



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: What you need to know*** which was developmentally designed for grades 5-6. This assembly is designed to help students define and understand bullying, cyberbullying and relational aggression. Students have learned about the characteristics of bullying and cyberbullying and how to differentiate between fighting/conflict and bullying situations. Online safety was covered and students were educated about the dangers of disclosing too much online and sending or posting inappropriate photos. The social and emotional impacts of bullying behaviors in the classroom and in cyber space were also addressed. This presentation was designed to leave students with concrete ideas of how to best deal with bullies in school and online.

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 seen bullying at your school? How about online?
- How did you feel when you saw someone being bullied?
- Have you ever felt as if you were target of bullying? What happened first? Who else was there? What did they do? Did you talk to a trusted adult in school about it?
- What kinds of apps do you or your friends use?
- What are your favorite games to play online?
- What kinds of things do your classmates chat about and post online?
- What can you do to be safe online? (limiting number of friends, keeping information as private as possible, posting and sending only appropriate material)
- I want to understand 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 for more information.

Sincerely,

The Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center and (your school)
