



ANTI-BULLYING PROGRAM

*"Our mission is to provide educational
proactive anti-crime programs
designed to meet the needs of all
citizens in our communities."*

What is Bullying?

Bullying is the repeated, deliberate, “thug-like” practice of: Harassment, Intimidation, Mistreatment, Torment, Oppression and other hurtful acts of Cruelty inflicted upon another person, or one group over another for pleasure.

The person who faces the aggressive acts of a Bully, is known as the “TARGET” or victim.

The impact of Bullying can have long term effects and can cause serious injuries. In some cases, the results of bullying has had deadly implications to both the target and the bully. Bullying is commonly associated with children. Anyone can be a bully; male, female, young or old. There are many reasons why kids bully. The most common and widely accepted one is “Social Conditioning.” Social conditioning is when a child learns to behave by watching the behaviors around them.

Bullying acts usually take place in school hallways, locker rooms, bathrooms, at home, playgrounds, churches, healthcare facilities, and the workplace. Adopted, step and handicapped children are common targets of abuse. There are different types of Bullying: Cyber, Verbal, Physical, Emotional, Extortion, and in many cases Sexual Assault and Rape.

Warning Signs That Your Child Is Being Bullied

There are many common **Physical**, **Psychological**, and **Educational** clues—both subtle and overt, which suggest a child is being bullied. Bullied kids have a difficult time seeking help and often don't tell their parents. The child feels ashamed, helpless, and afraid of getting beaten up if they tell.

Physical Clues:

Here is a list of the physical symptoms commonly seen in victims of bullying:

- Itching, Bruising or Bleeding in private parts.
(If sexually abused)
- Ripped or heavily soiled clothes.
- Unexplained scratches and bruises.
- Daily stomach or headaches.
- School books, or school supplies damaged.

Facts:

Kids stay home from school each day to avoid being tormented by a bully. Kids will fake illnesses and random ailments in an effort to escape being harassed and picked on. The stress of being bullied can cause actual physical illness and ailments.

Psychological Clues:

Besides the obvious physical clues that your child may be bullied, there are many “not so obvious” signs of victimization. Such as:

- *Moody, depressed, anxious, and irritable.
- *Withdraws from family and friends.
- *Obsession over personal safety issues.
- *Happy on the weekends, but mood changes on Sunday evenings and Monday mornings.
- *Anxious about receiving phone calls, emails, or text messages.

Educational Clues:

The educational clues are often the most difficult to figure out. It might be a few weeks or in some cases a few months, before you find out that there has been a change in your child's behavior in the classroom.

Examples:

- *Loss of interest in school work.
- *Refusing to participate in gym class.
- *Grades dropped for no reason.
- *Clinging behavior to adults or teachers.
- *Refusal to go to school or ride the bus.

Types of Bullying



VERBAL BULLYING:

Verbal bullying is more hurtful and damaging to a child's self-esteem and confidence than physical bullying.

Verbal bullying attacks the personality, physical attributes, emotional, academic, home life, and social status of the target. No topic is off limits to a bully.

A quote from a 14-year old girl from New Jersey:

"They say sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me. That is a lie! Sticks and stones may cause cuts, nasty bruises, and scars; but eventually the wounds heal. Words cut deep and the bruising and scars are on the inside. These wounds may take a lifetime to heal. Sometimes the wounds never heal."

Some examples of verbal bullying language:

Names- "Hey Faggot," "Fatso," or "Retard."

Hate--- An ethnic or religious slur.

Threat--- "I'm gonna kick your %@!#."

Rumors--- "Sally slept with John and she has herpes."

SOCIAL, RELATIONAL, AND EMOTIONAL BULLYING:



Social bullying happens when a child is humiliated in front of their peers. This happens more frequently among girls, and can be devastating to a child's self-esteem due to the public nature of the torments. Being embarrassed and ostracized is one of the worst types of bullying.

There are two kinds of social bullying: Non-verbal and Psychological. Non-verbal social bullying is when kids point fingers, stare, stick out the tongue, make faces, or stick up their middle finger.

Psychological social bullying is when kids exclude, ignore, isolate, or turn their back on someone.

PHYSICAL BULLYING:



Physical aggression is the most widely recognized and publicized form of bully behavior. This is the type of behavior that will get adult attention, garners school suspensions, and occasionally makes the six o' clock news.

Typically, the behavior is action oriented, involving such behaviors as hair pulling, pushing, kicking, poking, spitting, punching, throwing an object at someone, pushing books out of one's hands, and destroying personal property. Girls are more apt to use mild physical aggression such as pulling hair, slapping, kicking, and scratching. Boys are more likely to punch, kick, or spit.

Physical bullying can occur even when there is no actual contact. The bully can shake their fist in your face, slam a book down on your desk, or invade your personal space. This is called, "Posturing." Posturing is a common scare tactic bullies use to frighten and intimidate their targets.

The threat of physical violence is sometimes just as effective as the act of physical violence.

RELATIONAL BULLYING:

Relational bullying is intentionally damaging the social status of the victim. A relational bully often has the sophistication and interpersonal skills to fracture another girl's relationships and turn her, over time into a social outcast. The bully will convince her peers (by any means necessary) to exclude and reject a particular girl.

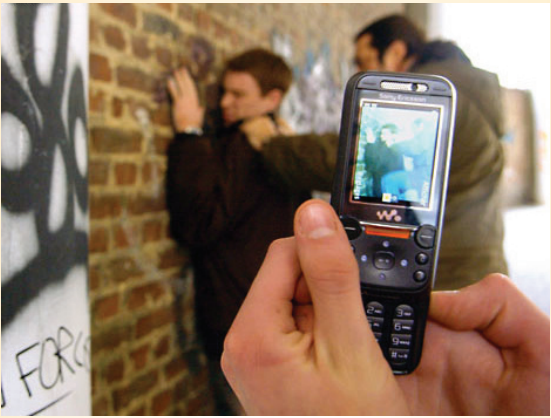


EMOTIONAL:

The emotional bully uses manipulation to get what they want. The emotional bully demands exclusivity and isolates her victim from her entire peer group. She gets jealous when the victim pays attention to anyone else and uses emotional blackmail to control her.



CYBER BULLYING:



Cyber bullying is the willful, deliberate, repeated action to inflict harm to another person through the use of videos, computers, cell phones, cameras, and other electronic devices.

Examples of online bullying: using the internet to send harassing or obscene messages, insults, emails, embarrassing videos, to online bulletin boards (like face book and twitter), utilizing the cell or iPhone to text, photograph, video record, on other social networking sites to harm the victim.

Cyber bullies do not have to deal with emotional, psychological, or the physical effects of “face to face” bullying on their victim. From one electronic device, cyber bullies can send destructive content to a limitless number of people in a matter of seconds.

SEXUAL BULLYING AND HARASSMENT:



Sexual bullying involves unwanted comments, gestures, physical, verbal and non-verbal actions, or attention that is intended to hurt, offend, or intimidate another person.

Sexual bullying can happen regardless of gender, or age.

Examples:

- Making sexual jokes, comments, or gestures.
- Spreading inappropriate online and offline rumors.
- Unwanted physical contact of any kind.
- Using sex as a way of advancement in the workplace.
- Lifting up a girl's skirt; pinching her backside; grabbing her breasts; unsnapping her bra; making unwanted sexual advances or force unwanted sexual activity.

Alert!

Forcing another person, male or female into sexual acts such as kissing, oral sex, or intercourse goes beyond sexual bullying and harassment. Forcing another person to do sexual acts is sexual assault or rape, and it's against the law!

EXTORTION:



If your child comes home ravenously hungry every day missing his or her jacket, iPod, cell phone, sneakers, or any personal property, they may be the victim of **Extortion**. Extortion bullies will use force or the threat of force to obtain money, food, or personal belongings from other kids. **Young children are particularly vulnerable to this type of extortion by older and bigger kids.**

This type of bully will pressure the victim into stealing money from home, another child, or steal from the classroom. The bully will use the victim to steal and use the action against the victim. **Blackmail** is used to threaten the victim into becoming an unwilling accomplice.

The bully will threaten to turn the victim in and get them in trouble or use the threat of violence against the victim. The bully will always avoid getting into trouble as long as they have a victim to exploit.

BULLYING CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:

A child with special needs has physical, mental, emotional, or social deficits that they are unable to control. These deficits make them an easy target for teasing, extortion, physical and sexual abuse. These children are bullied at a higher rate than regular children.



DIRECT & INDIRECT BULLYING:

Direct bullying is when the bully confronts the victim face to face. They will use physical violence, the threat of physical violence, or verbally abuse the victim in public. Indirect bullying is the systematic undermining of the victim's reputation by spreading vicious rumors with the intent of harming the victim's social standing. This behavior is difficult to stop because the identity of the bully may never be discovered. Cyber bullying is a good example. Girls are more apt to utilize these more subtle indirect strategies, whereas boys are more likely to engage in direct bullying.



INTERVENTION (STEP BY STEP)

When confronted with the heartbreaking realization that your child is being bullied, parents often realize that they have no real concrete and constructive idea of how to handle the situation. Parents who fear they will make the situation worse often become paralyzed with indecision and end up doing nothing. Doing nothing is probably the worst thing you could do for your child.

•Don't Wait:

The first time your child mentions that he or she is being bullied, or the first time you suspect it, take action. How you react will have a significant impact on how your child thinks and feels about what is happening to them.

•Work as a Team:

Thank your child for trusting you enough to share. Be a good listener. Stay calm and listen without interrupting.

•Assess your Child's Immediate Safety:

Consult your child and give him or her the opportunity to give his or her input about what decisions will be made and the course of action that will be taken throughout the process. This will help empower your child. Keep the communication lines open. If your child is being physically attacked, you will need to intervene immediately. This might mean keeping your child at home until a meeting with the teacher and/or principal can be arranged.

•Assess Your Own Level of Competence:

If you have emotional baggage from your own childhood experiences, you may not feel comfortable advocating in an objective and firm manner for your child. Seek professional counseling and support for you and your child. Have your spouse, a close personal friend, or an attorney speak on your behalf.

•Demand Immediate Action:

Ask that specific actions be taken in protecting your child. These actions may vary depending upon individual school policy. Document every step of this process and who was involved. This information may come in handy when taking legal action. Monitor your child's coping skills by communicating with the teacher. If the teacher or principal's actions are unsuccessful in stopping the bullying problem, then meet with the school board officials or the superintendent of schools. If that doesn't work then report it to the police and retain a lawyer.

•Get Involved:

Ask the teacher if you can volunteer to monitor in your child's classroom, the hallway, the playground or the lunch room.

Invite a friend or two from your child's class for a play date. Hopefully, this will build your child's network of friends. The more friends a child has the less likely your child will be bullied. If you discover that your child's school doesn't have an anti-bullying program, approach the PTA about organizing one.

•What Not to Do:

- Don't ignore it and hope it will go away.
- Don't tell your child to "tough it out" or "fight back." Your child needs intervention!
- Don't talk to the parent or legal guardian of the bully. Unless you know the parents well and are sure they will respond in a constructive manner, it's best to let the school deal with the parents of the bully.
- Don't accuse the teacher of failing to do their job. Give the teacher the benefit of the doubt and work with them to resolve the matter. The objective is to protect your child, not cause more problems.

WHAT IF YOUR CHILD IS A BULLY?

Immediate intervention is important in order to protect the victim, but it is also important to protect your own child.

Alert!

When a victim has reached his or her breaking point, the bully can be the target of serious or deadly consequences. The victim can and in some cases, will respond with extreme violence. In some cases, the situation may end with the bully being killed and the victim committing suicide.

The first step in solving the problem is to ask your child why he or she is bullying other children. Listen carefully to the response. You may discover that your child has some psychological issues. In a situation like this, you will need to seek professional help for your child. A trained counselor, psychologist, or psychiatrist may be the best person to help your child understand the true impact that bullying has on his or her life and the lives of others.

If you feel that your child's bullying is something you can tackle on your own, here are a few things you can do to help:

•Examine Your Approach to Discipline:

Do you verbally berate your child, and say things like “Stop acting like an idiot?” Do you use physical force to discipline your child and say, “I brought you into this world and I can take you out!” If so, your child may be imitating the behavior they see at home.

•Examine Your Parenting Style:

Are you overly strict? If so, your child learned that they can have their way through the show of force or perhaps you have been too permissive. If so, your child may not have developed the self-control necessary to handle peer interactions without resorting to bullying behavior.

•Examine Your Relational Style:

Be aware that your actions and attitudes have an enormous impact on your child. Your child needs your guidance and support in order to become a better person. Once your child knows better, they’ll do better. Here are some intervention strategies:

•Set a good example!

Assess the cause and fix the problem. Seek help if needed. Make it clear that the bullying has to stop. Implement consequences for bullying behavior. Be consistent! Set realistic expectations (change takes time). Provide positive reinforcement for good behavior. Keep the lines of communication open.

•**Social: Who Are Your Child's Friends?**

Your child's social environment can provide clues into their bullying behavior. Here are few things to consider: Do you know who your child's friends are? Try to observe the interactions of your child and his friends. If you suspect that your child's friends are not good influences, steer your child in a different direction.

•**Does Your Child Participate in Positive Activities?**

A child who bullies could benefit by participating in clubs, sports, and other group activities that encourage respect and teamwork. Belonging to a group will allow your child to develop the interpersonal and relational skills he or she will need to form strong friendship bonds throughout their life.

•**School:**

The school climate can have an extraordinary impact on the level of bullying that occurs within the school. If your child sees other kids engaging in bullying behavior with no discernible consequence, your child won't fear repercussions. On the other hand, a school that has zero tolerance for bullying will have lower levels of bullying behavior. Ask about the anti-bullying policy in your child's school. Make sure you understand the serious consequences of bullying behavior and discuss these sanctions with your child.

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All photo images available on the internet site

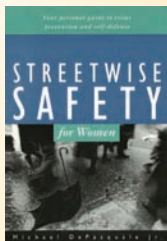
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