Definition of Bullying
(CDC; Gladden et al., 2014)

Bullying is unwanted aggressive behavior(s) among school-age children that has a high likelihood of causing physical or psychological harm or injury and is characterized by:

1) an imbalance of **real or perceived power** that favors the aggressor(s);
2) is repeated or has a high likelihood of being repeated;
3) The victim(s) of bullying may feel **intimidated, demeaned, or humiliated** as a result of the aggression.

Power Difference | Repetition | Purposeful | Causes harm
--- | --- | --- | ---

Recognizing the Difference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Normal Peer Conflict</th>
<th>Bullying</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equal power or friends</td>
<td>Imbalance of power; not friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happens occasionally</td>
<td>Repeated negative actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accidental</td>
<td>Purposeful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not serious</td>
<td>Serious with threat of physical or emotional harm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal emotional reaction</td>
<td>Strong emotional reaction from victim and little or no emotional reaction from bully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not seeking power or attention</td>
<td>Seeking power, control, or material things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not trying to get something</td>
<td>Attempt to gain material things or power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remorse- will take responsibility</td>
<td>No remorse- blames victim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effort to solve the problem</td>
<td>No effort to solve problem</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It matters, but...

- If a situation is occurring that is causing a change in behavior and distress for a child/adolescent in a school in which we work, we have a responsibility to help facilitate problem solving around that situation. It does not matter whether or not it is “bullying”.
  - Empathy
  - Educate
  - Empower
  - Encourage
Types of Bullying

- Verbal (direct)
- Physical (direct)
- Relational (indirect)
- Online or Cyber (indirect)

Cyber-Bullying

“Cyber-bullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group, that is intended to harm others.”

(Bill Belsey: www.cyberbullying.ca)

Bullying is Socially Complex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reinforcers</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullies</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victims</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outsiders</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defenders</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistants</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bullying is not just the bully and the victim, nor are the “bully” and the “victim” a stable thing...

Among 3rd – 8th graders:
- 15% Chronically Victimized
- 17% Ringleader Bullies
- 8% Bully Victims
- 60% Bystanders
- Only 11% intervene to help victim

(Amato, 2013)

A focus on defenders. Why?

- Defending helps
  - The defended victims are better adjusted than the undefended victims (Sainio, Veenstra, Huitsing, & Salmivalli, 2010).
- Not defending hurts
  - The most negative memory related to bullying is often “no one cared” (Kwanlopi & Salmivalli, 2010).

What leads to defending?

5 Step Model for Bystander Intervention

1. Notice the event
2. Interpret the event as a problem
3. Assume responsibility
4. Know appropriate form of assistance
5. Provide help

Rethinking Bystander Interventions

- Need to consider the following when considering building up defenders:
  - Peer and adult norms (is there a positive environment already)?
  - Who are the appropriate students to tap to defend?
    - Strong social capital
    - Strong social skills
Classroom environment matters

- The more reinforcing the bully is allowed to happen, the higher the levels of bullying (Salmivalli, Voeten, & Poskiparta, 2011).

- If a student is at risk (disability, LGBTQ, high anxiety, etc.), they are more likely to be victimized in classrooms where reinforcing is happening and LESS likely to be victimized when there is high levels of defending! (Karna, Velets, Postgaard, & Salminen).

Gender Differences?

In general, boys are more likely to engage in physical bullying than girls


Some studies find girls being more relationally aggressive while other studies do not.

- (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995),
- (Prinstein, Boergers, & Vernberg, 2001).

Grade level differences?

- Younger children in elementary and middle schools are more likely to bully others than adolescents (Hispertino, Dehk, & Fino, 2007).
- Bullying behavior peaks in middle school and then decreases (Goldbaum, Craig, Pepler, & Connolly, 2007).
- Physical bullying declines with age while verbal, social, and cyber-bullying tend to increase between the ages of 11 and 15 (Moffit & Cole, 2002, Espelage, Melson, & Soares, 2004).
- Verbal victimization tends to remain at high rates throughout the high school years (Grello, Madans, & Moody, 1999).

Two Types of “Bullies”

- Machiavellian “bullies”
  - Socially integrated
  - Fighting to make the system
  - Proactive and goal-directed aggression (get what they want)
  - Average outcomes
- Maladjusted “bullies”
  - Socially marginalized
  - Fighting against the system
  - Impulsive
  - Overly reactive to real/perceived slights
  - Low esteem, low competence
  - Poor outcomes

Does it matter? Yes! Intervention would likely differ for each type of student!

Students at Risk

- Students who are “different” in some way.
- Students with disabilities
  - Involved in bullying at twice the rate of students without identified disabilities
- Why?

Bullying and LGBTQ Students

- LGBT students experienced high levels of harassment or victimization based on sexual orientation and gender expression
  - 81.9% verbal harassment due to sexual orientation
  - 63.9% verbal harassment due to gender expression
  - 38.3% physical harassment due to sexual orientation
  - 27.1% physical harassment due to gender expression
  - 56.9% report homophobic & negative remarks about gender expression from teachers & other staff
  - 60.4% of the students experiencing victimization did not report the incident because they believed the staff wouldn’t respond appropriately, or believed that the report would make the situation worse

GLSEN; Fisher, 2014
The use of homophobic language against LGBTQ students also affects students who identify as heterosexual/cisgender/straight.

- “That’s so gay” and other epithets become part of their vocabulary
- Can push males to “prove” their masculinity by making sexual remarks about females → possible precursor to sexual harassment

**Homophobic Language**


dtug

**Bully-Sexual Violence Pathway**

- Emerging theory – bullying perpetration & homophobic teasing are thought to be predictive of sexual violence over time.
- Bullying is associated with increasing homophobic teasing perpetration during early adolescence.
- When students engage in homophobic teasing, sexual perpetration may develop as students are developing opposite-sex attractions and sexual harassment becomes more prevalent.
- Bully perpetration in middle school linked to sexual harassment perpetration in high school (Espelage, Low, Anderson, & De La Rue, 2014).

**What might be happening?** (Inspired by Espelage et al., 2014)

**Family & School Risk Factors**

**Family**
- Lack of supervision
- Lack of attachment
- Negative, critical relationships
- Lack of positive discipline and consequences
- Support for violence
- Modeling of violence

**School**
- Lack of supervision
- Lack of attachment
- Negative, critical relationships
- Lack of positive discipline and consequences
- Support for violence
- Modeling of violence

**Social-Ecological Framework**

How do we address the complexities of bullying as educators?

The PPAB scholars will have much more to say about this but here is a preview...
**Approach as educators...**

- Boys “scaring” Jonah off the bus
  - Empathy
  - Educate
  - Empower
  - Encourage
- Our responses send a message to everyone involved.

**Universal & Preventative Approach**

- 1) School Climate including Behavior Support
  - focus on the environment and systems
- 2) Social-Emotional Learning
  - focus on the students development of skills

**Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)**

- “Positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS) help create a positive school climate that promotes student achievement and well-being.
- …focuses on teaching and reinforcing desired behaviors rather than simply punishing negative behaviors.
- …results in significant reductions in office discipline referrals and suspensions as well as other problem behaviors, such as emotional dysregulation, concentration problems, bullying, and peer rejection.

**Social-Emotional Learning**

- Children need social-emotional skills to thrive both in the classroom and in life. Social-emotional learning (SEL) curricula teach children techniques to:
  - Gain confidence
  - Set goals
  - Make better decisions
  - Collaborate with others in work and play
  - Navigate the world more effectively

**Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)**

- Specific traits SEL programs target:
  - Empathy
  - Emotion Management
  - Social Problem Solving
  - Social competence

- A meta-analysis of 213 programs found that if a school implements a quality SEL curriculum, they can expect better student behavior and an 11 percentile increase in test scores (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011).