



*I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."*  
– Maya Angelou

**October**  
**Bullying Prevention Month**

In a System of Care dedicated to student wellbeing, bullying prevention is a priority. Experts agree that at the heart of prevention is the promotion of **empathy**.

**Bullying** occurs when someone uses their power to harm or control, whereas **empathy** is when someone uses their feelings and thoughts to connect with others. To teach me empathy, my grandmother used to remind me when my actions made someone feel “small.”

My grandmother knew that the social-emotional skills to cultivate empathy could be taught. The skills for empathy include active listening, perspective-taking, decision-making, self-control, help seeking, and response inhibition. In school we also teach kids how to be “**upstanders**,” how to find the courage to turn empathy into action by responding effectively to peer mistreatment so that everyone can feel a sense of belonging.

We can all **cultivate empathy** in others and ourselves. We can discuss character traits and point of view in literature or media, learn about current events, practice teamwork and collaboration, and volunteer for community service. We can model perspective shifting and draw attention to empathic behaviors when we see them on display. To do the work of Bullying Prevention Month, lets rededicate ourselves to developing and demonstrating empathy in our classrooms, schools, and community.

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**Bullying Prevention Resources**

[Middle and High School Bullying Prevention Ideas](#)

[Elementary Bullying Prevention Ideas](#)

[Merrimack School District Bullying Prevention Policy](#)

[Bystander Behavior Video](#)



**Empathy Resources**

[Family Resource for Cultivating Empathy](#)

[Second Step – The Purpose of SEL](#)

[Lesson Plans for Empathy Development](#)

[Cultivating Empathy](#)

[Brene Brown Video on Empathy](#)