
How to Stop Bullying: Teacher Handout

What is bullying?

- Any unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children involving real or perceived *power imbalances*; behavior is *repeated* or has potential for repeating
- Verbal – saying or writing mean things (i.e. teasing, name calling, sexual comments, threats)
- Social/Relational – hurting someone’s reputation or relationships (i.e. leaving someone out purposefully, telling kids not to be friends with someone, rumors, public embarrassment)
- Physical – hurting someone’s body or possessions (i.e. hitting, spitting, pushing, breaking)

How do you identify bullying?

- School staff are generally unaware of the extent of bullying (most episodes only last 37 seconds and are usually verbal vs. physical)
- School Map Hot Spots
 - Give students a school map and ask them to identify the 3 most common areas of bullying
 - Give teachers a school map and ask them to identify areas that are often unsupervised
- Peer Nominations
 - Ask fellow students to identify some students who “pick on others” and some students who get “picked on” frequently
 - Can frame it as a play or a movie – “If you were directing a movie and had a bully, who would you pick to play that role and why? What about someone who gets bullied?”

Is it really worth trying to stop bullying?

- “Isn’t it just a normal part of growing up?” – No. Most children are not bullied nor do they bully. Acceptance of this activity sends the wrong message
- “Won’t my intervening just make it worse when I am not around?” – No. Research has shown that teacher and peer interventions have reduced bullying.
- “I don’t know how to stop it and don’t know where to turn for help” – Talk to school counselors, contact local colleges/psychology/education programs, use resources below.
- “It seems like bullying programs just increase the amount of bullying” – Initially, you are likely to hear about more bullying when you start to intervene but overtime it will reduce

Quick tips for stopping bullying:

- Do - stay calm, intervene immediately, separate kids involved, ensure safety, meet medical/mental health needs, model respectful behavior
- Don't – ignore it, immediately sort out facts, force other kids to talk publicly about what happened, question in front of other kids, talk to involved kids together, make kids apologize on the spot

Supporting the Bullies and Bullied

- Bullied – listen to child fully, assure it is not their fault, know it is hard to talk about, give advice, develop a game plan with child, be persistent, follow up later
- Bully – clearly state problem behavior, show that bullying is taken seriously, work to find out reasons for bullying, consequences are teaching opportunities, involve bully in amending situation, avoid “punishment” consequences as able, avoid conflict resolution, avoid group therapy, follow up later

Other GREAT resources:

- www.stopbullying.gov, <http://pathwayscourses.samhsa.gov/bully>, www.teachsafeschools.org