

## **Help! My Child is Being Harrassed. What Can I do?**

Most schools and/or school corporations have anti-harassment policies which entitle a student the right to a non-hostile learning environment. These are not "special education" rights, but are right afforded to ALL students. For more information, check your school policies and/or your child's student handbook.

I have had good luck in stopping harassment by having parents request an IEP meeting. I then instruct the parents to go to the meeting with a proposed goal and set of objectives similar to the following:

### **Present Level of Achievement**

1. Suzie is under a great deal of stress because of harassment and teasing from other students.

### **Needs**

1. Suzie needs to learn strategies that she can use throughout her life to address the times when she experiences harassment from others.

### **Goal**

- A. Suzie will learn strategies to independently deal with harassment and teasing from other students

### **Objectives**

1. Suzie will learn how to read and understand the school's (or school corporation's) policies as well as any relevant laws, codes, regulations, and rules on harassment.

2. Suzie will understand which individual is the responsible authority assigned to attend to complaints on student harassment.
3. Suzie will learn to identify harassment as a violation of the laws, codes, regulations, rules, and policies on harassment.
4. Suzie will learn to draft a written complaint including all required elements and facts of the harassment incident as required by the laws, codes, regulations, rules, and policies.  
  
Alternative: Suzie will report to her teacher/aide/principal/guidance counselor any teasing or harassment and request that that adult assist her in filing a written complaint
5. Suzie will submit the complaint to the proper individual, agency, etc.

While most schools will refuse to write these goals and objectives into an IEP, it is often amazing how attentive school folks get once they understand that the parents and the student know there is a policy prohibiting such things and that they understand that complaints can be filed. Further, written "proposed" goals and objectives that the parents brings to the IEP team meeting are now part of the official documentation of the IEP process even when not actually written into the IEP.

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