Bully, Bullied, or Bystander:
Which one is your student?

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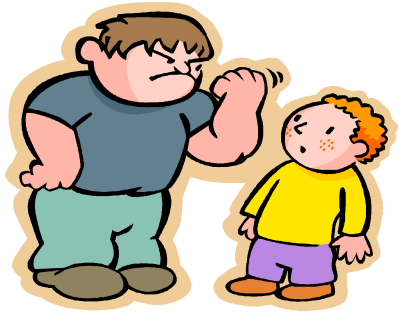
What is bullying?

Bullying is a conscious, willful, and deliberate hostile activity intended to harm, induce fear through the threat of further aggression, and create terror.

TYPES OF BULLYING

- Verbal
- Physical
- Relational



VERBAL

Description

Name calling, taunting, belittling, cruel criticism, personal defamation, racist slurs, and sexually suggestive or sexually abusive remarks. It can involve extortion of lunch money or possessions, abusive phone calls, intimidating emails, anonymous notes containing threats of violence, untruthful accusations, false and malicious rumors, and gossip.

Impact

Words are powerful tools and can break the spirit of a child who is on the receiving end. Verbal abuse is the most common form of bullying used. It accounts for 70% of reported bullying . Younger children who have not developed a strong sense of self are most susceptible to it.

PHYSICAL

Description

Physical bullying accounts for less than one-third of the bullying incidents reported by children. It includes slapping, hitting, choking, poking, punching, kicking, biting, pinching, scratching, damaging or destroying clothes or property belonging to the bullied child.

Impact

The older and stronger the bully, the more dangerous this kind of attack becomes, even if serious harm is not intended.

The child who regularly plays this role is often the **most troubled** of all the bullies and most likely to move on to more serious criminal offenses.

RELATIONAL

Description

Relational bullying is the systematic diminishment of a bullied child's sense of self through ignoring, isolating, excluding, or shunning.

Shunning in conjunction with rumors is a powerful bullying tool.

Relational bullying can involve subtle gestures such as aggressive stares, rolling of eyes, sighs, frowns, sneers, snickers, and hostile body language.

Impact

Relational bullying is most powerful during the middle years because it is when young teens are trying to figure out who they are & trying to fit in with peers.

Intentionally excluding a child from sleepovers, birthday parties, and playground games is often overlooked as a form of bullying because it is not as obvious.

The bullied child's pain is usually hidden or dismissed when expressed.

HOW TO RECOGNIZE BULLYING

Three Elements

- Imbalance of Power – The bully has the upper hand through size, strength, verbal skills, social hierarchy, or less to lose by getting into trouble.
- Intent to Harm - The bully means to inflict emotional and/or physical pain, expects the action to hurt, and takes pleasure witnessing the hurt.
- Threat of Further Aggression - Both the bully and the bullied know that the bullying can and probably will occur again.

Terror: The Possible 4th Element

Bullying is systematic violence used to intimidate and maintain dominance. **If not stopped**, the bullied lives in fear and is therefore terrorized by the bully.

From Target to Victim

Ever-weakening Target

After a child has been targeted by a bully, her actions determine if she becomes a victim. If the child succumbs to the attack by showing distress, fear, or no particular emotion; or fails to respond assertively or aggressively, she becomes someone she was not before the attack.

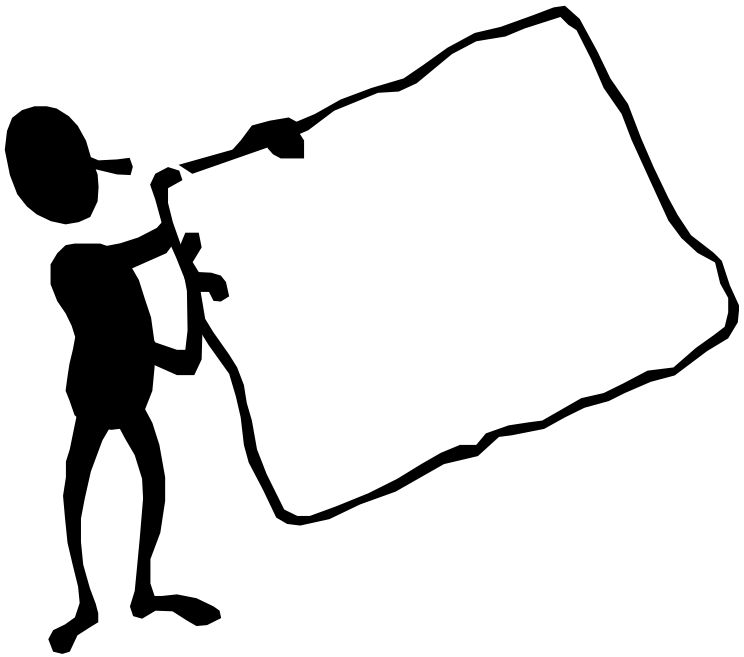
Why not fight back?

Do you think a victim should retaliate physically or verbally? Why or Why not?

FEELINGS

The guilt, shame, and sense of failure felt by a target who is unable to cope with the brutalization contribute to the destruction of his sense of well-being. More focus is put on developing survival strategies instead of social skills, and his life changes radically.

ACTIVITY SHEET



The Bully

Children aren't born bullies. Children are taught to bully. Home life, school life, the community and culture (including the media) permit and encourage such behavior.

Contempt

Bullying is not about anger. It is about CONTEMPT. Contempt is a powerful dislike toward somebody considered to be worthless, inferior, or undeserving of respect.

Children who bully target children who are different from themselves in some way. These differences are used to justify the attacks , because the bully needs somewhere to heap her aggression.

Psychological Advantages

A child's feelings of contempt give him an advantage as a bully, because these feelings allow him to harm another human being without feeling empathy, compassion, or shame.

Three Advantages

The three apparent psychological advantages are:

1. A sense of entitlement – the privilege and right to control, dominate, subjugate, and otherwise abuse another human being.
2. An intolerance toward differences – different equals inferior and thus not worthy of respect.
3. The freedom to exclude – to bar, isolate, and segregate a person deemed not worthy of respect or care.

Arrogance

Bullies project an air of superiority that is often a mask to cover up deep hurt and a feeling of inadequacy.

The bully rationalizes that he is entitled to hurt someone else because he holds that person in contempt; however, it is just an excuse to put someone down so that he, the bully, can feel up.

Common Traits of a Bully

- Likes to dominate other people.
- Likes to use other people to get what they want.
- Find it hard to see a situation from the other person's point of view.
- Are concerned only with their own wants and pleasures and not the needs, rights, and feelings of others.
- Tend to hurt other kids when parents or other adults are not around.
- View weaker siblings or peers as prey.
- Use blame, criticism, and false allegations to project their own inadequacies onto their target.
- Refuse to accept responsibility for their actions.
- Lack foresight or the ability to predict the consequences of their behavior
- Crave attention.

Parental Understanding

FOR BULLIES

- Practice empathy building exercises.
- Tell your own story about your childhood experiences.
- Help him/her identify and talk about feelings.
- List very specific consequences for bullying behaviors and post them at home.
- Involve your child in a church or character building program for youths.
- Consult a school counselor or family therapist.

FOR BULLIED

- Take it seriously
- Show understanding and empathy (not judgment)
- Remind your child that he/she does not deserve to be mistreated.
- Enroll your child in sports or martial arts to boost confidence and social skills.
- Allow your child to speak with a school counselor or therapist
- Speak with the teacher, coach, or person in authority to stop the problem.
- Ask that interviews with students be held separately to avoid further embarrassment or intimidation.

The Bystander

The actions of bystanders can either encourage or discourage a bully's behavior. A bully feeds on the support and approval of peers; therefore, if the bystanders express disapproval, the bullying may stop.

Types of Bystanders

- Followers – they don't start the bullying but join in and help
- Supporters – support bullying but do not take an active part
- Passive Supporters – like the bullying but do not display open support
- Disengaged Onlookers – watch what happens but don't take a stand
- Possible Defenders – don't like the bullying, want to help, but don't.
- Defenders – dislike bullying and try to help

Reasons for Standing By

1) The bystander is afraid of getting hurt by the bully.
2) The bystander is afraid of becoming a new target of the bully.
3) The bystander is afraid of doing something that would only make the situation worse, such as getting friends in trouble.
4) The bystander does not know what to do. (Children must be taught ways to intervene.)

Results

- Bystanders are more likely to adopt antisocial behavior.
- Bystanders develop a decreased sense of responsibility
- Bystander is hindered from developing empathy and compassion which are necessary for successful peer relationships.
- Stereotypes, prejudices, and discrimination are reinforced.