



BULLYING VICTIMIZATION

RESEARCH AND RECOMMENDED INTERVENTIONS

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Funding and support from:
DE Positive Behavior Support Project – School Climate & Student Success

MODULE STRUCTURE

- Module series goal:
 - Provide information to schools that can lead to improvements in **school climate** and **behavioral outcomes**.
- Module narratives provide additional information to accompany PowerPoint Presentation.
 - Endnotes throughout slides correspond to the references in the module narrative.
- Gold star = Resource on Delaware PBS website

WHAT IS BULLYING VICTIMIZATION?

- Bullying = type of aggression that aims to:
 - Harm the victim
 - Is repetitive over time
 - Involves an imbalance of power
 - The bully is more powerful than the victim¹



BULLYING IN DELAWARE

- Delaware law defines bullying as:
 - Intentional actions that occur in physical, verbal, written, or electronic form towards a student, school employee, or school volunteer that:
 - cause reasonable fear or substantial harm to the victim's physical or emotional well-being, or damage to property
 - are pervasive/persistent or characterized by a power differential that creates a hostile educational environment
 - interfere with a safe environment
 - include coercing others to cause the above harmful actions



DELAWARE SCHOOL SURVEYS

- Assesses four types of bullying victimization (verbal, physical, social/relational, and cyber)
 - *Delaware Bullying Victimization Scale*
 - Assesses students' reports of the extent to which they have personally experienced each of the four types of bullying during the current school year
 - Bullying school-wide subscale on the *Delaware School Climate Scale*
 - Assesses bullying in general throughout the school
 - Items that ask if students bully one another, threaten and bully others, and worry about others bullying them



NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF BULLYING VICTIMIZATION

- Greater internalizing problems
 - E.g. depression, anxiety, and loneliness¹⁻¹²
- Increased risk of suicide ideation, suicide attempts, and self-injury¹³⁻¹⁶
- Increased risk of participation in delinquent and problem behaviors
 - E.g. substance use, stealing, physical fighting, and vandalism¹⁷⁻¹⁸
- Greater difficulty making friends and greater risk for social rejection and isolation^{1,15,19-20}
- Lower social competence²¹
- Lower self-esteem^{11,15,19} and increased levels of self-criticism¹²

NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF BULLYING VICTIMIZATION

Less

- Attachment or connectedness to school^{2,22}
- E.g. greater fear, anxiety, and avoidance towards school^{8, 23-25}

Lower

- Academic engagement, achievement, and classroom concentration^{8,11,20,26-28}

At risk

- For psychosomatic problems
- E.g. headaches, stomach pain, sleeping problems⁴

NEGATIVE OUTCOMES FOR BULLIES

Important Note

- *Not only are victims of bullying at increased risk for a number of negative outcomes, but so too are students who bully others. Those risks include:*

- Involvement in crime, violence, drugs, alcohol, and delinquency^{8,17,29-34}
- Greater internalizing problems⁷
- Psychosomatic symptoms such as feeling tired or tense³
- Suicide attempts and ideation¹⁴
- Less school bonding, or connectedness²²
- Lower academic achievement^{8,17}

- Students who witness bullying and those who are **both victims and perpetrators of bullying** also are at risk for negative outcomes.¹⁰⁹⁻¹¹⁰



Bullying
Victimization
**Contributing
Factors**

Student and
Home
Characteristics

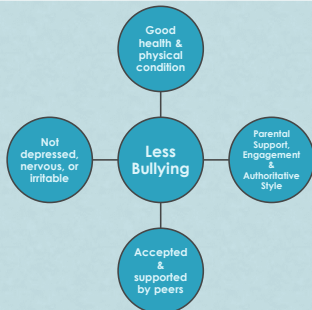
Classroom,
School, and
Teacher
Characteristics

STUDENT & HOME CHARACTERISTICS CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

- The following characteristics have been shown to be associated with students who experience **the least bullying**:
- General social and emotional competence. This includes:
 - Few, if any, behavior problems^{22,35,36}
 - Good social skills³⁷
 - Ability to regulate one's emotions^{37,38}
 - Experiencing and expressing empathy³⁹
 - Viewing oneself favorably^{15,21,36,38,40-42}
 - Positive self-perceptions
 - High self-esteem
 - Absence of internalizing problems
 - Overall life satisfaction



STUDENT & HOME CHARACTERISTICS CONTRIBUTING FACTORS



STUDENT & HOME CHARACTERISTICS CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

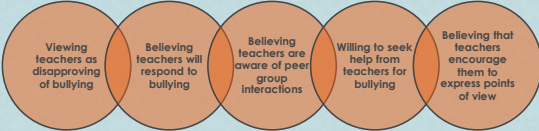
Important Note

- Although **not malleable**, other characteristics of students place them at increased risk of being bullied:
 - Students with disabilities, especially those with observable behavior problems⁵⁶⁻⁵⁹
 - Students who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning^{61,60-61}
 - Mixed results for race^{7,53,62-66}
 - Males tend to experience more bullying (and bully others) more than females (verbal and physical bullying)^{1,11,19,21,38,40,44,53,63,67}
 - Females bully and are bullied with more verbal, relational and social forms of bullying^{9,11,19,53}
 - Mixed results for age and grade level^{1,9,23,62,68-69,106}
 - Within the same grade, younger children are bullied more³⁴
 - Mixed results for religion
 - Muslim & Jewish students more likely to be victims¹⁴⁻¹¹⁶

CLASSROOMS, SCHOOLS, AND TEACHERS

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

- **Less bullying** occurs in schools and classrooms characterized by the following:
 - Positive teacher-student relationships and teacher support^{27,44,47,65,70-73}
 - This includes students:



CLASSROOMS, SCHOOLS, AND TEACHERS

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

- Positive student-student relationships, especially peer support^{71,77-78}
 - Student self-determination in the classroom⁸⁰
- Greater student respect for diversity and other differences⁷¹
- Students perceive behavioral expectations & rules to be clear, fair, and against bullying⁸¹⁻⁸³
- Authoritative approach to classroom management and school discipline^{38,70,75,85-86}
- Norms that do not support bullying^{23,50,77}

BULLYING PREVENTION CURRICULA & PROGRAMS

- Program features associated with more **positive** outcomes:⁹⁰⁻⁹²
 - Whole-school, multidisciplinary anti-bullying approach with high intensity
 - Programs inspired by Dan Olweus
 - Authoritative approach to classroom management and school discipline
 - Information/meetings for parents
 - Use of videos in lessons
 - Improved playground supervision in elementary school
 - Teacher training
 - Counseling for students who bully
 - Conflict resolution training
- When effectiveness of existing programs is found, it is more likely to be in elementary than middle and high school.¹⁰⁶





COLLECT & EXAMINE DATA RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES: TIER 1

- Examine data, such as from *Delaware School Climate Survey*
 - Are school-wide bullying and individual bullying victimization perceived as occurring infrequently across students, teachers/staff, and parents?
 - Unfavorable responses would indicate the need for interventions and related staff development.
- In addition to examining scale and subscale scores, look at student responses to specific survey items
 - Responses on the School-wide Bullying subscale (general and school-wide bullying) and Bullying Victimization Scale (individual bullying)
- If an area of need:
 - Gather and examine more data to determine why these relationships are not viewed positively
 - Office Disciplinary Referrals
 - Other subscales
 - Share results of the additional data with focus groups

CONDUCTING FOCUS GROUPS

Focus group guide

- Information on:
 - Designing questions
 - Recruiting participants
 - Conducting the group
 - Analyzing data
- Provides examples

Guidelines for Conducting a Focus Group

Focus groups are most useful if conducted in a structured and planned manner. They are most useful if they are conducted in a structured and planned manner. They are most useful if they are conducted in a structured and planned manner.

Key Guidelines you will find available here:

- Designing the group
- Recruiting and preparing for participants
- Conducting the focus group
- Analyzing the data

You will also find examples of the following items:

- Focus group questions
- Recruitment flyer
- Interviewer manual
- Sample consent form
- Data analysis form
- Participant report form

from Duke University
(https://assessment.trinity.duke.edu/document/s/How_to_Conduct_a_Focus_Group.pdf)

ESTABLISH COMMON UNDERSTANDING OF BULLYING & ANTI-BULLYING EXPECTATIONS

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES: TIER 1

To do this, schools should...

- Have a clear definition & understanding of bullying
- Include cyberbullying & the responsibility of the school in such cases
- Have teachers & staff reflect upon their own attitudes towards bullying
 - Teachers, staff, students, and parents should recognize what acts do and do not constitute bullying
- Emphasize the consequences of bullying for those who bully **and** for the victim and school climate





BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION ACTION PLAN

- Provides prompts to get staff, administrators, teachers, and other school personnel thinking about the aspects of bullying prevention and intervention that are in place at their school
- Includes suggestions about factors/steps to consider when completing the prompts

Initial Steps for Bullying Prevention and Intervention Action Plan

SCHOOL NAME: _____

Directions: The following are initial steps that could help your school create or bolster robust and meaningful bullying prevention and response systems. Respond to and think about/reflect on each of the prompts below.

1. Write the definition of "bullying" for your school (see district/state policies).

Consider these 4 components of bullying in developing the definition:

- Intentionality of physical or emotional power
- Repeated across time or individuals/roles
- Occurs in some physical or emotional space
- Unequal levels of effort

2. Outline your school's plan for teaching the definition & establish clear reporting protocol for staff, students, & families.

Consider these 4 steps in establishing protocol:

- Create
- Teach
- Practice
- Monitor

3. Outline your school's protocol for responding to bullying reports. Think about your school's crisis plan for unexpected emergencies.

Consider these 2 issues when establishing protocol:

Courtesy of the DE-PBS Project

TEACH STUDENTS HOW TO RESPOND TO BULLYING

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES: TIER 1

- Teach students how they might best respond to bullying
- Develop an anonymous process by which students can report all forms of bullying, including cyberbullying
- Develop school-wide expectations that promote prosocial behavior and prevent bullying, aggression, and peer rejection
- Develop clear and consistent consequences for students who bully others
- Make families aware of procedures and policies
- Identify non-classroom areas where bullying is most likely to occur
- Encourage school staff to seek out victims of bullying so they receive help



CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND SCHOOL-WIDE STRATEGIES RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES: TIER 1

- Model prosocial behaviors
- Use praise and rewards strategically
- Ensure there are clear behavioral and academic expectations, routines, and procedures; fair rules & consequences, & monitoring of student behavior
 - Apply the above to help prevent cyberbullying
 - Highlight prosocial behavior & the absence of bullying in these expectations
- Communicate the importance of social acceptance, the consequences of bullying, and the role of bystanders
- Observe peer interactions
- Arrange students' seating to promote opportunities for positive social interactions and social acceptance, and to avoid bullying





EFFECTIVE USE OF PRAISE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- Provides general strategies for how to effectively praise and reward students
- Gives specific script examples of what to do or say
- Activity for staff practice is available

Courtesy of the DE-PBS Project

Effective Ways to Acknowledge and Praise Students

- Focus on providing feedback, rather than controlling student behavior (see: control is blue, however, when compliance is backing)
 - Emphasize the alternative rather than controlling features of praise and rewards
 - Do, not say:
 - "I will give you a sticker if you finish your work."
 - "If you behave, you will get a _____."
 - "You get a sticker because I thought you behaved."
- Instead, say:
 - "I'm going to call my parents and let them know how much you behave like an engineer. You completed all assignments this week, and without arguing!"
 - "You've done 100% of your work in homework, at lunch, after the computer, etc!"
- Avoid teaching students that the most important reason to act responsibly is to earn rewards or to be praised (or to avoid punishment). Link the behaviors to others' underlying thoughts, emotions, and dispositions that support prosocial behavior.
 - "To avoid punishment, you have to demonstrate that you are responsible by giving a one-minute share of what we're up to."
 - Instead, let students' thoughts, emotions, and dispositions that include prosocial behavior, such as feelings of pride, empathy, autonomy, responsibility, caring, kindness, teamwork/teamwork, etc.
- For example, avoid saying "I'm getting better at not having to bring books, especially after the table was messy." Instead, say "I noticed that you're able to remember your seat, and that you can start out helping others. You should feel good about yourself! Thanks for being a kind person."
- Other good examples:
 - "Good! You should feel really proud of yourself for working so hard!"
 - "You job looking after others. The class really appreciates what you did!"
 - "I'm sure you would never refuse to be the team's coach!"
 - "For giving your answer, I feel sure that you would help. Cause even if you didn't, you're a special because you care about others."
 - "I'm giving the class 15 minutes of free time because you demonstrated responsibility towards being so well behaved that a substitute you have!"

STRATEGIES THAT PROMOTE POSITIVE TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES: TIER 1

Spend time with and get to know every student

Greet students when they come into school every day

Notice when students are having difficulties and listen

Treat students equally and do not indicate favorites

Allow your students to get to know you better

Have fun and use humor, when appropriate

Attend sports/extracurricular activities



IMPLEMENT A UNIVERSAL BULLYING PREVENTION OR SEL CURRICULUM RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES: TIER 1

Packaged programs available for purchase/training that are supported by research showing they reduce bullying victimization in elementary schools:

- KiVa Bullying Prevention Program
- Olweus Bullying Prevention Program
- Steps to Respect
 - Focuses on social-emotional skills



Important Note

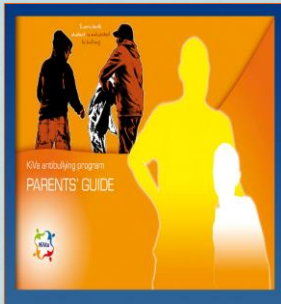
- Other popular programs (e.g. SWPBIS, Restorative Justice, Bully Proofing Your School, and Second Step: A Violence Prevention Program) have been shown to lead to positive outcomes but not reduced bullying victimization





KIVA BULLYING PREVENTION PROGRAM

- For students ages 6-12
- Includes training materials and lessons, videos, online games, and parents' guide
- Greater focus on supports for the victims and bullies
- Supported by studies showing reduced bullying and victimization⁹³⁻⁹⁶
 - Now being implemented throughout the U.S., including in DE



From KiVa International:
(<http://www.kivaprogram.net/program>)

Recommended
Strategies
Students at Tier 2 & 3

APPLY UNIVERSAL INTERVENTIONS

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES: TIERS 2 & 3

Interventions should be:

- Of greater frequency and intensity
- More comprehensive, including multiple components
- More individualized and guided by students' needs and factors that might explain/contribute to bullying and victimization
 - Social skills deficits
 - Individual strengths
 - Social networks in classrooms and school
 - Classroom management practices
 - Systems of social support and resources in the school, home, and community



PROVIDE SOCIAL SKILLS/SEL TRAINING

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES: TIERS 2 & 3

- Target specific prosocial skills and antisocial behaviors related to social acceptance, friendships, and bullying victimization
- Use lessons from a Tier 1 bullying prevention or SEL curriculum
 - E.g. Steps to Respect or Second Step
- Use evidence-based curriculum lessons designed for use at Tiers 2 and 3
 - E.g. Incredible Years, Coping Power, and PEERS
 - Include training for targeted students **and** their parents

Important Notice

- Use caution in grouping students together (i.e. in Tier 2 interventions) who share similar antisocial behaviors. This may result in "deviancy training," with peers modeling and reinforcing antisocial behavior¹⁰⁴⁻¹⁰⁵




ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES: TIERS 2 & 3

- Ensure that targeted students have a close, supportive relationship with at least one other student in the school
- Individual counseling may be appropriate for bullying victims
- Work closely with students' parents to target social-emotional skills at home




Making a plan
Who is going to do
what actions by
when?



THANK YOU

- Based on areas of need identified by data, check out other resources provided through the **School Climate and Student Success Module Series**.
- www.delawarepbs.org
- Questions can be directed to Sarah Hearn
- skhearn@udel.edu



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