Slide 1

Northern Illinois University

Bullying

(word cloud: Exclusion, Kicking, Intimidation, Embarrassment, Name-Calling, Pinching, MeanLooks, Threats, Assault, Bystander, Destroying Things, Stealing, Shoving, Teasing, Cyberbullying, Hitting, Harassment, MeanNotes, Rumors)

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NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
School Psychology Program

IDEAs that Work
U.S. Office of Special Education Programs

Project Prevent and Address Bullying for Students with Disabilities: A Multitier Behavior Approach (PPAB)

Christine Malecki, Michelle Demaray, and Julia Ogg – Project Directors

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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

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Recognizing the Difference

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

Does it matter?

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The Components Matter
(Ybarra, Espelage, & Mitchell, 2014; *JAH*)

No Repetition	No Power Difference

- Lowest rates of interference with daily functioning.

Either Repetition	OR Power Difference

- Higher rates of difficulty with daily functioning.

BOTH Repetition	AND Power Difference

- **Highest** rates of interference with daily functioning; **these youth report highest level of helplessness.**

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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)

Amanda Nickerson, https://www.slideshare.net/ubgse/bystanders-in-bullying-what-we-know-and-where-to-go

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."
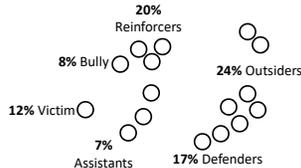
(Bill Belsey: www.cyberbullying.ca)

Bullying is Socially Complex

Among 3rd – 8th graders:

- 15% Chronically Victimized
- 17% Ringleader Bullies
- 8% Bully-Victims
- 60% Bystanders
- Only 13% intervene to help victim

(Espelage, 2015)

20% Reinforcers

8% Bully

24% Outsiders

12% Victim

7% Assistants

17% Defenders

Bullying is not just the bully and the victim, nor are the "bully" and the "victim" a stable thing…

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*" (Terasahjo & Salmivalli, 2000).

What leads to defending?

5 Step Model for Bystander Intervention

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

What characteristics would a student need to have to do these five steps well?

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, Voeten, Poskiparta, & Salmivalli).

Gender Differences?

In general, boys are more likely to engage in physical bullying than girls
• (Espelage, Bosworth, & Simon, 2000; Hyde, 1986; McDermott, 1996)

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 (Fitzpatrick, Dulin, & Piko, 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 (Archer & Cote, 2005; Espelage, Meban, & Swearer, 2004).

• Verbal victimization tends to remain at high rates throughout the high school years (Smith, Madsen, & 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

Regina George (Mean Girls)

• Maladjusted "bullies"
  • Socially marginalized
  • Fighting against the system
  • Impulsive
  • Overly reactive to real/perceived slights
  • Low esteem, low competence
  • Poor outcomes

Gelman (Recess)

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 LGTBQ 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

Homophobic Language

- 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
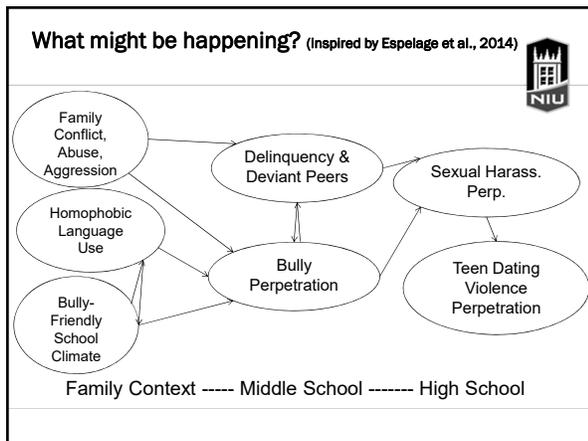
'THAT'S SO GAY.'
LET'S BE HONEST, IT'S PROBABLY NOT.

Gay. Let's get over it.

★ Stonewall

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).
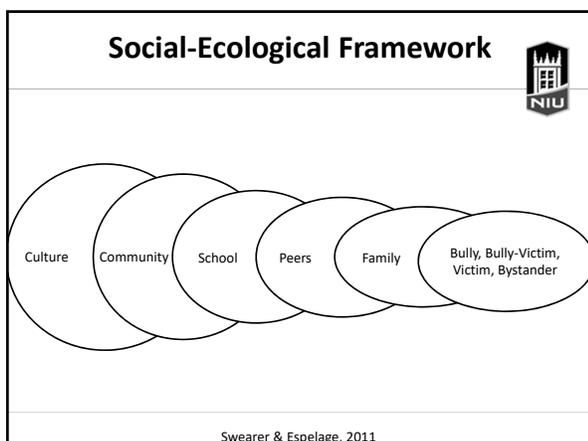
What is going on??

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

Family Conflict, Abuse, Aggression

Homophobic Language Use

Bully-Friendly School Climate

Delinquency & Deviant Peers

Bully Perpetration

Sexual Harass. Perp.

Teen Dating Violence Perpetration

Family Context ----- Middle School ------- High School

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

For review see Espelage, 2012; Espelage & Horne, 2007

Social-Ecological Framework

Culture

Community

School

Peers

Family

Bully, Bully-Victim, Victim, Bystander

Swearer & Espelage, 2011

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

PREVENTiON

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.**

www.nasponline.org

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

http://www.secondstep.org/social-emotional-learning

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).