

Bullying in the 21st Century

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Definition of Bullying

- A series of repeated intentionally cruel incidents
- Regularly involves the same children
- Can consist of a single interaction
- Bullying behavior has also been defined as a
 - criminal act if the bully is twelve years of age or older

BULLY FACT SHEET

- 6% admit bullying others at least twice a week
- Peers participated in 85% of the incidents
- Schools are aware of only 4% of the incidents
- Bullies continue to bully throughout their life
- 15% of secondary students report being victimized
- Someone is bullied every 37 seconds
- Bullies are identified by age 8
- Schools are the prime location for bullying

How Students Feel On Campus

- 37% do not feel safe at school
- 50% know someone who switched schools to feel safer
- 43% avoid school restrooms
- 79% say that violence is over stupid things (bumping into someone or rumors)
- 76% feel their lockers are not safe
- 63% say they would learn more if they felt safe
- 47% say that teachers spend half the class time disciplining other students
- 55% have seen weapons on campus

5 Characteristics of a Safe School

- Strong leadership
- Consistent and fair discipline policy
- High teacher involvement
- High expectations
- Parental involvement

10 Myths about Bullying

1. Bullying builds character (anxious, fearful, unhappy)
2. Harmless rite of passage (fact of life, but not acceptable)
3. Kids just being kids (children do it out of choice)
4. Kids bounce right back (many suffer long term emotional pain)
5. Victims bring it on themselves (bully chooses victim)

10 Myths about Bullying

6. Bullying will disappear if you ignore it (doesn't go away)
7. Sticks and stones may break my bones (little comfort)
8. Victims must learn to stand up for themselves (shouldn't be left to fend for themselves, they need adult intervention)
9. Hit the bully back and he will leave you alone - (unlikely to back down if victim goes on offensive)
10. No students are bullied in this school (virtually every school has bullies -- need a no bully policy and plan)

Forms of Bullying

- Teasing
- Taunting
- Threaten/Intimidate /Terrorize
- Intentionally injure victim
- Intentional exclusion
- Manipulating friends toward intentional exclusion
- Spreading rumors
- Cyberbullying
- Offensive comments
- Racial slurs
- Mean jokes
- Make victim do things they don't want to do
- Take/Vandalize victim's property
- Unwanted physical contact with opposite sex

Who Is a Bully?

- A person who doesn't care if bad things happen to other people
- A person who doesn't feel bad when they hurt others
- A person who likes to be in charge and always get their way
- A person who is bullied at home by their parents, siblings
- A person who believes the victim deserves to get bullied

Characteristics of Bullies

- Leaders
- Intelligent
- Fearless
- Impulsive
- Enjoy an audience
- Admired and envied
- Excellent social skills
- Want power

Early Warning Signs

- Pushes and shoves other children while playing
- Says mean things
- Acts and accepts aggression
- No remorse, empathy or anxiety
- Breaks rules, quick to react -- always in a physical manner
- Blames others and always has an excuse
- Likes to be the leader and dominate

Why Do Students Bully?

- To gain power
- To get attention or become popular
- To get material things
- To act out problems at home
- To copy another person they admire

Ways that Students Bully

- Physical aggression
- Verbal aggression
- Social alienation
- Intimidation
- Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying

- Offensive and humiliating images and words through phones and internet (IM, social networks, blogs, chat rooms, bulletin boards, texting)
- Most often with middle and HS students
- Increased dramatically
- Can be done anytime and anywhere

Forms of Cyberbullying

- Flaming
- Online Harassment
- Cyber stalking
- Denigration
- Masquerade
- Outing
- Trickery
- Exclusion

What to do about Cyberbullying

- Educate staff
- Discuss it with students
- Bring in experts
- Alert parents
- Develop computer and cell phone policies
- Follow up on incidents
- Keep record of online activity

Effects of Bullying

- Schools appear as unsafe, anxiety promoting (160,000 students/day miss school due to fear of being bullied)
- Depression
- Self-mutilation
- Suicidal thoughts

The Aggression Continuum



Students Who Are Victims

- Typically anxious and insecure
- Cautious with low self-esteem, alone
- Rarely will defend or retaliate
- Socially isolated may NOT have many friends
- Fears school and feels school is unsafe
- Vulnerable, shy, sensitive, and insecure
- Poor communication skills
- Lacks independence and assertiveness
- Will try too hard to please and make friends

Warning Signs of Being Bullied

- Frequent absences
- Unusual sadness
- Avoids certain school areas and/or activities
- Doesn't eat lunch
- Stays near adults
- Frequent visits to school nurse
- Plays alone on playground
- Withdraws from peers

5 Mistakes in Dealing with Bullies

- Victim Does Nothing
 - Teach them to walk away
- Teacher does nothing
 - Teacher must take action
- Give in to the Bully
 - Expect more of the same
- Letting others think Bullying is acceptable
 - Enlist all bystanders/project a tough facade
- Have no rules
 - Bullies need to know the consequences

Appropriate Victim Actions

- Ignore the bully and walk away
- Document specifics
- Avoid places where Bullies hang out
- Stay within sight of an adult
- Sit near the bus driver
- Walk to school with a friend or group
- Avoid bringing money or items of value
- Be careful giving out your phone number/email
- Join clubs, teams, make new friends

Bully-Free Classrooms

- Discuss bullying types of behavior
- Have Bully lessons at the beginning of the year
- Distribute Bully surveys
- Review School Policy
- Define a Bully
- Ask students how they feel when bullied
- Share ideas on how to Bully-free their campus
- Discuss victims and helping those being bullied
- Develop and sign a no-Bully policy

Ways of Bully-Proofing Classroom

- Teacher is core of anti-bullying programs
- Need "Bully-free Zone" in classroom
- Unacceptable in classroom - teach it
- Discuss what bullying is and give examples
- Foster climate of cooperation and caring
- Avoid sarcasm and put downs
- Incorporate lessons on individual differences
- Class meeting periodically

More Ways of Bully-Proofing Classroom

- Inform other staff
- Catch bully being kind and acknowledge
- Role play social situations where bullying occurs
- Closely monitor students who are at risk
- Try to connect with the bully
- Discipline bully but not harshly

Interventions in Dealing with Bullies

- Do not personalize
- Establish a connection with the bully
- Make the bully your ally
- Praise them for appropriate behaviors
- Provide opportunities for their success
- Spend 3 minutes every day with the bully for ten days
- Explain to them heroes are more idolized than bullies
- Get them involved in sports, clubs, or drama

Preventing Bullying

- Be vigilant
- Monitor hotspots
- Identify patterns
- Encourage bystanders to report
- Keep eye on isolated students
- Be available for alternative activities for at-risk students

Resources

Department of Health and Human Services Website:
http://pathwayscourses.samhsa.gov/bully/bully_fs_parents.htm

National Resource Center for Safe Schools (NRCSS),
1-800-268-2275 or (503) 275-0131.

Pacer National Center for Bullying Prevention Website:
<http://www.pacerkidsagainstbullying.org>.

Seskin, Steve (2009, Summer). No Bullying! *CARS+ SPECIAL EDUCATOR*, 29(3), 4-5.

Shore, Kenneth, Psy. D. *Bullying Prevention, A Comprehensive Schoolwide Approach*, Dude Publishing, Port Chester, NY, 2005.

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