Addressing Bullying Behavior
Resource Bundle

I. Addressing Bullying Behavior Resource

II. References
Use this resource to help you address any case of bullying and help those students involved grow from the experience.

### Bullying Criteria

*These three criteria separate bullying behavior from other acts of aggression.*

**Intentionality:** The bully knows his or her behavior will be perceived as unpleasant and maybe harmful to the targeted person.

**Repetition:** The harmful act is repeated or there is an escalation in the bullying behavior.

**Power Imbalance:** Differences can be in physical strength, ratio of bullies to victims, self-confidence, or popularity.

### Intervention

*Steps to take when bullying behavior is occurring in the moment.*

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<th>Action</th>
<th>Considerations</th>
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| Act quickly                   | As soon as you become aware that bullying is taking place, it is important to act quickly. This shows the victim that you support him or her, and sends a clear message to bullies and bystanders that bullying is unacceptable.  
If you are present when the bullying is taking place this means putting a stop to it immediately. If you feel unsafe stopping the bullying on your own, do not hesitate to seek help from other staff. If you are not present when the bullying is taking place, but are told of the occurrence, act quickly by seeking help and investigating the situation. |
| Investigate the situation     | Before deciding on how to resolve the problem at hand, be sure to talk to all relevant parties, including any bystanders and other school personnel. You are checking to see if the incident meets the criteria for bullying or falls under another category of aggression.  
By getting a clear picture of the situation you will better be able to support the victim and resolve the problem. |
| Seek help                     | Bullying is a serious problem and not something you should try and resolve on your own. Inform the school administration of what happened and seek advice for next steps to take.  
Be cognizant of your school’s school policy. Check to see if there are school-wide systems in place to handle bullying. |

### Resolution

*Approaches you can take to deal with those involved in an act of bullying.*

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<th>Considerations</th>
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| The Moralistic Approach         | For this approach to work, the school, or classroom, needs a strong and clear set of values in place. Students need to be taught about these values and they should be visibly present in the classrooms and halls.  
Bullying should be addressed as a breach or violation of the school’s values and norms. In this context, the bullying student is held responsible for helping to restore the safe and welcoming environment of the school or classroom. Often schools that use a moralistic approach seek to meet with the bullying student’s parents for a conference, as well as have him or her write an apology letter to the victim. |
| The Legalistic Approach         | For this approach to work, the school, or classroom, needs a set of sanctions in place that serve as consequences for bullying. Students must know exactly what they can expect if they are caught exhibiting bullying behavior. The severity of the sanctions matches the seriousness of the pattern of bullying behavior.  
Sanctions are not meant to be punitive but are in place to deter students from bullying in the future. Sanctions can involve bringing in parents, having a conversation with the principal, or losing privileges. |
| The Humanistic Approach | This approach focuses on not only changing the bully’s actions, but his or her beliefs and feelings. A teacher using the humanistic approach must try to understand why the bullies did what they did. In the humanistic approach, the teacher positions the bully to consider how his or her actions have affected the victim. The purpose is to develop empathy, and help the bully to recognize, on his or her own, that his or her actions were hurtful. Schools that use this approach often will bring the bully and victim together to work on building a more positive relationship. It is important for the teacher to work with both the bully and victim after the incident to help develop their prosocial behaviors. |

| Transformation | Actions you can take over an extended time period to help all students demonstrate more prosocial behaviors. |

| Bullies | How to help students who exhibit bullying behavior interact with others in a more positive way. |

- Have consequences in place that outweigh the benefits the student gets from bullying.
- Encourage students to think before they act and model this behavior for all students.
- Link students who have exhibited bullying behavior with positive role models.
- Include more cooperative learning lessons in to your curriculum to build students’ prosocial behaviors.
- Work with bullies to help them understand that they can have friends that disagree with them or are different from them.
- Use reverse role-playing to help bullies walk in a victim’s shoes.
- Work with bullies on conflict management, anger management, and problem solving.

| Victims | Work with the victims to self-protect and decrease the likelihood of being a target in the future. |

**Suggestions to help students self-protect:**
- Don’t be alone; stay close to a group.
- If confronted, stay calm, be confident, and look the bully in the eyes.
- Be assertive with your response. Show the bully that you are not afraid and the bully will not get the reaction he or she desires.
- If bullied, inform an adult right away.
- Practice how to handle stressful situations.

**Suggestions to help students not be viewed as targets:**
- Encourage the students to pick up a new hobby.
- Develop prosocial behaviors to help the student make new friends; practice these behaviors with the student.
- Provide time and a place for a victim to rebuild confidence.
- Find an older, more confident student to take the victim under his or her wing.

| Bystanders | How to help bystanders be agents of change and support victims when they are targeted. |

- Include bullying in your curriculum (discuss the topic, read texts that deal with it, etc.).
- Hold regular classroom meetings to discuss bullying and the presence of any negative student interactions.
- Role-play situations so bystanders can understand how hurtful bullying can be and why it is harmful to endorse bullying behavior.
- Discuss how students can support victims.
- Discuss with students why informing adults of bullying is important.

**References:**
References


