



# School Talk

## Breaking Up Student-on-Student Fights

School staff may encounter situations in which their attempts to intervene in breaking up a student-on-student fight may lead them to sustain an injury or be subject to being struck by a student during an altercation. School staff members are not usually trained in law enforcement or physical restraint techniques, but more and more frequently find themselves confronting students involved in fighting. It is important that staff follow the school district policies addressing its expectations of staff members in such situations.

If an argument between students escalates and erupts into a fight, school staff must know how to stop or intervene in order to stop the fighting and take necessary steps to properly deal with aggressive student behaviors. The following are tips on proper ways to handle student-on-student confrontation.

- Always follow your school's established procedures for intervening in student fights.
- Do not ignore aggressive behavior, since most often it quickly grows into a violent situation. Preventing these student fights begins with addressing bullying and student aggressive behavior. Follow established school policies.
- You should move toward the scene of violence because a teacher's presence can often stop the aggressive behaviors.
- Summon assistance or ask someone to report this to the office immediately. Do not leave the scene if possible.
- Look to see if any weapons are present.
- In a commanding and confident voice, tell students to stop fighting. Repeat these commands with a strong voice.
- Pay attention to the surrounding onlookers and disperse those who may be encouraging the fight.
- Do not get between students who are fighting.
- Continue to review the situation to ascertain what has happened, who is there and what will likely happen.
- Support the victim(s) in the best way you can and get proper medical assistance if necessary.
- Keep both the victim and the attacker away from each other and from other students.
- Staff members should be cautioned not to embarrass the injured student (victim) by drawing excess attention to him or her. Also, favoritism by a teacher or staff member may further alienate a victim, subjecting him or her to additional taunting because of a perceived relationship between the victim and the faculty member.

School staff must know how to intervene in order to stop student-on-student fights and take the necessary steps to properly deal with aggressive student behaviors.

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