


Winning Strategies to Eliminate Bullying in the Outdoor Environment

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Peaceful Playgrounds

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OBJECTIVES

- What bullying is
- What bullying isn't
- Legal responsibilities
- Preventing bullying strategies
- Hot spots for bullying
- How to Respond to bullying- AEIOU

Legal Requirements

- Overarching requirement for schools is that they have the legal responsibility of keeping kids safe at school.



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DEFINING BULLYING

What bullying is and isn't

Definition of Bullying

Unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged students that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.

- Behavior is repeated over time
- Intent is to harm (deliberate)



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What is not Bullying?

- A conflict
 - Two students are mutually at odds
 - No power differential
 - Equal; not one-sided
 - There's not "one" target being harmed
 - The conflict is not typically repeated
 - Both students may be angry, frustrated or uncomfortable



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Teasing vs. Taunting

Teasing

- Between friends
- All in fun
- Give and take
- Laughs together
- Stops if feelings get hurt

Taunting

- Contempt for target
- One-sided
- Words that hurt
- Laughs at target
- Target fearful
- Offense is repeated

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Roles in Bullying

- The bully
- The victim
- The bystander (witness)
- Kids may play more than one role



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Effects of Bullying

Bystanders:

- are also affected negatively by bullying
- may feel sorry for the victim
- wonder "Will I be next?"



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Kids Need to Know

Bullying:

- causes long-term harm
- is unacceptable
- can be against the law



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BULLYING STATISTICS

Bullying Increasing

- Bullying is becoming more frequent.
- Almost half of all students experience some form of bullying, but rarely report it.
- It's important to train students to report bullying, no matter how or where.



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On the Rise

- Bullying on rise in all age groups
- 61% are bullied because of looks or speech
- 55.6% who were bullied report being hit, slapped or pushed



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Cyberbullying

- 38 states provide some treatment of cyberbullying, or bullying involving electronic acts in their definitions.



...identifying the causes and consequences of cyberbullying

<http://cyberbullying.us/>

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Social Media

- Off-site bullying, such as cyberbullying, has legal implications for your school.
- Regardless of where bullying occurs, children have a legal right to feel safe while at school.



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Cyberbullying

- Cyberbullying is on the rise in chatrooms, on Facebook, etc.
- 160,000 students stay home each day because of their fears of being bullied.
- Bullying peaks in middle school.
- It may be hard to identify that a student is being bullied as only 1/3 of victims report being bullied.



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Bully Ramifications

- Bullying can lead to physical injury, social-emotional distress, death.
- Victimization can lead to mental health problems.
- Poor school attendance and frequent visits to the school nurse.
- 60% of boys identified as "bullies" in middle school had at least one criminal conviction by age 24. (Owleus, 1993)



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In Bullying No One Wins




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IDENTIFYING BULLYING

Types of Bullying

- Threats
- Spreading rumors
- Attacking someone physically or verbally
- Excluding someone from a group on purpose



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Boys Who Bully

- Direct forms of bullying
 - Hitting
 - Pushing
 - Shoving
 - Taking stuff from people



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Girls Who Bully

- Indirect types of bullying
 - Spreading rumors
 - Manipulating friendships
 - Excluding peers



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At Risk Groups

- No single factor puts a child at risk of being bullied or bullying others
- Bullying can happen anywhere
- Some groups are more at risk in certain communities such as:
 - LGBT
 - Disabled
 - Ethnic
 - Religious
 - Self-isolated



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Perceived as Different

- Perceived as being “different” from peers
 - Overweight
 - Underweight
 - Wears glasses
 - Clothing
 - New kid
 - Not being able to afford “cool” things



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Targets of Bullying

- Weak—can't defend themselves
- Depressed or anxious, low esteem
- Few friends, less popular
- Socially may not get along with others
- Seen as annoying or antagonize others



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LGBT Youth

- Perceived as being “different” from peers
 - LGBT students or students perceived as being LGBT (lesbian, bisexual, gay, and transgender)
- Teachers and administrators should be aware of language use by students that is considered discriminatory against LGBT
 - Example of inappropriate language: “That’s so gay”

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Harassment

- May be bullying
- Motivated by characteristics of a targeted victim
- Harassment violates Civil Rights Laws as a form of unlawful discrimination
 - Color
 - National origin
 - Sex
 - Disabilities



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Harassment

- Additional burden of liability
- Additional penalties for schools because harassment creates a “hostile environment when the conduct is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent so as to interfere with or limit a student’s ability to participate in services, activities or opportunities offered by schools.”

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LEGISLATION

Bullying

- Significant disruptions to the school environment
 - On campus
 - School sponsored events
 - School transportation
 - District owned technology

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Local Policy Components

Local Education Policies

- A. Definitions
- B. Report Bullying
- C. Investigating and Responding
- D. Written Records
- E. Sanctions
- F. Referrals



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Communications Plan

- Who to notify for policies related to bullying:
 - Students
 - Student's parents
 - School staff
- Inform them of consequences of bullying



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Legal Requirements

- Most state regulations require:
 - A district policy on bullying
 - Documentation on each bullying incident which includes:
 - Actions taken
 - Students involved
 - Investigation
 - Monitoring to prevent a repeat of the bullying incident



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Sanctions

- District Plan of Action for Bullying
- Staff meeting agreed upon consistent consequences
- Measured progressive consequences include:
 - Warning
 - Bullying Report
 - Note home to parents
 - Loss of privileges
 - Referral



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RESPONDING TO BULLYING

Staff Training

- Most states require or suggest teacher and staff training on direct response to bullying



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Hot Spots for Bullying

- Unsupervised areas
- Classroom transitions
 - Cafeteria
 - Library
 - Restroom
 - Playground
 - Hallways
- On the way to and from school
 - Walking
 - On the bus



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Direct Response to Bullying

Step 1: Take Action. "A"

- Confront bullying student.
- Remain calm in a fair but firm manner.
- Communicate that bullying will NOT be tolerated.
- Immediate action is necessary because when a teacher ignores bullying it sends the message that bullying is OK.

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Direct Response to Bullying

Step 2: Emphasize high expectations. "E"

- Realize that bullies often respond with "I was only fooling around."
- Realize the bully may say, "It was a joke."
- Emphasize high expectations and how you expect students to act appropriately.
- Finish with: "That behavior is not appropriate!"

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Direct Response to Bullying

Step 3: When in doubt, intervene and investigate. "I"

- When appropriate, impose a consequence.
- Point out that all students are to be treated with respect and kindness.
- Tell bystanders that they all share in the responsibility of keeping school safe.
- Do not ask bully to apologize on the spot, but do focus on the bully.

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Direct Response to Bullying

Step 4: Document all occurrences. "O"

- If the bullies behavior does not improve document the incident in a bullying report.
- Document on the report subsequent occurrences.
 - Document actions taken with the bully
 - Share report with bully's parents
 - Express seriousness of bullying and school policy
 - Ask bully's parents for support in ending bullying

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YOU Make a Difference in Stopping Bullying



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AEIOU Review

Remember: AEIOU

A = Take **ACTION**

E = Emphasize High **EXPECTATIONS**

I = **INTERVENE** and **INVESTIGATE**

O = Document all **OCCURRENCES**

U = **YOU** can make a difference

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“The school didn’t do anything.”

- In the majority of bullying cases that hit the courts, the accusation is “The school didn’t do anything.”
- Proper documentation is critical in liability cases involving bullying.

Keep a running record of incidents documenting who, what, when, where, why and how. Record consequences or actions taken.

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NEXT STEPS IN BULLYING PREVENTION

Classroom Interventions

- Establish class rules against bullying.
- Reinforce rules by teaching pro-social behavioral strategies through classroom instruction and activities.



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Further Study

Professional Articles

- Three professional articles that deal with the content of this course are available for download at our web site:

- Bullying and Harassment: What schools can do.
<http://www.peacefulplaygrounds.com/bullying-harassment-what-schools-can-do/>
- How Teachers Should Respond to Bullying
<http://www.peacefulplaygrounds.com/how-teachers-should-respond-to-bullying/>
- Why Bullying Programs Succeed or Fail
<http://www.peacefulplaygrounds.com/why-bullying-programs-succeed-or-fail/>

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