

DRESS CODE

- You have the right to wear your hijab or kufi at public school, even if there is a dress code or uniform requirement.
- If you do not wish to participate in school activities that would require you to remove your hijab, such as swimming, your school must provide an alternative activity for you.

HOLIDAYS AND PRAYER

- Schools cannot penalize students for missing school on religious holidays. You can request the day off in advance for Eid holidays.
- You are allowed to pray individually or as a group during the school day. CAIR advises you to choose a time to pray that does not coincide with school activities or class time.
- A school isn't required to provide a designated prayer room but can indicate what areas are available to students for prayer.
- You may be permitted to leave school for Juma'ah (Friday prayer). You must coordinate with school officials if you wish to do this.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS:

State law requires your school to protect you from harassment and discrimination:

- Schools **MUST** prohibit bullying based on religion, race and nationality.
- Schools **MUST** make their bullying policy public.
- Schools **MUST** have a process in place for investigating complaints of bullying. If you tell a teacher or another adult at school that you are getting bullied, they have to do something to help you.



WHAT IS A BULLY?

Someone who purposely tries to hurt others by:

- Making them feel uncomfortable
- Kicking/hitting
- Name-calling
- Spreading nasty rumors

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is repeated, aggressive behavior intended to hurt another person, physically or emotionally. Bullying can take place in person, through notes left on desks or lockers, text messages, or online via email or social media. It can range from verbal insults to physical violence, and usually occurs over an extended period of time.

PROBLEMS MUSLIM STUDENTS FACE:

- Pulling of headscarf or kufi
- Pressure to convert to another religion
- Insulting comments about Islam made in the classroom or at recess
- Physical abuse



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KNOW YOUR RIGHTS



as a Muslim
Youth at School



MUSLIM STUDENTS IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"I wish people at school would understand that even when they joke about calling me a terrorist, I don't really think it's funny."

"My friends make fun of my name. It makes me angry."

"I wish people were more open about learning more about the real Islam and not the kind of Islam they show on T.V. or on the news."

"I wish that people would understand that although my parents raised me Muslim, they didn't make me wear hijab. It was MY CHOICE."



STEPS YOU CAN TAKE:

- Use any ignorance you encounter as an opportunity to educate others about your beliefs. But if someone repeatedly makes offensive comments about Islam, report it.
- Learn more about and be proud of your faith.
- Volunteer to give a presentation on Islam on school-sponsored diversity days.
- Know that your real friends will stand up for you.

DO'S AND DON'TS IF YOU ARE BULLIED:

- DO report to a teacher or other trusted adults at school; your school has a legal duty to protect you.
- DO let your parents know if you are being bullied or know of someone who is being bullied.
- DO NOT feel ashamed or embarrassed. It is not your fault.
- DO NOT retaliate with violence or name-calling: this could result in you being punished and not the bully.

WORKING WITH TEACHERS:

- Some Muslim students have reported that teachers treat them differently based on their faith or country of origin.
- If a teacher makes a false statement about Islam, respectfully raise the issue during or after class.
- If any of the following situations occur, report it to your parents and the principal:
 - If a teacher prohibits or punishes you for wearing your hijab or kufi.
 - If a teacher makes fun of your name, country of origin, or religion, even in a joking way.
 - If a teacher suggests that you should convert to a different religion.

REMEMBER:

- Bullying in all forms should never be tolerated by you or your school.
- Do not cut yourself off and think you must handle bullying by yourself. Talk to a parent, a teacher, or another adult you trust. They are your allies.
- Contact CAIR!



WHAT CAIR CAN DO TO HELP:

- Advise you on how to address your situation.
- Accompany you to meetings with administrators or can contact them on your behalf.
- Help you file a complaint if school administrators aren't taking effective action to stop the bullying.
- Help connect you to resources about your faith which you can share with administrators and teachers.
- Help connect you to counseling services to help deal with the stress of bullying
- Even if you do not wish for CAIR to take action in your situation, it is still important to report what is happening, especially if your situation is like something described above. The more CAIR knows about what Muslim youth at school face, the better equipped the community can be to solve problems.