Resilient Systems Part II: Using Data-Based Decision-Making to Reduce Bullying

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Columbus, Ohio

Afternoon Workshop Objectives

- Understand how assessment and intervention are inextricably linked
- Understand the key elements for creating a positive school climate
- Identify how to use data-based decision-making
- Identify the critical elements for bullying prevention and intervention
- Review evidence-based resources

Therapeutic Interventions

- Develop a strong community referral system
- Utilize school counselors and school psychologists
- Create a positive school climate—vital for both prevention and intervention

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A Way to Document Bullying Incidents

- **Develop a confidential reporting system**
  - **Determine a method for reporting bullying**
  - **Document the incident in detail**
  - **Use forms consistently**
  - **Follow-up consistently**

Example: The ABC's of Bullying

- **Self-monitoring bullying behaviors is illuminating for both the bully and/or the target AND the adults**
- **Track the antecedents, behaviors, and consequences of bullying**

Helping the Victim, the Bully & the Bystander

- **Make sure students are aware of the confidential reporting system that details the problem**
- **Have an open door policy with counselors to address the needs of students involved in bullying**
- **Stay away from a shame/blame mentality**

Interventions for Bullies

- **It is important to determine whether intervention modules are best delivered in a group format or individually. Typically, anti-bullying programs deliver interventions in a group format. However, research has suggested that homogenous group interventions are not helpful for aggressive youth and in fact, may be damaging (Dishion, McCord, & Poulin, 1999).**

A True Story (Newsweek, April 12, 2004):

- **"People were climbing over seats and started fighting about stupid stuff."**
  - **-Woodlawn High School freshman Melissa Parks, on the arrests of 11 students and two adults after a fight broke out in the Maryland school's anger-management assembly.**

Cognitive-Behavioral Intervention for Bullying*

- **The social-cognitive perceptions of all participants in bullying interactions are as critical as are the aggressive behaviors, because the perceptions and cognitions of participants serve to perpetuate and escalate bullying incidents.**

* From: Doll, B. & Swearer, S. M., (2005). Cognitive behavior interventions for participants in bullying and coercion. In R. B. Mennuti, A. Freeman, & R. Christner (Eds.), *Cognitive Behavioral Interventions in Educational Settings*. New York: Brunner-Routledge.

The Bullying Intervention Project (Swearer, 2005)

- **Alternative to in-school suspension**
- **ASSESSMENT: Questionnaires (1 hr.)**
  - **The Bully Survey, CDI, MASC, HIT, TAS, Harter Self-Concept Scale**
  - **Give results of each**
- **EDUCATION: PowerPoint Presentation (30 min.)**
  - **Quiz over presentation**
- **EDUCATION: "Let's Get Real" Video or "Bully Dance" (30 min).**
  - **Discussion**

Bullying Intervention (Swearer, 2005)

- **EDUCATION: Worksheet Activities (from *Bully Busters*, 1 hr.)**
  - **Stop Rewind, Play it Again**
  - **Jump into my Shoes**
  - **Lend a Hand**
  - **Are you up to the Challenge?**
  - **Vacation Time**
  - **Relaxation Time**
- **EVALUATION: Write treatment report; share with school and parents**
- **FOLLOW-UP: Track office referral data for bullying incidents**

Everyone Plays a Role in the Bullying Dynamic

Beliefs and actions that maintain bullying

- Lack adequate skills and training
- Add fuel to fire (peer mediation example)
- Ignore bullying incidents
- Fail to intervene or do so "once in a while"

Beliefs and actions that prevent/reduce bullying

- Increase knowledge and skills
- Consistent responding
- Increase awareness
- Open door policy
- Know that bullying extends past what adults see
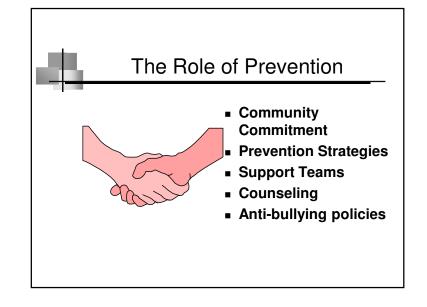
The Four R's of Effective Intervention

1. Recognize that bullying exists.
2. Review the conditions that allowed the bullying behaviors to occur.
3. Respond to the social-ecology of the bullying dynamic.
4. Repeat each time you're faced with a bullying dynamic.

How can we make a difference?

- **Create a positive environment**
- **Establish and enforce rules**
- **Monitor adults' responses to bullying**
- **School-wide, on-going assessment**
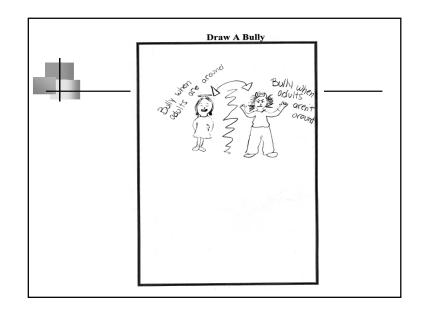- **Respond rapidly and unambiguously**
- **Defuse bullying situations**

The Role of Prevention

- **Community Commitment**
- **Prevention Strategies**
- **Support Teams**
- **Counseling**
- **Anti-bullying policies**

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Prevention Beats Intervention

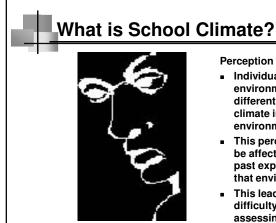It is better to be a swim teacher than a life guard.

Draw A Bully

School Climate

School climate is a critical component of effective bullying prevention and intervention efforts.
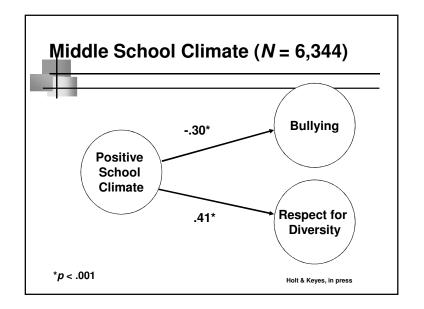

What is School Climate?

Perception
- Individuals in the same environment may have a different perception of the climate in that environment.
- This perception is likely to be affected by current or past experiences within that environment.
- This leads to some of the difficulty in defining and assessing school climate.

School Climate Factors that Encourage Bullying

- **School discipline that is too authoritarian or too lax**
- **Reinforcement of bullying behavior**
- **Ignoring bullying behavior**
- **Acceptance of bullying by peer groups**
- **Acceptance of bullying by staff**
- **Modeling by school staff and other students**
- **Bullying is viewed as an instrumental behavior (i.e., "I get what I want.")**

Middle School Climate (N = 6,344)

Positive School Climate → Bullying: -.30*

Positive School Climate → Respect for Diversity: .41*

*p < .001

Holt & Keyes, in press

Perceptions of School Climate

- **Bully-victims had the most negative view of school climate (M=84.6), followed by bullies (M=86.6), victims (M=87.3), and students not involved in bullying (M=92.8).**

- **Students involved in bullying held more negative perceptions of school climate than students not involved in bullying.**

- **(n=469, collected in 2002)**

Perceptions of One School's Response to Bullying
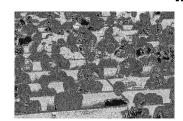
- **90% of students across their middle school years felt that schools should worry about bullying.**

- **35% of victims, 40% of bullies, and 15% of observers reported that the school staff did NOT know that the bullying occurred.**

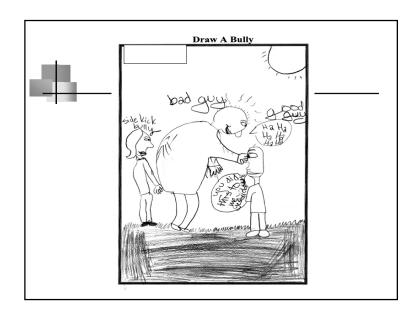## Conclusions about School Climate

- **Bullying appears to contribute to a negative school climate.**
- **School climate is a necessary, but not sufficient component of successful bullying prevention and intervention programs.**
- **Each school's climate will reflect their own unique environment.**
- **School climate is shaped by the adults in the school**

School-Wide Interventions

"School-wide interventions can reduce bullying behaviors by 30-50%."

Draw A Bully

Best Practices

- **We need to use data-based decision-making to effectively intervene with bullying behaviors.**

What are Schools To Do?

- Of the more than 300 published violence prevention programs, less than a quarter of these programs report outcome data showing that they reduce or prevent violence (Howard, Flora, and Griffin, 1999).
- Schools face the challenge of determining which programs and procedures will work in their particular school and community ecologies.

Data-based decision-making
(Swearer & Espelage, 2004)

1. Partner with university researchers to conduct an assessment of bullying behaviors
2. Conduct a school-wide anonymous assessment of bullying behaviors
3. Include multiple informants
4. Use self-report, other report, observations
5. Graph data to create a picture of the scope of bullying in your school
6. Use data to conduct classroom presentations on bullying
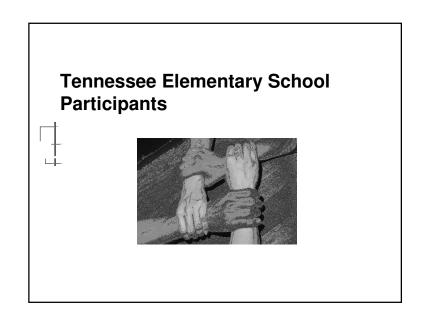
Data-based decision-making
(Swearer & Espelage, 2004)
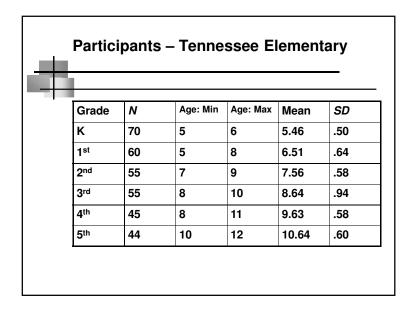
7. Use the data to create interventions for bullying
8. Use the data to establish preventative measures to create an antibullying climate
9. Share data with parent groups (e.g., PTO)
10. Create a data-based decision-making climate through the use of individual school data to help guide prevention and intervention programming.
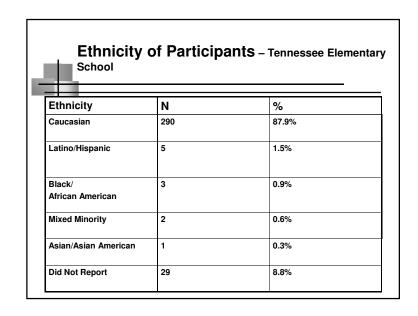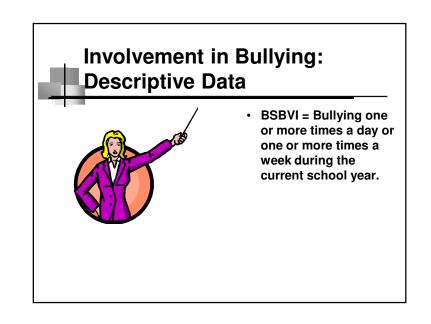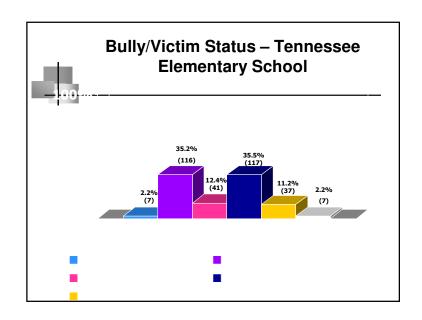
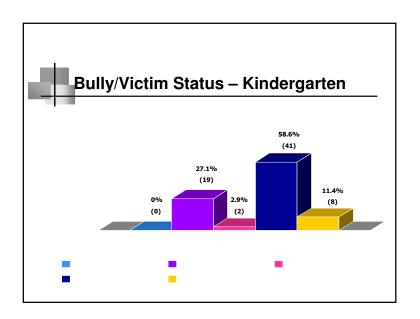## School-wide example of data-based decision making

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Tennessee Elementary School Participants

Participants – Tennessee Elementary

Grade	N	Age: Min	Age: Max	Mean	SD
K	70	5	6	5.46	.50
1st	60	5	8	6.51	.64
2nd	55	7	9	7.56	.58
3rd	55	8	10	8.64	.94
4th	45	8	11	9.63	.58
5th	44	10	12	10.64	.60

Ethnicity of Participants – Tennessee Elementary School

Ethnicity	N	%
Caucasian	290	87.9%
Latino/Hispanic	5	1.5%
Black/ African American	3	0.9%
Mixed Minority	2	0.6%
Asian/Asian American	1	0.3%
Did Not Report	29	8.8%

Involvement in Bullying: Descriptive Data

- BSBVI = Bullying one or more times a day or one or more times a week during the current school year.

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Bully/Victim Status – Tennessee Elementary School

2.2% (7), 35.2% (116), 12.4% (41), 35.5% (117), 11.2% (37), 2.2% (7)

Bully/Victim Status – Kindergarten

0% (0), 27.1% (19), 2.9% (2), 58.6% (41), 11.4% (8)

Bully/Victim Status – 1st Grade

1.7% (1), 51.7% (31), 1.7% (1), 30.0% (18), 15.0% (9)

Bully/Victim Status – 2nd Grade

3.6% (2), 30.9% (17), 16.4% (9), 45.5% (25), 3.6% (2)

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Bully/Victim Status – 3rd Grade

0% (0) — 27.3% (15) — 10.9% (6) — 32.7% (18) — 10.9% (6) — 9.1% (5)

Bully/Victim Status – 4th Grade

2.2% (1) — 44.4% (20) — 15.6% (7) — 20.0% (9) — 17.8% (8)

Bully/Victim Status – 5th Grade

6.8% (3) — 31.8% (14) — 36.4% (16) — 13.6% (6) — 9.1% (4) — 2.3% (1)

Comparisons with a Midwestern Sample

TN, $N = 44$ LPS, $N = 118$

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Bully/Victim Status – Boys and Girls

3.4% 4.5% 41.9% 29.9% 14.9% 11.5% 31.1% 40.8% 8.8% 13.4%

Where have you been Bullied?

N = 154, (Students able to endorse more than 1 category)

How did you get Bullied?

N = 154, (Students able to endorse more than 1 category)

Who Bullied you Most Often?

N = 154, (Students able to endorse more than 1 category)

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How Much of a Problem was the Bullying for you?

N = 154, (Students able to endorse more than 1 category)

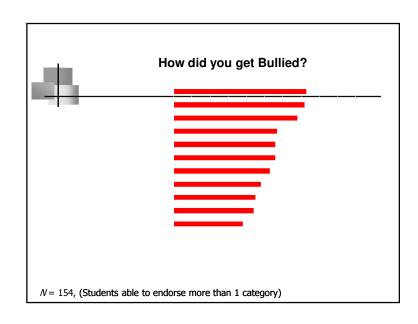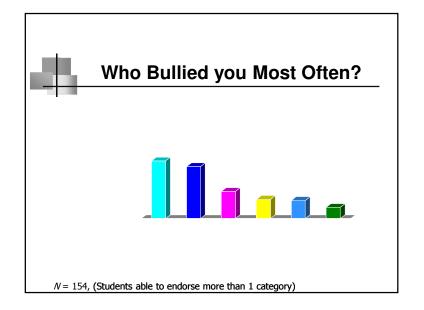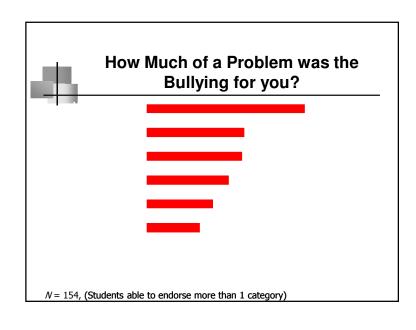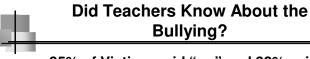## Top 10 Reasons Students Report being Bullied at this school

1. They think I am a wimp (n=66)
2. I get good grades (n=53)
3. I get angry a lot (n=52)
4. They think my friends are weird (n=51)
5. They think I'm fat (n=46)
6. They think my face looks funny (n=45)
7. The clothes I wear (n=43)
8. I am too short (n=43)
9. I am different (n=39)
10. They say I'm gay (n=35)

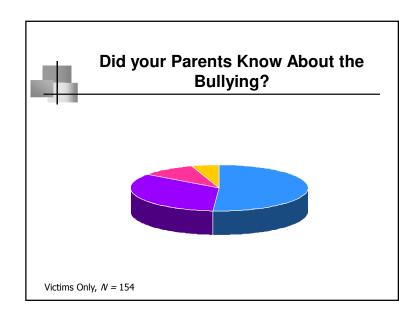## Did Teachers Know About the Bullying?
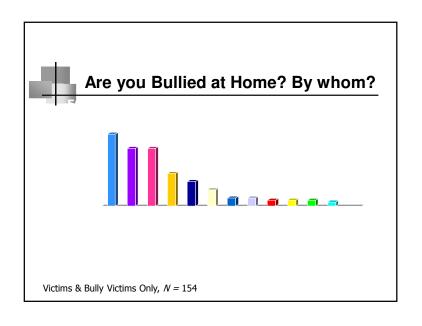
- 35% of Victims said "no" and 32% said "I don't know."

- 37% of Bystanders said "no" and 23% said "I don't know."

- 37% of Bullies & Bully/Victims said "no" and 29% said "I don't know."
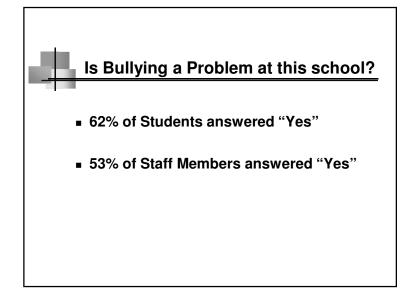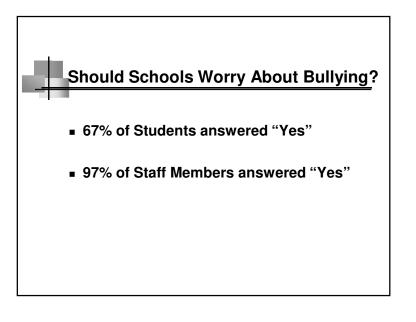
How do you think your teachers & school staff took care of the bullying?

	Victims N=116	Bystanders N=37	Bullies & Bully/Victims N=157
Very well	22%	24%	11%
Okay	9%	3%	18%
Bad	12%	9%	13%
I don't know	49%	41%	40%
Missing	7%	23%	18%

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Did your Parents Know About the Bullying?

Victims Only, *N* = 154

Are you Bullied at Home? By whom?

Victims & Bully Victims Only, *N* = 154

Is Bullying a Problem at this school?

- 62% of Students answered "Yes"

- 53% of Staff Members answered "Yes"

Should Schools Worry About Bullying?

- 67% of Students answered "Yes"

- 97% of Staff Members answered "Yes"

What do the data say about Bullying at Tennessee Elementary?

Data-Based Decision-Making: PREVENTION

- Encourage open communication between students and adults
  - 60% of students said that teachers didn't know about the bullying
  - Only 50% of students told their parents
- Teach about the negative consequences of bullying starting in kindergarten
- Send messages that physical bullying and verbal bullying are equally detrimental

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Data-Based Decision-Making: PREVENTION

- What happens between kindergarten and first grade? An increase in victimization.
- 5th graders had the highest percentage of bully-victims. Seems that older students bully younger students and this dynamic appears to be particularly strong for boys at this school.
- You must get your "not involved" numbers higher!
- Model respectful behavior and develop consistent and enforceable consequences for bullying

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Data-Based Decision-Making: INTERVENTION

- Boys are more involved in bullying behaviors than girls at this school.
- Boys seem to bully each other in the same grade.
- Older boys (i.e., 5th graders appear to be bullying the younger students).
- Bullying occurs between siblings—work with parents.

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Data-Based Decision-Making: INTERVENTION

- **The bully/victim dynamic appears to be particularly salient at this school.**
- **The 80/20 principle (Richard Koch)**
- **At this school, it's the 15/60 principle--- looks like 15% of the students are the ones who bully 60% of the victims**
- **You need to actively intervene with these 15%**

Top Five Places where Bullying Occurs at this school

- Bus
  - Video cameras on the bus? Train bus drivers.
- Gym
  - PE teacher(s) must be involved in anti-bullying efforts.
- Bathroom
  - Monitor, monitor, monitor!!!!
- Cafeteria
  - Teachers should eat lunch with the students
- Before School
  - Adults should be around the school perimeter interacting with students. Students should know that adults are watching and are involved.

Kids' Voices…

- General quotes from the Bully Survey:
  - "I think that bullying is a big problem at this school."
  - "They say I am weird because I am smart."
  - "I'm bullied because of the boys I like."
  - "They think I have head lice."
  - "I told the principal."

- In response to: "Tell us what you did to take care of the bullying?"
  - "I didn't take care of it, I'm still getting bullied."
  - "I beat the living crap out of him."
  - "I did it back to them."
  - "Nothing because I am scared because he hits really hard."

Kid's Voices…

- "I think that bullying is a big problem at this school."
- "I got off the bus and went to get Mis. Smith (principal)."
- "I told them to stop and I told the Bus driver."
- "I got switched to a different class."
- "Poured cold water on him on the bus and told the bus driver."

Staff voices…..

"The other child just picked him out – this particular bully doesn't single just one out he has several students he picks on."

"Bullying not only occurs in younger children. It follows children through high school."

"The bigger the child the worse the bullying may become."

"There was several times he was hit (physically hit) and he was always blamed."

"Bullying took away his faith in himself as well as faith in the adults that should have handled it better."

Staff voices…..

- "Always make time to talk to any individual reporting this type of behavior. Try to resolve issues and bring parents into the discussion."
- "I changed seating arrangement. The other child who was doing the bullying lost recess. I also discussed differences with my class."
- "I had to move the bully at a great distance from the boy in the classroom and finally worked with another teacher to change the bully's schedule to avoid any in-class time together."
- "The other child just picked him out – this particular bully doesn't single just one out he has several students he picks on."

Strategic Planning

- Develop your own anti-bullying policy
- How are you going to get 80-100% buy-in?
- How are you going to assess baseline levels of bullying and victimization?
- How are you going to increase awareness of bullying?
- How will you conduct on-going evaluations of bullying?
- What actions will the school take to respond to bullying?
- How will you evaluate your bullying intervention efforts?

Suggestions for School-Wide Interventions

- Conduct a school-wide assessment of bullying and victimization -- use multiple informants.
- Interventions should confront and change supportive attitudes toward bullying and harassment – both among students AND staff.
- Getting peers to view bullying as negative is a critical component of bullying intervention programs.
- Interventions should address changes throughout the school years.
- Develop, adopt, and monitor an anti-bullying policy.

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Suggestions for Classroom Intervention

- Support teacher suggestions for responding to bullying.
- Create an open-door policy for ALL students.
- Monitor student behavior constantly.
- Be aware of seating arrangements and student involvement in bullying.
- Follow a uniform code of conduct.
- Intervene quickly.
- When possible, weave bullying awareness into the curriculum.

Suggestions for Individual Intervention

- Target counseling services to address internalizing problems such as depression and anxiety in bullies, victims and bully-victims.
- Individualize counseling services across subtypes of bully/victims.
- Interventions for victims and bully-victims should include treatment for anxiety.
- Interventions for bullies and bully-victims should include treatment for depression.

Suggestions for Individual Intervention

- Dispel beliefs about the outcome of aggressive behavior
- Involve parents in the intervention process
- Think about group interventions carefully (i.e., groups may not be effective for bullies and/or bully-victims).
- Create ways for students to share their experiences openly (create a forum for students to share their voices – "Draw A Bully").

CBT for Internalizing Problems

- "Coping Cat" program for anxious youth (Kendall, 1992)
- "Taking ACTION" program for depressed youth (Stark et al, 1996)
- Order: Workbook Publishing, Inc.
  208 Llanfair Road
  Ardmore, PA 19003
  (610) 896-9797

CBT for Externalizing Problems

- "Keeping your cool" program for angry/aggressive youth (Nelson & Finch, 1996)
- "Stop and Think" program for impulsive youth (Kendall, 1992)
- Order: Workbook Publishing, Inc.
  208 Llanfair Road
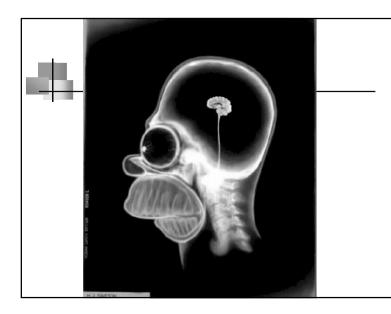 Ardmore, PA 19003
  (610) 896-9797

Cyberbullying: School, classroom, and individual implications

- **www.cyberbullying.ca**
- Schools must have internet use policies
- Cyberbullying is a punishable offense
- If cyberbullying gets out-of-control, school climate is poisoned
- Limit use of computers and cell phones
- Open communication between home and school is critical

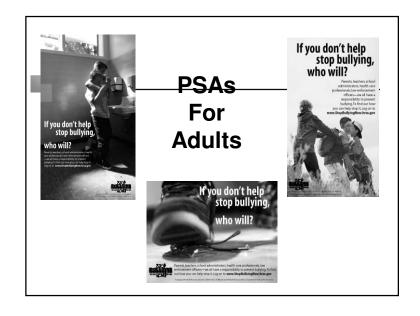## Common Pitfalls in Bullying Prevention and Intervention

- "Debunking the dyadic bias" (Espelage & Swearer, 2003)
- Zero tolerance ("Get rid of the bullies")
- Group treatment for bullies
- Peer mediation/conflict resolution
- Simple, short-term solutions (i.e., suspension)
- School-wide interventions WITHOUT 80-100% staff support

We need to Change the Climate!
Public Information Campaigns

- **HRSA's "Take a stand. Lend a hand. Stop bullying now."**
  (www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov)

- **SAMHSA's "Make Time to Listen, Take Time to Talk…about Bullying." (www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/15plus/aboutbullying)**

www.StopBullyingNow.hrsa.gov

PSAs For Adults

If you don't help stop bullying, who will?

INDIVIDUALIZE Prevention and Intervention Efforts

- **One size DOES NOT fit all!**
- **Schools need to implement bullying prevention and intervention strategies that fit their school ecology and that are empirically validated.**
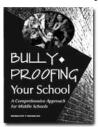
Bullying Prevention and Intervention Resources

Know what the research supports and make informed decisions about prevention and intervention strategies.

Bully-Proofing your School Series

- **Provides a comprehensive line of publications for elementary and middle schools, as well as early childhood.**
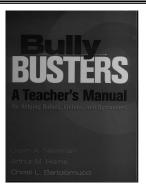
BULLY•
PROOFING
Your School
A Comprehensive Approach for Middle School

Order Information

- **Sopris West Educational Services.**
- **Orders may be placed on their website:www.sopriswest.com**
- **or by calling 800-547-6747.**

BULLY BUSTERS

Bully Busters (Newman, Horne, & Bartolomucci, 2000)

- Intervention and prevention program designed specifically for the middle school years.
- Classroom-level program addresses the essential components of the school ecology that are responsible for change.
- Focus on teacher education and training.
- Differing implementation methods facilitate the needs of different school ecologies.

Steps to Respect (Committee for Children, 2004)

- Research-based program; research-based modules
- Includes school-wide implementation support
- User-friendly
- Comprehensive: Grades 3-6
- *Developmental Psychology* article: found that playground bullying reduced by 25%

Order Information

Steps to Respect: A Bullying Prevention Program

Committee for Children
568 First Avenue South, Suite 600
Seattle, WA 98104-2804
(800) 634-4449, ext. 6210
http://www.cfchildren.org

Second Step: A Violence Prevention Program (Committee for Children, 1997)

- Research-based program; research-based modules
- Includes a module on bullying
- User-friendly
- Buy-in issues are addressed first
- Comprehensive: Grades 1-3; 4-5; 6-7; 7-8;8-9
- U.S. Department of Education Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools "Exemplary Program."

Order Information

Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum
2203 Airport Way South, Suite 500
Seattle, WA 98134
(800) 634-4449

http://www.cfchildren.org

The Peaceful Schools Project (Twemlow, Fonagy, Sacco, Vernberg, & Twemlow)

- "A philosophy, not a program."
- Essential components: discipline plan, positive climate campaign, gentle warrior, reflection time.
- Includes parent workshops.
- Addresses the school's unique ecology.
- Impressive outcome data.

Order Information

"The Peaceful Schools Project."
http://www.backoffbully.com

The Bullying Prevention Program (Olweus & Limber, 1999)

- The only anti-bullying program to meet the criteria for a proven program in the *Blueprints for Violence Prevention* (Elliott, 1999).
- Successfully replicated internationally (e.g., Whitney, Rivers, Smith, & Sharp, 1994) and in the United States (Melton et al.,1998).
- Follows a whole-school multilevel approach that includes core components targeting several levels of the school ecology.
- Implementation issues across different school ecologies are discussed.

Order Information

Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence

Institute of Behavioral Science

University of Colorado at Boulder

Boulder, CO 80309-0442

(303) 492-8465

http://www.Colorado.EDU/cspv/blueprints

Stories of Us--Bullying

- www.storiesofus.com.au
- *Stories of Us* is a unique series of education resources for primary and secondary students. This is the first time students have collaborated in brainstorming the subjects, developed the scripts and performed all key roles in a series of dramatized resources. Every word of dialogue is their own, and every detail approved by the students. The *Stories of Us* videos are compelling as they draw upon the collective experience of the students, holding a mirror to their reality with such authenticity that some students watching them are convinced they are real.
- U.S. filming will begin in fall 2007 in Illinois and Nebraska!

R.E.S.P.E.C.T. [2] (www.respect2all.org)

- **Relationship Empowerment for Students, Parents, Educators & Community Through Theatre**
- **Mission:**
  - **bring together a** community collaboration **to** build healthy relationships **among** children and youth **through theatre**

General Resource

Bullying Behavior: Current issues, research, and interventions. Edited by Geffner, R. A., Loring, M. T. & Young, C. (2002).

Published by The Haworth Press, Inc.
10 Alice Street
Binghamtom, NY 13904-1580
1-800-895-0582
www.HaworthPress.com

Teacher/Counselor Resource

Bullying, Peer Harassment, and Victimization in the Schools. Edited by Elias, M. J. & Zins, J. E. (2002).

Published by The Haworth Press, Inc.
10 Alice Street
Binghamtom, NY 13904-1580
1-800-895-0582
www.HaworthPress.com

Teacher/Counselor Resource

Resilient Classrooms. Doll, B., Zucker, S., & Brehm, K. (2004).

Published by The Guilford Press.
72 Spring Street
New York, NY 10012
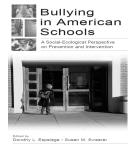www.guilford.com

Teacher/Counselor Resource

Bullying in American Schools
A Social-Ecological Perspective on Prevention and Intervention

Edited by
Dorothy L. Espelage • Susan M. Swearer

Lawrence Erlbaum Associates
http://www.erlbaum.com

Parent Resource

- *And Words can Hurt Forever: How to Protect Adolescents from Bullying, Harassment, and Emotional Violence (2002).*
- **By James Garbarino and Ellen deLara. The Free Press.**

Relational Aggression Resources

- *Girl wars: 12 strategies that will end female bullying.* **By Cheryl Dellasega & Charisse Nixon, 2003, Simon & Schuster.**
- *Sugar & spice and no longer nice: How we can stop girls' violence.* **By Deborah Prothrow-Stith & Howard R. Spivak, 2005, Jossey-Bass.**

Forthcoming from Guilford Press in 2008

- *Bullying Prevention and Intervention: Realistic Strategies for Schools*
- **By Susan M. Swearer, Dorothy L. Espelage, and Scott A. Napolitano**
- **To be published in K. Merrell (Ed.).** *The Guilford Press Practical Intervention in the Schools Series.*

However, it's not about the program….it's about the people!

"Be the change that you want to see in the world."

-Ghandi

SUCCESS

Keys to…

- Use data-based decision-making.
- Creating an anti-bullying policy.
- 80-100% staff support.
- School-wide prevention and intervention.
- Effective home-school communication.
- Effective referral system for mental health issues.
- Creating a healthy, supportive school climate.
- Fostering healthy, supportive peer relationships.
- A genuine respect for diversity.

Draw A Bully

This drawing is to represent that bullies come in all shapes and sizes. Bullies can be anyone and everyone. Because of this is it is impossible to draw a bully.

Target Bullying: Ecologically-Based Prevention and Intervention

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www.targetbully.com and brnet.unl.edu

Questions?