



# BULLY PREVENTION

What Parents Need To  
Know

# WHAT IS BULLYING?

A written, graphic, verbal, or physical act that is:

- ▶ **Repeated over time**
- ▶ **Intentional harm-doing**
- ▶ **Power: Occurs in a relationship in which there is an imbalance of power**

Remember R. I. P.

# WARREN CITY SCHOOLS BOARD POLICY ALSO STATES:

- ▶ Bullying is: “the behavior causing both mental or physical harm to the other student(s) and is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student(s).”

# BULLYING CAN BE:

## DIRECT

Face to face

### Verbal

Insults, putdowns,  
teasing, harassment

### Physical

Shoves, pushes, hitting,  
assault

### Psychological

Rolling eyes, dirty looks, uttering threats,  
extortion

# BULLYING CAN BE:

## INDIRECT

Behind someone's back

### Exclusion

Leaving out  
Shunning

### Gossip

Lowering people's opinion  
About the victim

### Relational Aggression

Telling people not to be  
friends with a victim

# KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN....

Rough Play	Real Fighting	Bullying
Usually friends; often repeated (same players)	Usually not friends; typically not repeated	Typically not friends; generally repeated
Balance of power	Power relatively equal	Unequal power
No intent to harm	Intentional harm-doing	Intentional harm-doing
Affect is friendly; positive, mutual	Affect negative; aggressive, tense, hostile affect	Affect negative; aggressive & differs for victim and aggressor

# GENDER DIFFERENCES

- ▶ 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

(Nansel, 2001; Olweus, 1993)

# BULLYING AFFECTS **EVERYONE**

- ▶ Those who are bullied
- ▶ Those who bully
- ▶ Bystanders

# CHARACTERISTICS OF A BULLY

- High self-esteem
- May be popular
- More likely to engage in other problem behaviors later in life, such as criminal activity or alcohol or other drug abuse

# CHILDREN WHO BULLY ARE LIKELY TO:

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

# LONGITUDINAL DATA

- ▶ 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.

(Olweus, 1993)

# CHARACTERISTICS OF VICTIMS

## Passive

- Quiet, anxious & insecure
- Tend to “normalize” and no longer are victims upon entering adulthood, though they may have continued lower self-esteem and be more prone to depression

## Provocative

- Reactive, clumsy, impulsive, irritating
- Attempt to fight or answer back when attacked, but not effectively
- Often hyperactive, have difficulty concentrating and act in ways that irritate others

# CHILDREN WHO ARE BULLIED ARE LIKELY TO HAVE:

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

# HEALTH CONSEQUENCES OF BULLYING (FEKKES ET AL., 2003)

	<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%

# EFFECTS ON BYSTANDERS

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

# The Bullying Circle

## Bully

Starts the bullying and takes an active part

## Follower/Henchman

Takes an active part, but does not start the bullying

## Supporter

Supports the bullying but does not take an active part

## Passive Supporter (Possible Bully)

Likes the bullying but does not display open support

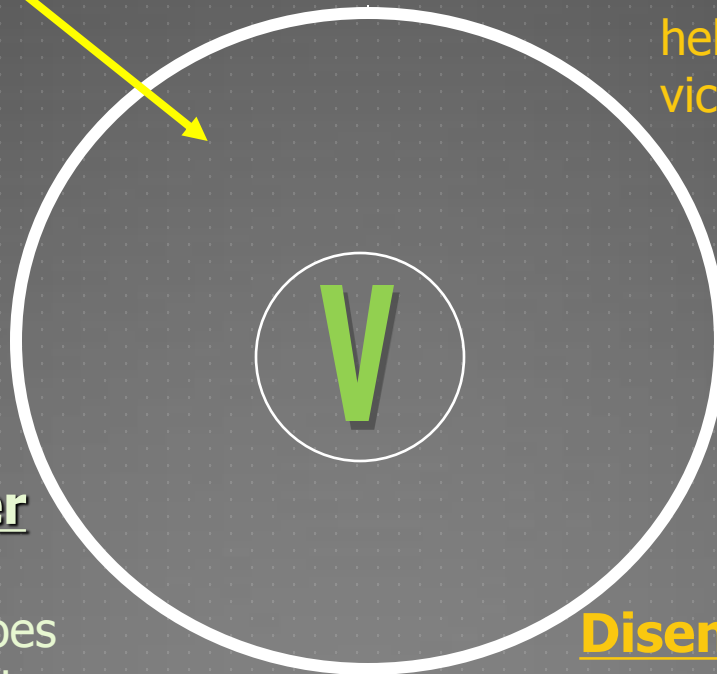
## Defender of the Victim

Dislikes the bullying and helps or tries to help the victim

## Possible Defender

Dislikes the bullying and thinks he ought to help but doesn't

## Disengaged Onlooker



# WHY ADULTS DON'T INTERVENE

- ▶ **Difficulty recognizing bullying**
- ▶ **Failure to recognize the importance of intervening**
- ▶ **Uncertainty regarding *how best* to intervene**

## **Enabling**

is unwittingly protecting a person from the consequences of their actions out of a sense of love, compassion, fear, or survival instinct

## **Entitlement**

is the belief that it is our right to use violence or threats of violence to express feelings, meet needs, or satisfy wants.

## **Intolerance**

occurs when violence is accepted as the norm by adults or young people who ignore, rationalize, or minimize incidents of violence.

# POSSIBLE WARNING SIGNS THAT A CHILD IS BEING BULLIED:

- ▶ Comes home with torn, damaged, or missing pieces of clothing, books, or other belongings
- ▶ Has unexplained cuts, bruises, and scratches
- ▶ Has few, if any friends, with whom he or she spends time
- ▶ Seems afraid of going to school, walking to and from school, riding the school bus, or taking part in organized activities with peers (such as clubs)
- ▶ Sudden loss of appetite or appears anxious
- ▶ Takes a long, “illogical” route when walking to or from school
- ▶ Has lost interest in school work or suddenly
- ▶ Begins to do poorly in school
- ▶ Appears sad, moody, teary, or depressed when he or she comes home
- ▶ Complains frequently of headaches, stomachaches, or other physical ailments;
- ▶ Has trouble sleeping or has frequent bad dreams;
- ▶ Suffers from low self-esteem

# WHAT IS BEING DONE AT WILLARD?

- ▶ School Counselors are providing monthly classroom lessons.
- ▶ Teachers K-3 are using the Skills for Life program in all of the classrooms.
- ▶ Counselors are providing Skills for Life Training in grades 4-8.
- ▶ Small lunchtime groups.
- ▶ Individual sessions available with counselors for victims, bullies, and bystanders.
- ▶ Lead principals, POD principals, teachers, counselors, family liaisons and other school staff working with families to provide interventions and support to those who may be affected by bullying in any way.
- ▶ Continued staff training with the latest research and best research-based interventions.

# WE ALL MUST TAKE BULLYING VERY SERIOUSLY!

- ▶ Administrators
- ▶ Teachers
- ▶ Counselors
- ▶ Support staff
- ▶ Parents
- ▶ Students
- ▶ Community members

# WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU SUSPECT YOUR CHILD IS BEING BULLIED?

If your child shows any of these signs, this does not necessarily mean that he or she is being bullied, but it is a possibility worth exploring. What should you do? Talk with your child and talk with staff at school to learn more.

- ▶ 1. Talk with your child. Tell your child that you are concerned and that you'd like to help. Here are some questions that can get the discussion going:

# WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU SUSPECT YOUR CHILD IS BEING BULLIED?

Some direct questions:

- ▶ I'm worried about you. Are there any kids at school who may be picking on you or bullying you?"
- ▶ "Are there any kids at school who tease you in a mean way?"
- ▶ "Are there any kids at school who leave you out or exclude you on purpose?"

# WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU SUSPECT YOUR CHILD IS BEING BULLIED?

Some subtle questions:

- ▶ “Do you have any special friends at school this year? Who are they? Who do you hang out with?”
- ▶ “Who do you sit with at lunch and on the bus?”
- ▶ “Are there any kids at school who you really don’t like? Why don’t you like them? Do they ever pick on you or leave you out of things?”

# WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU SUSPECT YOUR CHILD IS BEING BULLIED?

2. Ask the teacher to talk with other adults who interact with your child at school (such as the music teacher, physical education teacher, or bus driver) to see whether they have observed other students bullying your child.
3. If you are not comfortable talking with your child's teacher, or if you are not satisfied with the conversation, make an appointment to meet with your child's school counselor or principal to discuss your concerns.

# WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD IS BULLYING OTHERS?

1. Talk with staff at your child's school. Call or set up an appointment to talk with your child's teacher. Share your concerns about your child and ask the teacher such questions as:

- ▶ “How does my child get along with other students in his or her class?”
- ▶ “With whom does he or she spend free time?”
- ▶ “Have you noticed any unusual changes in the way my child interacts with some of his peers?”

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3. If you are not comfortable talking with your child's teacher, or if you are not satisfied with the conversation, make an appointment to meet with your child's school counselor or principal to discuss your concerns.

Whatever the situation:

SEEK HELP

# BOTTOM LINE

If you obtain information from your child or from staff at your child's school that leads you to believe that he or she **is being bullied or is bullying others**, take quick action. Bullying can have serious effects on children.

After talking with your child and staff at his or her school, you **don't suspect** that your child is being bullied or is bullying others, **stay vigilant** to other possible problems that your child may be having. Some of the warning signs discussed earlier may be signs of other serious problems. Share your concerns with a counselor at your child's school!

# WE CAN STOP BULLYING!

- ▶ **Stopping bullying takes a team effort.**
- ▶ The reward is:  
A school climate where children are free to learn.



# INTERACTIVE WEBSITE

[www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov](http://www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov)

- ▶ Animated Serial Comic
  - ▶ Games, polls for tweens
  - ▶ Advice for tweens
  - ▶ Resource Kit for adults
  - ▶ Links to partner groups and activities
- ▶ Call 1-800-789-2647 or go to [www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov](http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov) for more information

# REFERENCES

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