranks.
- **Verbal**—Involves name calling, mocking, teasing, intimidation and threats to embarrass.
- **Relational**—Involves exclusion-leaving others out, gossiping, humiliation, threats to reveal personal information, peer pressure, eye-rolling, stopping a conversation when the intended target is around.
- **Cyber**—Involves any kind of electronic format—social media, text messages and email. A message or threat can haunt a victim for weeks, months or years.

### Players

There are three main players and each has its own characteristic.

- **Bullies**—A common trait among bullies is the want for power. It gives them attention, social status and peer group support. They see it as “fun.”
- **Targets**—May show some vulnerability that makes them different from their peer group. Their response to bullying may make the difference between isolated and repeated incidents.
- **Bystanders**—Third person observers or witnesses. They can continue to watch or become “upstanders.” Upstanders are those who intervene by speaking and standing up for others.

### Bullying Prevention

Youth should not fear physical or emotional harm while participating in a 4-H experience whether from the learning environment itself or from adults, other participants or spectators.

8 ways to help prevent bullying:
- Help establish acceptable & unacceptable behaviors
- Find a friend/be a friend
- Be & encourage Upstander attitudes
- Create & maintain an Upstander community
- Encourage & don’t be afraid to talk with adults
- Learn to laugh at yourself
- Create & maintain a safe environment
- Create & maintain an inclusive environment