

Sticks, Stones & Words *Hurt:* Bullying Prevention

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Status Update: Bullying 2014

- Peer Relationships across the developmental spectrum
- When peer relationships go awry-what is bullying?
- How has electronic communication impacted peer relationships for adolescents?
- Teaching children and parents to understand risks and negotiate complexities of electronic communications
- Teaching strategies for managing teasing and bullying: Roles for Schools/families/health professionals

Early Peer Relationships

- Peer groups are fluid
- Peer choices often influenced by parents, location, ease
- Parental involvement is high
- Supervised/structured activities
- Conflict often resolved with adult involvement
- Sense of self:
 - Primary :family members
 - Secondary: peers/other adults

3

Peer Relationships During Tweens and Teens

- More time spent away from families with peers
- Peer groups provide emotional support and security away from parents
- Strong relationship between how students are viewed by peers and their self-esteem
- By middle childhood, most students have become painfully aware of the importance of social acceptability, popularity, making and keeping friends

4

Form of Peer Relationships in Tweens and Teens

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- Friendships incorporated closeness, intimacy and shared activities
- Tend to gather in same sex groups primarily
- Best friends are extremely important
- Best friend loyalty is extremely important
- Strong tendency to conform: adherence to rules is rigid
- Peer pressure starts to increase dramatically by age 9!

5

**Both genders can be publicly mean
and disloyal to friends**

To avoid being rejected themselves!

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6

Teasing vs. Taunting

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaser and person being teased easily switch roles • Is not intended to hurt • Maintains everyone's dignity • Lighthearted, clever and benign • Only a small part of the activities have in common • Innocent motives • Discontinues when person gets upset | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imbalance of power • Intended to harm • Includes humiliating, cruel, bigoted comments • Laughter directed <u>at</u> the target, not <u>with</u> the target • Is meant to diminish target's sense of self worth • Induces fear of further taunting or aggression • Sinister in motive • Continues especially when target becomes distressed |
|---|---|

The Bully, The Bullied and The Bystander by Barbara Coloroso

7

When Peer Relations go Awry: Definition of Bullying Behaviors

- Imbalance of power
- Ongoing mistreatment
- Intent to harm (emotionally, physically or socially)
- Threat of further harm or damage
- Instilling fear

8

Facts about Bullying

- Almost 30% of today's youth are being affected by bullying, either as the victim or as the bully (Milsom & Gallo, 2006).
- Over two-thirds of students believe that schools respond poorly to bullying, with a high percentage of students believing that adult help is infrequent and ineffective (Cohen & Canter, NASP, 2003).
- 25% of teachers see nothing wrong with bullying or putdowns and consequently intervene in only 4% of bullying incidents (Cohen & Canter, NASP, 2003).

9

Types of Bullying

- **Physical**- most visible and easiest to identify
- **Verbal**-most common form for boys and girls
- **Relational**- most difficult to detect; includes ignoring, excluding, shunning

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10

Emotional Bullying = Verbal + Relational

- When someone tries to gain control by making others afraid or angry
- Characterized by verbal abuse, exclusion from a group, tormenting, and humiliating.
- Extends to sexually abusive comments and racially motivated comments
- Most difficult type of bullying to cope with or prove
- Most at risk for impacting physical/mental health and self-esteem
- Is a form of social violence

11

Effects of Being Bullied

- Lower self-esteem
- Depression and Anxiety
- Absenteeism and lowered school achievement
- Thoughts of suicide
- Illness (headaches, sleep problems, abdominal pain, tension)
- **Increasing awareness that intense bullying can invoke a trauma response and symptoms similar to other types of traumatic experiences**
- **These symptoms and effects can persist into adulthood**

12

Children Who Bully: at Risk

- Olweus study: Bullies were 4 times as likely to have 3 or more convictions by age 24
- Increased drug and alcohol use (Heydenberk et al. 2006)
- More likely to drop out of school (Heydenberk et al. 2006)
- Feel disconnected from the teachers and other students at school (Milsom & Gallo, 2006)

13

The Bullied; Who Is A Target

- New kid
- Youngest kid
- Already traumatized kids
- Submissive kid
- "Annoying kid," according to peers
- The kid who is unwilling to fight
- The kid whose ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation is viewed as different or inferior
- The kid with a physical or mental disability
- The shy, timid kid
- The really poor or really rich kid
- The really smart kid who stands out
- The non-conforming kid
- The kid with a physical trait that is different- braces, glasses, overweight, underweight, or a skin condition
- The kid who is in the wrong place at the wrong time!

The Bully, The Bullied and The Bystander

by Barbara Coloroso

14

Why The Bullied Don't Tell

- Ashamed
- Fear retaliation
- Don't believe anyone *can* or *will* help
- Believe the lie that bullying is part of growing up
- Believe that adults are part of the problem. May experience adults as giving permission or actually bullying them
- Telling is bad, not cool, immature

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15

Warning Signs: Victim of Bullying

- Angry/ withdrawn after internet use
- Abrupt avoidance or fear of school
- Avoiding friends or activities
- Sudden avoidance of using the internet
- Unexpected drop in grades
- Taking an unusual route to school
- Signs of depression
- Withdrawal from family; wanting to be left alone
- Losing lunch money or saying, "I wasn't hungry."

adapted from Nancy Willard and Barbara Coloroso

16

Intervention Framework

- Target all three aspects of bullying: Bully, victim and bystanders
- Adult intervention required: School-Community Partnerships
- Universal Interventions aimed at changing social norms
 - Prevention: Clear norms for respect; behavioral expectations; consequences
 - Social Skill Building

17

Goals for Prevention: Traditional Bullies

- Prevention through increased supervision (particularly in unstructured time)
- Use clear consequences (to overcome pattern of refusing to accept responsibility and to increase connection of behavior to consequences)
- Assess underlying motivation for bullying (self-esteem; social skills deficits; revenge; loneliness)
- Teach empathy (increase awareness of impact of behavior on others)

18

Goals for Prevention: Traditional Victims

- Recognize risk factors for being victimized (perceived “difference”)
- Teach social skills
 - Assertiveness
 - Approaching groups
 - Identifying adults who will listen to concerns
 - Educate about Tattling versus Telling:
 - Tattling: to get someone in trouble
 - Telling: to *keep* you or another child *out of trouble*

19

Effectively Handling Face-to-Face Bullies

***Sometimes* these approaches work:**

- Using humor
- Laughing and acting like you don't care
- Running away (when in real physical danger)
- Ignoring (when they are taunting for attention)

Adapted from The Bully Free Classroom

Role for Parents

- *Support* your child and understand his/her perspective of what is happening without jumping to immediate conclusions
- *Let them know* that any type of exclusion and/or teasing and intimidation can be hard to handle and that *you want to help them figure out how to make it stop*
- *Gather Information*-reach out to the teacher, coach or activity leader and ask for their assistance in monitoring the situation and supporting your child
- *Request additional support* from school support personnel if you feel you need additional support, inquiry or response
- *Consider engaging other parents* in discussion of peer climate, interactions and role that parents can play at this developmental stage. This may include a specific parent and child but may need a mediator to be effective.

21

Goals for Prevention: Traditional Bystanders

Majority of peers do not come to the aid of victim

- Fear of being next victim
- Uncertainty of how to act: "don't know what to do"
- Teach them specific skills and strategies for assessing situation, diffusing if possible or seeking assistance
- Teach students that "not acting" is acting:
 - Not acting is contributing to the bullying
 - "pay attention, get involved, never look away"
- Recognize that safety concerns are real and contextual

22

Target Bystanders

The world is a dangerous place, not because of those who do evil, but because of those who look on and do nothing. *Albert Einstein*

23

Bystander Skills: Change Norms

Why Not Respond?

- Don't know what to do
- Fear retaliation
- Draw attention
- Believe adults won't be helpful

Skills to Learn

- Not OK
- Distraction
- One friend can be enough
- When to seek adult help or intervention

24

Goals for Prevention: Universal Approach

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- Most powerful antidotes for bullying:
 - Strong sense of self
 - Being a friend
 - Having at least one good friend that will stick with you
 - Being able to successfully join a group

Social-Emotional Learning Skills!

25

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Cyberbullying: The Perfect Storm

Culture of Behavior that typically occurs
"off radar" for adults
and
Technology that is more accessible to students than to
most adults!

26

Navigating the Technological World:

**Dangers and thrills await; just like a
Riding a bike**

Need Adults to teach and monitor

27

Access To Technology

- Percentage of students with cell phones in schools: near 100% for high school/middle school
 - Percentage of students aged 12-17 using the internet: 87%
 - Percentage of teenagers using the internet at a friend or relatives house: 87%
 - January, 2007: Number of people who visited most popular networking website for children: 25 million; 2nd: 11.3 million
 - Percentage of teenagers reporting receiving an unwanted sexual solicitation online: 13%
 - Number of children who admitted they consider meeting face-to-face with someone they meet on internet: 1 out of 3
-
- Lisa Madigan: www.IllinoisAttorneyGeneral.gov

28

Impact of Electronic "Community" for Peer Relationships

Development:

- Friendship choices are expanding from a locus of convenience-neighbors, classmates, parental role in creation of social networks to one of shared interests

Electronic Impact:

- Internet provides access to a much broader community with *significant* decrease in adult supervision and control

29

Impact of Electronic "Community"

Development:

- Relationships are increasingly fluid
- Experimenting with new groups and identities.
- May include pushing back from old peer groups and making negative assessments of old friends

Electronic Impact:

- Broader network to connect
- Negative communications and assessments shared easily and quickly with large numbers of peers
- Game of "telephone" now with one "send" 30

Impact of Electronic "Community"

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Development:

- Impulsive thoughts and actions are normative
- Frontal lobes not fully developed until early/mid 20's
- Just learning to "stop and think" or to consider consequences for self and others

Electronic Impact:

- The pace and reach of communication make impulsive decisions to communicate an angry or inappropriate thought (or picture) much riskier (greater potential for negative consequences)
- Once "sent" no control over who else may receive communication
- Even adults challenged

31

Cyber-bullying

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- Bullying or harassment by use of electronic devices through **e-mail**, **instant messaging**, **text messages**, **blogs**, and **websites**.



32

Frequency of Cyber-bullying

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A study of 1500 Internet-using teens:

- **Over 1/3 of youth reported being victimized**
40% of victims were disrespected,
18% were called names
over 12% were physically threatened
about 5% were scared for their safety.
- **Only 15% of victims told** an adult about the incident
- **over 16% of teens admitted to cyber-bullying others**

Hindua and Patchin, 2005

33

Types of Cyber-bullying

- **Flaming:** angry, rude arguments
- **Harassment:** repeatedly sending offensive messages
- **Outing and Trickery:** disseminating private information or tricking someone into disclosing private information and then disseminating it
- **Denigration:** "Dissing" someone by spreading false rumors or information



by Nancy Willard

Types of Cyber-bullying

- **Impersonation:** pretending to be someone else and posting damaging information
- **Exclusion:** intentionally excluding someone from an online group
- **Cyber-stalking:** creating fear by sending offensive messages
- **Cyber threats:** raises concerns about violence against others

by Nancy Willard



Comparison to traditional bullying

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- “virtually” anonymous.
- less energy and courage to express hurtful comments using a keypad, particularly in a group setting
- do not have to be larger and stronger than their victims
- electronic forums lack supervision.
- No monitoring of offensive content in electronic mail or texts



36

Comparison to Traditional Bullying

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- Kids often know more about computers and cellular phones than their parents, so there is little concern that a probing parent will discover their experience (Parents are reluctant to master this unfamiliar territory)
- the inseparability of a cellular phone from its owner makes that person a perpetual target for victimization
- Don't actually have to experience impact of behavior (not "face to face")
- Electronic media feels "unreal" (no permanence).

37

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Cyber-bullying:
Anyone can be targeted...
at anytime...
for any reason

38

Adults Must Understand:

Good Kids can say and do mean things

Easy for fun to slide into dangerous
and/or mean electronically

39

Cyber-bullying is Against the Law

- In the U.S., it is now **a federal crime** to anonymously “annoy, abuse, threaten, or harass any person” via the internet or telecommunication system.
- Punishable by fine and/or up to two years imprisonment

from Wikipedia

40

Risks too Great, Exposure too Likely

Can't wait for a problem; must take a Universal Approach to Cyberbullying and Internet Safety

41

What Caring Adults can do to prevent Cyberbullying

- Pediatricians, educators and parents need to learn to navigate technology that students are using (texting, emails, facebook and whatever else comes along)
- Gather information about monitoring electronic communication and about legal consequences for certain behaviors (ie sexting, bullying)
- Stay up-to-date-share resources and learn about new technology that kids are accessing
- Educate yourself about warning signs and talking with students about concerns of safety or victimization
- Ask questions and Have difficult conversations with kids!!

42

Questions to Ask: Peer Relations

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Indirect:

- Do you have a best friend or group of friends?
- Who do you hang out with? Who do you sit with at lunch or on bus?
- Are there kids at school who you really don't like?

Direct:

- Are there kids at school who pick on you or bully you?
- Kids who tease you?
- Kids who leave you out of things on purpose?

www.stopbullyingnow.org

43

Use scenarios for dinner conversations: Is this OK?

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- Texting a friend from another friend's phone and failing to let them know who you are?
- Asking who they are inviting to their party?
- Asking who they "like"?
- Forwarding their response to others?
- Sending a picture of yourself in your new bikini to a friend

44

Educate your kids about the risks of electronic communication

Many students do not understand that once something is posted/sent, they lose control of the audience who may read it

Would I be OK if this text were printed on a 6 foot billboard in front of my school?

What if my grandmother, little sister or principal reads this?

“Think Before You Post” Campaign

45

Lisa Madigan, Attorney General Internet Use Recommendations

- Basic contract to print out and review with your child on website
- Follows 7 key principals with “I will” statements for child and parent to sign regarding online behavior and internet use

SEE HANDOUT: www.IllinoisAttorneyGeneral.gov

46

Parent Action Steps if Concerned if About Electronic Victimization

- Identify the bully or perpetrator
- Do not encourage retaliation
- Have your child stop communication including block the bully (electronically)
- Problem solve with the child the best way to resolve the situation
- Print out the communication for evidence
- Inform the school
- Call the police if threats or exploitation is involved

47

Internet Resources for Parents/Professionals

- www.netsmartz.org
- www.ikeepSAFE.org
- www.cyberbully.org
- www.safekids.com and www.safeteens.com
- www.staysafe.org
- www.isafe.org

48

Recommend Books for Parents

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- [The Bully, The Bullied, and The Bystander](#) by Barbara Coloroso
- [Girl Wars: 12 Strategies That Will End Female Bullying](#) by Cheryl Dellasega and Charisse Nixon
- [The Bully Free Classroom](#) by Dr. Allan Beane
- [Cyberbullying and Cyberthreats](#) by Nancy E. Willard
- [Mean Chicks, Cliques, and Dirty Tricks](#) by Erika V. Shearin Karres
- [Odd Girl Out](#) by Rachel Simmons
- [Queen Bees and Wannabes](#)
- [Bully Blocking: Six Secrets to Help Children Deal With Teasing and Bullying](#) by Evelyn M. Field
- [Bullyproof Your Child For Life: Protect Your Child from Teasing, Taunting, and Bullying for Good](#) by Joel Haber and Jenna Glatzer
- [Cyber Bullying: Bullying in the Digital Age](#) by Robin M., PhD Kowalski, Susan P., PhD Limber, and Patricia W., PhD Agatston
- [Bullying, Victimization and Peer Harrassment: A Handbook of Prevention and Intervention](#)

49

You-Tube Videos for Educational Purposes

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Impact of Bullying:

- Think Time: How Does Cyberbullying Affect You? (2:20)
- Words Hurt (00:31)

Bystanders Can Help:

- The Price of Silence (Anti-Bullying Public Service Announcement) (1:02)

Think Before You Post Campaign:

- Think Before You Post English: Sarah (1:00)
- Once Posted You Lose It (1:39)
- Do you really know who you're talking to? (00:25)

50

Resources for Helping Students experiencing victimization

<http://www.itgetsbetterproject.org>

- Began in September, 2010 by Dan Savage
- Multiple videos of adults telling gay teens that it will get better
- For youth experiencing bullying based on sexual orientation
- Suicide prevention

51

Thank You to Colleagues

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52