

## **Bullies - Educators**

Educators let students know they care.

Bullies let students know who's boss.

Educators teach self-control.

Bullies exert their own control.

Educators diffuse minor disruptions with humor.

Bullies use sarcasm to turn disruptions into confrontations.

Educators privately counsel chronic discipline problems.

Bullies publicly humiliate chronic misbehavers.

Educators help all students feel successful.

Bullies punish students for being unsuccessful.

Educators address misbehavior.

Bullies attack the character of the misbehavers.

Educators see each student's uniqueness.

Bullies compare children to one another.

Educators treat all students with respect.

Bullies make it clear that not all students deserve respect.

Educators highlight good behavior.

Bullies make examples of poor behavior.

Educators, aware of the power they wield over their students, choose their words and actions carefully.

Bullies wield their power recklessly, frequently resorting to anger and intimidation.

Educators educate.

Bullies humiliate.

**Are you a bully?**

Source: Linda Starr (Educationworld.com, 2003)

# **THE BULLY, THE BULLIED, and BEYOND**

**Strategies for Schools, Teachers, and Parents  
Help for Bullies, Victims, and Bystanders**

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## **WHY DEAL WITH BULLYING?**

- Childhood bullying is dangerous and should not be tolerated in our schools.
- Schools have a legal and moral duty to stop persistent victimization.
- A survey found that 6 to 10% of school age children are chronic victims. (Bernstein & Watson 1997) *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 12 (4).
- A nationwide report of students ages 12-18 found that 32% were experiencing bullying within the past school year. (U.S. Education Department, 2007)
- One in four youths (14-17 years old) report being physically attacked by a peer in the past year (Justice Department, 2007)
- Both bullies and victims are more likely than other students to report psychological and social problems (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2003).

## **BULLYING IMPACTS LEARNING**

- The National Education Association (NEA) estimates that 160,000 children miss school every day due to fear of attack or intimidation by other students. The report indicated that likely 15% of all school absenteeism is directly related to the fear of being bullied at school.
- Bullying and social isolation can increase the likelihood a student will have poor grades, drop out of school, or develop substance abuse problems. (*Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*, Feb. 2010)
- Psychologist Abraham Maslow suggests that all humans must have basic needs met before other needs, such as education, become important. Second in Maslow's hierarchy of needs – behind air, food and sleep – is safety. If children do not feel safe in school, learning is not as much of a priority.

## **BULLYING HAS NEGATIVE LONG-TERM AFFECTS**

- Students who are bullied suffer long-term physical, emotional, psychological, social, and academic effects.
- There is a well-established correlation between being the victim of bullying and thinking about or attempting suicide (*Bullicide*).
- A 1993 Norwegian study found that students identified as bullies in middle school are six times more likely to be convicted of a crime by the age of 24, abuse their own children and/or spouse, have substance-abuse problems, have multiple divorces, and are less likely to be promoted at their job.

## **BULLYING-PREVENTION PROGRAMS DO WORK!**

- Olweus saw a 50 percent reduction in bullying in 42 schools in Norway when the school instituted a whole-school approach to bullying. Other antisocial behaviors were also reduced (vandalism, fighting, theft, and truancy.)
- McCormick Middle School in South Carolina launched an school-wide bullying-prevention campaign. At the end of the first year, the number of students reporting bullying dropped from 50% to 22%.

## **WHAT IS BULLYING?**

- Bullying is when a more powerful individual or a group repeatedly and intentionally imposes harmful acts upon an weaker individual, causing embarrassment, fear, pain, or discomfort.
- Bullying is disrespectful and an abuse of power.
- Bullying is an imbalance of power and can take many forms: physical, verbal, nonverbal gestures, extortion, or exclusion. It can include assault, tripping, intimidation, rumor-spreading, isolation, demands for money, destruction of work or property, theft of possessions, or name-calling.

## **FAMILY ISSUES AND BULLYING**

- Negative family practices in early childhood are clearly associated with later antisocial and bullying behaviors.
- Schools and homes that lovingly set clear limits and boundaries and are nurturing and caring can do much to prevent bullying.

### **FAMILIES OF BULLIES**

- Home lives of bullies are often characterized by rejection, frigidity and a lack of nurturing that can result in a lack of empathy for their victims.
- Parents of bullies are more likely to subject their children to severe physical punishment or violence.
- The families of bullies tended to be socially isolated.
- There is often chaos in the home and frequent parental conflicts.
- The family seldom uses problem-solving strategies, and violence is often considered a solution.
- Parenting practices are usually inconsistent and ineffective.
- There is typically a lack of monitoring of TV, movies, friends, music, video games, grades, and substance use.

### **FAMILIES OF VICTIMS**

- There can be sibling abuse or abuse by the parents in the home.
- Consistent disciplinary practices are often lacking.
- The parents of victims usually have financial and/or marital problems.
- The parents of victims are often overly emotionally involved and entangled in their children's lives.
- The families may become deeply wrapped up in responding to the child's oppression.
- Bullying victims are often overly-dependence on parental support.
- Parents may also have deficits in social skills.

## SCHOOL BULLYING SURVEY

We want our school to be a better place to learn and live. Please answer the following questions about the way people behave toward one another in our school. By answering these questions, you are helping us learn about problems our school might have. If we can identify the problems we can do something to improve the situation. Please answer honestly; we want to know how you feel. No one will know your name or how you answered. Use the following definition to answer the questions.

**Bullying occurs when one student or a group of students intentionally and repeatedly hurts another student through actions or words.**

Male Female (Circle one) Age \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

**Circle your answer.**

1. Have you ever been bullied at this school or any school? Yes No
2. Have you been bullied at this school during the past year? Yes No
3. Have you been bullied at this school during the past month? Yes No
4. Have you been bullied at this school during the past week? Yes No

**Answer the following questions based on your experiences during the past 30 days.**

5. How many times have you been teased in a way that made you feel uncomfortable?

0                      1-2                      3-4                      5 or more

6. How many times have you been called names by someone?

0                      1-2                      3-4                      5 or more

7. How many times have you been threatened or intimidated by others?

0                      1-2                      3-4                      5 or more

8. How many times have you been excluded or left out on purpose?

0                      1-2                      3-4                      5 or more

9. How many times have you been hit, pushed, or kicked in a way that physically hurt or made you feel afraid?

0                      1-2                      3-4                      5 or more

10. How many times have you experienced unwelcome sexual comments, gestures, or touching?

0                      1-2                      3-4                      5 or more

11. Put an **X** by each place where you have been bullied during the past month.

<input type="checkbox"/> On the school bus	<input type="checkbox"/> In the restroom
<input type="checkbox"/> Walking to or from school	<input type="checkbox"/> In the lunchroom
<input type="checkbox"/> In the classroom	<input type="checkbox"/> In the locker room
<input type="checkbox"/> In the halls at lockers	<input type="checkbox"/> On the Internet or phone
<input type="checkbox"/> Walking between buildings	<input type="checkbox"/> After school events
<input type="checkbox"/> At P.E. or on the playground	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

**If you HAVE been bullied during the past 30 days, answer questions 12-14. If not, skip ahead to #15.**

Circle all responses that apply.

12. The bullying I received was from....

Boys    Girls    Younger    Older    Same Age

13. Were school officials aware of the bullying?

Yes                      No

14. Were you happy with the way school officials handled the bullying situation?

Yes                      No

**All students answer the following questions.**

15. Overall, how much of a problem is bullying at our school?

Intolerable                  Irritating                  No Problem

16. How well do adults deal with bullying at our school?

Well                  Adequately                  Poorly

17. Do you feel safe from bullies at our school?      Yes                  No

18. Do you admire or like bullies?                      Yes                  No

19. Do you know how to report bullying?              Yes                  No

20. If you saw someone being bullied, would you feel safe reporting the bullying problem to school officials?

Yes                  No

21. Have you yourself bullied another student during the past 30 days?

Yes                  No

Please write down any additional information, comments, or suggestions that you feel will help our school improve in the way we treat one another

# CYBERBULLYING

Cyberbullying is when someone is repeatedly harassed, mistreated, or made fun of by another person online, while using mobile phones, text or use of other portable electronic devices. Unlike traditional bullying, cyberbullying comes right into the victims' home and can be happening at any time of the day or night.

A 2007 survey of 2000 young people between the ages of 11 and 16 found:

- 43% reported that they had experienced cyberbullying.
- 33% reported engaging in cyberbullying in the past 30 days.
- 40% of victims did not tell an adult about the experience.

Cyberbullying can involve:

- Harassment via Instant messaging/text messaging
- Stealing passwords
- Inappropriate blog entries
- Improper or insulting websites
- Sending malicious programming code viruses
- Sending porn and other junk e-mail and instant messages (IM).
- Online impersonation
- Sending inappropriate pictures through e-mail and mobile phones

**SEXTING** is a form of cyberbullying that involves sending nude or sexually explicit pictures through mobile phones or other electronic devices..

- More the 25% of teens said they had been involved in sexting in some way and 10% had sent out naked pictures of themselves through mobile phone text messages or e-mail. (Associated Press, 2008)
- **Sexting** can violate laws against having or sending child pornography even when it is sent between young people themselves.
- Sexting can lead to **sextortion**. The blackmailer sends threatening messages promising to electronically distribute the original explicit photos, unless the victim provides more explicit pictures or performs sexual acts.

## SCHOOL RESPONSE TO CYBERBULLYING

The only way to really combat cyberbullying is to educate and raise awareness among students, parents, and educators.

### **School Interventions:**

- Be aware of state laws regarding the use of the Internet.
- Investigate possible in-school bullying related to the cyberbullying.
- Establish a relationship with the internet service provider (ISP) in your area before you need them.
- Monitor student Internet use in school frequently to establish the expectation among students that there is a high probability instances of misuse will be detected and result in disciplinary action.
- Develop a clear, comprehensive policy on acceptable computer use, both on and off school property. The policy should spell out what constitutes cyberbullying and list consequences.
- Include cyberbullying in the school's bullying-prevention policy. Schools can reserve the right to discipline students for actions taken off-campus if those actions are malicious, intentionally disruptive, or affect school safety.
- Make sure your schools' policy on Internet and mobile phone use addresses:
  - Access to inappropriate material.
  - Unacceptable communication and communication safety.
  - Unlawful and inappropriate activities.
  - Protection of students personal information.
  - A notice of limited expectation of privacy.
  - Requirements of reporting cyberbullying or inappropriate mobile phone use.
  - Teach **ethics for electronic communications** and encourage students to sign a pledge to use electronic communication ethically.
- If the cyberbully is done using a mobile phone, trace the number, and hold the responsible individual accountable.
- The more repeated the communications are, the greater the threats, and the more dangerous the methods, the more likely it is that law enforcement or legal action needs to be sought.
- If cyberbullying involves some form of hacking, password thievery, unauthorized sharing of personal contact information, or identity theft, contact the police.

**Strategies to Use with Students:**

- Teach students to respect others and to take a stand against bullying of all kinds.
- Encourage students to report incidents of cyberbullying and refuse to protect or enable the perpetrator.
- Instruct students not to open, read, or forward hurtful messages and to refuse to visit websites designed to bully others.
- Encourage students to protect themselves by never agreeing to meet with any person they meet online, and to reach out to a trusted adult if they have been threatened online.
- Challenge students to protest when individuals take videos or pictures that could be used to embarrass others.
- Make sure cyber-ethics is included in any computer instruction given at school.
- Inform students that digital information generally **does not** go away and information can nearly always be traced.

**Students Experiencing Cyberbullying Should:**

- Tell a trusted adult.
- Send a non-emotional, assertive message to the cyberbully telling him/her to stop.
- Block or filter all further communications through e-mail, text, and IM contact list.
- Avoid going to the site or chat group where he/she has been attacked.
- Change their e-mail address, account username, or phone number.
- Save the inappropriate message(s). If they file a complaint with the ISP they will need to provide the harmful material as evidence.
- Trace the number sending the bullying messages and contact the phone company. Be sure to save the communication.

**Help for Parents:**

- Send home policies concerning Internet and mobile phone use at the start of the school year.
- Furnish information for all parents concerning cyberbullying and provide training on how to monitor their children's online and mobile usage.
- Inform parents when the school becomes aware of specific problems resulting from cyberbullying.

# SCHOOL-WIDE BULLYING PREVENTION CAMPAIGN

## BULLYING IS UNACCEPTABLE

Parents, teachers, students, administrators, and community leaders need to be aware of and involved in the planning and implementation of the bullying-prevention program. The **principal** is the single most important person in the program and must be committed and involved.

**1. Begin with education.** Educate all staff, students, parents, and community members on the problem of bullying and its long-term consequences.

**2. Have highly visible administrative leadership** that:

- Models respect and responsibility by how they treat all students and staff.
- Demonstrates acceptance of individual differences.
- Has a vision for the school that emphasizes caring for others just as much as good grades or high test scores.
- Implements a plan for reducing the amount of time students can spend unsupervised on campus.

**3. Plan high-profile activities.**

- Invite special guest speakers to address the students and staff on the topic of bullying.
- Sponsor No More Bullying Day (Week, Month).
- Have students make posters, wear buttons, etc., with an bullying prevention theme.
- Encourage students to engage in pro-social activities. Conduct a kindness campaign.
- Hold regular classroom meetings to discuss bullying concerns with students.
- Provide educational opportunities for parents regarding how to determine whether their children may be bullies or victims of bullying, and provide strategies, resources, and suggestions for how to work with the school to find a solution.

**4. Develop a strong disciplinary policy** prohibiting bullying in all forms. A good discipline policy should include:

- A statement that the school will not tolerate bullying behaviors.

- A definition of bullying, with examples (e.g., rumor spreading, isolation, social exclusion, physical aggression, etc.).
- A definition of and list of policies regarding sexual harassment and hazing.
- A wide range of nonviolent consequences for bullying behaviors.
- A requirement that students take responsibility for improving their own behavior.
- The responsibilities of children who witness incidents of bullying and clear guidelines for reporting these incidents.
- Guidelines for teachers and staff on specific actions to take if they witness or are notified of incidents of bullying among students.
- A comprehensive plan for tracking bullying, noting the interventions that were used, and a post-intervention surveys to assess the effectiveness of the strategy.

## **5. Create a school climate that promotes respect for all students.**

- Use instructional time for curricula that promote communication, friendship, anger management, problem-solving, and assertiveness skills.
- Provide opportunities for all students to demonstrate pro-social behaviors through service-learning programs or community service.
- Offer extracurricular activities for a wide variety of gifts and talents (Art, drama, cooking, photography, technology, etc.).
- Use school newsletters, assemblies, and school-wide announcements to report “good news” stories, foster school unity, and create a sense of community.
- Foster communication among school administrators, teachers, parents, and students.
- Insist that the staff models positive, respectful, and supportive behaviors.
- Establish a referral system that brings students who need help to the attention of the administration.
- Communicate with the families of the victims and bullies.

## **6. Implement programs such as:**

- Peer tutoring/mediation
- Cooperative learning
- Education on feelings
- Group problem-solving
- Social-skills training

## **WHAT TO DO ABOUT BULLYING**

- Improve supervision in the schoolyard, cafeteria, restroom, hallways, stairwells, and between buildings.
- Stop the bullying behavior as soon as you become aware of it.
- Never bully the bully. You are the adult; you set the example.

## **ENCOURAGE THE REPORTING OF BULLYING**

Victims or witnesses of bullying rarely report bullying to teachers or even parents.

- Students do not believe that anything would change as a result of reporting bullying.
- In their experience, adult responses have been disappointing or have made the problem worse.
- They fear retaliation and think it is worse to be thought of as “a snitch.”
- Students feel shame and/or fear they would not be believed.
- Children do not want to worry or upset their parents.

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF BULLIES**

- Most bullies do not appear to have much empathy for their victims and may even enjoy inflicting pain on others..
- Young bullies tend to grow into older bullies without appropriate intervention.
- Most bullies have aggressive personalities and are motivated by power and the desire to dominate others.
- Co-bullies support the bullies. They are less aggressive and seldom instigate bullying but become enthusiastic participants when bullying is set in motion by a more aggressive peer.
- The bully-victims represent a small group of students who are both bullying and the victim of bullying. Their behavior can provoke negative responses from those around them which results in rejection and social isolation. Bully-victims can respond to peer rejection by becoming aggressive toward others, often making their social situation worse.

# STRATEGIES TO HELP BULLIES

**THE MORALISTIC APPROACH** – The administration use moral pressure to require the bully to accept and conform to the school’s code of conduct.

**THE LEGALISTIC APPROACH** – The school presents clear rules and identifies consequences for bullying. Rules are consistently enforced.

**THE TARGETED APPROACH** – The school evaluates the needs of the bully and provides re-education, counseling, and/or skills training.

1. Have the bully **take responsibility** for his/her behavior.
  - The bully must acknowledge that his/her behavior is inappropriate.
  - The bully will make restitution by repairing or replacing any destroyed or damaged items.
  - The bully must write or make an apology.
  - Bullies could be asked to provide helpful services to compensate their victim if the victim would like help.
  
2. Help the bully learn to **control his/her behavior**.
  - Use “time for self” to allow the bully time to cool down.
  - Provide instruction on relaxation strategies.
  - Teach self-monitoring skills.
  - Have the bully participate in conflict-resolution and/or anger-management classes.
  - Instruct the bully in friendship skills.

3. Provide the bully opportunities to **make positive contributions** and develop a new identity.

- Ask the bully to report future harassment of the victim.
- Teach the bully to provide support to the victim.
- Assign the bully constructive tasks to occupy him/her during release times.
- Have the bully tutor or teach a class at a lower grade level.
- Have the bully write a report on a Nobel Peace Prize winner and present it to the class.
- Help the bully identify and develop his/her own interest and skills.
- Teach the bully to compliment others and act with kindness.

4. Provide counseling to help bullies **deal with their personal difficulties** and **foster empathy** for the victim.

- Bullying is often a cry for help.
- Provide group counseling utilizing strategies such as reverse role-playing to help the bully develop empathy for his/her victim.
- Help the bully identify his/her illogical thoughts and learn to think differently.

**5. If the bully will not change his/her behavior following repeated interventions and training, he/she should be removed from the class or school and be transferred to another program such as an alternative school, get help from a mental health agency, or face consequences from the police.**

# HELPING THE CHILD WHO IS BULLIED

## REASONS STUDENTS ARE BULLIED

1. They are different in their **appearance**.
  - They are overweight or underweight.
  - They are physically smaller or disabled.
  - They have a less attractive facial appearance.
  - They don't have the "right" clothing.
  
2. They have deficits in the area of **social status**.
  - Their grades are too high or too low.
  - They have a low socioeconomic status.
  - They are members of a minority group.
  - They are not seen as being popular and have few friends.
  - They are often extremely passive and will not defend themselves.
  - They are friends with another student who is bullied.
  - They are overly emotional and are socially withdrawn.
  - They have gender-identity issues.
  
3. They have **disabilities** that can be manifested in inappropriate social behaviors. They may have conditions such as:
  - Physical disabilities that result in a limited ability to participate in all aspects of the school program.
  - ADHD, Autism Spectrum /Asperger's, Sensory Integration Disorder, etc.
  - Other behavioral, emotional, or learning problems.

**CONSEQUENCES OF BULLYING** – Students who are chronically bullied and/or socially isolated are more likely to:

- Complain of headaches and/or stomach pains.
- Have excessive absences and/or check-outs and receive **low grades**.
- Not want to go to the lunchroom, or have a poor appetite.
- Withdrawal from activities and not want to participate in group work.
- Report nervousness, depression, anger, and fear.
- Contemplate **suicide** as a possible solution.
- Suffer long-term consequences, such as increased anxiety, depression, and/or troubled adult relationships.

## **PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS TO LEARN SKILLS**

**1. Assertiveness training:** Most victims of bullying look like victims. They should learn to:

- Stand up straight and hold their heads high.
- Keep their shoulders back and make eye contact.
- Lean forward and speak with a firm voice.
- Become aware of how to communicate through body language.
- Walk with confidence.
- Know the policies for reporting bullying incidents.

**2. Social skills training:** Victims often profit from social-skills instructions with other students in settings where they may be less afraid. They benefit from:

- Peer-mediation training.
- Anger-management classes.
- Friendship instruction.
- Practicing problem-solving.
- Positive visualization techniques.
- Individual and/or group counseling.

**3. Build on strengths:** All students have gifts and talents. You can:

- Offer leadership opportunities.
- Provide opportunities for all gifts and talents (art, music, humor, etc.) to be recognized and encouraged.
- Promote participation in school activities and classes where they will find success.
- Encourage positive relationships with supportive adults.

## **THINK SAFETY FIRST**

1. Tell students to avoid places where bullies hang out.

- Encourage students to stay with their friends because bullies are less likely to bother them when they are with others.
- Tell students to move closer to the teacher when they are being harassed so the teacher can see what is happening and intervene.
- Develop a nonverbal cue that will let the teacher know when students need help with a bully.

2. Teach students being bullied to look for signs that the bully is becoming violent.

- Explain how to watch for angry facial expressions and aggressive body language.
- Help them be able to notice when verbal bullying is becoming threatening and violent in nature.
- Tell students to be especially cautious when the bully tries to block their movements.

3. Teach students being bullied to immediately walk toward a friend and/or adult and get help if:

- They are alone.
- They are approached by a group of bullies.
- They feel physically threatened.
- The bully is making threats that make them uncomfortable.
- The bully has a weapon.
- The bully is using drugs or alcohol.

4. Make sure the student being bullied knows where to go for help.

- Help them identify teachers, friends, etc., that they trust to ask for help.
- Assure students that they don't have to be embarrassed to ask for help; everyone needs help at times.

## LEARN TO RESPOND

Teach students appropriate responses to the comments and/or actions of bullies.

1. **Ignore** the bully. It is best to ignore the bully if:
  - You do not know the bully.
  - The bullying is occurring for the first time.
  
2. **Agree** with the possible truth. Say:
  - I know.
  - You're right about that.
  - My barber did get kind of carried away.
  - I was kind of clumsy.
  - You're right, basketball just isn't my game today.
  
3. **Disagree** with the bully. Say:
  - No, I'm not.
  - That's just not true.
  - That isn't right•.
  
4. Give a **neutral response** to the bully. Say:
  - So.
  - Whatever.
  - You noticed.
  - You may be right.
  - You're entitled to your opinion.
  - I'm sure that is the way you see it.
  - It's ok; you don't have to like me.
  - And your point is?
  
5. **Ask** for what you want in a firm, calm voice. Say:
  - I don't like what you are saying to me.
  - Go away and stop bothering me.
  - I'm asking you to stop saying (doing) that.
  - What you are doing is wrong (mean). Stop.
  - If you don't stop, I'm going to get help.
  - I won't fight you because it's wrong to fight.

6. **Confuse** the bully by turning the insult into a compliment. Say:
  - Why, thank you. What a kind thing to say.
  - That is so sweet; thanks for sharing.
  - Coming from you, that is a real compliment.
  - You must like me because you are having a hard time keeping your hands off me. Alternative: Wouldn't spend so much time talking to me.
  - What a sweet thing to say. I didn't know you cared.
  
7. Use **humor**. Say:
  - Excellent insult! May I use that one?
  - Really, and I have wasted all this time thinking I was cute (tall, short, skinny, etc.).
  - Did you think of that all by yourself?
  - Wow, how long did it take you to think of that?
  - What do I look like now? And make a funny face.
  - Just laugh and say: Good one.
  
8. Respond to an insult with something totally **confusing**. Say:
  - Oh, go eat ice cream.
  - Well, I heard you had two feet.
  - Yes, but can you stand on your hands?
  - I'm not your eggplant.
  
9. Ask the bully **questions**. Say:
  - Why did you say that? Do you really think so? Who else do you think is weird (skinny, tall, etc.)?
  - How tall do you think I am? How tall do you have to be to be considered tall? How tall are you?
  - How do you spell that? Well can you spell "ridiculous"?
  - When did you learn that? What are some other things you know?
  - Why are you so interested in where I buy my clothes? Where do you buy your clothes?
  - Why would you want to tell me I am in LD (short, clumsy, etc.)? Do you think I don't know I am in LD? Do you think that hurts my feelings? Is there a reason you want to hurt my feelings?
  - (An all-time favorite is playing deaf.) What did you say? I'm sorry I still didn't hear you. Could you say that again?

10. Learn to use the **broken record** technique. Say,
  - I want you to stop. I want you to stop. I want you to stop. ..
  - Leave me alone. Leave me alone. Leave me alone. ..
  - Stop saying that. Stop saying that. *You get the idea.*
  
11. Look beyond the insult and **show an interest** in the bully. Say:
  - You must be really angry with me. Have I hurt your feelings?
  - I don't blame you for being upset, your team played really well. I know your disappointed.
  - I am sorry that you did not make the team, too. I know how it feels to not get something you really wanted.
  - I'm sorry. It is upsetting when someone bumps into you.
  - I guess you think making insults is a way to fit in but it really just turns people off.
  
12. Give the bully a **compliment**. Say:
  - I am sorry you feel that way, because I think you are really a nice person.
  - I guess my hair is a mess today, but may I say your hair looks really nice.
  - I guess you don't like my clothes ,but I really like the shirt you are wearing.
  - You say mean things, but down deep I think you have a good hear.
  
13. Use **"I" messages**. Say:
  - I feel..... (State your feelings.)
  - when you..... (State the behavior.)
  - and I want you to.... (Tell what would make the situation better.)
  
14. Know when to **walk away**. Bullies can be dangerous.

**Bullies want you to be upset.  
Don't give them what they want!**

## HELP FOR BYSTANDERS

*“In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies,  
but the silence of our friends. “*

Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr

Three types of bystanders:

**encouragers:** they laugh and cheer supporting the bully

**observers:** they provide an audience but don't take sides

**defenders:** they step in or comfort the victim

- The majority of students are neither chronically bullied nor are they bullies themselves. **Gaining the support of bystanders is the best way to stop bullying.**
- Some 88% of students report witnessing some type of bullying at school.
- Between 10 and 20% of students report they try to help the victim, and 33% said they should help but do not.
- When a bystander laughs or cheers during the victimization, the bully perceives an increase of status and the bullying usually escalates.
- If bystanders intervene and support the victim, bullying is likely to stop.
- Bystanders can learn how to safely help victims during attacks and how to not reward and reinforce bullying behaviors.
- Bystanders can become indirect victims when they experience the repetitive abuse of their peers. They report feelings of fear, discomfort, guilt, helplessness, and experience a negative impact on their sense of security.(O'Brien, 1998)
- It is often **easier to change bystanders' attitudes and behaviors than the bullies!**

**Bystanders can help by:**

- Refusing to spread rumors verbally or through electronic communications.
- Refusing to join in when someone is being bullied.
- Assisting a rejected or lonely person at a safer time and place.
- Creating a distraction to draw the attention away from the victim.
- Going to get adult assistance during a bullying situation.
- Speaking up when they see someone being bullied.

**Schools need to provide education so bystanders will be able to:**

- Deal with their feelings of helplessness and guilt.
- Develop their own character through helping someone else.
- Learn and practice intervention skills.
- Assess the risk to themselves and others.
- Identify and take appropriate actions to stop bullying.
- Use an identified intervention phrase, such as:

Take a panther pause.

Cougars are kind.

Not here!

Kindness counts at Kennedy.

# **BULLYING AND STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

Students with disabilities and those in special-needs classes are often at greater risk of being bullied or become a bully-victim because of their lack of academic and social power. Students with disabilities:

- Must be protected from bullying.
- Need to learn social skills they are lacking.
- Ought to be provided assertiveness training.
- Should be made to feel they belong in the school community.
- May need individual or group counseling.
- Need others to understand their disabilities and accept them for who they are.

## **TEACHER STRATEGIES FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

Teachers of students with special needs should:

- Not take the student's inappropriate behaviors personally.
- Show compassion for the student's special struggles.
- Seek out information on the nature of the student's disorder and, if appropriate, educate students in the classroom.
- Help downplay the negative aspects of the student's challenges and build on his/her strengths.
- **Never** intentionally embarrass a student with disabilities.
- Work with the student to identify nonverbal cues to indicate that they need help, are off task, and/or need to be more conscious of his/her behavior.

## CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

Students with disabilities can be magnets for bullies and often don't realized that they are being made fun of until it is too late. A "circle of friends" can be used to help the child with disabilities filter out bullying peers.

- Identify compassionate peers who are willing to be the student's "friend for the day."
- Give the *friend* some training and provide an opportunity for the "friend" to get to know the student with a social challenges.
- Ask the *friend* to accompany the student with social needs to the rest room, stay near him at P.E., sit with him in the lunchroom, and assist with other identified tasks.
- If the student with a disability is being teased or bullied, the *friend* can intervene and ask the bully to stop and/or gets an adult to help.
- If several students are identified as "friends," this does not put a strain on any one volunteer.

## ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER

Many of the behaviors associated with ADHD make children targets for bullying.

- ADDers are often "**provocative victims**" and can sometimes make you feel they deserve the bully's response.
- The child with ADHD is restless and often teases and irritates others. He/she doesn't pick up social cues to know when to stop.
- Impulsive behavior associated with ADHD causes children to respond before thinking of an appropriate response.
- Children with ADHD often have difficulty waiting their turn and tend to interrupt others.
- ADDers have a developmental delay in their executive functioning skills and can not plan and sequence their behavior as well as others their age.
- ADDers can be easily aroused and often become overly emotional.
- The ADDer may fight back against the bully, but is usually ineffective and ends up losing.
- The ADDer can have difficulty switching gears and may try to continue the conflict, experiencing serious frustration and distress.

## **AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER/ASPERGER'S**

**Autim/Asperger's:** are also called pervasive developmental disorders (PDD). These disorders cause impairments in social skills, a limited ability to engage in reciprocal conversations, and an intense interest in one special subject. Many children with PDD become targets for bullies because they lack social and communication skills.

### **FEATURES OF PDD**

Students with PDD often:

- Are horribly misunderstood and are teased, bullied, or ignored by others.
- Appear to have a lack of empathy.
- Don't seem to understand the unwritten rules of social play.
- Have a limited ability to form friendships.
- Misunderstand non-verbal communication and so persist responding inappropriately.
- Rigidly follow codes of conduct when they are explained.
- Exhibit a preoccupation with one or more special areas of interest.
- Display an overly formal speech pattern.
- Lack the ability to share enjoyment with other people.
- Rely on nonfunctional routines or rituals and are upset by changes.
- Are hurt by the teasing and are often unaware that their unusual behavior is contributing to the problem.

## **SENSORY INTEGRATION DYSFUNCTION**

**Sensory Integration Dysfunction:** The ineffective processing of information received through the senses, causing problems with learning, development, and behavior. Children with SID are often bullied because they have social deficits in one or more areas.

### **AREAS OF SENSORY DYSFUNCTION**

- Difficulty with rhythm and use of time.
- Lack of awareness regarding interpersonal distance and what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate touching.
- Misinterpretation of, or lack of attention to, the meaning of gestures and postures, and the inability to use gestures appropriately.
- Inability to accurately “read” facial expressions, maintain eye contact, and/or use facial expressions with the appropriate intensity.
- Misunderstanding of or inability to interpret tone of voice, voice volume, etc.
- Inappropriate use of whistling, humming, throat clearing, etc.
- Lack of understanding regarding style of dress and how clothes are worn.
- Lack of attention to good personal hygiene.

### **OTHER DISABILITIES THAT CAN CAUSE BULLYING**

- Physical disabilities
- Medical problems
- Learning disability
- Auditory-language impairment
- Speech/articulation difficulties
- Vision problems
- Eating disorders

## CREATE A SAFE CLASSROOM COMMUNITY

*“People don’t get along because they fear each other. People fear each other because they don’t know each other. They don’t know each other because they have not properly communicated with each other.”*

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

### **Secure, happy students seldom bully their peers.**

#### **Help students get to know each other.**

1. Conduct activities that allow students to share information concerning their lives, goals, interests, etc.
2. Establish appreciation time to encourage students to respond to one another in caring ways.
3. Confront “moral illiteracy” and challenge students to examine the consequences of their behaviors.
4. Teach the law of *reversibility* and *universalability*:
  - How would you feel if someone did that to you?
  - Would you want all people to act this way in a similar situation?
5. Hold class meetings to encourage communication and problem-solving skills.
  - Start with positives.
  - Identify concerns.
  - Facilitate respectful sharing and listening.
  - Practice problem-solving through the democratic process.
  - End on a positive note.
6. Develop a class mission statement.
7. Encourage students to seek help if they are having academic or social problems
8. Foster group accountability for class rules and academic success.

## THE TEACHER AS THE MODEL

*“I have come to a frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom . . . As a teacher, I possess tremendous power to make a child’s life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated, and a child humanized or dehumanized.”*

Haim Ginott

Israeli-born educator and psychologist

### **Teachers can:**

1. Demonstrate a high level of respect for all students and adults, both inside and outside the classroom.
2. Greet each student by name and show interest in all students. Encourage students with personal comments and/or notes.
3. Help and encourage all students to experience academic and social success based on their gifts. Plan activities so all students can demonstrate their strengths.
4. Encourage students to feel safe in sharing their feelings and needs by disclosing their ideas, likes, dislikes and dreams.
5. Avoid favoritism; it can lead to jealousy and bullying.
6. Be careful with the use of sarcasm and never intentionally embarrass students or do anything that could undermine a student’s dignity or self-esteem.
7. Use personal conferences to give students caring, corrective feedback when they need it. Listen to the students’ needs.

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**Web-site resources:**

[www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov](http://www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov) - bullying information, resources, and prevention tips.

[www.bestbuddies.org](http://www.bestbuddies.org) - enhancing the lives of people with intellectual disabilities.

[www.cyberbullying.us](http://www.cyberbullying.us) - cyberbullying research, anecdotes, resources and more.

[www.pacer.org/bullying](http://www.pacer.org/bullying) - engages and educates communities to address bullying prevention.

[www.safeteens.com](http://www.safeteens.com) - provides social-web safety tips for teens and parents.

[www.wiredsafety.org](http://www.wiredsafety.org) - internet safety, help and education.