

Bullying

What is bullying?

Bullying is a repeated form of youth violence, aggressive behavior that is intentional, and involves an imbalance of power or strength.

www.bullyinginfo.org

Repeated

Intentional

Imbalance of power

The difference between bullying and conflict

■ Bullying

- Most often happens in privacy or out of the way places from adults
- Someone is targeting one person
- Threats are made and bullies hurt people with words or actions
- Bullies are not friends with their targets

■ Conflict

- Often happens where everyone can see
- Usually has a lot of people around and involved
- May involve fighting but both people are fighting
- Afterwards the problem is worked out

Bullying or Conflict?

- Bobby is missing his favorite pencil. He suddenly sees Jimmy using it. “Hey, give me back my pencil!” he yells. Jimmy tells him he found it on the floor and not it’s his pencil. Bobby takes Jimmy’s eraser and throws it into the garbage can.

Bullying or Conflict?

- A group of girls have been friends since first grade. One day, Amber tells the other girls not to be friends anymore with Sara. The other girls agree and run away from Sara every day at recess and lunch. They won't tell her why, and she starts to cry because she doesn't know why they are doing this to her.

Types of Bullying

- **Physical Bullying** – is action oriented...includes hitting or kicking a victim, or damaging a victim's property
- **Emotional Bullying** – uses words to hurt or humiliate another person...includes name-calling, insults, making racist comments, and constant teasing
- **Social Bullying** – causes harm to one's group acceptance...includes spreading rumors and gossiping
- **Cyberbullying** - bullying through email, instant messaging, in a chat room, on a Web site, or through digital messages or images sent to a cell phone. (same intent to harm...distinguish between "put down" and "get back")

Violence Impacts Life Skills & Academic Success!

- **1/3** of all students have been bullied at school
- **160,000 students** skip school daily because of bullying... impacts **absenteeism**
- Effects of bullying **persist into adulthood**, with **victims** being at greater **risk for depression**
- **Bullies** are at four-times greater risk for **criminal behavior**
- **Detracts** from student **learning** and time spent **teaching**
- Hyper vigilant**Fight or Flight!**

Fact or Myth

- **People who bully have power over those they bully.**
 - **FACT** – People who bully others usually pick on those who have less social power (peer status), psychological power (know how to harm others), or physical power (size, strength). However, some people who bully also have been bullied by others. People who both bully and are bullied by others are at the highest risk for problems (such as depression and anxiety) and are more likely to become involved in risky or delinquent behavior.
- **Spreading rumors is a form of bullying.**
 - **FACT** – Spreading rumors, name-calling, excluding others, and embarrassing them are all forms of social bullying that can cause serious and lasting harm.
- **Only boys bully.**
 - **MYTH** – People think that physical bullying by boys is the most common form of bullying. However, verbal, social, and physical bullying happens among both boys and girls, especially as they grow older.

Fact or Myth

- **People who bully are insecure and have low self-esteem.**
 - **MYTH** – Many people who bully are popular and have average or better-than-average self-esteem. They often take pride in their aggressive behavior and control over the people they bully. People who bully may be part of a group that thinks bullying is okay. Some people who bully may also have poor social skills and experience anxiety or depression. For them, bullying can be a way to gain social status.
- **Bullying often resolves itself when you ignore it.**
 - **MYTH** – Bullying reflects an imbalance of power that happens again and again. Ignoring the bullying teaches students who bully that they can bully others without consequences. Adults and other students need to stand up for children who are bullied, and to ensure they are protected and safe.

Fact or Myth

- **All children will outgrow bullying.**
 - **MYTH** – For some, bullying continues as they become older. Unless someone intervenes, the bullying will likely continue and, in some cases, grow into violence and other serious problems. Children who consistently bully others often continue their aggressive behavior through adolescence and into adulthood.
- **Reporting bullying will make the situation worse.**
 - **MYTH** – Research shows that children who report bullying to an adult are less likely to experience bullying in the future. Adults should encourage children to help keep their school safe and to tell an adult when they see bullying.
- **Teachers often intervene to stop bullying.**
 - **MYTH** – Adults often do not witness bullying despite their good intentions. Teachers intervene in only 14 % of classroom bullying episodes and in 4% of bullying incidents that happen outside the classroom.

Fact or Myth

- **Nothing can be done at schools to reduce bullying.**
 - **MYTH** – School initiatives to prevent and stop bullying have reduced bullying by 15 to 50 percent. The most successful initiatives involve the entire school community of teachers, staff, parents, students, and community members.
- **Parents are usually aware that their children are bullying others.**
 - **MYTH** – Parents play a critical role in bullying prevention, but they often do not know if their children bully or are bullied by others. To help prevent bullying, parents need to talk with their children about what is happening at school and in the community.

Self Check

Changing behaviors...

People who are bullied

- Have **higher risk of depression and anxiety** that may persist into adulthood.
- Have **increased thoughts about suicide** that may persist into adulthood. In one study, adults who recalled being bullied in youth were 3 times more likely to have suicidal thoughts or inclinations.
- Are more **likely to have health complaints**. In one study, being bullied was associated with physical health status 3 years later.
- Have **decreased academic achievement** and school participation.
- Are more likely to **miss, skip, or drop out of school**.
- Are more likely to **retaliate through extremely violent measures**. In 12 of 15 school shooting cases in the 1990s, the shooters had a history of being bullied.

People who bully

- Have a higher risk of **abusing alcohol and other drugs** in adolescence and as adults.
- Are more likely to get into **fights, vandalize property, and drop out of school.**
- Are more likely to **engage in early sexual activity.**
- Are more likely to have **criminal convictions and traffic citations** as adults. In one study, 60% of boys who bullied others in middle school had a criminal conviction by age 24.
- Are more likely to be **abusive toward their romantic partners, spouses or children** as adults.

People who witness bullying

- Have increased use of tobacco, alcohol or other drugs.
- Have increased mental health problems, including depression and anxiety.
- Are more likely to miss or skip school.

Bully Proofing your child

- **Help your child understand bullying.** Explain what bullying is.
- **Keep open lines of communication with your child.** Check in with your child and listen to any concerns about friends and other students.
- **Encourage your child to pursue their interests.** Doing what they love may help your child be more confident among their peers and make friends with other kids with similar interests.
- **Teach your child to take a stand against bullying.** Give guidance about how to stand up to those who bully if it is safe to do so.
- **Talk to your child about seeking help from a trusted adult when feeling threatened by a bully.** Talk about whom they should go to for help and role-play what they should say. Assure your child that they should not be afraid to tell an adult when someone they know is being bullied.
- **Know what is going on in your child's school.** Visit the school website, subscribe to the student paper—if there is one—and join the PTA listserv or mailing list. Get to know other parents, school counselors, and staff. Contact the school by phone or e-mail if you have suggestions to make the school a safer and better learning place.

What should you do if your child is being bullied?

- **Talk with your child.** Focus on your child. Express your concern and make it clear that you want to help.
- **Empathize with your child.** Say bullying is wrong, that it is not their fault, and that you are glad they had the courage to tell you about it.
- **Work together to find solutions.** Ask your child what they think can be done to help. Reassure them that the situation can be handled privately.
- **Document ongoing bullying.** Work with your child to keep a record of all bullying incidents. If it involves cyberbullying, keep a record of all messages or postings.
- **Be persistent.** Bullying may not be resolved overnight.
- **Stay vigilant to other possible problems that your child may be having.** Some of the warning signs may be signs of other serious problems. Share your concerns with a counselor at your child's school.
- **Help your child develop strategies and skills for handling bullying.** Provide suggestions for ways to respond to bullying, and help your child gain confidence by rehearsing their responses.

How can I work with the school to prevent bullying?

- **Know the school policies.** Ask for a copy or check the student handbook.
- **Open the lines of communication.** Call or set up an appointment to talk with your child's teacher or school counselor and establish a partnership to stop the bullying.
- **Get help for your child.** Seek advice from your child's guidance counselor or other school-based health professionals.
- **Commit to making the bullying stop.** Talk regularly with your child and the with the school staff to see whether the bullying has stopped.

What Not to Do

- Never tell your child to ignore the bullying.
- Do not blame your child for being bullied.
- Do not encourage your child to harm the person who is bullying them.
- Do not contact the parents of the students who bullied your child.
- Do not demand or expect a solution on the spot.

TOP TEN STRATEGIES FOR HANDLING BULLIES

- #1 Saying "SO"
- #2 Be a Broken Record
- #3 Stand Tall!!
- #4 Breathe deeply
- #5 HA, HA, HA!
- #6 Use the Eyes in the Back of Your Head
- #7 Slip Slidin' Away
- #8 Be Your Own Cheerleader
- #9 Get Help
- #10 Be-friend the Bully

Websites and Contact Info

- www.stopbullying.gov

For questions about this presentation, please contact:

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