



Preventing Bullying

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What is Bullying?

“Bullying is a form of social interaction—not necessarily long-standing—in which a more dominant individual (the bully) exhibits aggressive behavior that is intended to, and does, in fact, cause distress to a less dominant individual (the victim). The aggressive behavior may take the form of a direct physical and/or verbal attack or may be indirect. More than one bully and more than one victim may participate in the interaction.”

Dorthea Ross

Childhood Bullying and Teasing, 1996

Bullying Is About Power

- Intentional aggressive behavior
- Repeated over time
- Occurs in a relationship in which there is an imbalance of power.



Direct Bullying

- Physical
 - Hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting . .
- Verbal
 - Taunting, teasing, racial slurs, verbal sexual harassment
- Non-verbal
 - Threatening, obscene gestures

Indirect Bullying

- Physical
 - Getting another person to assault someone
- Verbal
 - Spreading rumors
 - Cyber bullying
- Non-verbal
 - Deliberate exclusion from a group or activity

Cyber Bullying

- Cell phone messages

- E-mails

- Web Sites



Cyber Bullying

"Yeah. I used to be best friends with this girl and one night, me and my friends were just kind of, I don't know why, but we just decided to be kind of mean to her. We started calling her all these names and everything. After that, I regretted it... I tried to be her friend again, but she didn't want to because like she didn't want me to hurt her. So I guess I deserved it, but it made me feel really bad because I knew I shouldn't have done it."



What Is Bullying?

The easiest way to understand bullying is through looking at these analogies:

- ❑ Spouse abuse.
- ❑ Sexual harassment.

Both involve imbalance of power; in all these forms of abuse **the perpetrator blames the victim** for the abuse. In all three the victim may blame him or herself for the abuse, if it is not stopped.

How Has Society Reacted to Abuse?

- ❑ Through denial *“It’s not important;” “He didn’t mean it.”*
- ❑ By blaming the victim or asking the victim to solve the problem: *“You should wear different clothes;” “Just GET the dinner on the table on time;” “He just does it because he knows it bothers you.”*
- ❑ And through comprehensive intervention including training, consequences, helping abusers change, positive peer pressure, and support for targets.

Bullying Behavior

- Often a part of a conduct-disordered behavior pattern
- This pattern may continue into young adulthood
- Olweus study: Were 4 times as likely to have 3 or more convictions by age 24.



Facts About Bullying

Bullies choose targets with little social support.

Most bullies are self-confident and many are popular.

The cost of bullying for the bully is an important part of the change process.

How Prevalent Is Bullying?

AMA Study (2002)

11% of American students in grades 6-10 are bullied frequently.

13% bully others frequently.

National Association of School Psychologists (2002)

“Bullying is the most common form of violence in our society.”

5,000,000 students are bullied frequently.

6,000,000 students bully frequently.

Prevalence of Bullying

Nansel et al. (2001)

National sample of 15,600 students in grades 6-10

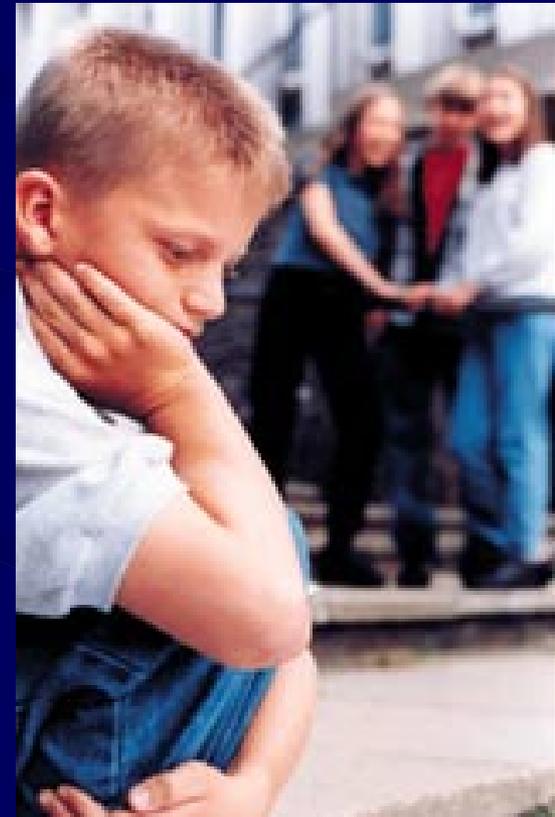
19% of students reported bullying others “sometimes” or more often during the school term.

17% reported being bullied “sometimes” or more often.

6.3% reported bullying and being bullied

Short-term Effects of Being Bullied

- Lower self-esteem
- Illness
- Absenteeism
- Depression and anxiety
- Thoughts of suicide



Developmental Anxieties

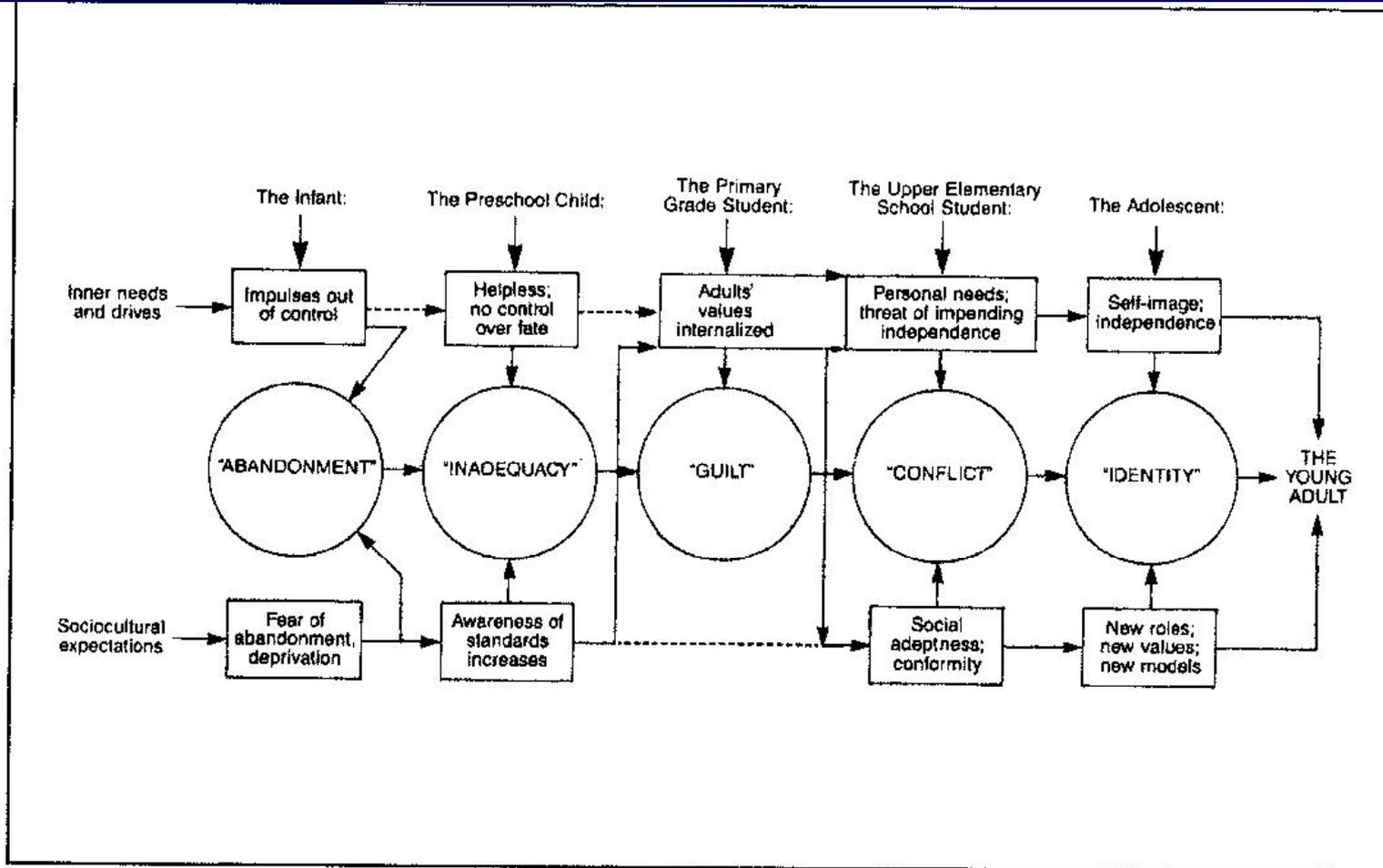


Figure 3.1. Diagram of the way normal developmental anxieties emerge. Solid lines denote major influences; dotted lines denote contributing influences. Note. From *Developmental Therapy—Developmental Teaching* (3rd ed., p. 47), by M. M. Wood, 1996, Austin, TX: PRO-ED. Copyright 1996 by PRO-ED, Inc. Reprinted with permission.

Effects on Bystanders

- Feel afraid
- Feel powerless to change things
- Feel guilty
- Feel diminished empathy for victims



Effects of Bullying on School Climate

- Interferes with student learning
- Creates a climate of fear and disrespect
- Students may perceive lack of control/caring

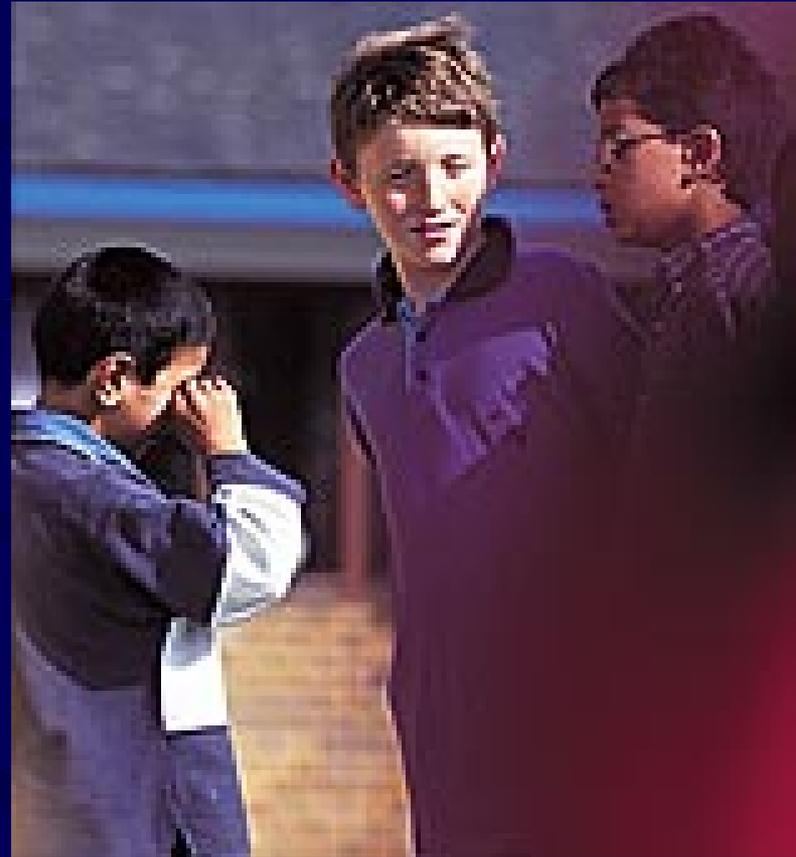


Why Stop Bullying?

- ❑ Bullies are five times as likely to become adult criminals as non-bullies.
- ❑ Targets of bullying are more likely to be depressed as adults.
- ❑ Preventing bullying lowers rates of vandalism, fighting, theft and truancy.
- ❑ Preventing bullying improves school climate.

Three Main Characters

- The Bully
- The Bullied
- The Bystander



The Scene Is Set

- A culture that rewards bullies and blames targets
- Schools that pretend not to have a bullying problem, that have a well-established hierarchy of student cliques, and that have no effective programs to address bullying
- Parents who model and/or teach Bullying 101 at home.
- Adults who don't see the suffering or hear the cries of kids who are bullied

The Bully



Four Markers of Bullying

Imbalance of Power

Intent to Harm

Threat of Further Aggression

Terror

7 Kinds of Bullies

- Confident
- Social
- Fully Armored
- Hyperactive
- Bullied
- Bunch
- Gang

Traits of Bullies

- Like to dominate
- Like to use others to get what they want
- Find it hard to perspective-take
- Are concerned only with their own wants and pleasures and not the needs, rights, feelings of others.
- Tend to hurt kids when adults are not around.

Traits of Bullies

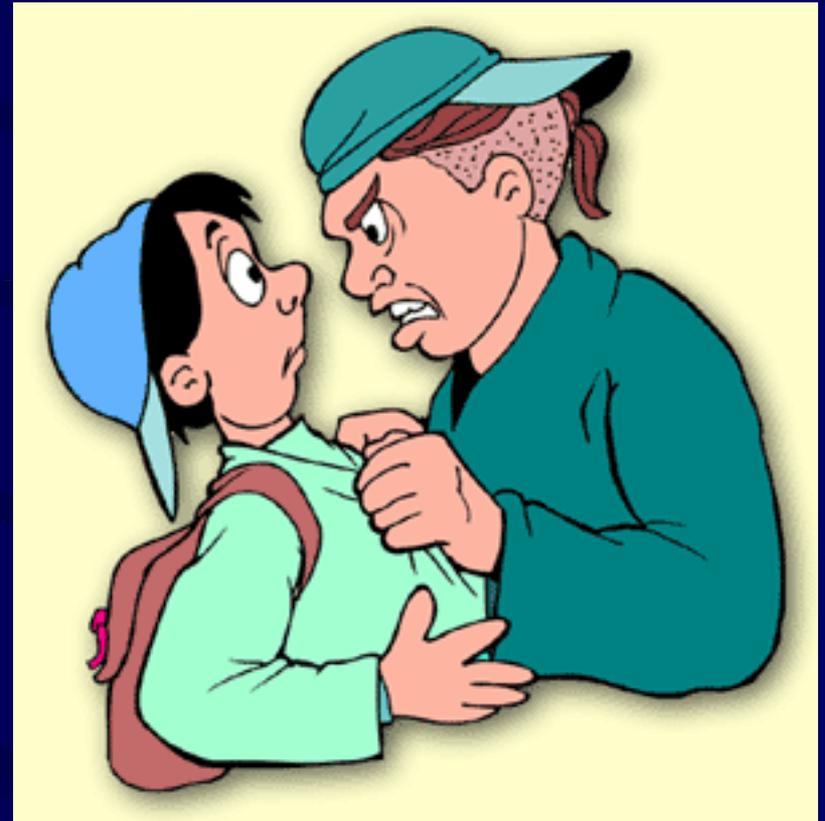
- View weaker kids as prey
- Use blame, criticism, and false allegations to project their own inadequacies on target
- Refuse to accept responsibility for their actions
- Lack foresight—can't consider short vs. long-term consequences
- Crave attention

Contempt Drives Bullying

- A sense of complete entitlement
- An intolerance toward differences
- A liberty to exclude

The Big Five

- Race
- Religion
- Gender
- Physical Attributes
- Mental Abilities



The Masquerade of Deception

- Power plays
- Hazing
- Cliques and the school social structure



What a Bully Does When Caught

- Denies that he did anything wrong
- Trivializes the event: “I was just having some fun with him.”
- Counterattacks: “He went psycho on us!”
- Claims victim status: “He was looking at me funny.”
- Counts on the support of bystanders to deny anything the bullied kid says.

Teasing (as opposed to taunting)

1. Allows the teaser and teased to swap roles easily
2. Isn't intended to hurt
3. Maintains basic dignity
4. Pokes fun in a lighthearted, clever and benign way
5. Is meant to get both parties to laugh
6. Is only a small part of activities shared by kids who have something in common.
7. Is innocent in motive
8. Is discontinued when someone gets upset

Taunting

1. Is based on an imbalance of power and is one-sided
2. Is intended to harm
3. Involves humiliating, cruel, demeaning or bigoted comments thinly disguised as jokes
4. Includes laughter directed at the target
5. Is meant to diminish the self-worth of the target
6. Induces fear of further taunting or can be a prelude to physical bullying
7. Is sinister in motive
8. Continues when targeted kid becomes distressed

What Bullying Is Not

- Acts of impulsive aggression
- Behaviors associated with Asperger's Syndrome
- Criminal activities such as serious physical assault, weapons, vandalism, which require legal investigation
- Hate crimes

How Children Become Aggressive

Olweus found that:

- ❑ Bullies often come from homes where there is little warmth and adult attention.
- ❑ In these homes, adults discipline inconsistently, using emotional outbursts and physical discipline.



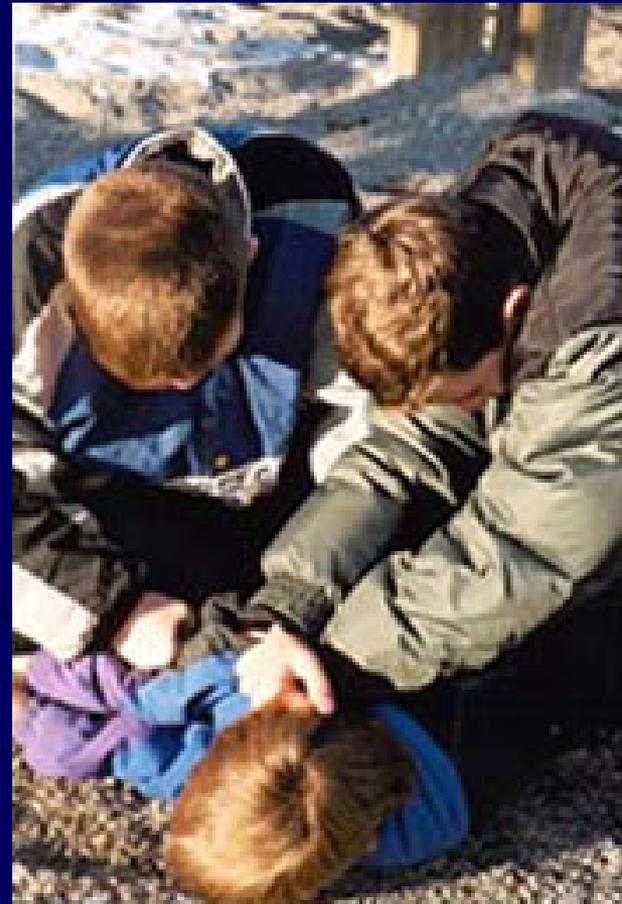
Family Risk Factors for Bullying

- Lack of parental warmth and involvement
- Lack of parental supervision
- Overly-permissive parenting
- Harsh discipline/physical punishment

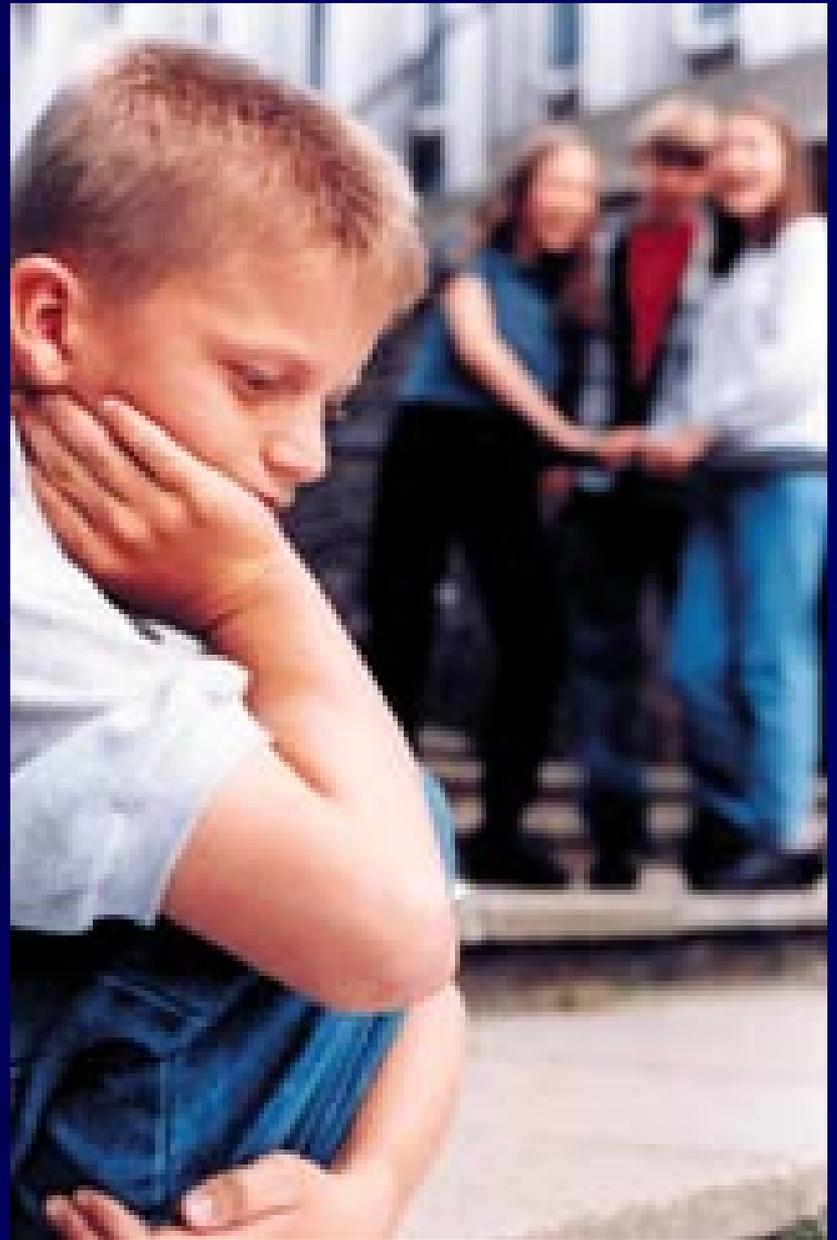


School Risk Factors

- Lack of supervision during breaks
- Staff have indifferent or accepting attitudes towards bullying
- Students have indifferent or accepting attitudes



The Bullied



Who Are the Targets?

- The new kid
- The youngest kid who is smaller, scared, insecure, especially in middle or high school.
-
- The kid who has been traumatized; already hurt; extremely sensitive; avoids peers to avoid further pain; finds it hard to ask for help.
- The submissive kid; anxious; lacking in self-confidence; easily led; does things to please or placate others.

Who Are the Targets?

- The kid who has behaviors others find annoying (Aspberger's)
- The kid who is unwilling to fight; wants to solve problems without aggression.
- Kid who is shy, quiet, unassuming, timid.
- The kid who is rich or poor.

Who Are the Targets?

- The kid whose race or ethnicity are perceived by the bully as inferior, deserving of contempt.
- The kid whose gender/sexual orientation is perceived by the bully as inferior, deserving of contempt.
- The kid whose religion is perceived by the bully as inferior, deserving of contempt.

Who Are the Targets?

- The kid who is bright, talented, gifted—targeted because she stands out.
- The kid who is independent and unconcerned about social status; doesn't conform to the norm.
- The kid who expresses emotions readily.
- The kid who is fat, thin, short or tall.

Who Are the Targets?

- The kid who wears braces or glasses.
- The kid who has acne or any other skin condition.
- The kid who has superficial physical attributes that are different.
- The kid with physical or mental disabilities.
(These kids are 2 to 3 times more likely to be bullied.)

Who Are the Targets?

The kid who is in the wrong place at the wrong time; attacked because the bully wanted to aggress on someone now.



Why Don't Kids Tell Adults They Are Being Bullied?

- They are ashamed of being bullied.
- They are afraid of retaliation.
- They don't think anyone *can* help them.
- They don't think anyone *will* help them.
- They have bought into the lie that bullying is a necessary part of growing up.

Why Don't Kids Tell Adults They Are Being Bullied?

- They believe that adults are part of the lie (Some adults in their lives may have bullied them; might have given other kids “permission” to torment them.)
- They have learned that ratting or telling is bad, not cool.

Kids Speak in 5 Ways

- Body
 - Face
 - Eyes
 - Tone of Voice
 - Words
- Be alert to “red flags”
 - Decode comments, behaviors
 - Watch for warning signs

Warning Signs

- Shows abrupt lack of interest in school
- Takes unusual route to school
- Suffers a drop in grades
- Withdraws from school activities
- Is hungry after lunch
- Does something out of character
- Uses derogatory language when talking about peers
- Stops talking about peers and everyday activities
- Has disheveled or missing clothing
- Has stomachaches, headaches, panic attacks, appears exhausted

Ultimate Extremes of Being Bullied

Shame brought on by bullying can cause kids to implode or explode.

“Nothing seems to threaten the human spirit more than rejection, brutalization, and lack of love.”

Garbarino
Lost Boys

Suicide

At least 16 students per year in the UK choose death over relentless bullying.

In 1999 one in thirteen U.S. high school students reported making a suicide attempt.

Suicide

In 2000, more than 2000 succeeded.



Violence

Recent Harris poll: as many as 20 teens in a high school of 800 are “high risk” for shooting at school.

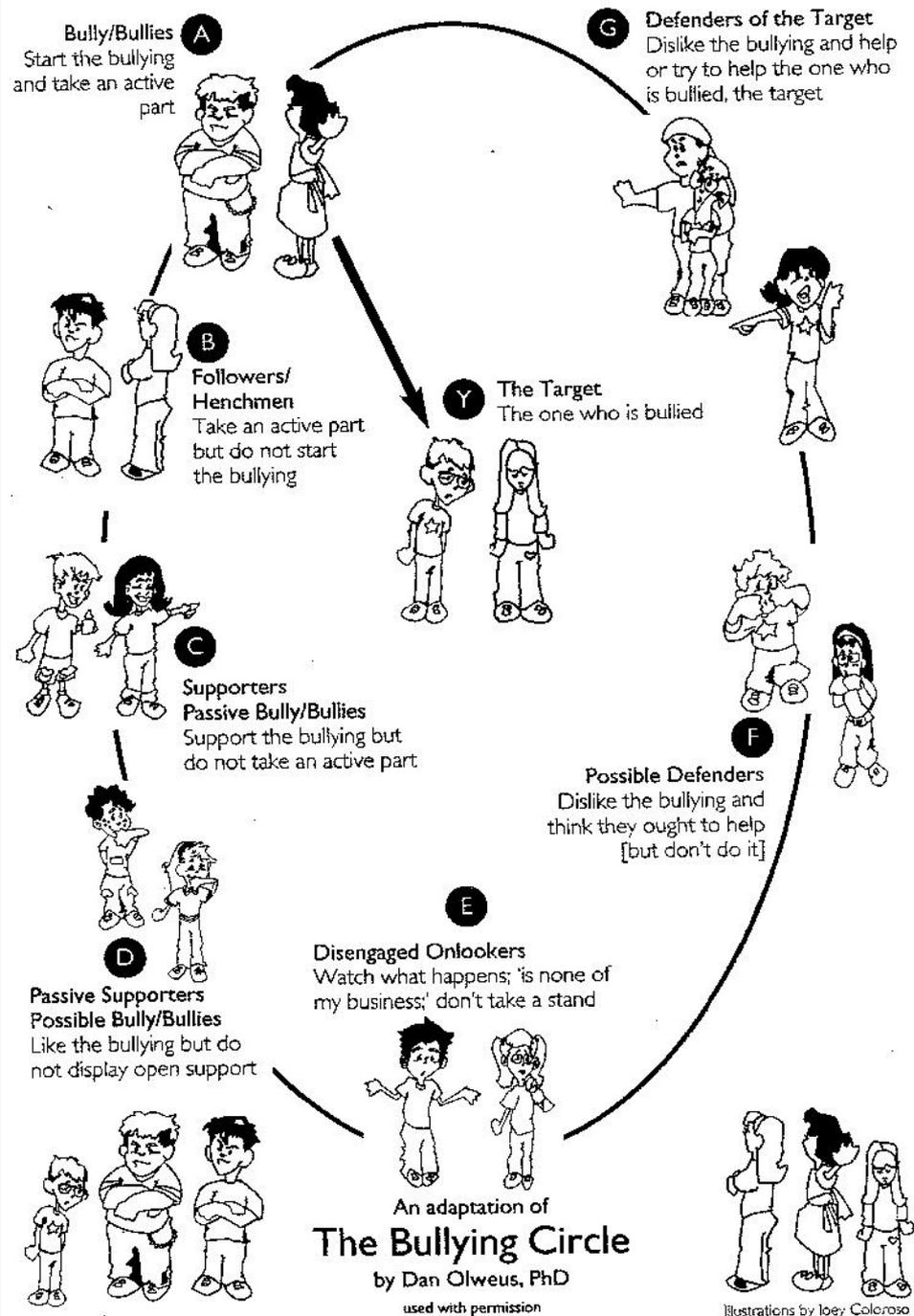
Likely to be boys in 11th or 12th grade who do not feel valued at home or school and who have a perceived low quality of life.

No history of getting into trouble.

The Bystander



The Bullying Circle



No Innocent Bystander

- **Supporters:** Passive bullies who support the bullying but do not take an active part
- **Passive Supporters:** Possible bullies who like the bullying but do not display open support
- **Disengaged Onlookers:** Watch what happens, but don't take a stand
- **Possible Defenders:** Dislike the bullying and think they ought to help—but don't

The Price a Bystander Pays

Cheering the bully causes more distress to the victim and encourages the bully.

Bystanders become desensitized to bullying.

Bystander's inner controls break down in the face of no consequences and many apparent rewards of bullying.

The Price a Bystander Pays

Self-respect of bystander is eroded;
cruelty is riveting to watch but
distressing to contemplate.

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

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

1995 Study (Pepler & Craig)

- Peers were involved in some capacity in 85% of bullying episodes.
- Peers reinforced the bullying in 81% of the episodes.
- Peers were more respectful and friendly toward the bullies than the targets.
- Peers were active participants in 48% of the episodes.
- Peers intervened in only 13% of the episodes at which they were present.

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Why Bystanders Don't Get Involved

1. Afraid of getting hurt himself.
2. **Afraid of becoming a new target.**
3. Afraid of doing something that will only make the situation worse. (If they tell it will make things worse.)
4. **Does not know what to do.**

Bystander Excuses

- The bully is my friend
- It's not my problem or fight
- The target is not my friend
- The target is a loser
- The target deserves it; asked for it; had it coming
- Bullying will toughen him up

Bystander Excuses

- Kids have a deeply embedded code of silence
- It's better to be in the group than defend the outcast
- Too big a pain to think about (weigh the moral dilemma)

Range of Approaches Taken by Schools to Address Bullying

- Nothing
- Awareness-raising efforts
- Reporting, tracking
- Zero tolerance (school exclusion)
- Individual treatment
- Group treatment
- Self-esteem enhancement for bullies
- Mediation, conflict resolution programs
- Curricular approaches
- **COMPREHENSIVE APPROACHES**

Teacher Perceptions vs. Behavior

- Pepler & Craig found an average of 1 incident of bullying every 7 minutes in elementary schools.
- Adults intervened in 4% of playground and 14% of classroom incidents.
- In those same schools, 71% of staff said they almost always intervened in bullying.

Why Is Teacher Intervention so Weak?

- Staff do not always agree with arbitrary school rules and do not consistently enforce them.
- Often, rules are difficult to enforce adding to inconsistency.
- Vague rules are not enforced.
- Inconsistency teaches bullies that they can “get away” with behavior.

Mistake #1

"Get rid of the bullies. We simply need a 'zero tolerance' policy for bullying."



Mistake #2

"Let's group bullies together for treatment."



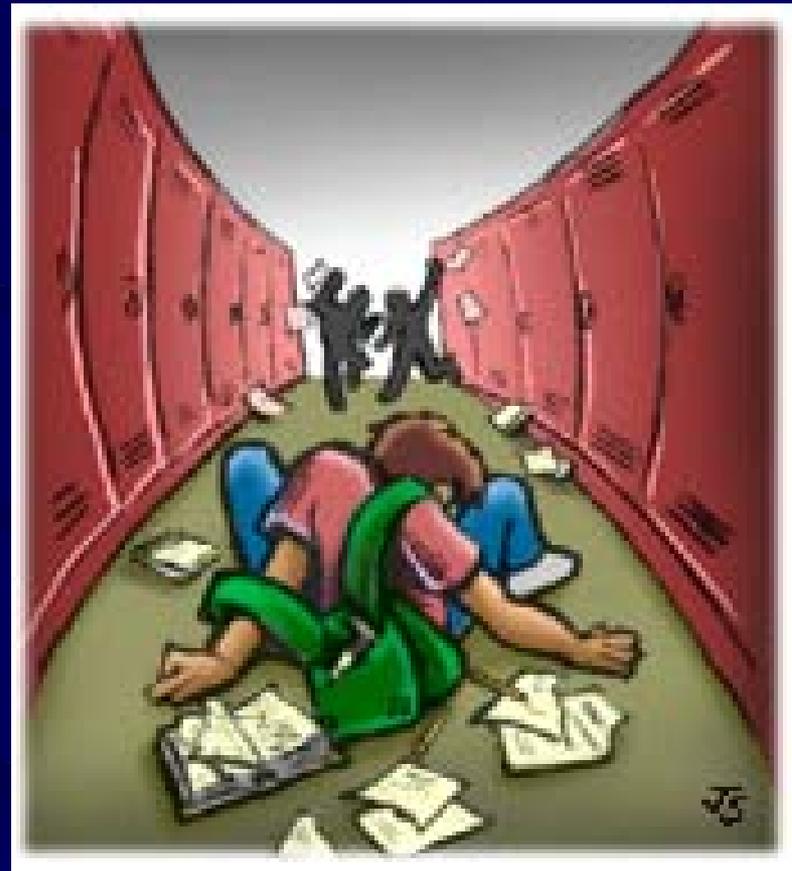
Mistake #3

"Bullying is best handled through peer mediation."



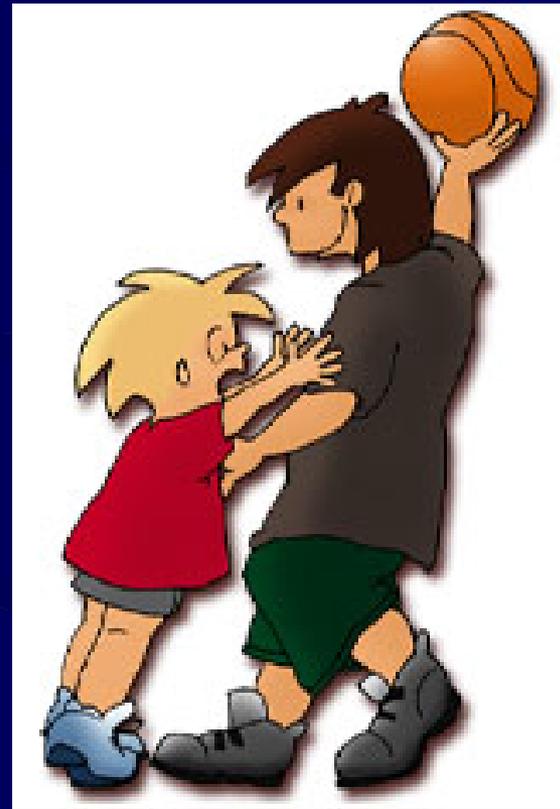
Mistake #4

"There's got to be a good, one-shot solution to bullying prevention."



Mistake #5

The
"Prevention
Program
DuJour"
Approach



Dan Olweus

Dr. Dan Olweus, in Norway, did the groundbreaking research on bullying from 1975 to the present. His work is the foundation of all current bullying prevention interventions.

He began with a review of research on how youth become aggressive, then used the data to develop school-based interventions.

The Olweus Research

Olweus built his bullying prevention intervention by creating school and family environments that *changed* the patterns that create aggression.



The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program

- Developed by Dan Olweus in Norway
- Comprehensive (a school-wide effort)
- Focused on changing norms and behavior
- Preventive and problem-solving
- Research-based
- Not time-limited: Requires systematic efforts over time

Goals of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program

- Reduce existing bully/victim problems among students
- Prevent the development of new bull/victim problems
- Improve peer relations
- Improve school climate

Program Principles

It is critical to develop a school environment characterized by:

Warmth

Positive interest

Involvement from adults

Firm limits to unacceptable behavior



**Structure
is like the
guardrails on
a high-level
bridge.**

Program Principles

Non-hostile sanctions are consistently applied when rules are violated

Adults act as authorities and positive role models

Elements of the Program

- School-wide interventions
- Classroom level interventions
- Individual interventions
- Community interventions

School-Wide Interventions

- Form a Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee
- Train committee and all school personnel
- Administer bully/victim questionnaire
- Develop school rules against bullying

Sample School Rules

- We will not bully others.
- We will try to help students who are bullied.
- We will make it a point to include students who are easily left out.
- When we know somebody is being bullied, we will tell an adult at school and an adult at home.

School-Wide Interventions

- Use consistent positive and negative consequences
- Increase supervision in “hot spots.”
- Hold staff discussion groups
- Actively involve parents

Interventions at the Classroom Level

- Post and discuss school rules
- Consistently use sanctions and positive reinforcement
- Incorporate bullying themes across the curriculum
- Hold regular class meetings

Interventions at the Individual Level: LSCI

- On-the-spot interventions and follow-up discussions with students who are bullied
- On-the-spot interventions and follow-up discussions with students who bully
- Parental involvement

Community Involvement

- Look for ways that community members can support the school's efforts
- Examine strategies for spreading anti-bullying messages beyond the school

Program Outcomes: Norwegian Sample (42 schools)

- 50% - 70% reductions in students' self-reports of bullying and victimization
- Program effects were more marked after 20 months than at 8 months
- Reductions in self-reports of antisocial behavior such as vandalism, fighting, theft, alcohol use and truancy
- Improvements in class "social climate"

Program Outcomes: South Carolina

- Reductions in boys' and girls' self-reports of bullying after 7 months
- Reductions in boys' reports of social isolation and bully victimization after 7 months

Challenges to a Whole-School Approach to Bullying Prevention

- Resistance from staff & parents
- Desires for short-term, simple solutions
- Use of contradictory interventions
- Funding
- Limited classroom time available to focus on bullying prevention

Effective Bullying Prevention

- “The program strives to develop a school (and ideally a home) environment characterized by:
- ❑ warmth, positive interest, and involvement by adults;
 - ❑ firm limits to unacceptable behavior;
 - ❑ non-hostile, nonphysical negative consequences consistently applied in cases of ...unacceptable behaviors; and
 - ❑ where adults act as authorities and positive role models.” (Olweus, Limber 1999)

Foundations of Bullying Prevention

Safe and affirming school climate

Consequences for aggression:

- inevitable,
- predictable,
- escalating

- Positive feeling tone and modeling
- Time spent with young people

Effective Discipline

Specific behavior expectations.

Consistent consequences:

- Inevitable

- Predictable

- Escalating

- Rubric-based (based on objective standards)

Work with parents

Maintain positive feeling tone

A Possible Discipline Rubric

Behavior	1st time	2nd time	3rd time
Tease (define)	Warning	Call home 1 recess	Call home 3 recess
Push Shove	Call home 1 recess	Call home 3 recess	Call home 5 recess
Harass Punch Kick	Call home 3 recess	Call home 5 recess	In school suspension

Positive Feeling Tone and Modeling

Adults greet students and praise them.

Adults spend time with students and listen to them.

Adults talk with students respectfully.

Adults mentor students at risk.

Adults reward improved behavior by youth at risk.

Adults give and accept feedback about each others' behavior with students.

"Children have never been very good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them." (James Baldwin)

Bullying Prevention

**Counsel
bullies**

**Support
targets**

**Activate
bystanders**

Safe and affirming school climate

**Consequences for
aggression:**

- inevitable,
- predictable,
- escalating

- Positive feeling
tone and
modeling
- Time spent with
young people

Working with Aggressive Children and Youth:

The Symptom Estrangement
Reclaiming Intervention

Counseling aggressive youth

We help students think about these questions after they know what their consequences are:

- What did you do?*
- What was wrong with that?*
- What problem were you trying to solve?*
- How will you solve that problem next time?*

As students reflect on their behavior they learn how their behavior affects others and find different ways to meet their needs.

Supporting Targets:

The Messaging Numb
Values Reclaiming
Intervention

The New Tools RI

Supporting targets:

Bullying is a loss experience:

- ❑ Loss of safety
- ❑ Loss of self-esteem: *“They bully you, then you bully yourself”*
- ❑ Loss of belonging
- ❑ Loss of control over own life

How do we support youth who are experiencing losses? We protect from more losses, comfort them and help them not blame themselves for what has happened. We don't usually tell them to pretend it doesn't hurt.

Activating Bystanders

We encourage youth to:

- Speak up to bullies,
- Ask adults for help,
- And reach out as friends isolated peers.



In other words...

Bullying prevention interventions:

- Raise the cost of bullying by removing the bully's power.
- Connect students and teachers and make kindness pay.
- Work with families.
- Help aggressive youth change.
- Change the peer culture so everyone is included.
- And protect and support targets of bullying.

To Learn More

- Dan Olweus, Bullying at School
- Dorothea Ross, Childhood Bullying and Teasing
- Nan Stein et al: Bully-proof; Flirting or Hurting; Quit it!
- Linda Sanford, Strong at the Broken Places
- Stan Davis, Schools Where Everyone Belongs
- Barbara Coloroso, The Bully, the Bullied, and the Bystander

To Learn More

- www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov (Kid's interactive site with great cartoon videos; lots of free resources for adults.)
- www.stopbullyingnow.com (Stan Davis site with very good information.)
- www.bullyonline.org/schoolbully/index.htm (Comprehensive site with extensive links.)
- www.antibullying.net/schoolstaff.htm (University of Edinburgh, Scotland--extensive resources and case studies.)
- www.dontlaugh.org (Peter Yarrow's Operation Rescue—free curriculum and videos to download.)

Scores on the Sub-test Are Intended to Reflect Different Approaches to Addressing Bullying Issues

- **A. Ascribing responsibility to the victim** – High scorers tend to see the remedy to bullying as lying principally with the victim who needs to develop the capacity to resist being bullied or in some way prevent it from happening.
- **B. Ascribing responsibility to the bully** – High scorers want to blame the bullies and treat them in an uncompromising and tough manner so as to deter their behavior.
- **C. Ignoring bullying** – High scorers tend to ignore or belittle the issue of bullying and feel that it is generally not their responsibility.
- **D. Problem solving** – High scorers are not interested in blame, but rather in reaching a constructive outcome for both the bully and the victim.
- **E. Smoothing approach** – High scorers generally feel that bullying need not be taken very seriously and that children can be best prevented from bullying others by reducing their opportunities and/or their motivation to do so.