Coping with Bullying

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April 1999
Eric Harris and Dylan Kirbuld entered Columbine High School armed with assault weapons and home made bombs.
They fired randomly and killed 12 classmates, a teacher, injured 18 teenagers, and then shot and killed themselves...they had been constantly ridiculed and bullied at school”
Columbine High School
Bullying
Definition

* Dr. Dan Olwens. (Swedish researcher)

“ A person is being bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons.

Negative action is when a person intentionally inflicts injury or discomfort upon another person through physical contact, through words, or in other ways...is both overt or covert”
Bullying Prevalence

* According to a 2001 national survey of parents and kids by the Kaiser Family Foundation and Nickelodeon 74% of 8 to 11 year old students said teasing and bullying occurs at their school regularly.

* Duane Alexander MD, Director of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development

“ It’s a public health problem that merits attention. People who were bullied as children are more likely to suffer from Depression, and low self-esteem, well into adulthood, and the bullies themselves are more likely to engage in criminal behavior later in life”
Bullying
Books and Cinemas

* Oliver Twist by Charles Dickens in 1838.
* The Outsiders by S. E. Hinton in 1967.
* Back to the Future.
* The Karate Kid.
Bullying
Main elements

* An imbalance of Power
* Intent to Harm
* Threat of Further Harm
Bullying
The Triad

The Bully

The Bullied

The Bystander
Bullying Types

* Verbal Bullying
  Name Calling
  Taunting
  Swearing
  Spreading rumors
  Gossip
  Note writing
  Whisper Campaigns
  Secret reveling
  Making up stories to get somebody in trouble, etc.
Bullying Types

* Physical Bullying
  Hitting
  Punching
  Kicking
  Spitting
  Pushing, etc.
Bullying Types

* Social, Relational and Emotional Bullying
  Deliberately excluding someone from a group
  Spreading false rumors
  Silent Treatment
  Manipulation, etc.
Bullying Types

* Extortion

Obtaining money

Taking away possessions

Making somebody steal
Bullying Types

* Cyberbullying
  Email campaigns
  Facebook and other social sites
  Chat rooms
  On line exclusions
  Cell phones
  Text Messages
  Digital Photos and Videos
  Websites, etc.
Bullying
The Bully
Characteristics

- Need to feel powerful and in control
- Need for attention
- Need to feel superior
- Feel he does no wrong
- No empathy
- Quick to feel angry and aggression
- Enjoys inflicting pain and suffering
What about the bully?
Studies show that children identified as bullies by age 8 are six times more likely to be convicted of a crime by age 24. Brewster & Railsback

60% of kids characterized as bullies in the 6th-9th grade had at least one criminal conviction by age 24. Brewster & Railsback

Bullies are five times more likely to end up with a serious criminal record by age 30.
Bullying
The Bully

Contributing Factors Associated with Bullying

Family Factors
- Lack of attention and warmth
- Modeling of aggressive behavior at home
- Poor supervision

Individual Factors
- Active, impulsive personality
- Lack of empathy for others
- Craves attention and approval from others

School
- School climate is perceived as uncaring or indifferent
- Teachers/staff unaware or unclear of bullying definitions or how to respond
What motivates a bully?
Bullies prey on an imbalance of power. They may be seeking attention. They need to make themselves feel more important. They need a particular reaction from the other members of the group. Bullies believe their behavior is exciting and makes them more popular.
Bullying
The Bully

What motivates a bully?
They may be coping with a loss.
They may have an active and impulsive temperament.
They may be victims of bullying/abuse.
They may see violence modeled at home or elsewhere in their lives.
Bullying
The Bully

Warning Signs that your child may be bullying others
Frequent name-calling
Regular bragging
A need to always get his/her own way
Spending more time with younger or less powerful kids
A lack of empathy for others
A defiant or hostile attitude; easily takes offense
Frequent misbehavior at school (e.g. name-calling, teasing, intimidating, physical aggression)
May display cruelty to animals also
Bullying
What To Do if you suspect your child may be bullying others

Talk with your child
Never condone bullying behavior; speak up and tell your child that the behavior they are engaging in is considered bullying.

Encourage empathy for others
Remind your child that everyone has a right to be themselves, to choose their own friends and to feel safe at school.

Review consequences of bullying behavior
Both discipline consequences and relationship consequences

Reinforce respectful behaviors at home Help your child deal with feelings in positive ways

Contact the school for help
Set up a meeting with your child’s teacher(s) or counselor. Develop a plan for change.
Bullying
The Bullied
Characteristics

* Anxious
* Insecure
* Cautious
* Low self-esteem
* Younger
* Frail
* Maybe a member of a minority, different sexual orientation, etc.
* Reluctant to defend or retaliate
* Few friends
Bullying
The Bullied
Why they do not tell

* Embarrassment about being a victim
* Scared of retaliation
* Thinks needs to be silent to belong
* Feels he deserves it
* Afraid nobody will believe him
* Worried about been called a tattletale
* Thinks he should tough it out, etc.
Bullying

The Bystander

* The Assistant
* The Encourager
* The Avoider
* The Hero

Probably the most important one of the Triad.
Bullying
Common Myths

* It is a normal right of passage
* Kids need to learn to defend themselves
* Children who are bullied always tell an adult

Afraid of retaliation
Afraid of being dismissed
Afraid of being blamed
Afraid of being labeled a “Tattletale”
Afraid of making the situation escalate
* People are born Bullies
Bullying
Common Myths

* Bullying does not happen “in my school”
* Bullies are loners with no social skills
* Bullying is a school problems
Bullying
Factors that increase it

* Violence in the Family
* Social Learning (Bandura)
* Domestic Violence
* Child Abuse
* Lack of Positive Role Models
* Violent Television and other media
* Prior Victimization
* School Failure
* Peer Rejection
* School Environment
Bullying
Warning Signs

I hate morning getting out of bed
Bullying
WARNING SIGNS

* Physical Clues

Sudden loss or increase in appetite
Injuries; cuts, bruises, busted lips, black eyes, etc.
Difficulties falling asleep
Fear of using bathroom in school
Asking or begging for extra money for lunch
Stomach aches, headaches, etc, to avoid going to school
Trying to take a knife or some other means of “self-protection”
Books or personal items come back damage
Prefers company of adults
Develops new nervous habits; nail bitting, etc.
Bullying Warning Signs

* Psychological Clues

Acts moody, sullen or withdrawn
Depressed, or anxious
Puts himself down; “I am stupid”
Happy on weekends, depressed Sunday evening or Mondays
Gets upset after checking computer or cell phone
Overly concerned about personal safety issues
Loses respect for authority
Bullying Warning Signs

* Educational
  Grades start to drop
  Skips classes or school entirely, etc.
Bullying
Once Discovered..

* What you can DO

Thanks you child for telling you, if he did

Be a good listener

Explain to him, it is NOT his fault

**Validate** his right for physical and emotional safety

**Validate** her feelings

Tell him you love him, and always will

Ask what would make him feel safe

Tell the school

Asses his safety

Demand action

Get Involved

Keep on top of it

Document all your efforts
Bullying
Once Discovered

* What NOT TO DO

Do not ignore

Do not tell your child to tough it out, or fight back

Do not talk to the parents of the Bully (unless you know them well)

Do not automatically accuse the teacher or school

Do not wait
Bullying
How to Protect your Child

* Teach Social Skills
* Improve Self-esteem
* Find areas of Strength and Competence
* Provide Praise and Encouragement
* Find areas that need improvement and work on them
* Positive Self Talk
* Teach a child Empathy and how to be a friend
* Encourage you Child to join a Group
Bullying
Social Skills

* Ability to make friends
* Ability to have confidence in his own abilities
* Ability to be resilient
* Body Language; Eye contact, posture, facial expressions, voice qualities,
* Conversational skills
* Friendship skills
* Assertiveness skills
* How to say “NO”
* How to ask for HELP
Bullying
Barriers for getting involved

* Fears of making the situation worse
* Feeling embarrassed by a bullied child
* Child begs you not to tell
* Fears of being seen as Overprotective
* Wanting the child to stand for himself
Bullying
Schools, students, parents and communities working together

* Identifying the extent of the problem
* Creating an awareness campaign
* Implementing Educational Programs
* Specifying Classroom rules
* Having Cooperative Learning Activities
* School/District Policies
Bullying
The School/The Community

* School Interventions/Consequences for Bullying
* Warning □ Verbal and written □ Permanently documented
* Coaching/Intervention

□ Anger Management, Conflict Resolution/Communication/Problem Solving Skills, Diversity Training during Saturday school or before, during, or after school detention.

□ May be provided by administrators, teachers, counselors, school psychologists, or school resource officers

* Suspension/Expulsion Referral to Law Enforcement (if applicable)
Bullying Resources Websites

* United Stated Department of Health and Human Services
  www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov

Adult and Children Together Against Violence
  www.actingagainstviolence.apa.org

Bullying.org
  www.bullying.org

BullyingUK
  www.bullying.co.uk

BullyPoliceUSA
  www.bullypolice.org

Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence
  www.colorado.edu/cspv/index.html
Bullying
The Heroes
THANK YOU!