

BULLYING, ASSAULT, AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

OUTCOMES

As a result of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Define bullying and explain how it is different than teasing
- Describe the causes and effects of bullying
- Recognize when bullying becomes assault
- Recognize when bullying becomes sexual harassment
- Demonstrate strategies they can use to avoid being intimidated or to deal effectively with bullies
- Demonstrate what they and other bystanders can do to prevent others from being bullied and assaulted

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Flipchart paper and markers (enough for half of the class)
- Pens or pencils for each group
- Masking tape to hang posters

HANDOUTS

- 1 Personal Journal
- 2A -- 2C (enough of each handout for one third of the class)
 - 2A The Short and Long-Term Effects on Victims
 - 2B The Problems of Bullies
 - 2C What Does The Law Say About Bullying?
- 3 (Optional) Draft or Evaluate A School Bullying Policy
- 4 (Optional) What People Can Do To Stop Bullying
- 5 (Optional) Dealing with Bullying
(Optional) A Copy Of Your School's Bullying Policy, if available

PREPARING TO TEACH THIS LESSON

- Prepare the materials described above
- Write up and post the objectives for the lesson

COMMUNITY RESOURCE PEOPLE

A Community Resource Person would add credibility and interest to this lesson. Invite a school counselor, prosecutor, a community police officer or school resource officer, school administrator, or a victim's rights specialist to assist with this lesson. Send a copy of the lesson when confirming the date and location of the class. After he or she has received the lesson, discuss how you will work together to teach it.

For additional suggestions about working with Community Resource People, see the section about Community Resource People in the section labeled "Integrating Law-Related Education Into Your Youth Court Program" in the front section of this manual.

TIMING

As written, this lesson will take about two hours. This estimate is based on a class size of about 25 students. If your class is smaller, it will take less time. If it is larger, it may take longer.

If you cannot dedicate two hours to teaching this class in one session, you have two choices. First, you could break the lesson into two sessions. If you choose this option, a logical place to break the lesson is about ninety minutes into the lesson, after "Part Two," the student newscasts. Be sure to leave enough time for the summary questions and discussion shown at the end of that section.

A second choice that is that you could pick and choose which parts of this lesson you want to teach in one class period. If you choose to shorten the lesson, be sure to give students sufficient time within each activity and do not cut the summary discussion at the end. These are critical to helping students absorb and personalize the information you have taught.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

The content and activities of this lesson may inspire students to want to talk about their own experiences with bullying after the lesson ends. If at all possible, try to arrange your schedule to be available to students who approach you privately after the lesson. If a counselor or other community resource person is helping you with the lesson, ask him or her to stay as well.

SUMMARY

At the end of each lesson is a summary section. It is very important that you watch the clock and leave sufficient time to complete the debrief (summary) with the students. During this reflection time the students can discuss the information learned, clarify any concerns and analyze the skills that they have practiced. This is a critical step in the learning process and must not be neglected.

PART ONE: WHAT DO YOU THINK? WHAT DO YOU KNOW? (25 minutes)

1

Point out and describe the purpose and outcomes of the lesson. If a Community Resource Person is assisting with this lesson, introduce him or her now.

2

Distribute **“Handout 1: Personal Journal”** which can be found at the end of this lesson plan.

Ask a volunteer to read the directions aloud. Tell students they have five minutes to work quietly and independently on their journals. Write the ending time on the board. Ask students to begin working on their journal.

NOTE: Normally, the instructor would walk around the room and check students' work during this time. In this instance, out of respect for their privacy, do not.)

While students are working, write three questions on the board or the flipchart paper:

How did it feel?

What did the bully do?

Why might the bully have done it?

Give a one-minute warning when time is nearly up, but tell students they can continue working quietly if they need more time.

3

Ask students who feel comfortable sharing a story to tell the rest of the class what they saw or what they experienced. Before students begin sharing stories, ask them not to

use the names of the bullies or of the victims to protect their privacy. If they choose to say the story is about themselves, that is fine, but not expected.

NOTE: If no student chooses to share a story, wait quietly for a few moments. They may be trying to work up the nerve to speak. If no one comes forward, use an example from “Optional Handout 5: Dealing With Bullying.”

Allow two or three students to share their stories. (If additional students wish to share their stories, try to let them. If there are too many stories for the time allotted, encourage anyone who wishes to share his or her story to tell someone sitting nearby.)

4

Focus the students’ attention on the second question: “What did the bully do?” Ask students:

- From the stories already told, what types of bullying behaviors do we know about?
- Can you name other types of bullying behaviors?

NOTE: It is not necessary to name or categorize each of the behaviors listed below.) The students responses will likely fall into these categories and include:

- *physical aggression: physical harm (punching, poking, pinching, shoving, hitting, choking, biting, spitting) destroying property*
- *social aggression: spreading rumors, gossip, racial slurs, exclusion from a group, ranking or rating, manipulating peer relationships*
- *verbal aggression: name-calling, insulting, teasing, threatening, telling cruel jokes*
- *intimidation: phone calls, playing mean or embarrassing tricks, ganging up or cornering, demanding servitude, money or property, mean looks or silence*
- *written aggression: threatening or humiliating notes or graffiti*
- *sexual harassment: comments or actions of a sexual nature that make the victim uncomfortable, taunting about sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation, using indecent gestures*
- *racial, cultural, and ethnic harassment: racial slurs, taunting and teasing about race, religion, disabilities, social status, or family problems, comments or actions that make the recipient feel uncomfortable*

Sources: Marla Bonds, “Bully-Proofing Your Middle School,” spring 2000, <http://www.naesp.org> and Hilda Clarice Quiroz, “Youth, Culture and Diversity,” *COPS in Schools: Keeping Our Kids Safe*, U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services and the National School Safety Center, 2000.

5

Ask students:

Do you think girls and boys bully in different ways? If so, how?

Research shows that the stereotypical bully is a boy, but girls are often bullies, too. Girls are more likely to use verbal and psychological aggression than physical intimidation. A girl is more likely to start a hurtful rumor or to exclude another child from a group. Some people dismiss “girl bullying” as simply girls being girls, but ignoring this behavior can be very harmful.

6

Ask students:

What do bullies often bully someone about? (What or who is the target for bullies?)

Research shows that in middle school, girls who mature early are commonly victims of harassment. Interestingly, although most victims do not look very different than their classmates, they are taunted most often because of their physical appearance. In high school, much of the teasing and bullying is based on gender and on sexual orientation.

7

Turn students’ attention to their notes under the question “How did it feel?” Ask students to discuss the effect of bullying on victims.

Their discussion will likely include:

- *frightening*
- *frustrating*
- *helpless*
- *humiliating*
- *like being rejected*
- *isolating, lonely*
- *like being persecuted*
- *hopeless*
- *anxious*
- *embarrassing*
- *ashamed*
- *hurt*
- *unsafe*
- *confusing*

Tell students that research shows that these feelings become stronger when a child is hurt in physical ways. These feelings often become overwhelming when a child is threatened not to tell. They become more serious when a child feels like no one cares about what is happening or that they do not belong at a school.

8

Turn students' attention to their notes about question "Why might the bully have done it?" Ask students to discuss this question.

If their responses do not include the following information, please add these points to their discussion. Point out that there are exceptions and these traits or experiences are not common in every bully.

- *Bullies have learned that bullying works.*
- *Bullies feel powerful and in control at the time of the incident.*
- *Often, beneath a tough exterior, bullies have problems that make them want to be aggressive. For example, many bullies are physically or emotionally abused at home.*
- *Bullies may feel they have to prove something. Many bullies are not successful at school, in sports, or socially, so they act in a way to make them look more powerful. For example, a kid who is short may feel he has to prove something to the bigger kids.*
- *Bullies often target those they can easily upset or over whom they can easily assert their power. They pick victims who react "weakly." They often pick someone who is younger or smaller in size.*
- *Bullies tend to be more aggressive in nature.*
- *Bullies may think bullying humor is acceptable and popular, particularly in light of media images like "real television" and "shock radio jocks" that show it is entertaining to humiliate, embarrass, or destroy others.*
- *Bullies may think their actions are no big deal, especially when bystanders do nothing about it.*
- *Some bullies may feel forced to bully by other people.*

(Important note: Even though you are finished with the students' lists on the board for the moment, save them for a later part of the lesson.)

9

Ask students:

- So, what is bullying, then? (Have them put the definition in their own words.)

- Sometimes people get confused about the difference between teasing and bullying. What do you think is the difference?

Teasing, when it does not hurt feelings, can be a way of showing friendship or that you like someone and want to get their attention. People who tease might say they were just kidding. Most people are sorry for the kind of teasing that hurts someone's feelings.

Bullying is much more serious than teasing. Bullies intend to hurt the person and typically hurt the person over and over again. Sometimes, bullies do it in places or ways they will not get caught.

- Tell students these elements are part of most accepted definitions of bullying:
desire to hurt + hurtful action + a power imbalance + repetition + evident enjoyment by the bully + sense of being oppressed on the part of the victim
- Explain each part of this definition and ask students how closely it matches their definitions.

PART TWO: PUTTING BULLYING INTO PERSPECTIVE

(60 minutes)

1

Put students into groups of four or five students. Ask groups to sit so that each member has a writing surface and can easily see and hear other members of the group.

2

Explain that each group is assigned to write a news story about the significance of bullying for a radio or television broadcast. You will give them the facts they need to include, but they can include other information if time allows and if they wish. The broadcast will be done live and will be two minutes long. Clarify the directions for anyone who is unclear. Tell students the groups will have 15 minutes to prepare their stories. Write the ending time on the board.

3

Pass out Handout 2A to one group, 2B to a different group, and 2C to a third group. If you have more than three groups, give the fourth group A, the fifth group B, etc. Give multiple copies to each group so students do not have to share. These handouts

can be found at the end of this lesson plan.

NOTE: The information contained in these handouts is partially derived from Quiroz, Hilda Clarice, “Youth Culture and Diversity” COPS in Schools: Keeping Our Kids Safe, U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services and the National School Safety Center, 2000, p. 147.

4

Instruct students to begin working in their groups. As the students work, set up a desk in the front of the room where the students will sit to broadcast their stories. Then circulate around the room observing and assisting students. Give a three-minute warning when time is nearly up.

5

When the preparation time is up, invite a group to present its newscast. Tell students in other groups to listen carefully.

6

After each group reads its news story, ask the following questions to the presenters and to the rest of the class:

- What information surprised you the most?
- What information most persuaded you to pay attention to the problem of bullying?
- What would you tell a younger brother, sister, or friend about bullying?

At the conclusion of the newscasts, thank students for their work to this point.

PART THREE: WHAT CAN YOU DO? (30 minutes)

NOTE: You have a choice about which option to take in teaching the next part of the lesson.

Option A: involves reviewing a school bullying policy or writing one. This option is recommended for youth courts that are in school settings.

Option B: involves analyzing what victims, bystanders, and adults can do to stop intimidation and bullying.

If time permits, you could do both activities, or you could continue this lesson on a later day.

Option A: Develop Or Evaluate A School Policy On Bullying

It would be a good idea to invite a school counselor or administrator to co-facilitate this part of the lesson.

1

Ask students if their school has an anti-bullying policy. If so, do they think it is effective? If not, what should be changed?

2

If your school has an anti-bullying policy and if it is available, hand it to students now. Ask them to read it quietly.

3

If your school does not have a bullying policy, ask students:

- Do you think having a school policy would make a difference in bullying?
- What do you think should go into a school policy about bullying?

4

Put students into pairs to evaluate their current school bullying policy or to create a new policy.

5

Distribute “Optional Handout 3: Draft or Evaluate A School Bullying Policy.” This handout can be found at the end of this lesson plan.

NOTE: This activity is adapted with permission from: “Full Court Press,” Homicide: Life on the Streets --- Lessons in Law, written by Street Law, Inc. for Court TV, 2001, pp 3 – 4.)

6

Review the criteria for a good school policy listed on “Optional Handout 3.” Tell students they will have 15 minutes to work on their policies. At the end of that time, they will be invited to share the most important parts of their policy with other students. Write the ending time on the board.

7

As students are working, give each group several pieces of blank flipchart paper and a marker. Then circulate around the room to observe and assist them. Give a one-minute warning when time is nearly up.

8

Ask students to post their policy recommendations on the walls. Invite all students to walk around or look around the room at the other policies. Give them about five minutes to do so.

9

Ask the following questions:

- What recommendations are the most common?
- Which recommendations are most likely to be implemented? Why?
- Which parts of the policy would you be willing to be involved in?
- Do you think these recommendations should be given to our school administrators? Why or why not?

Option B: Analyze what victims, bystanders, and adults can do to stop bullying.

1

Lead a discussion about the critical role of by-standers to bullying. Ask students the following questions:

- If about 85% of a school population is bystanders (neither bullies nor victims), how often do you think these people intervene in bullying?

Researchers have found that adults intervene in 4% of incidents; peers intervene in 11% of incidents.

- When you have seen someone intervene, did the bullying stop?

Most students report that when someone intervenes, the bullying decreases or stops.

- What do you think are the consequences if bystanders do nothing?

If undetected and untreated, bullying creates a climate of fear and anxiety that can harm all

students (not just intended victims) physically, emotionally, and academically.

2

Write three headings on the board: “Victims” “Student Bystanders” “Adults”

Ask students to brainstorm what these people can do to stop intimidation and bullying. Write down two or three suggestions for each category.

3

Tell students that considerable research has been done to examine which strategies work and which do not. It has been found that no one solution works well in every situation. People should use a variety of strategies. It is particularly useful to switch strategies when one is not working.

4

Distribute “Optional Handout 4: What People Can Do To Stop Bullying” which can be found at the end of the lesson.

Ask students to read the handout quietly. If there are students who may have difficulty reading it, ask volunteers to take turns reading parts to the class.

5

Distribute “Optional Handout 5: Dealing with Bullying” to each student. It can be found at the end of this lesson plan.

NOTES: The situations in this handout are based on true stories reported in the student’s own words on www.bullying.org and www.safeschools-wa.org. Feel free to adapt them to your group as appropriate, or you may wish to have your students develop their own situations for discussions. If you choose the latter option, the students should have written the situations (and you should have approved them) prior to this class.

6

Tell students they will be working with a partner to discuss situations and decide what they think should be done in each. Move students to sit with their partner (or have them pick partners) now.

7

Review the directions with students. Make sure they understand the assignment. Tell them they have ten minutes to work with their partner. Write the ending time on the board. Instruct students to begin. As students are working, circulate around the room to observe and to assist as necessary. Give a one-minute warning when time is nearly up.

8

Call the group back together for a large group discussion. Ask one pair of partners to read a situation and to describe the strategies they recommend. Continue this discussion until all scenarios have been discussed.

NOTE: If time permits, you can extend this activity by asking students to consider all the situations. You can also have small groups of students do role-plays for each scenario, having students portray the bully, the victim, peer bystanders, and adults. They should demonstrate how others could intervene in a positive way. Allow about 35 minutes for a role-play activity and the appropriate discussion after each role-play.

PART FOUR: SUMMARY AND CLOSURE (10 minutes)

1

Ask students the following questions:

- What is the most important thing you learned in class today?
- What are some of the effects of bullying on victims? What are some of the effects of bullying on the rest of the community?
- If you experienced bullying and believed the bully broke the law, would you try to press charges or sue? Why or why not?
- If you did want to take a case of bullying to court, what steps can you take?
- Describe one way you can stop this problem.
- If you were tempted to bully someone, what could you do instead?
- If a case involving bullying came before your youth court...
 - ... what sentencing recommendations might you make to help the bully understand the consequences of his or her actions?

- ... what sentencing recommendations might you make to help the bully repair whatever is causing him or her to bully?
- ... what sentencing recommendations might you make to help the bully learn more appropriate interactions?
- ... what sentence or disposition could you assign to help repair the harm done to the victim?
- ... assuming the victim of bullying did not want to testify before your court (or could not testify) how would you get the information you would need to know about the effect of bullying on that person so you could make an appropriate recommendation about the bully's sentence or disposition?

2

Thank students for their participation and insights. Thank the Community Resource Person, if one is present.

RESOURCES

Bonds, Marla, "Bully-Proofing Your Middle School," Middle Matters, Spring 2000, National Association of Elementary School Principles, <http://www.naesp.org>

Brandsberg-Engelmann, Jennifer, "Full Court Press," Homicide: Life on the Streets -- Lessons in Law a project of Street Law, Inc. and Court TV, 2001.

This videotape and lesson plans includes lessons about bullying, policing the police, transfer of juveniles to adult courts, due process rights, police procedures and witnesses, and lawful/unlawful use of deadly force to protect property and people. To order this curriculum, contact Street Law, Inc at: 301-589-1130 ext. 220 or Street Law's website: www.streetlaw.org/homicide.html

Carlson, Andrea, Judith A. Zimmer, and Eleanor Green. Community Works: Smart Youth Make Safer Communities. This curriculum is a joint project of Street Law, Inc. and National Crime Prevention Council. To learn more about the curriculum, check the Web site: www.streetlaw.org or call 301-589-1130.

Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education, 526 U.S. 629 (1999)

Educational Forum on Adolescent Youth Bullying Proceedings. American Medical Association. 2002

Franklin v. Gwinnett County Public Schools, 503 U.S. 60 (1992)

Hatred in the Hallways: Violence and Discrimination Against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Students in U.S. Schools, Human Rights Watch.

This report describes the effect of hatred and a hostile climate on youth, where harassment occurs in schools, the roles of school staff in making situations worse or better for kids, and legal standards that apply to cases of harassment. The report can be ordered by contacting HRW at: www.hrw.org

Quiroz, Hilda Clarice, "Youth, Culture and Diversity," COPS in Schools: Keeping Our Kids Safe, U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services and the National School Safety Center, 2000.

Viadero, Debra, "Beating the Bullies," Education Week, August/September, 1997, www.edweek.com/tm/vol.09/01bully.h09

www.bullying.org: This website is operated and for kids to create a supportive community to express their experiences with bullying and to get ideas about effective strategies in coping. It contains poems, stories, music submitted by children of all ages from around the world.

www.education.unisa.au/bullying/: This website is operated by Dr. Ken Rigby, a leading researcher and expert in bullying. He reviews current professional studies and provides information about how bullying affects kids and how it can be reduced.

www.safeschools-wa.org: This website is part of a project in Washington state that gathers first-hand accounts of the experiences of gay and questioning youth in schools. The project also supports students, parents, teachers, and all school staff in their efforts to keep schools safe for all children.

www.stopbullyingnow.com: This website is administered by Stan Davis, who describes ways to identify bullying, strategies for victims and for supporting bullies. He also describes what strategies do not work and offers seminars, videos, workshops, and free PowerPoint presentations about this topic.

HANDOUT 1 PERSONAL JOURNAL

You will not be required to share this journal with anyone, but you will be invited to share it if you wish.

Think about a time when someone intimidated you or when you witnessed someone being bullied. This could have happened at school, in your neighborhood, at home, anywhere.

How did it feel to be intimidated? (Or, if you're thinking about something that happened to someone else, how do you think it felt to that person?)

What did the bully do? (What actions or words did he or she use?)

Why do you think the bully did those things or said those things?

HANDOUT 2A THE SHORT- AND LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF BULLYING ON VICTIMS

Directions:

1. Read the information listed below.
2. Decide as a group whether you want to write a news story for radio or for television.
3. Write a story that incorporates the facts on this page. If time allows and you want to include other facts, stories, or perspectives, you may. Remember, your story should take no more than two minutes to read.
4. Remember to watch the clock so you finish writing your story on time. Be sure to leave at least three minutes to rehearse reading your story. You have a total of fifteen minutes to prepare.
5. Decide who will report the story to the rest of the class. You can have more than one reporter.
6. Practice reading the story for your group and make whatever changes you think are necessary.

The **short-term effects** of being bullied are well documented*. People who have been bullied might:

- fail at school work
- begin to miss a lot of school
- become ill with stomach-aches, headaches, fatigue, and symptoms of nervousness and chronic worrying
- display unexpected mood swings
- withdraw from family and friends
- have trouble concentrating
- lose interest in school or wherever the bullying occurs
- argue and/or fight more
- change friends or social groups
- display suspicious bruises or scratches
- frequently lose money or property
- avoid lunch time, recess, social activities or specific students or groups

HANDOUT 2A, continued

The **long-term effects** of being bullied are also well documented*. People who have been bullied are more likely to:

- become clinically depressed
- be much more truant or drop out of school
- develop discipline problems
- have lowered self-esteem or pride
- begin bullying others
- plan acts of revenge or retaliation
- run away
- attempt or succeed at suicide

Victims are usually younger, smaller, and weaker than the bully, or are different from other children or teens in some obvious way.

Victims often lack confidence and are anxious. They have difficulty sticking up for themselves.

* (For citations and resources, please see the instructor's handout.)

HANDOUT 2B

THE PROBLEMS OF BULLIES

Directions:

1. Read the information listed below. Then, decide as a group whether you want to write a news story for radio or for television.
2. Write a story that incorporates the facts on this page. Try not to simply recite the facts in a list. Make it interesting. If time allows and you want to include other facts, stories, or perspectives, you may. Remember, your story should take no more than two minutes to read.
3. Remember to watch the clock so you finish writing your story on time. Be sure to leave at least three minutes to rehearse reading your story. You have a total of fifteen minutes to prepare.
4. Decide who will report the story to the rest of the class. You can have more than one reporter. Practice reading the story for your group and make whatever changes you think are necessary.

FACTS:

- Bullies often blame their victims.
- Often, bullies are emotionally and/or physically abused at home.
- One in four children who bully will have a criminal record before the age of 30.
- Bullies are much more likely than non-aggressors to grow up to batter their spouses and abuse their children.
- Bullies who are identified by a caring, adult mentor can learn attitudes or relationship skills that curb or replace bullying behaviors.
- Bullies can be influenced by positive peer pressure when peers do not tolerate bullying and when classmates support more positive behaviors.
- Bullies who have severe mental health problems should be identified, diagnosed, and treated or there may be serious consequences for the entire community.
- Bullies should be supported (not condemned) on their road to learning acceptable social behaviors.
- Most researchers agree that if we ignore the problems of bullies, and simply focus on punishing them, their behavior and problems will persist.

HANDOUT 2C

WHAT DOES THE LAW SAY ABOUT BULLYING?

Directions:

1. Read the information listed below. Decide as a group whether you want to write a news story for radio or for television.
2. Write a story that incorporates the facts on this page. Try not to simply recite the facts in a list. Make it interesting. If time allows and you want to include other facts, stories, or perspectives, you may. Remember, your story should take no more than two minutes to read.
3. Remember to watch the clock so you finish writing your story on time. Be sure to leave at least three minutes to rehearse reading your story. You have a total of fifteen minutes to prepare.
4. Decide who will report the story to the rest of the class. You can have more than one reporter. Practice reading the story for your group and make whatever changes you think are necessary.

FACTS:

Bullying is often a form of ASSAULT and, therefore, punishable by the law.

- Assault is an intentional physical act or a threat of attack with a clear or obvious ability to carry out that threat, so that the victim feels danger of physical attack or harm. It is not necessary for actual injury to occur before a person can be charged with assault. The only requirement is that the person intended to do harm.
- People who are assaulted can bring criminal charges against their assailant or they can sue their wrongdoers in a civil court.

Bullying is often a form of SEXUAL HARASSMENT, and therefore, punishable by law.

- Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct that is of a sexual nature that occurs in a workplace or a school.
- According to recent a Supreme Court case, school boards and school officials can be held responsible (sued) if the school leadership showed deliberate indifference to "student on student" harassment that was severe enough to prevent victims from enjoying educational opportunities.
- In a separate case, the Supreme Court ruled that students who were harassed by teachers can claim damages (money in a lawsuit) from the school.
- Victims of sexual harassment can also sue their harassers directly.

HANDOUT 2C, continued

Bullying also BREAKS THE LAW when it becomes:

- extortion --- using threats to obtain the property of another
- theft
- battery -- intentional unlawful physical contact by one person upon another without consent. Like assault, actual injury is not necessary for a battery charge. The only requirement is that the person intended to do bodily harm.
- weapons possession
- murder
- arson- the deliberate and malicious burning of another person's property.
- hate acts or crimes
- hazing
- rape or sexual assault
- a violation of civil rights (may include bullying based on racial or ethnic prejudice or sexual harassment)
- slander--- spoken expression about a person that is false and damages that person's reputation.

HANDOUT 3

DRAFT OR EVALUATE A SCHOOL BULLYING POLICY(*)

Directions:

With a partner, draft a written policy on bullying for your school. The Website Bully Online reports that the steps listed below must be taken to stop bullying. How will your school policy incorporate those ideas?

If your school has a policy already, does it meet the guidelines for effective anti-bullying policies? Why or why not?

There is a whole-school anti-bullying spirit and culture to which both staff and children are genuinely committed.

Everyone knows and understands what bullying is and why bullies bully.

Everyone knows and understands that bullying is unacceptable

Bystanders, especially adults, stop bullying incidents immediately.

The bully is held accountable for his or her actions in a firm but kind and supportive manner, without physical punishment. (Remember, the bully typically is deeply unhappy and has low self-esteem.)

After a bully is identified, he or she is supervised and supported in learning appropriate ways of interacting with other students.

All students are taught to be assertive.

All students are taught to stop bullying and to step in and/or report it.

All students are empowered to help both the target and the bully.

Write your recommendations for a policy on the flipchart paper you have been given. Be as specific as possible. For example, if you think all students should be taught to be assertive, how should that be done?

(*) for citations and references, please see the instructor's handout.

HANDOUT 4 WHAT CAN PEOPLE DO TO STOP BULLYING?

Victim	Student Bystander	Parents, Teachers, Other Adults
Know and understand what bullying is and why bullies bully	Know and understand what bullying is and why bullies bully	Know and understand what bullying is and why bullies bully
Know and understand that bullying is unacceptable	Know and understand that bullying is Unacceptable	Know and understand that bullying is Unacceptable
Avoid the bully or certain places where it does not feel safe	Speak out against the bully	Take a stand. Defy the research that says adults intervene in only 4% of incidents. Always intervene when they see bullying and stop it (for example, saying "You can't do that here..")
Ignore the bully	Include the student being bullied in group and activities	Let all students know that bullying is not okay
Break eye contact with the bully	Show empathy for the victim (for example, listen and give advice)	Model good relationships (at home, school, recreation centers, etc.)
Talk in a calm and brave voice	Get together with other bystanders to tell the bully to stop	Help all children learn positive activities such as sports
Join a group of other students	Get adult help	Help students understand what it feels like to be a victim
Talk to yourself in a positive way to maintain your self-esteem	In a quiet setting, try to find out what is really bothering the bully	Try to help that person, if possible. Involve other adults to stop bullying before it starts.
Turn and walk away	Believe that they share with adults the responsibility for keeping schools safe and caring	Be sympathetic to bullies yet clear that their bullying behavior will not be accepted
Tell the bully assertively to stop threatening him or her (for example, "I don't like what you're doing --stop It. Get a life --leave me alone)	Learn skills to be an effective peer mediator	Teach students who bully more appropriate ways to conduct Relationships
Use humor to defuse the situation (for example, "Look, Johnny, lay off. I don't want you to be late for school.)	Surprisingly, onlookers tend to blame victims for the treatment they receive. Bystanders should learn to see when the bully is at fault.	Teach the difference between teasing and bullying
Get help from an adult, friend or peer when a potentially threatening situation arises or when other strategies are not working	Take a stand. Defy the research that says peers intervene in only 11% of incidents.	Teach the difference between flirting and sexual harassment
Do not fight back: Experience shows counter-aggression increases the likelihood of continued victimization		Provide ways for students to report bullying situations anonymously or privately.
		Maintain adequate supervision of Students

If these strategies are used in isolation, they are not likely to work. There should be a comprehensive approach that does not rely solely on the victim to be brave, the bully to just stop, or the bystanders to "save the day." These solutions must be used together to reduce aggressive, bullying behaviors.

OPTIONAL HANDOUT 5 DEALING WITH BULLYING

Directions:

For each situation described below, discuss what various people might do to try to stop the bullying. Consult the chart on “Optional Handout 4: What People Can Do To Stop Intimidation and Bullying?” for more ideas.

Try to agree on answers to these questions:

1. What can the victim do?
 2. What can peers of the victim and bully do?
 3. What can the adults involved in the victim’s life or bully’s life do? (Consider parents, guardians, teachers, counselors, school administrators, recreation center workers, religious leaders, etc.)
- A. A Muslim boy reports that his sister and her friends are often harassed verbally, teased, pushed and had their hijabs (their veils) torn off by students at their school. His family, recent immigrants with limited English, do not know what to do. They did not know if it was religious bigotry or if it was bias against them because they are immigrants from another country. His sister is thinking about dropping out of school and he is trying to switch schools.
- B. Two ninth grade girls are regularly teased on the bus. One day, a group of boys call the girls “queers” and “dykes” and publicly embarrasses them. The boys corner them, brushing up against them in a sexual way. The boys also threaten them, “You better watch out. We will get you.” The bus driver is present throughout the incident, but does not intervene. According to one of the girls, since the bullying began, her grades have suffered, she has been drinking alcohol more, and she has thought about suicide.
- C. An eighth grade girl has been called ugly every day at school for a number of years. Some of her classmates move her desk to the corner of the room every day to remind her that she is an outcast. She says that what hurts the most are their mean stares. She says she feels like she is dying and she has forgotten how to laugh. She does not speak much at home or at school and she does not like to eat any more. She says her teachers try to stop the bullying when they see it, but she dreads the lunch bell, which for her, signals forty minutes of terror.

OPTIONAL HANDOUT 5, continued

- D. A Black student growing up in a predominantly White neighborhood loved to play sports. He says he made friends with everyone. When he got to high school, there were many more Black students. Many of the students --- Blacks and Whites --- teased him because his friends were mostly White and because he made honor roll. They called him “white wash” and “sell out.” He has been in therapy, but is still very angry. He’s pretty sure he’s going to blow up on someone some day, “not in a Columbine sort of way,” but he does think about lashing out at the bullies --- both girls and boys --- and having them know the kind of pain he has suffered.
- E. He dreads gym class. Starting in the beginning of his freshman year, something bad happened every day. He was kicked in the groin, shoved into the water heater, spat on, kicked, pushed, and beaten. He had his pants thrown in the toilet twice and his shoe thrown in the urinal. His classmates routinely hid his clothes and took his glasses. A few students made sexually inappropriate comments. In response, he has been in a fight (and been suspended), and refused to change for gym class, which hurt his grade in the class. When he wrote down a list of things that had been done and gave it to his gym teacher, she took it to the principal. The other boys called him a liar. The principal told him to “shut up and learn to take it,” although he did suggest that the boy could change in a different bathroom before gym class.

(These stories are all based on true stories reported in the student’s own words on www.bullying.org and www.safeschools-wa.org)