

Bullying: The Realities and Our Responsibilities



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Presentation Overview



- What is bullying?
- Why be concerned about bullying?
- What works and doesn't work in bullying prevention and intervention?
- How is the District addressing bullying?
- Your responsibilities as a District employee.

Bullying, Defined.



Any form of behavior that includes such acts as intimidation and/or harassment that:

- Has the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm or damage to property;
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that the action, behavior, or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive environment in the form of physical or emotional harm;
- Occurs when there is a real or perceived imbalance of power or strength, or
- May constitute a violation of law

Direct Bullying



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



Indirect Bullying



- Getting another person to bully someone for you
- Spreading rumors
- Deliberately excluding someone from a group or activity
- Cyber-bullying



More common than we might believe.



- *Nansel et al. (2001): national sample of 15,600 students in grades 6-10*
 - 19% of students reported they bullied others “sometimes” or more often
 - 9% of students reported they bullied others weekly
 - 17% of students reported that they were bullied “sometimes” or more often
 - 8% said they were bullied weekly
 - 6% reported both bullying *and* being bullied “sometimes” or more often



Gender Effects in Bullying



- Most studies find that boys bully more than do girls
- Boys report being bullied by boys; girls report being bullied by boys and girls
- Boys are more likely than girls to be physically bullied by their peers
- Girls are more likely to be bullied through rumor-spreading, sexual comments, social exclusion

The Bullying Environment



- Children usually are bullied by one child or a small group
- Common locations: playground, classroom, lunchroom, halls, bathrooms
- Bullying is more common at school than on the way to/from school

Bullying as a predictive behavior

Students who bully are more likely to:

- Get into frequent fights
- Be injured in a fight
- Steal, vandalize property
- Drink alcohol
- Smoke
- Be truant, drop out of school
- Report poorer academic achievement
- Perceive a negative climate at school
- Carry a weapon

- 60% of boys who were bullies in middle school had at least one conviction by age 24.
- 40% had three or more convictions.
- Bullies were 4 times as likely as peers to have multiple convictions.

(Source: Longitudinal Study of Children who Bullied (Olweus, 1993))

Effects on Bullying Victims



- ✦ Lower self esteem
- ✦ Higher rates of depression
- ✦ Higher absenteeism rates
- ✦ More suicidal ideation

Health Consequences of Bullying on Victims



	<u>Bullied</u>	<u>Not bullied</u>
Headache	16%	6%
Sleep problems	42%	23%
Abdominal pain	17%	9%
Feeling tense	20%	9%
Anxiety	28%	10%
Feeling unhappy	23%	5%
Depression scale		
moderate indication	49%	16%
strong indication	16%	2%

(Source: Fekkes et al., 2003)

A victim shares his anguish.



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Bullying and severe school violence; a nexus.



- US Secret Service and the US Dept. of Education jointly studied 37 incidents of severe targeted school violence, involving 41 attackers and found:
 - 3/4 of attackers felt persecuted, bullied prior to the incident
 - 1/3 of attackers characterized as “loners”
 - 1/4 socialized with students who were disliked by most mainstream students
 - Many had considered suicide

(Source: Safe School Initiative Report (2002))



When Students See Bullying at School



What do you usually do when you see a student being bullied?

- 38% Nothing, because it's none of my business
- 27% I don't do anything, but I think I should help
- 35% I try to help him or her

Reporting of Bullying to School Staff



- Many victims do not report being bullied.
- Older children and boys are less likely to report victimization.
- Why don't children report?
 - 2/3 of victims felt that staff responded poorly
 - Only 6% believed that staff responded very well.

(Source: Hoover et al., 1992)

How responsive are we really?



- Adults overestimate their effectiveness in identifying bullying and intervening.
- Many children question the commitment of teachers and administrators to stopping bullying
 - 35% believed teachers were interested in stopping bullying
 - 25% believed administrators were interested in stopping bullying

(Source: Harris et al., 2002).

A call to action: Amphi Bullying Policy -- JICK



- Contains many elements required under new state law.
- Defines bullying and includes “cyberbullying”.
- **Requires all staff to report incidents of bullying.**
- Creates convenience for parent/student reports – provides form, online access.
- Administration MUST investigate – time limits apply.
- Discipline required if allegations verified
- Investigation records retained for six years

The policy prohibits bullying...



- On school grounds
- On school property
- On school buses
- At school bus stops
- At school sponsored events and activities
- Through the use of district computers or network
- Or anywhere outside of the school and the school day when the bullying results in a substantial physical, mental, or emotional negative effect on the victim while on school grounds

Policy JICK – Reporting Bullying



- Students are encouraged to report bullying incidents.
- Any employee who sees bullying incidents or receives a report of the same must notify a school administrator.
 - Initial notification to school administrator may be verbal.
 - Written notification must also be made within 1 school day of the verbal report.
 - If the school administrator is the direct observer or first recipient of a bullying report, the administrator must create written documentation as well.

Response to Bullying Reports -- JICK



- When report is made, administrator must be give student copy of their rights, protections and support services. (District brochure).
- **Administrator must investigate all reports of bullying.** Investigation must begin as soon as possible, but no later than two school days following receipt of report.
- If administrator determines bullying did occur, discipline must be imposed Code of Conduct.
- Regardless of investigation outcome, administrator must meet with the students involved to review the findings.
- Subject to FERPA restrictions, parent(s) or guardian(s) of the students involved shall also be informed of the findings.

Other Requirements -- JICK



- Summary of policy, rights and protections must be posted in every classroom and common area. (Policy Exhibit/Form JICK-EB).
- Policy also prohibits and applies to allegations of harassment and intimidation.
- Documentation of investigation must be maintained by administrator for 6 years following conclusion.

Thank you...



**...FOR ALWAYS DOING YOUR VERY BEST
FOR OUR STUDENTS.**

**PLEASE HELP MAKE
OUR SCHOOLS SAFE PLACES TO
LEARN AND WORK
BY PROMPTLY REPORTING BULLYING
WHENEVER YOU SEE IT.**