



SAFE, INCLUSIVE AND ACCEPTING SCHOOLS

Bouncy is nervous, but a friendly teacher reaches out and provides a warm welcome. Another teacher chats with **Specs**, while **Toof** meets up with old friends. **Bouncy** makes a new friend. **Knack** and **Fixit** look on with satisfaction as the richly diverse school body start their year.

MESSAGE

How valuable it is to create a welcoming learning environment reflective of our diverse school communities, one in which everyone feels safe, included and accepted.

Everyone has a role to play in developing and imagining a positive school environment to support student achievement and well-being.

Narrated Message

We are proud of our commitment to help ensure that schools are safe, inclusive and accepting.

Everyone can play an important role in nurturing a positive school environment where all children and their families, and all the people who work there feel like they belong.

A welcoming school is a place where students can learn, grow and reach their full potential.

ISSUES AND STRATEGIES

- Actively welcoming students and their families from all backgrounds and making sure they feel like they belong
- Creating a physical environment that communicates the beauty and value of diversity
- Recognizing the positive impact of welcoming learning environments
- Honouring and celebrating the diversity of population found in Ontario schools
- Acknowledging differences and similarities, and shared values
- Ensuring that bullying is identified, addressed and prevented
- Knowing the difference between bullying and conflict, and fostering appropriate skills and policies
- Ensuring that protocols and practices are in place for all members of the school community and that they are shared with everyone
- Making sure that students and all members of the community feel safe, included and accepted
- Modelling respectful and open-minded behaviour
- Supporting positive, respectful behaviour and early intervention

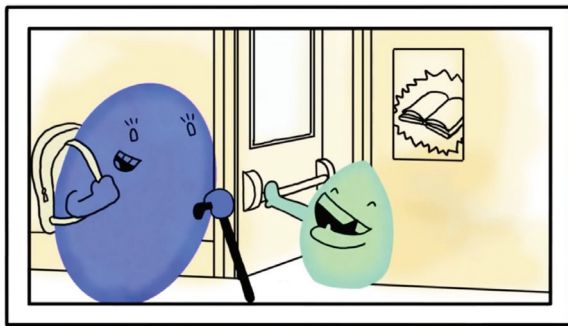
QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

Parents

1. What are some of the messages this vignette offers?
2. What does a safe, inclusive and accepting school community look like to you?
3. What suggestions do you have for helping foster a welcoming school environment?
4. What can we do to help parents feel more welcome?
5. How might you get involved?
6. Do you have any personal stories to share?

School Staff

1. What does a safe, inclusive and accepting school look like to you?
2. How can you facilitate a welcoming school community? And how can your colleagues and the administration, or board help you with this?
3. Do you have strategies for communicating across cultural differences in your classroom or at large in the school community?
4. Are there strategies that have worked well for including, and learning from the diverse families and students at your school?
5. What ideas do you or your school have for involving parents in a meaningful way to foster inclusion?
6. How can you and your school partner with families to nurture this kind of environment?



RESOURCES

- Imagine a School without Bullying: A School Climate Approach to Bullying Prevention
www.wcdsb.ca/schools/imagine/index.html
- Twelve Bullying Myths
www.greatschools.org/parenting/bullying/slideshows/3098-10-bullying-myths.gs
- Bullying: What Parents Can Do
www.ncpc.org/topics/bullying/bullying-/what-parents-can-do
- Bullying Prevention: Nature and Extent of Bullying in Canada
<http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/res/cp/res/2008-bp-01-eng.aspx>

SCHOOL STAFF

- • Safe@school: Understanding Bullying
www.safeatschool.ca/index.php?q=plm/bullying-prevention/understanding-bullying
- Shaping Safer Schools: A Bullying Prevention Action Plan
www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/safeschools/publications.html
- Ten Steps to Building a Bully-Free School
www.greatschools.org/improvement/volunteering/604-building-schools.gs
- Bullying Prevention Manual
www.chd.region.waterloo.on.ca/en/childfamilyhealth/bullyingprevention.asp
- Social and Emotional Learning and Bullying Prevention
www.case.l.org/publications/sel-and-bullying-prevention
- Checkpoints for Schools: Towards a Non-Violent Society
www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/resourcesforteachers/classroomresources/checkpointforschools_wda48934.html