

“85% of the students in schools are neither bullies nor victims. . .Fear and power struggles are a reality in elementary schools, and one of the goals within schools must be to bring these issues in line so they are manageable.” (Garrity, Jens, Porter, Sager, Camilli, 2000). The faculty goal at Manatee Cove Elementary is to build a “caring majority” to support other students, defuse the power of bullies and provide a positive school identity. Instruction for the “caring majority” is called Bully Proofing.

Bully Proofing is a three part process. The first part includes Bully Proofing classes which have begun at Manatee Cove Elementary. The classes are being taught by the School Counselor and reinforced by adults at the school. Bully Proofing is presented to grades K-5. There are many tools that are being used to accomplish this which includes brief lessons on the A.M. News, in classrooms, groups, and with individuals.

Mediation is the second part of Bully Proofing. This is also practiced at Manatee Cove Elementary. When conflicts arise between students, they are worked out in the classroom, in EDEP if student attends or by administrators when time permits. The school counselor uses mediation when needed. Students learn to work out their difference in a peaceful and successful format.

The third part of Bully Proofing is to stand up for others who are being teased or bullied. This means the students who hear or see the harassment of bullying happen. These students are learning to not stand by and be silent but to speak up.

You can help your student understand this process by reinforcing the I STATEMENT: **I feel** (say what you are feeling) **when you** (say what is being done that is causing a conflict). **I want** (say what you believe would end the conflict).

This is a phrase that is being taught and will continue to be taught in order for students to have a peaceful but powerful voice. When students use this phrase, they are less likely to get themselves in a bully situation.