



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parent,

Your child participated in an assembly that was organized and presented by The Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center (MARC).

The Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center is housed at Bridgewater State University in Bridgewater, Massachusetts. MARC's founder and director is Dr. Elizabeth Englander, a professor of Psychology at the University, and an expert in the field. Our goal is to bring low- or no-cost services to the K-12 education systems, law enforcement, and other professional caregivers for children in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The services we provide include school programs (student assemblies and facilitation trainings), conferences, workshops, consultation, and research in the areas of bullying and cyberbullying pertaining to education and prevention.

The student assembly that your child attended was ***Bullying and Cyberbullying Basics Assembly*** which was developmentally designed for grades 2-3. This assembly was an interactive group presentation designed to help children develop the appropriate mechanisms to deal with bullying issues in schools. Children learned about roles associated with bullying and where bullying can occur. Appropriate ways to deal with bullying were discussed in a developmentally appropriate manner. Examples were used to illustrate key points, and included the following topics:

- How to differentiate between bullying situations and fights/conflicts (the 3 things that are different between bullying and fighting)
- How to be a good friend
- What to do if classmate or friend is feeling sad or afraid
- What they can do to reduce or stop bullying
- The importance of talking to adults about these issues

The difference between conflict and bullying was discussed to underscore how hurtful and damaging bullying behaviors can be. Several examples were provided and discussed to help students identify the differences between bullying behaviors and conflicts. An emphasis was placed on talking to people they trust in order to get help with bullying and any other situation in which they may feel personally threatened or upset.

Having open discussions about what happens in school or on the internet can be effective in helping to increase awareness surrounding the topics of bullying and cyberbullying. Education is the key to preventing, as much as possible, harmful situations from arising online and in person. The following bulleted questions are a few talking points to hit with your kids:

- Have you ever felt as if someone is being mean to you on purpose? How did this make you feel?
- What is the difference between bullying and fighting/arguing?
- What kinds of things can you do to be a good friend or classmate?
- What kinds of video games and computer games do you play?
- I want to know what goes on with you, your friends, and your classmates. When something goes wrong, the more you tell me, the better able I am to help fix the situation.

The MARC website has many free downloads for parents that may help answer questions and provide information about bullying and cyberbullying.

If you have any additional questions please contact your child's school administration at (phone number) \_\_\_\_\_ or visit our website at [www.marccenter.org](http://www.marccenter.org) for more information.

Sincerely,

The Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center and (your school)

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