

Bullying

Harris County Department of Education
Center for Safe and Secure Schools

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What is bullying?

- Unwanted, aggressive behavior toward school aged children
- Real or perceived power imbalance
- Repeated, or potentially repeated behavior
- Over period of time constant aggression

Descriptors of bullying

- Imbalances of power—to control or harm
 - Physical strength
 - Access to embarrassing information
 - Popularity
- Repetition of behaviors
 - Threats
 - Spreading rumors
 - Attacking physically or verbally
 - Excluding someone from a group



Types of bullying

- Verbal
 - Teasing, name-calling
 - Sexual comments
 - Taunting, Threatening
- Social
 - Leaving someone out
 - Telling friends to exclude
 - Rumors, public embarrassment
- Physical
 - Hitting/kicking/pinching, spitting
 - Tripping/pushing
 - Taking or breaking possessions
 - Mean or rude hand gestures

Where does bullying happen?

- Wherever youth gather:
- School buildings
- Before or after school
- Playgrounds
- Bus
- Neighborhoods
- Community recreation centers
- Telephone
- Internet

What is impact of bullying on school population?

- 2011—20% of students in grades 9-12 (Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System—Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- 2008-2009—28% of students in grades 6-12 (School Crime Supplement – National Center for Education Statistics and Bureau of Justice Statistics)

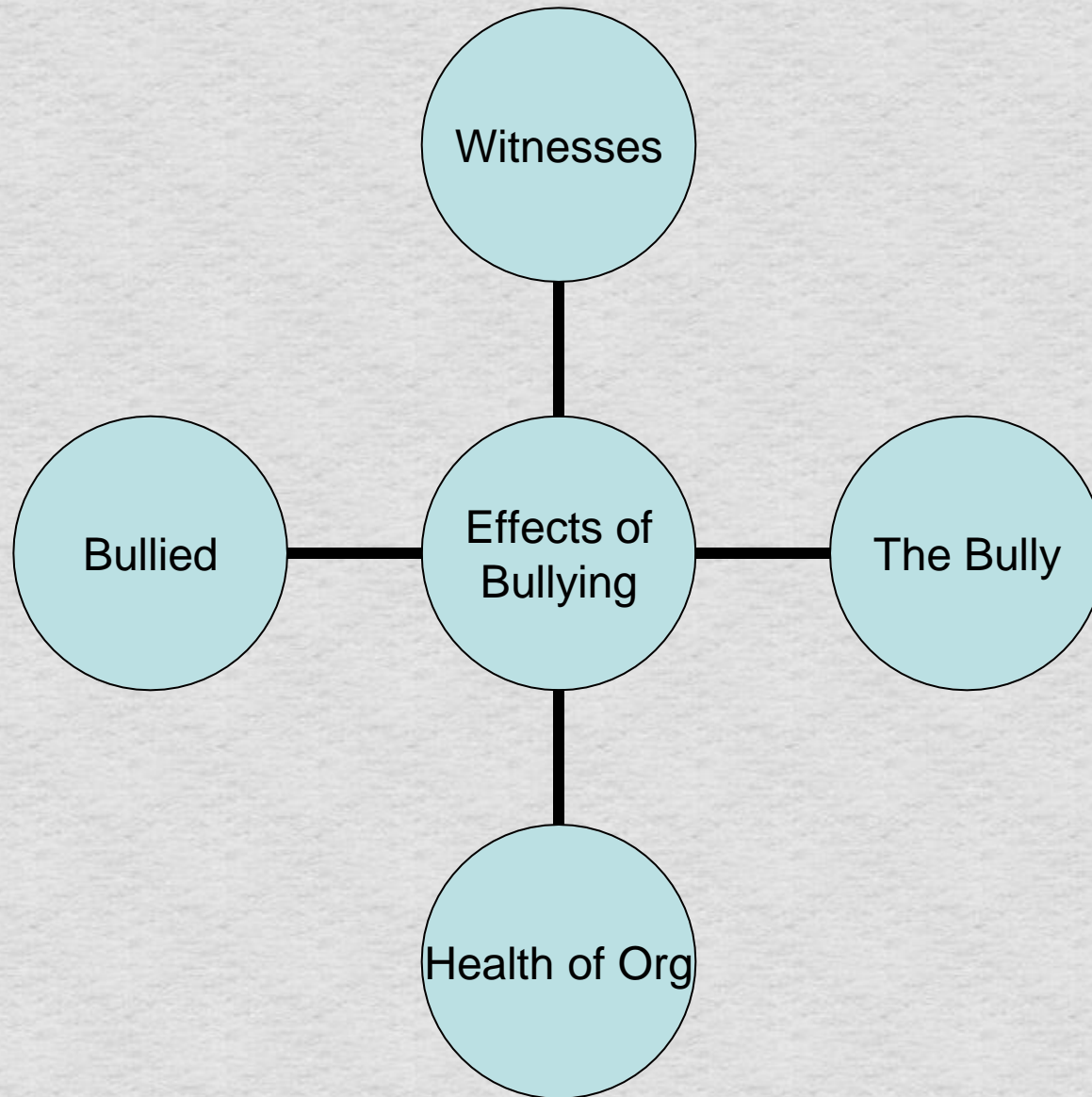
Who is at risk?

- No single factor places one in greater or less risk—it can happen anywhere, as cities, suburbs, or rural towns
- Some groups/individuals may be more vulnerable: lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender youth, youth with disabilities, socially isolated youth.



Effects of bullying

- Can affect everyone—children, adolescents, and persist into adulthood
- Bullied—depression, anxiety, feelings of sadness and loneliness, changes in sleep and eating, loss of interest in enjoyed activities
- Witnesses to bullying
- Health of organization (school, class, team, club) in which it occurs
- The bully—abuse alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, fights, vandalize property, drop out of school, early sexual activity, criminal convictions, and excessive traffic citations, abuse toward romantic partners, spouses or children, mental health problems—depression and anxiety, truancy, and school drop-out.



What to do? Support Students Involved

- Be a friend to person being bullied
- Tell trusted adult, like a family member, teacher or coach
- Help person being bullied get away from the situation
- Set good example. Do not bully others
- Don't give bullying an audience1010

Be a friend

- Spend time with person being bullied
- Children can support each other—listening
- Talk—in person, on telephone—support, encouragement, advice
- Tell bullied person that what happened wasn't cool, and they are there for them
- Tell bullied person, that you don't like bullies, and can you do anything to help?
- Help bullied person talk to a trusted adult

Tell a trusted adult—family member, teacher, coach

- Bystanders can tell trusted adult in person or by note
- Ask trusted adult to help keep bullying from continuing
- Encourage bystanders and the bullied not to get discouraged, and continue to communicate with trusted adults
- Talk to as many adults as possible, communicate the problem—teachers, counselors, custodians, nurses, parents

Help person being bullied get away from situation

- Create distraction. Don't reward bully with attention
- Bystander(s) can offer the bullied ways to leave scene—"Mr. Smith needs to see you right now!" "Come on, we need you for the game."
- Remind children not to intervene unless it is safe, never use violence. Seek immediate adult help.

Set good example. Do not bully others.

- Don't bully others, and don't encourage bullying behavior.
- Look for opportunities to contribute to the anti-bullying culture at school, clubs, and organizations
- Create anti-bullying posters, share stories or show presentations promoting respect for all.

Don't give bullying an audience

- Students can help stop bullying by actively not supporting it.
- When bullying observed, act disinterested, or blatantly state that they don't think bullying is entertaining or funny.
- Students, keep their distance, don't give an audience
- Communicate with adults—teacher, principal, counselor, parent

Texas State Laws that Cover Bullying

- Texas Education Code: Sections 21, 25, 28 and 37
- Section 21—Staff development requirements
- Section 25—Transfer of students bullied or bully perpetrator
- Section 28—Required curriculum
- Section 37—Bullying behavior

Staff development

- Section 21.451(2011)—Staff development may include training identifying, responding to, and reporting incidences of bullying

Transfer of students

- Section 25.0342 (2011)—At the request of a parent or other person acting on behalf of a student who is a victim of bullying, the district shall transfer the student to another classroom in the building where the bullying occurred, or it may transfer the student to another campus where the bullying did not occur.

Required curriculum

- Section 28.002(s)(a)(2)(b)(2011)—The State Board of Education shall adopt for the health curriculum essential knowledge and skills that includes evidence-based practices that will effectively address awareness, prevention, identification, self-defense in response to, and resolution of and intervention in bullying....

Student Code of Conduct

- Section 37.001—In addition to establishing standards of student conduct, the student code of conduct must:
 - (7) prohibit bullying...and ensure that district employees enforce those prohibitions.

Bullying prevention policies and procedures

- Section 37.0832— “Bullying” means written or verbal expression, electronically or physical conduct on school property or school activity, that has effect of physically harming, damaging property or placing student in reasonable fear of harm; severe, persistent action to create an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for a student

Section 37.0832(b)(1)(2)—
Conduct is bullying if it exploits
imbalance of power between
student perpetrator and student
victim, interferes with student's
education or disrupts operation
of school.

ISD Board of Trustees-adopt policy

- Section 37.0832(c)(d)
- Prohibits bullying of student
- Retaliation against any person
- Provision of notice to parents (victim and bully)
- Actions to obtain assistance and intervention in response to bullying
- Available counseling options
- Procedures for reporting, investigating incident
- Appropriate protection from discipline of victim, discipline for bully, allowing for applicable requirements under federal law (IDEA, 20 U.S.C. Section 1400 et seq.)
- Student and employee handbook inclusion of policy
- Inclusion in district improvement plan
- Must be posted on the district's website

Discipline Management Policies; Sexual Harassment

- Section 37.083(a)—Each school district will implement a discipline management program to provide for prevention of and education concerning unwanted physical or verbal aggression and sexual harassment in school, on school ground, and in school vehicles.

Disruptive Activities

- Section 37.123 Commits offense (Class B misdemeanor) if person, alone or in concert with others engages in disruptive activity on campus or property of private or public school.

Disruption of Classes

- Section 37.124—Person commits an offense if the person, on school property or on public property within 500 feet of school property, alone or in concert with others, intentionally disrupts the conduct of classes or other school activities—emitting noise that hinders class instruction, preventing or attempting to prevent student from attending class, through acts of misconduct disrupts class activities, and defines “school property.”

Community Education Relating to Internet Safety

- Section 37.217—Program of instruction
- Dangers of personal information on internet
- Process to report inappropriate online solicitation
- Prevention, detection, and reporting of bullying or threats occurring over internet

Questions and Discussion