

Newsletter Item 12

Aim: To provide families with an understanding of the Method of Shared Concern in managing bullying incidents and how it works

The Shared Concern method

The key to stopping bullying is getting those involved to talk about what is happening and decide how to overcome the problem. The Friendly Schools Plus Program recommends that schools use the Method of

Shared Concern to encourage children to talk about bullying incidents. Families can also use this strategy at home.

The Method of Shared Concern aims to change the behaviour of students who are bullying and to improve the situation for the student being bullied. This method helps students develop empathy and concern for others and gives them strategies to help them get along better with others in the school and at home.

How does the method work?

1. Individual meetings are held with each of the students involved in the bullying incident: the student or students bullying, the person being bullied and any bystanders who may have seen what was happening.

2. Each student is asked about the bullying behaviour and to suggest ways he or she personally could help to improve the situation for the person being victimised.

3. The student being bullied is also given the opportunity to discuss what happened and is encouraged to think of ways to improve the situation.

4. There are follow-up meetings, discussions and planning that give students the opportunity to change and to put these new behaviours into practice in a supportive environment.