Bullying Prevention and Intervention in the School Environment:

Factsheets and Tools

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PREV|Net

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Introduction

This resource is comprised of Fact Sheets and Tools to support your ongoing bullying prevention and safe and accepting school efforts at your school. The fact sheets provide a brief summary of the most recent research on key elements in a bullying prevention plan. The tools are designed to provide evidence-based strategies to recognize, assess, prevent, intervene, and develop an evidence-based bully prevention policy. The resource is divided into four sections: 1) Education; 2) Assessment; 3) Prevention and Intervention, and 4) Policy. The Education section is designed to develop awareness and knowledge, change attitudes, and build commitment to promoting healthy relationships and addressing bullying problems. The Assessment and Evaluation section is designed to provide universal assessment tools to evaluate the extent of bullying and/or victimization problems and children's relationships, as well as the effectiveness of programs for children and youth, their families, schools, and communities. The Prevention and Intervention section is designed to provide evidence-based plans for action to reduce problems of bullying and victimization and to promote healthy relationships for children, their families, schools, and communities. Finally, the Policy section is designed to stimulate policy development to provide evidence-based guidelines for ensuring children's rights to be safe and supported in all contexts of their lives. Additional up-to-date resources and tools are available from the PREVNet (Promoting Relationships and Eliminating Violence Network) website: www.prevnet.ca.

The preparation of this resource has provided an unprecedented opportunity for us to take stock of the current knowledge about bullying and victimization, and the important issues of assessment, prevention and intervention, and policy. We hope that educators will find this resource useful in providing a research foundation and consolidating their commitment and efforts to prevent bullying and promote healthy relationships for all children and youth. We are grateful for the contributions of Dr. Joanne Cummings and Dr. Nancy Dalgarno and for the guidance of staff at the Ministry of Education.

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Timeline of Bullying Prevention Activities

Month	Activity	Person Responsible
September	1. Send home Code of Conduct	Principal
	2. Establish Safe School Committee and identify staff co-ordinator	Principal
	3. Identify School Champions	Safe School Committee
	4. Discuss School Policy regarding bullying and safe and accepting school at assembly	Principals/Staff/Students
	5. Prepare weekly Safe School Announcements and tips	Safe School committee
	6. Review assessment results on bullying and school climate and identify goals and success metrics for goals.	Principal
October	1. Conduct Safe School and Bullying assessment	Safe School Committee
	2. Initiate Bullying Prevention Program	Staff
	3. Provide explicit training on bullying prevention to staff	Principal
	4. Plan Bullying Awareness Week activities	Safe School Committee
	5. Safe School Committee Meeting to review school climate and bullying prevention goals, metrics of success, and activities.	Safe School Committee
November	1. Write to parents in newsletter or other regular communication about what your school is doing to address bullying	Principal
	2. Bullying Awareness Week activities	Safe School Committee
	3. Report the results of the assessment and identify goals for the year	
	4. Safe School Committee meeting	Safe School Committee
	5. Maintain Bullying Prevention Program	Staff
December	1. Maintain Bullying Prevention Program	Staff
	2. Celebrate safe school activities at December assembly.	Safe School Committee
January	1. Maintain Bullying Prevention Program	Staff
	2. Plan and hold a youth led initiative for whole school	Safe School Committee

Month	Activity	Responsibility
February	1. Maintain Bullying Prevention Program	Staff
	2. Review Safe School activities with staff and provide mini 15 minute information exchange of what classes are doing.	Principal
	3. Engage champions in Whole School Activity planning	Safe School Committee
March	1. Maintain Bullying Prevention Program	Staff
	2. Parent letter about supporting healthy relationships with an activity in it.	
April	1. Maintain Bullying Prevention Program	Staff
	2. Have a class or the Safe School Committee conduct an environmental Scan	Safe School Committee
	3. Host a Bullying Awareness evening for students and parents.	Safe School Committee
May	1. Maintain Bullying Prevention Program	Staff
	2. Conduct Safe School and Bullying Assessment	Safe School Committee
	3. Debrief with Safe School Committee about what worked, what did not work, and what are the current needs.	Safe School Committee
June	1. Maintain Bullying Prevention Program	Staff
	2. End of year assembly celebrating the Healthy Relationships and Safe School Initiatives	Staff Safe School Committee
	3. Identify potential members for Safe School Committee for September	Principal

Bullying Defined

Did you know?

The way children and youth bully and the impact of bullying change with age. As children grow older, the proportion of those who use physical aggression declines while other forms of aggression such as verbal, social, and cyber bullying increase. Over time, the impact of continued bullying accumulates and becomes more serious.

Children, youth, teachers, staff, parents/guardians and other members of the community need to recognize bullying as a widespread and serious problem. They need to be alert to bullying in all its forms, not just physical bullying.

What is bullying?

'Bullying' means aggressive and typically repeated behaviour by a child or youth where,

- a) they should know that the behaviour would be likely to,

  - i. cause harm, fear or distress to another individual, including physical, psychological, social or academic harm, harm to the individual's reputation or harm to the individual's property, or
  - ii. create a negative environment at a school for another individual

- b) there is a real or perceived power imbalance based on factors such as size, strength, age, intelligence, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, gender identity, gender expression, race, disability or the receipt of special education[1].

Bullying is defined as a "typically a form of repeated, persistent, and aggressive behaviour directed at an individual or individuals that is intended to cause (or should be known to cause) fear and distress and/or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, or reputation. Bullying occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance"[2].

Key Elements

1. The behaviour causes harm.

2. The child or youth who is bullying has power over the child or youth who is victimized.

3. Bullying is a behaviour that is typically repeated.

4. Bullying can take many forms: physical, verbal, social, or electronic.

REFERENCES

[1]Kowalski, R. M. (2000). "I was only kidding!": Victims' and perpetrators' perceptions of teasing. Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 26, 231-241.

[2]Ontario Ministry of Education. (2009). Policy Program Memorandum No. 144. http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/144.pdf

[3]Promoting Relationships and Eliminating Violence (PREVNet). (n.d.). Bullying: Definitions. http://www.prevnet.ca/research/fact-sheets/bullying-definitions

[4]The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education. (2010). Interim Edition http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/healthcurr18.pdf

What are the forms of bullying?[1,2,3]

1) **Physical bullying can be:**
   o hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting, beating up, stealing, or damaging property.

2) **Verbal bullying can be:**
   o name-calling, mocking, hurtful teasing, humiliating or threatening someone, racist or sexist comments, harassment.

3) **Social bullying can be:**
   o excluding others from the group, gossiping or spreading rumours, setting others up to look foolish, and damaging friendships;
   o treating people badly because of their identity, saying bad things about a culture, calling someone racist names, telling racist jokes
   o treating people badly because of their religion or beliefs, saying bad things about a religion or belief, calling someone names, telling jokes about a religion or belief
   o leaving someone out or treating them badly because they are a boy or a girl, making someone feel uncomfortable because of their sexual orientation/gender identity/gender expression, making sexist comments or jokes, touching, pinching or grabbing someone in a sexual way, making rude comments about someone's sexual behaviour, calling someone names describing sexual orientation
   o leaving someone out or treating them badly because of a disability, making someone feel uncomfortable because of a disability (e.g., mental or physical), making comments or jokes to hurt someone with a disability
   o treating someone badly because of his/her appearance (e.g., weight-based teasing) or social class (e.g., not having name brand clothing or possessions).[4]

4) **Electronic bullying:**
   Electronic communication lets youth connect with each other in all kinds of ways. Youth use social media to create relationships with others. Healthy face-to-face and online relationships mean that interactions are respectful. Disrespectful interactions become bullying. Cyberbullying:
   • is electronic communication used to upset, threaten or embarrass another person;
   • is using email, cell phones, text messages, and internet sites to threaten, harass, embarrass, socially exclude, or damage reputations and friendships;
   • includes put-downs, insults, spreading rumours, sharing private information, photos or videos or threatening to harm someone.
   • is always aggressive and hurtful.

Fact sheet has been developed by PREVNet, www.prevnet.ca

The Difference between Bullying, Aggression and Teasing

Bullying always involves aggression. Aggression becomes bullying when it is repeated over time between the same individuals and there is a power imbalance.

Conflict can be positive or negative. Bullying is a form of negative conflict. Conflict becomes bullying when it is repeated over time and involves a power differential.

Teasing becomes hostile when it implies interpersonal rejection and social exclusion, rather than camaraderie and social inclusion.

Bullying

Bullying is behavior that includes the use of any physical, verbal, electronic, written or other means. Bullying is intentional aggressive behaviour. If aggressive behaviour is physical, it may include hitting, pushing, slapping, and tripping. If it is verbal, it may include name calling, mocking, insults, threats, and sexist, racist, homophobic, or transphobic comments. If it is social or relational aggression, it is more subtle and may involve such behaviours as gossiping, shunning, ignoring, spreading rumours, excluding others from a group, or humiliating others with public gestures or graffiti. Social aggression may also occur through the use of technology (e.g., spreading rumours, images, or hurtful comments through the use of e-mail, cell phones, text messaging, Internet websites, social networking, or other technology).

Aggression

Aggressive behaviour is conflict that may be intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect. It can take many forms, including physical, verbal, and social. It can be experienced in a number of ways including physical, mental, emotional, and psychological harm.

Teasing

Teasing can be positive or negative.

Positive Teasing:
- illustrates closeness, affection, and familiarity with another person
- person being teased is not distressed
- takes place within a strong relationship
- strengthens the relationship

Negative Teasing:
- alienates, criticizes, and embarrasses the other person
- the person being teased is distressed
- takes place within a weak relationship
- undermines the relationship

When is teasing hostile?

- Teasing about physical appearance is most often perceived as hostile and hurtful because it has so many implications for social acceptance and it is out of the individual's control.
- Teasing is hostile when the person being teased is distressed by the teasing. Research indicates that individuals are aware of the impact their teasing has on the individual being targeted. This is likely due to their knowledge of the effect their teasing will have on the victim:
    o Will it serve to reject or include the target?
    o What will be the verbal and nonverbal responses to the teasing?

When does teasing become bullying?[1,2]

- There is a power imbalance between the children/youth involved—the person teasing has more social power or social value among peers compared to the person being teased.
- The child who is teasing intends to distress or harm the child being teased.
- The child being teased is distressed or hurt by the interaction.
- The negative teasing occurs repeatedly.

REFERENCES

[1] Pepler, D. J., & Craig, W. (2000). *Making a Difference in Bullying*. LaMarsh Research Centre for Violence and Conflict Resolution, Research Report 60. Toronto, Ontario: York University.

[2] Promoting Relationships and Eliminating Violence (PREVNet). (n.d.). *Bullying: Definitions*. http://www.prevnet.ca/research-and-tools/fact-sheets/bullying-definitions.

When does teasing become bullying?

i)   Teasing
   - is equal and reciprocated
   - is fun and not hurtful
   - often occurs prior to aggression

ii) Aggression
   - is conflict
   - can be intentional or unintentional
   - could be one time
   - can lead to BULLYING

iii) Bullying
   - a form of typically repeated, persistent, and aggressive behaviour
   - directed at an individual or individuals that is intended to cause fear.

Teasing *can lead to* Aggression *can lead to* Bullying

See the tool to help differentiate teasing from aggression and bullying:
Critical Questions to Assess Bullying, Aggression or Teasing

Critical Questions to Identify Bullying, Aggression and Teasing

It is important to be able to distinguish between bullying, aggression and teasing. The following questions are critical when trying to assess the interactions among children and youth.

How to identify Bullying, Aggression and Teasing

CRITICAL QUESTION	TEASING	AGGRESSION	BULLYING
Is this behaviour reciprocated?	**Usually** The teasing is shared equally.	**Usually Not** There is usually only one. aggressor.	**No** There is a person who bullies and a person who is victimized.
Do both people look like they are having a good time?	**Usually** It takes place within a strong, positive, relationship.	**No** One person is the aggressor.	**No** One person is in distress or being harmed.
Is the behaviour fun?	**Usually** Both people enjoy the banter.	**Usually Not** It can alienate and be embarrassing.	**No** The person bullying intends to cause fear.
Has this happened before with these individuals?	**Yes** It occurs when there is a familiarity.	**Possibly** It may be a one-time event.	**Yes** Bullying is typically repeated behaviour.
Is there a power differential?	**No** It illustrates closeness and affection.	**Possibly** It can happen within a weak relationship.	**Yes** There is always a power imbalance.

Key Elements of a Whole School Approach to Prevent Bullying and Promote Healthy Relationships

A Whole School Approach is the most effective approach to preventing bullying and promoting healthy relationships.

Safe School Teams

1. Membership includes youth, parents/guardians, school staff, community partners, school administrators.

2. Safe school teams are a requirement of PPM144.

What is a "whole school approach"?

A whole school approach brings everyone together to work toward creating a safe, inclusive, and accepting school where bullying problems are prevented and handled effectively when they arise. A whole school approach involves the administration, teaching and school staff, children, youth, parents/guardians, and the broader community.

Why have a "whole school approach"?

A whole school approach is the most effective way to prevent bullying and promote learning. Children's learning depends on having positive relationships at school. When everyone works together for a safe, inclusive, and accepting school, children and youth receive **consistent** messages and responses about bullying and positive relationships at school, at home, in sports, in recreation centres, and in the neighbourhood. By providing consistent messages, responses, and supports that address bullying problems, school communities can promote positive, healthy relationships for their children and youth.

How does a "whole school approach" work?

All adults who are responsible for children play an important role in teaching them about healthy relationships and bullying. Teachers, parents/guardians, and other adults involved in children's lives:

- model relationship skills and attitudes
- create positive situations in which children and youth interact

Children will only learn positive relationship skills and attitudes if they observe and interact with adults who model positive relationships when interacting with children and other adults. All members of a school community must to work together: administration, teaching and school staff, children, youth, parents/guardians, and the broader community (e.g., police, family support services). In a whole school approach, professional learning opportunities are provided to everyone in the school community to promote awareness and provide effective solutions for bullying.

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A Whole School Approach involves working directly with:

1. *Children*
2. *Youth*
3. *School Staff*
4. *Parents/ Guardians*
5. *The Community*

The Ontario Leadership Framework

1. Build a shared vision.

2. Model the school's values and practices.

3. Build trusting relationships among school staff, students, parents and community partners.

4. Connect the school to the wider environment.

From *The Leadership Frameworks for Principals and Vice-Principals and for Supervisory Officers*. http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/leadership/pvpleadershipframework.pdf.

What constitutes a Whole School Approach?

The school board policy and school plan sets the framework for a whole school approach by outlining not only the expectations and procedures for children and youth behavior, but also the expectations for all members of the school community. A whole school approach involves activities and initiatives that engage all members of the school community including: the children and youth (individuals and classes), parents/guardians, school staff, community partners. This approach involves prevention (activities that raise awareness and increase positive behaviours for the whole school) and intervention (activities that focus on individuals who are involved in bullying problems – as the child or youth who bullies, the child or youth who is victimized, or the child or youth who witnesses the bullying). An important element of the whole school approach is a regular evaluation exercise that assesses change at all levels of the school community.

Components of a Whole School Approach

Children and Youth

A whole school approach focuses on education of the whole child, including social-emotional development. School and classroom based learning activities that promote understanding of differences, inclusion and positive leadership are essential bullying prevention activities. By promoting positive relationships in and outside the classroom, all children and youth can be engaged in bullying prevention. Those children and youth who are involved directly in bullying, either as a child or youth who is engaged in bullying, or a child or youth who is victimized, or in both roles, will need extra intervention support.

School Staff

Successful bullying prevention programs depend on teachers, principals and all school staff to create a climate that encourages positive peer processes that promote a positive, safe, inclusive and accepting environment and discourages bullying. The success of bullying prevention initiatives depends on the extent to which the principal champions a bullying prevention initiative and provides resources. It also depends on principals and all school staff's engagement and implementation of the program.

Given the central importance of the principal's leadership in a school, there is a need for administrators to consider the importance of a positive school climate and healthy relationships for the well-being and academic achievement of children and youth in the school when developing school improvement plans. The principal sets the tone for the school and models the types of relationships that are valued in the school. Principals must be aware of their own behavior and how that impacts not only on the children and youth, but also on their staff members.

Teachers are responsible for establishing a collaborative and respectful classroom climate, effective strategies to set agreed upon norms for behaviour, open communication and appropriate responses for children and youth involved in bullying. Support for planning these complex tasks needs to be explicit about the importance of the school climate and quality of relationships for a child or youths' well-being, their social-emotional development, and their academic success.

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R E S O U R C E S

A Vision of Literacy for the Adolescent Learner. http://www.edugains.ca/newsite/literacy2/adolescent/visionoflitera cy.html.

Classroom Dynamics: Creating a Supportive Learning Environment. http://www.edugains.ca/newsite/math2/classroomdynamics.html

Early Learning for Every Child Today: A Framework for Ontario Early Childhood settings. http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/oelf/continuum/continuum.pdf.

Ontario Ministry of Education. Equity and Inclusive Education Framework. *Caring and Safe Schools in Ontario: Supporting Students with Special Education Needs through Progressive Discipline, Kindergarten to Grade 12. http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/caring_safe_school.pdf*

Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/prevent.html

PREVNet: http://prevnet.ca

Stepping Stones: A Resource on Youth Development (Ministry of Children and Youth Services. http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/topics/youthopportunities/steppingstones/youth_policy.aspx

Components of a Whole School Approach

Parents/Guardians

A whole school approach provides opportunities for parents/guardians to learn about bullying, about the school's bullying prevention initiatives, and to become engaged. Parents/guardians are essential partners in addressing bullying problems at school. Parents/guardians of children who are bullied are often aware of their children's distress long before the school knows of the bullying. These parents/guardians can raise concerns with teachers and participate in finding ways to support their children. Parents/guardians of children who bully are also important in the interventions; however they may not be as easy to engage. By talking with these parents/guardians and trying to collaborate with them, the school may be able to move a child or youth off a troubled path of bullying, which often leads to delinquency, dating aggression, and harassment.

Community

Although bullying problems unfold most frequently within the school, they are not just school problems. It is important, therefore, to extend an understanding of bullying and strategies to address bullying problems into the broader community. Schools can develop partnerships with agencies within the community (e.g., police, recreation, public health, mental health, family support). These agencies can not only provide prevention education in the school, but they can also support the school to intervene with children and youth who are experiencing severe difficulties.

See the Tools to support your Whole School Approach:

- *Creating community partnerships (why important and who could be)*
- *Identifying children, youth and adult champions at your school*
- *Roles and responsibilities of champions*
- *Integrating bullying prevention into the classroom learning*
- *Sample activities at each level*

Creating Community Partnerships

Bullying is not just a **school** problem. It also happens in the **community** and it requires community support and solutions. Every school exists within a wider community and developing community partnerships to prevent and reduce bullying is an excellent strategy for many reasons.

Messages about bullying prevention are improved and more impactful when it comes from a diverse group people who children and youth respect. Involving the community helps to ensure that youth get consistent messages everywhere they live, learn, play, and work. Every community is unique and, therefore, engaging the community to actively address bullying involves examining the resources within the community that could assist partners in supporting the effort. A creative and community-specific approach to identifying potential community partners is required and school principals may want to consider partnerships with:

- local police
- public health professionals
- fire fighters
- paramedics
- local athletes
- youth leaders in places of worship
- elders
- spokespeople for disability organizations
- local politicians
- media personalities
- artists, social justice advocates
- local businesses
- older children and youth, and adults who have personal stories to share about bullying
- youth's workplace/employers

> Bullying frequently happens at school, but it is a community problem. A Whole School Approach is more effective when community partners are involved.
>
> Each community will have diverse and different opportunities to form partnerships.

> "Physical and emotional safety is a precondition for effective learning in health and physical education."
>
> From *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education.* http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/health.html.

Rationale for Building Community Partnerships

1. Converge Messages and Create Shared Values

The primary message for children and youth is that they have the right to be safe and a responsibility to respect others' right to safety. Safety should be taught as a holistic concept that encompasses both physical and emotional/psychological safety. Children and youth need to receive consistent and well-aligned messages about the importance of being safe and keeping others safe—not only from their parents/guardians and educators, but from diverse members of their communities. Welcoming community partners to work with youth demonstrates that bullying prevention is not just a school issue, but a community issue that is everyone's responsibility.

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Rationale for Building Community Partnerships continued…

Key Elements

1. Converge messages and create shared values.

2. Believe in a safe and just society.

3. Inspire and role model.

4. Keep it fresh and age appropriate.

Community partnerships is a component of the Foundations for Healthy Schools Framework.

http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/healthyschools/foundations.pdf.

2. *Belief in a Safe and Just Society*

It is important to convey the message to all children and youth that they live in a safe community in a safe world and that there are people they can depend on to help them. We teach young children that bullying can hurt our bodies or our feelings. In order to strengthen the message that safety is everybody's right, it is helpful to involve community leaders who are already associated with keeping people safe—police officers, public health nurses and physicians, fire fighters, and paramedics. These community members can be powerful and persuasive spokespeople because they are seen as heroes who have a deep commitment to serving others. This involvement not only lends great credibility to the school's bullying prevention messaging, but it also helps children and youth develop a sense of trust in these adults and our wider society.

3. *Inspiration and Role Modeling*

In any community there are people who can inspire and motivate youth through personal stories of courage, persistence, talent and dedication. These are the people who can touch youths' hearts, and ignite their passion to make a positive difference in our world. Whether a theatrical performance, a work of art presented by an artist, or presentation by a spokesperson with a disability; personal stories and works of art can be powerful tools to stimulate children and youth's commitment to refrain from bullying and stand up for others. Middle school and secondary school youth are particularly open to messages from people with whom they can identify; hence, youth-to-youth messaging is an effective strategy.

4. *Keeping it Fresh and Age Appropriate*

Ongoing and developmentally appropriate bullying prevention messaging is essential throughout every child and youth's school career. Engaging community partners from a wide variety of institutions and walks of life will help to ensure that the bullying prevention initiatives in your school are relevant and compelling. It is important to enable relationships to develop between youth and community partners whenever possible by having repeat visits—both within the same school year and from year to year—that build upon previous knowledge. For example, public health can present on the components of a healthy relationship or police can present to younger children the concept of bullying prevention and the right to be safe and responsible, followed by presentations on electronic bullying.

Steps to Building Effective Community Partnerships

1. Understand that community partnerships can augment and amplify your pre-existing ongoing bullying prevention initiatives but they do not take the place of the school's role and responsibility.

2. Develop a comprehensive inventory of potential community partners.
   - Reach out to local organizations and learn about what bully prevention programing they already offer or are willing to offer for specific grade levels. Organizations may include:
     - ✓ Police
     - ✓ Emergency Services Personnel (e.g., fire fighters and paramedics)
     - ✓ Public Health
     - ✓ Child Welfare/Social Service/Mental Health
     - ✓ Youth-serving Organizations
     - ✓ Public Service Organizations
     - ✓ Advocacy and Disability Organizations
   - Compile a list of other bullying prevention champions in your community through:
     - ✓ research
     - ✓ canvassing community contacts, teachers, parents/guardians, and especially children and youth.
   - Connect with other schools to create partnerships for mentorship and youth-to-youth messaging.
   - Involve other existing school partners, such as local childcare centres and after-school programs, and busing companies in community partner bullying prevention activities.

3. Assess your school climate. Identify children and youth needs and develop initiatives to target these needs. Select community partners that can best address these needs and the developmental level of your children and youth.

4. Once you have identified potential partners, work to create a mutually respectful, collaborative and transparent relationship.
   - Appreciate that time is limited and do everything possible to make it a smooth and easy partnership (e.g., efficient agendas, share concise resources, etc.)
   - Invest time for relationship building, and the co-creation or adaptation of resources.
   - Welcome partners, introduce them to staff, children and youth appropriately, demonstrate appreciation, and provide honest and tactful feedback.
   - Recognize barriers (e.g., work schedules and language).
   - Come to very clear understandings about roles, boundaries, and responsibilities of all partners, and use a Memorandum of Understanding to identify specifics.

Steps to Building Effective Community Partnerships continued…

5. Integrate the bullying prevention messaging of your partners into your school's ongoing bullying prevention activities.
   - Use planned pre-learning and de-briefing classroom activities so that partnership presentations are not a "one-time" learning activity.
   - Schedule community partner events carefully to integrate and support ongoing bullying prevention initiatives (e.g., schedule a visiting artist to present during Bullying Prevention and Awareness Week).

Roles and Responsibilities of Champions

Identifying child and youth leaders to champion bullying prevention

Champions are individuals who deeply embrace and embody healthy relationships and the school's bullying prevention aspirations. They are leaders in creating a positive social climate by fostering healthy relationships throughout the school community including relationships among adults, and between adults and children or youth. Ideally, champions are formally designated from three levels:

Level 1
- Administrators
- Teachers
- School staff

Level 2
- Children
- Youth

Level 3
- Parents
- Community

By working together for a whole-school initiative and separately within their own level, the role of each champion is to:

- Increase *awareness* of bullying as an important issue
- Increase *knowledge* about bullying and its many forms and negative impacts
- Change *attitudes* and *opinions* about bullying
- Develop appropriate *skills* to address bullying
- Enhance *aspirations, motivation, and behavioural intent* to address bullying through specific program initiatives and moment-to-moment interactions
- Change his/her *own behaviour and be a role model to* influence the behaviour of peers within their own level
- Change implicit *social norms and school climate*

Many champions are needed to support bullying prevention efforts and engage the school community. Identify:

- Administrative Champions
- Teacher Champions
- School Staff Champions
- Children and Youth Champions
- Parent Champions
- Community Leader Champions

Steps to Mobilizing Champions

Champions can be either recruited or self-selected. A designated school administrator should manage the champions.

1. **Administrators, Teachers, Other School Personnel**
   a) Designate and hold accountable a school administrator to lead safe and caring school initiatives and programs.
   b) Recruit others to create an effective and diverse team. Criteria for membership would include:
      ✓ personal interest, motivation, and commitment to issue
      ✓ communication skills
      ✓ ability and commitment to collaborate

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Steps to Mobilizing Champions continued…

a) Provide adequate preparation time, resources, and recognition to fulfil roles and responsibilities of bullying prevention champions (see below).
b) Specify roles and responsibilities for individual team members which may include:
   ✓ choosing evidence-based programs and curricula
   ✓ disseminating resources
   ✓ providing professional development
   ✓ researching, selecting and liaising with community partners
   ✓ managing specific educational and activity initiatives throughout the school year
   ✓ assessing and evaluating the programs and initiatives
   ✓ bringing school policy or code of conduct to life
   ✓ monitoring school climate

1. **Children and Youth**
   a) Create a formal structure for children and youth to play a role in the school's bullying prevention initiatives.
   b) Recruit children and youth by
      i. asking for volunteers
      ii. directly approaching individual children and youth
   c) Criteria for child and youth selection should be broad, so that champions are drawn from a diverse pool of children and youth—not just the academically talented and natural leaders. Include children and youth who demonstrate one or more of the following:
      ✓ interest, motivation and commitment to the issue
      ✓ empathy, caring and prosocial patterns of behaviour
      ✓ drive for social dominance and power (e.g., children and youth who may have used their power negatively in the past, but with adult and peer support can become a champion)
      ✓ oral and/or written communication skills
      ✓ creative problem solving abilities
      ✓ talent and interest in diverse areas such as technology, visual art, athletics, or drama.
   d) Empower children and youth to show leadership and take on as much responsibility as possible to make choices and implement initiatives, while providing ongoing adult supervision and support.
   e) Sample roles for children and youth champions include:
      ✓ Being a member of the safe and accepting schools team (which also includes administrators, school personnel, parent and community representatives)
      ✓ Befriending vulnerable children and youth as part of a *Plan of Safety*
      ✓ Mentoring younger children and youth
      ✓ Presenting to peers and younger children and youth, or children and youth at other schools, using a variety of media
      ✓ Participating in conflict mediation/restorative justice activities, which are facilitated by a teacher who has been trained in such approaches.
      ✓ Leading peer-based discussions
      ✓ Whole school programming

Steps to Mobilizing Champions continued…

2. **Parents**
   a) Include responsibility for bullying prevention initiatives in pre-existing parent committees' missions or create a new structure for this purpose.
   b) Recruit parents who have shown:
      - ✓ a personal interest, motivation and commitment to issue
      - ✓ an ability to collaborate
   c) Encourage parents to play a leadership role and learn about:
      - ✓ bullying
      - ✓ school policy regarding bullying including progressive discipline
      - ✓ school's code of conduct
      - ✓ school climate surveys
   d) Sample additional roles for parent champions include:
      - ✓ being involved in the Safe and Accepting Schools Committee or another school committee (that also includes administrators, school personnel, community leaders, and children and youth representatives)
      - ✓ volunteering in school anti-bullying initiatives

Integrating Bullying Prevention into Classroom Learning Curriculum

Integrating Bullying Prevention into Classroom Learning

School is the place where children and youth come to learn. Traditionally, there is a strong emphasis on numeracy and literacy, which are critical life skills. Recently, there is more and more emphasis on learning the critical skills for initiating and sustaining healthy relationships. These skills can be difficult to learn because, unlike reading or math, there is not consistency in the developmental learning skills required from one relationship to another and from one day to another.

The classroom is one of the primary places where social and emotional skills can be learned and character can be developed, but learning these skills does not always come naturally. Just as with other forms of learning, children and youth learn relationship skills by trial and error and, as with reading and math, we need to provide extra supports to those who are constantly struggling to foster positive relationships.

Classroom-based learning activities can promote learning and understanding of:

- The importance of positive relationships for learning and life
- The definition of bullying
- Differences between bullying and teasing, aggression and competition, aggression and assertiveness, telling and tattling
- social responsibilities and strategies for those who witness bullying
- Diversity and inclusion
- Empathy
- Positive leadership and recognition
- Expectations for a supportive learning environment, and positive class and school climate

These learning activities can be integrated across the curriculum or can be highlighted with special events that are then supported with curriculum-based learning.

"The development of skills and knowledge in mathematics is often enhanced by learning in other subject areas. Teachers should ensure that all students have ample opportunities to explore a subject from multiple perspectives by emphasizing cross-curricular learning and integrated learning,"
.
The Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-8: Mathematics (2005)

Building skills for health relationships and bullying prevention across the curriculum

Educators can creatively and intentionally plan instruction across the curriculum to support students in developing skills for positive relationships and preventing bullying.

Language Integration

There are many books that focus on bullying problems; these are available for all ages of children and youth. One Ontario resource for a list of books can be found at: www.parentbooks.ca/Bullying_Resources_for_Kids_&_Teens.html[1]. It is important to note that one criterion for choosing a book to study is that the resolution to bullying should be constructive and positive. Some books end with revenge and observational research indicates that when a child uses aggression in response to being bullied, the bullying continues longer. Stories of bullying (the use of power and aggression) and the pain it causes are central to the stories of *Harry Potter* and are frequently found in classic literature, as well (e.g., *Lord of the Flies*, *Cinderella*).

Creating prose and poetry to express feelings about bullying can also engage children and youth. A recent example of spoken poetry by Shane Koyczan, a Canadian poet, highlights the power of words. His illustrated poem on bullying, entitled *To This Day* has gone viral and is available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ltun92DfnPY[2].

Consider opportunities to help students skills for bullying prevention when planning instruction with the overall expectations for oral communication, reading, writing and media literacy in the Ontario language curriculum[3].

Mathematics Integration

Statistics is a means of learning from data and determining patterns and associations in what seem to be random events. There are a lot of statistics about bullying that can be used to develop understanding about the prevalence of bullying and the harm that it causes. For example, the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health has conducted the *Ontario Student Drug Use and Health* Survey for decades. They have gathered data on bullying, which can serve as the basis for discussion and exploration. This is a link to the survey reports: http://www.camh.ca/en/research/news_and_publications/ontario-student-drug-use-and-health-survey/Pages/default.aspx[4].

Schools are now required to do formal surveys on bullying and school climate. In math class, students can:

- analyze data from their school's survey (if available)
- develop observation strategies or questions that are relevant for their school
- collect and manage additional data from students, parents/guardians, teachers, or community leaders, and analyze the responses and report on the findings.

These activities relate directly to the Ontario mathematics curriculum strands *Data Management and Probability*, and *Patterning and Algebra*[5]. Remind students of the voluntary nature of research and the importance of confidentiality.

References

[1]Parentbooks. (2012). *Bullying resources for kids and teens.* Retrieved from, http://www.parentbooks.ca/Bullying_Resources_for_Kids_&_Teens.html.

[2]Koyczan, S. (2013). *To this day project.* Retrieved from, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ltun92DfnPY.

[3]Ontario Ministry of Education. (2006). *The Ontario curriculum Grades 1-8: Language.* Retrieved from, http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/language18currb.pdf.

[4]Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH). (2012). *Ontario student drug use and health survey.* Retrieved from, http://www.camh.ca/en/research/news_and_publications/ontario-student-drug-use-and-health-survey/Pages/default.aspx.

[5]Ontario Ministry of Education. (2005). *The Ontario curriculum Grades 1-8: Mathematics.* Retrieved from, http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/math18curr.pdf.

Building skills for healthy relationships and bullying prevention across the curriculum continued…

Arts, Sciences, and Health Integration

Bullying is a relationship problem and relationship problems form the basis of many forms of artistic expression. Students can be encouraged to explore the issues and solutions to bullying through visual arts, drama, dance, and music.

There is much to be learned through science and health about social-emotional development, social behavior and the brain, stress and functioning, mental health, and many other aspects of human behavior that shed light on the complex dynamics of bullying and its impact.

Supportive Learning Environment

Positive relationship and bullying prevention activities can be woven into the fabric of daily life in classrooms. The type of activity may vary given the time of the year or the needs that arise during the year. Investing time in establishing and maintaining a supportive learning environment and making ties to learning across the curriculum is time well spent. Examples include:

- Establishing a shared set of class norms at the beginning of the year for creating a supportive learning environment—one that everyone in the class buys into.
- Holding regular circle times for discussion of issues that arise and suggestions of solutions. These times can be guided by class norms such as only one person talks at once, no put downs and no naming people.
- Activities to learn about differences among the children in the class, such as days to learn about the cultures of origin of classmates.
- Activities to promote intervention for those who witness bullying, such as establishing a code for helping, generating positive strategies for intervening when children and youth observe bullying, and role plays to practice these strategies.

Sample Strategies and Activities for a Whole School Approach for Bullying Prevention

A Whole School Approach involves working directly with the entire school community including:

- children and youth,
- classroom groups
- school staff
- parents/guardians
- the broader community.

By educating and engaging all of the school community, improvements in relationships and responses to bullying can be developed and promoted to ensure a supportive learning environment, positive school climate and sustainable improvements.

"Living skills cannot be taught effectively in isolation; they must be taught and evaluated in conjunction with learning related to all strands of the curriculum, in order to make the learning personally relevant for students. As they develop and apply their living skills, students will build resilience. They will learn to make choices that protect their safety and health and enable them to become independent thinkers and responsible adults who are capable of developing strong relationships and who are committed to lifelong healthy, active living.

The Ontario Curriculum,
Grades 1-8,
Health and Physical Education
(2010)

Goals of bullying prevention activities

1. Promoting positive relationships within and between the entire school to enhance school climate and a supportive learning environment;
2. Educating and developing awareness about bullying, the importance of healthy relationships, and self-awareness about the use of real and perceived power in relationships;
3. Consolidating attitudes which are incompatible with bullying for inclusion, acceptance and respect for all;
4. Developing awareness of bullying issues at the school;
5. Developing positive solutions to prevent and address bullying;
6. Learning positive strategies to address bullying by
   a. children and youth who are victimized
   b. children and youth who witness bullying
   c. teachers, and
   d. other school staff;
7. Building social responsibility and open trusting communication about bullying and relationship difficulties.

Below are a just a few suggestions of activities based on the Whole School Approach. It is important that the activities are focused on the positive ways to enhance school climate, and to solve issues when they arise through education and discussion.

This fact sheet has been developed by PREVNet, www.prevnet.ca

Resources

Classroom Dynamics: Creating a Supportive Learning Environment:
http://www.edugains.ca/newsite/math2/classroomdynamics.html

Ontario Ministry of Education:
http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teachers/safeschools.html

PREVNet: http://prevnet.ca

Ontario Ministry of Education. Full-Day Early-Learning - Kindergarten Program. (2010-2011 draft).
http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/kindergarten_english_june3.pdf

Ontario Ministry of Education. The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition. (2010).
http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/health.html

Ontario Ministry of Education. The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9-12: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition. (1999 & 2000).
http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/health.html

Stepping Stones: A Resource on Youth Development (Ministry of Children and Youth Services:
http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/topics/youthopportunities/steppingstones/youth_policy.aspx

Ontario Ministry of Education. Caring and Safe Schools in Ontario: Supporting Students with Special Education Needs through Progressive Discipline, Kindergarten to Grade 12. (2010)
http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/caring_safe_school.pdf

Activities for Children and Youth

- Representation on Safe and Accepting School Teams
- Poster Initiatives/Activities - children make a poster about promoting healthy relationships and preventing bullying
- Announcements with a positive message of the day
- School club for promoting inclusion, safety, and respect
- School assemblies with community professionals, athletes, etc.
- Pink shirt day (www.pinkshirtday.ca[1])
- Articles in school newsletter
- Arts activities related to addressing bullying (e.g., drama, visual arts, music, poetry, prose)
- Peer mentoring program for bullying awareness and positive support
- Activities for Bullying Awareness Week (3rd week in November)
- Town Hall meetings to generate ideas and express concerns
- Recognition of students' positive behaviours
- Survey of messages and images in school to ensure they reflect school's diversity and promote positive, caring relationships
- Involvement of children/youth in assessments of bullying and supportive relationships at school.

Activities for School Staff

- Representation on Safe and Accepting School Teams
- Professional learning opportunities with professionals from community
- Developing vision of supportive learning environment and positive climate for the school
- Staff identification of strengths and concerns in school
- Activities to increase staff cohesion and collaboration
- Sharing effective practices in preventing bullying
- Generate innovative supervision strategies for key areas in the school (e.g., halls, outside)
- Develop strategies and tools for effective communication such as between:
  - teacher and principal (e.g., reporting slip)
  - bus driver and principal (e.g., reporting slip)
  - teacher and parent/guardian (e.g., call script)
  - student and teacher (e.g., bullying problem/solution box)
  - parent/guardian and teacher (e.g., letter: see www.teachsafeschools.org[2])
- Involvement in assessments of bullying and supportive relationships at school.

This fact sheet has been developed by PREVNet, www.prevnet.ca

Resources

Ontario Ministry of Education. The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9-12: Social Sciences and Humanities (2013). http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/ssciences9to122013.pdf

References
[1]CKNW. (2013). *Pink shirt day.* Retrieved from, http://www.pinkshirtday.ca/.

[2,3]The Melissa Institute for Violence Prevention and Treatment, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE/University of Toronto). (n.d.). *Teach Safe Schools.* Retrieved from www.teachsafeschools.org.

[4]Peaceful Schools International. (2013). *Free online resources.* Retrieved from, http://peacefulschoolsinternational.org/psi-resources/free-online-resources.

[5]US Department of Health and Human Resources. (n.d.). *Stop bullying now.* Retrieved from, http://www.stopbullying.gov/.

Activities for Parents/Guardians

- Representation on Safe and Accepting School Committee
- Encourage attendance at parent/guardian nights by showcasing children's and youth's work related to positive relationships and bullying prevention
- Facilitate parent/guardian involvement at a variety of times to suit availability by having food, babysitting, transportation support, if possible.
- Inform parents about bullying prevention activities at school
- Encourage parents/guardians and grandparents to volunteer (e.g., school and classroom activities or school council initiatives)
- Develop activities for children to take home to enhance parent/guardians' awareness of the importance of healthy relationships and bullying prevention
- Involvement in assessments of bullying and supportive relationships at school.

Activities for the Community

- Representation on Safe and Accepting School Committee
- Developing vision of a supportive learning environment and positive climate for the school and community
- Partnerships with the school on community efforts (e.g., food bank)
- Partnerships with police for positive school-police relationships and to promote positive youth-police relationships
- Partnerships with child and youth-serving organizations for extra-curricular activities
- Partnerships with child and youth mental health organizations for professional learning and mutual support.

There are many creative ways to work with the different levels of a school community to increase awareness and engagement in promoting positive relationships and preventing bullying. The activities that you choose for your school need to fit with the special circumstances of your school. You can get additional ideas for activities for all members of the school community and of the school for all grades on numerous internet sites related to developing a supportive learning environment, positive school climate and preventing bullying. Here are a few that have whole school activities described:

- www.teachsafeschools.org[3]
- www.peacefulschoolsinternational.org[4]
- www.stopbullyingnow.gov[5]

When And Where Does Bullying Happen in Your School?: Conducting an Environmental Scan

Did you know?

Positive social relationships foster healthy interactions. Poor social relationships contribute to early death as much as smoking, drinking, and obesity, and children involved in bullying (either as the student being victimized or the student engaged in bullying) have relationship problems. By assessing the extent of relationship problems at your school you can help prevent bullying.

So what?

Positive school climate has a positive impact on such areas as mental health, substance use, healthy eating, conflict resolution and healthy relationships[1]. Keep your school safe by assessing the prevalence of bullying and ensuring your interventions are working to promote healthy relationships and reduce bullying. Most bullying episodes are verbal and brief with more than half of children and youth not reporting them to school staff. This means there could be a lot of bullying going on in your school that you don't know about. An environmental scan can help you learn about bullying at your school.

What is an environmental scan?

- An assessment of the prevalence of bullying in your school.
- A formalized method of finding out the extent and the nature of bullying problems in your school

The data collected from the first time an assessment is conducted provides a starting point for understanding bullying problems in your school (i.e., How many children and youth are being bullied?). Ongoing assessments measure how effectively the bullying problems are being handled within the school (i.e., Has bullying decreased at our school in the last year?). Environmental scans should provide information on the incidence, type, and impact of bullying using input from all members of the school community (e.g., children, youth, teachers, staff, parents/guardians, and community members) and from multiple methods of data collection (e.g., surveys, interviews, observations, and mapping).

The information collected from your environmental scan can help you:
- evaluate your school's progress toward achieving its safe and accepting school goals
- provide insight about how the interventions may need to change.

Assessments not only tell you how well you are doing, they also tell you what is not working, and what you may need to change. Assessments inform bullying prevention activities at your school and bullying prevention activities inform assessments!

Resource

Canadian Government: Public Safety Canada. Bullying Prevention in Schools. http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrcs/pblctns/bllng-prvntn-schls/index-eng.aspx

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One student who has experienced being victimized stated, *"I want my adults to know that it is seriously bad."*

How do I do an environmental scan?

There are many different approaches to assessing bullying; each provides a slightly different perspective. It is best to collect as many different perspectives as you can. Children and adults have different views of bullying which can be identified through a variety of means. An understanding of bullying problems in schools can involve asking many people (e.g., teachers, guidance counselors, librarians, custodians, social workers, bus drivers, educational assistants) and assessing multiple perspectives in many multiple ways (e.g., questionnaires, observations, interviews, and mapping). The method of assessment will depend on the school, its resources, and the types of information that the school community is concerned about.

Assessments can be formal and informal. According to Bill 13 (Accepting Schools Act)[2], schools need to conduct a formal survey of students, parents and school staff at least once every two years to evaluate school climate.

Some common methods of assessment include:
• Formal surveys for children, youth, parents/guardians, and school staff to provide information on the prevalence, the type, the impact, and the role other children and youth, and what adults know about the problem.
• Physical Environment Surveys
  o Maps of the school property and asking children and youth to identify where bullying happens
  o Maps of the inside of the school and asking children and youth to identify where bullying happens
• Regular check-ins in the classroom by asking informally if any children and youth have seen bullying and what they did about it.

Teachers create assignments in class to do informal observations in the hallways or on the yard that identify how often bullying happens, what type of bullying is happening, and where it happens. Have a discussion in class about the general observations.

How many children and youth should complete the survey?

If possible, survey all children and youth so you can have the most reliable and representative data about bullying in your school. The surveys should be age appropriate. The more data you have the better able you will be to detect differences between groups and how bullying changes over time. If an adequate number of children and youth complete the survey, you can get a more reliable picture of what is going on in your school. If you cannot survey all children and youth, those who are invited to participate should include a diverse range of the children and youth in the school (i.e., be representative of your school population). The most representative samples are randomly selected to avoid bias such as gender, race, religion, and socio-economic status.

See the Tools on Questions to Ask in an Environmental Scan and Sample Mapping Strategy.

REFERENCES

[1]Public Health Agency of Canada. *Health behaviour in school-aged children.* http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/dca-dea/prog-ini/school-scolaire/behaviour-comportements/.

[2]Ontario Ministry of Education. *Bill 13: Accepting Schools Act. School Climate Surveys.* Retrieved from http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teachers/climate.html

Bullying Prevention Needs Assessment

This checklist is intended to help you assess your school's current methods and procedures for responding to bullying. It will allow you to identify strengths, gaps, and areas that need to be addressed.

Needs Assessment Checklist

Please rate the extent to which your school's practices are aligned with the following components of best practices.	Well Aligned	Needs Addressing
School Plan		
1. Your school has a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan that explicitly refers to bullying.		
2. Plan is aligned with current legislation, and Ministry policy and guidelines.		
3. Plan was created with stakeholder involvement, including children/youth, parents/guardians, teachers and school staff.		
4. Plan includes a clear definition of bullying including:		
• Real or perceived power imbalance in bullying		
• Description of different forms of bullying		
• Perceived or actual harm, fear or distress due to bullying		
5. The plan includes a clear reference to the importance of healthy relationships, including rights and responsibilities for:		
• Mental and physical safety of self and others		
• Respect for self and others		
• Feeling valued and a sense of belonging in the school community		
6. The plan clearly describes to whom, when, and where it applies.		
• Children/youth		
• School volunteers		
• Teachers		
• School staff		
• Principals/vice principals		
• During school sanctioned events and/or other interactions (e.g. cyber-bullying; walking to and from schools etc.)		
• Both face-to-face and online (i.e., electronic communication)		
• When there is an impact on school climate		
7. Plan stipulates time and resources allocated to professional learning for all teachers and, school staff (including new staff members, students and parents)		
Bullying Prevention Education		
1A. *For Children and Youth: Developmentally appropriate lessons/activities that address the following content areas:*		
• Children and youth's right to mental and physical safety at school, and responsibility to respect rights of others including understanding and respecting diversity		
• Healthy and respectful relationships – the why and the how		
• Explanation of bullying in all its forms		

Tool has been developed by PREVNet, www.prevnet.ca

Please rate the extent to which your school's practices are aligned with the following components of best practices.	Well Aligned	Needs Addressing
• Critical role played by those who witness bullying, the importance of reporting		
• To whom to report bullying		
• Social skills: communication, assertiveness, social problem solving and conflict resolution		
• School plan about bullying		
1B. *Timing and Characteristics of Lessons/Activities*		
• Classroom or Home Form early in the school year		
• Classroom or Home Form throughout the school year		
• School-wide or division-wide events including assemblies, speakers performances, posters etc. throughout the school year,		
• Packaged bullying/violence prevention programs are evidence based, linked to the curriculum, and appropriate for the children and youth population		
• Use of peer mentoring and peer-to-peer messaging especially for middle and secondary students		
• Inclusion of community members and groups such as police, fire department, government officials, public health nurses, parent associations, settlement organizations, etc.		
2A. *For Parents/Guardians: Education about bullying includes the following content:*		
• Explanation of bullying in all its forms		
• School Plan		
• Signs of children and youth involvement in bullying problems		
• To whom they should report if they have a concern		
• Opportunities to get involved		
2B. *Timing and Format of Parent/Guardian Education and Involvement*		
• Presentations during well-attended events such as Curriculum Night, Back to School Gathering, Performances, etc.		
• Presentation format is fresh and changes from year to year, e.g., featuring children and youth as presenters, community experts, panel discussions, small group break-out sessions, etc.		
• Accessible written or electronic communication outlining the school plan, and code of conduct that parents/guardians sign and return early in school year (translated when necessary)		
• Written resources outlining school plan disseminated in student agendas, newsletters, on school's website, etc.		
3A. For All School Personnel: *Education about bullying*		
• In-depth professional learning about the developmental issues that impact bullying amongst the ages/stages of children and youth		
• Supervision of children/youth – the why and the how of monitoring individual children and youth, peer interactions, peer dynamics, and how to identify and address incidents of bullying in the moment		
• Clear explanation that all bullying incidents must be reported to the principal and staff who work directly with students respond to observations of bullying behavior in the moment and/or report as per plan		
• Clear procedures regarding how to document and report bullying incidents that are a) directly observed by school staff, b) disclosed by a children or youth, and/or c) disclosed by a parent/guardian		
• Clear delineation of roles and responsibilities with respect to implementing school plan		
Effective Responses to Bullying Problems (Intervention)		
1. *Responding to children and youth who have bullied*		

Tool has been developed by PREVNet, www.prevnet.ca

Please rate the extent to which your school's practices are aligned with the following components of best practices.	Well Aligned	Needs Addressing
• Progressive Discipline – A continuum of responses are implemented that consider mitigating circumstances and other factors, starting with "formative" or educational consequences that develop social understanding, attitudes and skills needed for healthier relationships. If bullying behaviour is repeated, consequences increase in severity.		
• Responses take into account the impact of the bullying and the unique individual, family, peer dynamics, and situational factors.		
• Parents/guardians are involved as per school plan and involved in working through problem. School social workers or other service providers are involved when necessary to support the child or youth, and parents/guardians.		
• A rigorous follow-up plan is developed to monitor bullying behaviour <u>as long as necessary</u> to help ensure it has stopped. This involves: o increased monitoring of children and youth who have engaged in bullying o checking-in with the child or youth who was bullied. Check-ins should occur daily for a specified number of days, then every other day, then twice a week, once a week, once every two weeks, once a month, etc.		
2. Responding to children and youth who have been bullied by bullying.		
• The child or youth is immediately offered emotional support and assurance that there is a caring adult they can turn to		
• An individualized safety plan is developed and implemented (e.g., child or youth is connected to a peer mentor or someone the same-age, children and youth is allowed to enter building before bell rings, etc.)		
• Ongoing monitoring is implemented <u>as long as necessary to help ensure victimization has stopped</u>		
• Parents/Guardians are informed as per school plan		
• School social workers (or other mental health workers) are involved when deemed necessary to support children, youth and families		
Roles, Responsibilities, and Accountability		
• All school personnel model healthy relationships at all times		
• All school staff report serious student incidents including bullying. Staff who work directly with students respond to observations of bullying behaviour in the moment and/or report as per plan		
• The principal receives reports of bullying, investigates, makes discipline decisions, and assumes responsibility for implementation and follow-up		
• The effectiveness of bullying prevention/intervention is evaluated biannually through anonymous student and staff surveys		
• Designated school personnel and parents/guardians review and update the school's bullying prevention and intervention plan at specified intervals based on internal evaluation findings and current research literature		
• School is accountable to the school community, parents/guardians for implementing the bullying prevention and intervention plan to reduce bullying and making alignment to their school improvement plans		

Sample Mapping Activity: Where Does Bullying Happen in your School?

Children and Youth are the experts

Children and youth are the experts on bullying. Bullying is a covert activity, often hidden from adults who are responsible for supervision at school. Children and youth, on the other hand, are almost always present when bullying occurs, so they know <u>where</u> it happens, <u>when</u> it happens, <u>what</u> happens, <u>who</u> does what, who is bullied, and lots more. School personnel can learn about the problems of bullying and harassment as a first step in bullying prevention from children and youth.

Ontario schools are required to conduct a school climate survey of students, teachers, school staff and parents about bullying at school every two years. Most surveys ask children and youth about the locations of where bullying occurs at school. According to children and youth, the most common locations for bullying are areas that are relatively unsupervised with unstructured activities, such as the hallways, locker areas, lunchrooms, gym change rooms, and the schoolyard. School climate surveys are helpful in providing general information on where bullying happens. More precise information can be obtained by asking children and youth to indicate the exact locations where they observe or experience bullying.

How to find out where bullying happens in your school?

Find or develop a schematic map or floor plan for your school that shows each floor and the outside areas. Make enough copies of the map for children and youth to complete the mapping activity.

You can approach this task in several ways, such as:

1. The mapping activity can be appended to the school climate survey and done by every child and youth.
2. You can identify representative groups (e.g., every fifth English class) and have this selective group of children and youth complete the mapping exercise.
3. Children and youth members of a peer-run safe school group or bullying prevention committee can survey classmates to complete the mapping exercise.
4. The mapping can be done as an activity as part of a bullying awareness day, perhaps during bullying awareness week, or at any time of the year as part of the school's bullying prevention plan.

The instructions are simple:
1. Each child and youth can mark the "hot spots" where he/she has witnessed or experienced bullying in the school or on the school grounds.
2. Children and youth can place a small circle or sticky dot where they have seen or experienced bullying. They can also indicate any area on the school map where they are worried that bullying might occur.
3. With older youth, it is possible to identify "hot spots" with more information. The youth can indicate not only <u>where</u> bullying happens, but also <u>when</u> it happens, and <u>what</u> happens. The information on when bullying happens and what happens can be added in boxes in spaces at the margins of the map, with instructions to the children and youth to draw a link from the identified "hot spot" to the

Below is a sample map with spaces which illustrates this approach.

Sample First Floor Plan: School X

Classroom 102	Classroom 103	Office 104	Classroom 105
Door 1 Stairs	Hall A		Door 2 Stairs
Classroom 106	Staff Room 107	Classroom 108	Classroom 109

When and Where	When and Where	When and Where	When and Where
When and Where	When and Where	When and Where	When and Where

Once these maps have been completed, several classes could compile the data and present a report to the Safe and Accepting School Team or to the school as a whole. The findings from the mapping activity will provide clear guidelines for supervision and bullying prevention planning.

The goal of this exercise is to have the children or youth inform adults in the school where bullying is happening so that you can address the problem. At the same time, the project can be intergrated into classes to learn about data management. Finally, the exercise can empower children and youth with the knowledge of the different types of bullying and by being part of the solution to stop it from happening!

Bullying Prevention Needs Assessment

A needs assessment helps schools determine their level of readiness to engage in a bullying prevention initiative. It also provides schools with a better understanding of the current state of their prevention efforts, and helps guide future programming.

Who should be involved?

The perceptions of students, school staff, parents/guardians and community partners are all critical to understanding the school's needs since each group has access to unique information and each are a part of the Whole School Approach. The needs assessment with these groups can be completed in a number of ways, through:

- focus groups
- class discussions
- parent/guardian and staff meetings
- surveys

"Even the best-designed programs will have little effect if they don't match the real needs of your school."

Ministry of Education (2005)

What should we consider?

Bullying prevention initiatives at school require activities in four domains:

1. Education: with all members of the school community and ongoing

2. Assessment: of bullying within the school and individual students' needs

3. Prevention and Intervention: evidence-based activities, strategies, and processes to promote a positive school climate and address bullying when it arises

4. Policy: comprehensive school policy that constructively and consistently addresses bullying problems

There are two sections to this Needs Assessment Tool"

1. Content
2. Implementation

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What should we consider continued…?

Content. The content section evaluates (a) the degree to which the school has implemented a bullying prevention program and (b) the content of the bullying prevention program with respect to important elements including:

- school climate and positive relationships;
- tailored to the developmental/educational needs of the children and youth;
- includes all members of the school community.

Implementation. The implementation section evaluates:

- leadership from the principal, school staff, students, and parents/guardians;
- the school's interest in developing the initiative;
- the resources available and needed to implement the initiative; and
- the current ability for the school to sustain the program over time.

What will we learn?

Using this Needs Assessment, schools can determine their level of performance with respect to education, assessment, intervention, and policy. The school will learn:

- How it is currently addressing bullying problems?

- How comprehensive the approach to bullying is with respect to relationship focus, developmental/educational needs, positive school climate and relationships within the school community, and leadership?

- How interested the stakeholders are in addressing bullying problems?

- How satisfied stakeholders are with the current bullying prevention efforts?

- Whether additional resources are needed to support the prevention efforts?

- What can be done to expand on current efforts?

- How the current efforts are being sustained over time?

REFERENCE

Ontario Ministry of Education, Safe Schools Action Team. (2005). *Shaping safer schools: A bullying prevention action plan. Retrieved from* http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/health ysafeschools/actionTeam/shaping.pdf

> **See the Tool on Bullying Prevention Needs Assessment.**

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Bullying Prevention Needs Assessment

This tool will enable an overview of where your school is at with respect to developing a bullying prevention plan and identifying what aspects of the school plan needs to be further developed. With your *Safe and Accepting School Team*, complete the four charts below. Where the answer is "no" these are areas that will require development through the leadership of the team. If the answer is "yes", but qualified with a 'not satisfied' or 'somewhat satisfied', these are also areas that your team could work toward improving. This assessment should be repeated at the beginning of each school year to help identify the goals in bullying prevention and the planning needs each year.

Chart 1: Education

Education	Questions about education provided to students, school staff, parents, and community representatives	Students		School Staff		Parents/Guardians		Other Adults	
		Yes or No	Level of Satisfaction **0** not satisfied **1** somewhat satisfied **2** very satisfied	Yes or No	Level of Satisfaction **0** not satisfied **1** somewhat satisfied **2** very satisfied	Yes or No	Level of Satisfaction **0** not satisfied **1** somewhat satisfied **2** very satisfied	Yes or No	Level of Satisfaction **0** not satisfied **1** somewhat satisfied **2** very satisfied
Content	Has your school provided educational opportunities to raise awareness about:								
	1. Bullying as a relationship problem that requires relationship solutions?								
	2. Developmental/educational needs related to bullying?								
	3. School climate and positive relationships among all school members?								
Implementation	Have the principal and staff identified bullying as a critical issue for the school?								
	Has the school made an effort to increase communication about bullying issues?								
	Have resources been allocated to support and sustain your bullying prevention program?								

Chart 2: Assessment

Assessment	Questions about assessment conducted with students, school staff, parents, and community representatives	Students		School Staff		Parents		Other Adults	
		Yes or No	**Level of Satisfaction** **0** not satisfied **1** somewhat satisfied **2** very satisfied	**Yes or No**	**Level of Satisfaction** **0** not satisfied **1** somewhat satisfied **2** very satisfied	**Yes or No**	**Level of Satisfaction** **0** not satisfied **1** somewhat satisfied **2** very satisfied	**Yes or No**	**Level of Satisfaction** **0** not satisfied **1** somewhat satisfied **2** very satisfied
Content	Has your school conducted an assessment of bullying problems?								
	Does the assessment include questions about the types of bullying at different ages for boys and girls?								
	Did the assessment include questions about perceptions and strategies of peers, school staff, and parents?								
	Were results communicated to the school community?								
Implementation	Is your school interested in learning about the extent of bullying problems?								
	Do you have resources (e.g., staff, materials) to assess bullying?								
	Are extra resources available in the community (e.g., university, parent volunteers)?								
	Does your school have a plan to use assessments to guide prevention programming and evaluate interventions?								

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Chart 3: Prevention and Intervention

Prevention and Intervention	Questions about prevention and intervention for students, school staff, parents, and community representatives	Students		School Staff		Parents		Other Adults	
		Yes or No	Level of Satisfaction **0** not satisfied **1** somewhat satisfied **2** very satisfied	Yes or No	Level of Satisfaction **0** not satisfied **1** somewhat satisfied **2** very satisfied	Yes or No	Level of Satisfaction **0** not satisfied **1** somewhat satisfied **2** very satisfied	Yes or No	Level of Satisfaction **0** not satisfied **1** somewhat satisfied **2** very satisfied
Content	Is your school running a bullying prevention program? If yes:								
	1. Is it evidence-based and involves the whole school?								
	2. Does it provide specific support and strategies for students who are bullying others and/or are victimized?								
	3. Does it promote positive relationships and strategies for students, staff, & parents?								
Implementation	Are the principal and teachers leading the program and involving the whole school community?								
	Do you require:								
	1. Resources (e.g., funding, staff, materials) to run a program								
	2. Are they available?								
	If you are running a program, are you evaluating it or planning to evaluate it?								
	What obstacles do you foresee in implementing bullying prevention programs?								

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Chart 4: School Plan

School Plan	Questions about school plan development for students, school staff, parents and community representatives	Students		School Staff		Parents		Other Adults	
		Yes or No	**Level of Satisfaction** **0** not satisfied **1** somewhat satisfied **2** very satisfied	**Yes or No**	**Level of Satisfaction** **0** not satisfied **1** somewhat satisfied **2** very satisfied	**Yes or No**	**Level of Satisfaction** **0** not satisfied **1** somewhat satisfied **2** very satisfied	**Yes or No**	**Level of Satisfaction** **0** not satisfied **1** somewhat satisfied **2** very satisfied
<u>Content</u>	Does your school plan:								
	1. Define bullying?								
	2. Have specified procedures to address bullying?								
	3. Specify roles and responsibilities of students, school staff and parents in preventing and responding to bullying?								
<u>Implementation</u>	Has the plan been disseminated to all students, staff, and parents?								
	Are you evaluating the school plan implementation process and effectiveness?								
	Do you require:								
	1. Resources (e.g., funding, staff, materials) to run a program?								
	2. Are the resources available?								
	What obstacles do you foresee in implementing and sustaining the bullying prevention plan?								

Principles of Bullying Prevention and Intervention

Bullying prevention and intervention are not just about eliminating bullying—it is also about promoting the development of healthy relationships. The goal is to help ensure that all children and youth have healthy, safe, respectful and caring relationships with everyone in their lives.

Bullying prevention strategies provide children and youth with awareness and skills:

- to initiate and engage in positive relationships.
- to prevent from bullying others.
- to cope effectively with being bullied (e.g., walk away or tell someone).

All children and youth need this awareness and social-emotional skill to be successful in school and in their relationship with peers. All adults involved with children and youth need to know how to provide support for developing social understanding and responsibility.

Bullying intervention strategies are used when children and youth experience problems with bullying. There are two approaches to intervention:

1. Providing individualized supports to promote development in areas where children and youth are struggling (e.g., understanding, social skills, attitudes) and to promote their strengths.
2. Helping ensuring that children or youth relationships with teachers, peers, family and the community are both positive and support the development of constructive social understanding, behaviours, and attitudes.

Principles for Bullying Prevention and Intervention (Evidence-based)

Principle 1: Bullying is a relationship problem.

- **Bullying is a power relationship problem between the child bullying and the child being bullied**. Both children require supportive interventions to promote positive relationships.

- **Relationship problems require relationship solutions.** Children and youth who bully require interventions to teach that bullying is unacceptable, and to learn awareness, social skills, empathy, and positive leadership. Children and youth being victimized require safety and support to overcome bullying.

- **Relationship solutions include all children and youth involved in bullying.** Those who witness bullying are often involved as part of the problem. Interventions focused on the peer group have the potential to shift the power dynamics and promote positive relationships.

- **Children's positive peer relationships depend on positive relationships with adults**. Teachers, parents/guardians, and other adults not only model relationship skills, language, and attitudes, but they are also active in creating positive experiences in which children and youth interact with each other.

"I want the adults in my life to know that if it [the bullying] keeps on happening that they will still love me and help stop it."

Principles for Bullying Prevention and Intervention (Evidence-based) continued...

KEY ELEMENTS

Principle 1:
Bullying is a relationship problem.

Principle 2:
Bullying interventions require a developmental approach.

Principle 3:
Bullying interventions require a systems approach.

Principle 4:
Leadership is foundational for change.

Principle 2. Bullying interventions require a developmental approach.

- **Bullying changes with the developing capacities and concerns of children and adolescents**. The many forms of bullying vary by age and gender. Interventions must be appropriate for the developmental level of the children and youth.

- **Bullying can start in preschool and continues into the school years and beyond.** Interventions should begin early and provide ongoing support for healthy relationships. There are strong opportunities across the Ontario curriculum to support children and youth in building skills for healthy relationships. For example, the Ontario health and physical education curriculum for grades 1-12 include teaching personal skills, adaptive management and coping skills, interpersonal skills, communication and social skills, as well as critical and creative thinking.

- **The intensity of interventions required will vary by children and youth developmental needs and capacities.** A small minority of children and youth, who have serious involvement in bullying and/or victimization, require the most intense interventions. These children and youth may require referrals to child and family services within the community.

- **Bullying problems occur through both in thoughts and in behaviours**. Interventions to promote healthy relationships require attention, empathy, social skills, behavioural and emotional regulation, attitudes, moral understanding, conflict resolution, and leadership.

Principle 3. Bullying interventions require a systems approach.

- **Successful interventions are comprehensive and systemic.** Success depends upon change in classrooms, the school climate, peer groups, school staff, administration, parents/guardians and communities.

- **Peers are key to bullying dynamics and solutions.** Interventions targeting peers focus on engaging children and youth to address bullying problems when they see them. Peers require coaching in effective intervention strategies and in understanding the peer dynamics in bullying.

- **Adults support and model healthy relationships for children and youth.** All adults are models for children. Adults need to have self-awareness about their own behaviour. They must lead by example and refrain from using their power aggressively. They are responsible for promoting safe, caring, and inclusive peer interactions.

Principles for Bullying Prevention and Intervention (Evidence-based) continued…

Prinicple 4: Leadership is the Foundation for Systems Change

- **Leadership by the school principal generates support and action.** The success of a school-based bullying prevention program depends on the commitment, understanding, and actions of the school principal.

- **Leadership by teachers is essential in program delivery and support of healthy relationships.** The implementation and effectiveness of bullying prevention programs depend on teachers' commitment to the program, concern for issues of bullying, and confidence that they have sufficient understanding and professional learning to deal with the issue.

- **All adults are important in promoting healthy relationships.** All adults who are responsible for children's well-being play an important role in promoting healthy relationships and addressing bullying problems.

Why focus on learning relationship skills?

Learning how to get along with others is highly complex and difficult for all children and youth to master, especially those who are not given support for healthy relationships in the early years—there is no one-to-one correspondence, nor consistency in learning about relationships. The ways children interact with parents/guardians or siblings are different than the ways they interact with unfamiliar adults or peers. To initiate and maintain positive relationships, children need to develop increasingly complex social understanding, social awareness, and social skills. Children learn through trial and error. It's their job to make mistakes, and our job is to help them learn from those mistakes—whether those mistakes are in reading, math or relationship skills. All children require ongoing and positive support for social-emotional development because it is essential for success in school and in life.

The Health and Physical Education (see 'Living Skills' sidebar) and Social Sciences and Humanities curriculum provides curriculum integration opportunities to explicitly teach living skills and other learning across the curriculum (e.g., in the Arts and with group work in any subject).

Children and youth who are able to have healthy relationships will be less likely to engage in bullying and also be more likely to support children and youth who are bullied. Promoting healthy relationships is a key way to prevent bullying and create a safe and accepting school climate.

Living Skills

1. Personal Skills
   - self-awareness
   - self-monitoring
   - adaptive
   - coping
   - management
2. Interpersonal Skills
   - Communication
   - Relationship
   - Social
3. Critical and Creative Thinking
   - Planning
   - Concluding
   - Presenting
   - Reflecting
   - Evaluating

From the HPE Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8, p. 20. Interim Edition. http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/healthcurr18.pdf.

Ontario Curriculum

Ontario Ministry of Education. The Full-Day Early Learning – Kindergarten Program (draft). http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/kinder.html

Ontario Ministry of Education. The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition. (2010). http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/health.html

Ontario Ministry of Education. The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9-12: Health and Physical Education, (1999 & 2000). http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/health.html

Ontario Ministry of Education. The Ontario Curriculum: Social Studies, Grades 1-6; History and Geography, Grades 7-8. (2013). http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/sshg18curr2013.pdf

The Ontario Curriculum. Grades 9-12: Social Sciences and Humanities, (2013). http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/ssciences9to122013.pdf

Resources

PREVNet: http://www.prevnet.ca.

Stepping Stones: A Resource on Youth Development (Ministry of Children and Youth Services: http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/topics/youthopportunities/steppingstones/youth_policy.aspx

Teaching Relationship Skills

If learning how to get along with others is so complex, then we can consider several strategies to support this learning at school and beyond. We need to:

- Intentionally provide opportunities for all students to develop relationships and living skills through the curriculum, extra-curricular activities, and within the community.
- Identify children who are experiencing problems as early as possible, so that we can introduce supports quickly before their learning difficulties grow and they fall farther and farther behind.
- Consider what relationship skills can be taught, reinforced and practiced when students are working in groups with learning across the curriculum.
- Not only engage and motivate children in learning, we also need to reach out and engage their families so they are able to support learning. Engage learning opportunities for children and youth to develop skills for healthy relationships.
- Identify the child or youths' strengths and weaknesses and tailor supports to promote their own way of learning because every child is different.
- Break down the learning tasks into small steps and provide many opportunities for practice (e.g., homework, role play) so they can apply the skills in their lives.
- Understand that children learn best and are most motivated to learn when they know that the person teaching them (e.g., teacher, principal, coach, counselor, parent/guardian) really cares about them.
- Demonstrate to children and youth how to interrupt and stop inappropriate language and behaviour.
- Acknowledge that children learn through reinforcement. They need constant encouragement and praise when learning is going well – and they need firm, but warm support when they struggle with learning.
- Recognize that teaching complex relationship skills, like reading and math, is not a one-off task. It takes ongoing feedback, monitoring, and support to help ensure that children are learning and practicing their newly acquired skills.
- Learn new skills at every age. In many ways, learning about how to have positive relationships is a life-long journey. Some children and youth will require much more support than others to continue learning these complex skills.

Responding to Inappropriate Behaviour

The purpose of responding to inappropriate and disrespectful behaviour is to stop and correct it immediately so that the students involved realize that it is unacceptable. By not responding or saying nothing, teachers are condoning the behaviour. This behaviour requires a response. Responding may include asking a student to stop the inappropriate behaviour, naming the behaviour and explaining why it is inappropriate and/or disrespectful, and asking the student for a change in future behaviour. It is important to consider underlying factors and be sensitive to what else could be going on for all students involved.

Teachers can also use curriculum resources to address issues of bias, discrimination to assist children to understand when/where different forms of bullying occur. They can create positive climates by including curriculum that promotes healthy, positive relationships.

What to do with the child or youth who engages in bullying

Bullying is a relationship problem that requires relationship solutions. The intervention steps described here are designed to stop the bullying and enable individual children and youth to interact with others positively. Interventions should clearly label bullying as unacceptable. It is important that the interventions also build awareness, and help children and youth develop the skills, empathy, and insights they need to not engage in bullying and behave in a respectful manner.
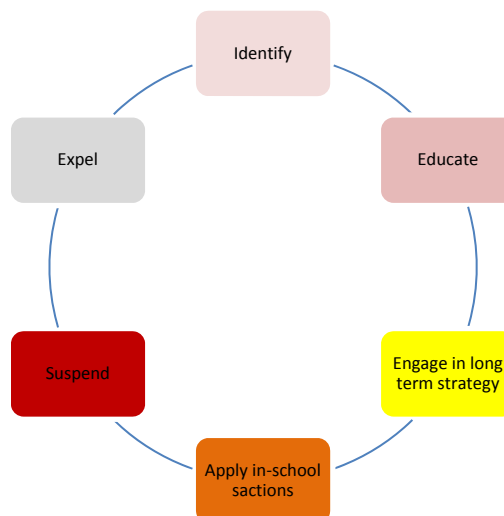
Key Considerations

When addressing bullying ask yourself the following questions:

- What are the particular children or youth circumstances?
- What is the nature of the bullying behaviour?
- How frequent and severe is the bullying?
- What is the impact of the behavior on the school climate?
- What interventions will promote positive behavior in this student and be both corrective and supportive?
- Is the response based on current school, board and ministry policies and guidelines (e.g., considering mitigating and other factors)?

Below are the steps to be taken when responding to aggressive and/or bullying incidents that could happen at your school. The steps are based on the Progressive Discipline PPM 145. Progressive discipline utilizes a continuum of interventions to provide support to teach appropriate behaviours and consequences to address appropriate behaviour.

The six steps to address bullying are outlined in the chart below.

Responding to Aggressive and Bullying Incidents

Tool has been developed by PREVNet, www.prevnet.ca

Intervene in Aggressive and/or Bullying Interactions: Step 1

Step 1: Identify	This level of intervention applies to all aggressive and bullying incidents.
Response is immediate and takes about 3 minutes.	**Stop the Aggression or Bullying** It is important that all children and youth understand the school's commitment to ensuring their safety. • Interrupt the bullying in front of anyone who witnesses it. Say, "*Stop it. That's bullying.*" • Make sure all the children and youth in the area hear your comments.
	Identify the behaviour as aggression or bullying A major goal is to take the "spotlight" off the child/youth being targeted and turn the focus to the behavior. • Label the form of bullying (physical, verbal, social or electronic): "*I noticed (saw, heard) _____.* • Identify the problem behaviour with reference to the school's Code of Conduct: "*Our school's Code of Conduct says we must treat everyone with respect.*"
	Broaden the response Help child or youth who bully realize the negative impacts of their actions. • Identify the aggression and bullying behavior in the context of the impact on other children and youth at the school: "*This <identify behavior> can also hurt others who overhear it.*" • Identify the behaviour, not the person, as negative and indicate the expectations for children or youth: "*At this school, we do not put people down other children/youth.*" or "*Our school does not appreciate hurtful behavior. We support and are respectful to other children/youth.*"
	Ask for positive change in future behavior Speak directly to the child or youth who is bullying and personalize the response. • "*(Use the child/youth's name), please pause and think before you act.*" Be sure to be supportive to the child or youth who was victimized. • Check in with the child or youth who was bullied: "*All children and youth in our school have the right to be safe and be treated respectfully. I am sorry this happened to you and I will work to help ensure that it will not happen again.*"
Response requires short-term follow up.	**Follow up** • Record the incident and report it to the principal. • Determine if this is bullying or aggression (use the tool). If this is bullying, continue to Step 2.

Intervening in Aggressive and/or Bullying Interactions: Step 2

Step 2: Educate	This is a response to every bullying incident. Completed Step 1 first.
	Identify (See above) • Includes all steps in Step 1.
	Educational Opportunities for Learning Children and youth who bully must learn that their behaviour is inappropriate and harmful to the other people involved. They need to acquire the understanding and skills that allow them to interact positively and respectfully with others. Educational learning opportunities will help children and youth develop the insights and empathy needed to modify their behaviour. Educational learning opportunities must be (a) swift, (b) consistently applied and (c) delivered in a nonaggressive manner—hostile adults inadvertently teach children to use aggression. Examples of Educational Consequences - Have the child or youth who bullied: • Lead a class discussion (e.g., harmful effects of bullying, how peers can prevent bullying) • Write a story (e.g., about the negative impact of bullying) • Write a note to their parents/guardians explaining their behaviour and the consequences of it • Develop a role play • Prepare a class presentation • Read about bullying prevention • Make posters for the school • Work on learning to see the perspective of other children/youth and empathize • Work on building leadership skills and find opportunity for positive leadership (e.g., leadership in play, clubs and team involvement)
	Repair Given that children or youth have to interact at school, it is important to repair their relationship so that it does not negatively influence the school climate and perceptions of safety. Involve the child or youth who was bullying in making amends or repairing the relationship to help him or her take responsibility for his/her behaviour and to develop an understanding of the impact of bullying. If the child or youth who was bullying cannot authentically apologize for his/her behaviour, use an indirect method (e.g., writing a letter of apology) rather than a direct apology (e.g., a restorative meeting).
	Follow up (To help ensure ongoing check-ins) Contact parents/guardians Contact parents/guardians of both the child or youth who engaged in bullying and the child or youth who was bullied. • Provide some information about what happened, how it was addressed (progressive discipline, the learning opportunities) while respecting the privacy of all students involved. Explain the monitoring and following-up plans to avoid repeated events. • Engage parents/guardians by asking for their support in monitoring the situation and ensuring that it does not happen again. • Follow-up with the parents/guardians either with a phone call, email, or note home one week after the event to find out how the child/youth is doing and if further information is needed. Monitor the child or youth Identify a school staff member who can check in with the child or youth who bullied and the child or youth who was victimized the day following the incident. Use a 'three, two, one' strategy: (i) Check-in three times in the first week following the incident, (ii) two times in the second week following the incident and (iii) one time in the third week following the incident. Frequent check-ins with child or youth to let him/her know that adults are concerned about the behaviour and are monitoring the situation to help ensure that the bullying has stopped. It also supports the child or youth who was victimized, by reinforcing his/her understanding that he/she has a right to be safe, that the adults in the school are concerned about safety, and that they are following up to help ensure that the bullying has stopped.

Intervening in Aggressive and/or Bullying Interactions: Step 3

Step 3: Support and Counsel	Children and youth who are repeatedly involved in bullying may require more intensive support.
Response is on the spot.	**Identify** • Includes all steps in Step 1. • See above descriptions.
	Educate • Includes all steps in Step 2. • See above descriptions
Engage in long-term strategy.	**Developing a Long Term Strategy for Student who bullies And for Student who is Victimized** When a problem with either the child who engages in bullying or the child being bullied persists over time in spite of educational intervention, more intensive support is required. • Identify the supports that are available within the school, board, and community to assist in the interventions for the child/youth involved in bullying. • Meet with parents/guardians to review the problem and potential solutions which may include exploring the underlying causes of the aggressive behaviour, as well as recognizing the child/youths' strengths and challenges. • Based on the child/youths' needs consider the appropriate intervention (e.g., individual counselling, mental health support, parenting/guardian support, skills training). • Assess the need for academic support. • Work the parents/guardians to connect with the appropriate supports and resources within the school, the board, or the community.
	Monitoring and Following up • Follow up with parents/guardians and the child/youth to continue the support and help ensure that positive progress is being made.

Intervening in Aggressive and/or Bullying Interactions: Step 4

Step 4: Apply in-school sanctions	Children and youth who are not responding to Steps 1 – 3, may need to have sanctions applied while at school.
	Identify • Includes all steps in Step 1. • See above descriptions.
	Educate • Includes all steps in Step 2. • See above descriptions.
	Engaging in a long term Strategy • Includes all steps in Step 3. • See above descriptions.
	Apply in school sanctions to child/youth engaging in bullying • If the above steps have not been successful in stopping bullying and learning positive behaviours, it may be necessary to exclude the student from extra-curricular school activities in order to keep children and youth safe. Taking into account mitigating factors, a detention have been identified as appropriate strategies within the Ministry of Education's Progressive Discipline Policy.

Intervening in Aggressive and/or Bullying Interactions: Step 5

Step 5: Suspend	Once mitigating factors have been taken into account, students may remain on this level for repeated bullying incidents.
	Identify • Includes all steps in Step 1.
	Educate • Includes all steps in Step 2.
	Engaging in a Long Term Strategy • Includes all steps in Step 3.
	Apply in school sanctions to child/ youth engaging in bullying • Includes all steps in Step 4.
	Suspend child/youth engaging in bullying • For safety reasons, it may be necessary to exclude the child/youth from the school for a limited period of time. • It is important for the child/youth to remain connected to the school and to his/her academic program, consequently, provide access to learning resources. • Developing reintegration strategies sets the expectation that the child/youth will rejoin the school community and abide by the school bullying prevention plan and code of conduct. • If available, children/youth can be referred to alternative programs that build skills, behaviours, and positive attitudes, as well as ongoing learning opportunities.

Intervening in Aggressive and/or Bullying Interactions: Step 6

Step 6: Expel	This is the final step.
	Identify
	Educate
	Engaging in a Long Term Strategy
	Apply in school sanctions to child/youth engaging in bullying
	Suspend child/youth engaging in bullying
	Expel child/youth engaging in bullying • According to Ministry, in extreme cases, a decision may be made that a child/youth cannot return to his/her school.

Tool has been developed by PREVNet, www.prevnet.ca

Scaffolding: Coaching Students Involved in Bullying

What is needed to address bullying problems?

To understand and effectively address bullying, a "binocular" view is needed. With only one lens, the focus is limited to the individual needs of students involved in all roles within bullying: those being aggressive, those being victimized, and those who witness bullying. This singular view, however, falls short in providing a thorough understanding of bullying problems. By adding a second lens, as with binoculars, it can expand the focus to include student's relationships. This second perspective takes into account the social dynamics in their peer groups—and the roles that adults play in shaping their experiences. Together these two lenses offer a more comprehensive perspective on bullying problems. This deeper understanding of the complexity of the issues will lead to recognize the multiple approaches required to address bullying problems. In this section, the focus is on supporting individual students through scaffolding —a form of coaching.

What is scaffolding?

Scaffolding is a term that describes what adults can do to support a student's learning and enable a student to do a bit better—reach a bit higher than he or she would be able to without support. Scaffolding was the term coined by Bruner[1] and described by Vygotsky[2] to describe the process through which adults provide support for students' learning.

When it comes to supporting children and youth involved in bullying, the scaffolding metaphor enables the consideration of the supports required to provide them with the skills, capacities, and social cognitions to move out of the roles that are deleterious for development and into healthy relationships[3].

Scaffolding can be programmatic, such as in social skills training programs. The vast majority of times, however, adults socialize children and youth by providing scaffolding on a moment-to-moment basis—when they recognize that a student needs support and they find a way to coach in the moment. Teacher prompts in curriculum provide examples of words and coaching that can support this learning.

Curriculum to Support Scaffolding

Ontario Ministry of Education. Full-Day Early-Learning - Kindergarten Program. (2010-2011 draft). http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/kindergarten_english_june3.pdf

Ontario Ministry of Education. The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition. (2010). http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/health.html

Ontario Ministry of Education. The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9-12: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition. (1999 & 2000). http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/health.html

Why do we need to scaffold?

Students learn through trial and error. When they have difficulties in any subject, the necessary supports are provided so they can learn and meet academic expectations. Learning how to get along with others through social-emotional development is a very complex process. Therefore, it is essential to think about the necessary supports for social-emotional learning in the same way as other aspects of a student's education.

The process of *scaffolding* can be best illustrated through the words of a Yupik Elder who described how students are traditionally taught in his indigenous community. He explained that Yupik adults "honour children's mistakes", because children's mistakes provide adults with ideal opportunities to move in and teach them in a meaningful and relevant way.

When adults are attuned to the strengths and needs of students in their care, they are able to anticipate the challenges that students will meet, observe their current needs, and provide coaching and dynamic support for learning. When adults provide these ever-changing supports that adjust to student's individual needs, students are better able to succeed. Relationship scaffolding refers to providing supports that enable a student to behave and interact in socially advanced ways.

What can be done for children and youth involved in bullying?

Children and youth engaged in bullying have "relationship problems that require relationship solutions". Those who engage in bullying require support in learning how to use their power positively, rather than aggressively.

Children and youth who are victimized need support to be protected from this form of abuse; some of these students may need to develop social skills and strategies including building self-esteem.

Children and youth who witness bullying often feel helpless to intervene; they also need support to learn effective strategies to stand up to bullying, rather than standing by.

Supporting children and youth who engage in bullying

Children and youth who bully need support in understanding that bullying is wrong. An assessment of these students' strengths and needs will indicate where scaffolding is required. They may need focused coaching to learn about:

- the impact of their behaviours
- the importance of relating positively to others
- ways of achieving power and status through positive leadership rather than through aggression

Children and youth who engage in bullying need help learning positive problem-solving skills and resisting peer pressure to bully. These students may need help reflecting on the consequences of their behaviours (e.g., Will this impact on my learning and my success?). They may also need support in learning right from wrong and in finding their moral compass. For students who bully, teachers can provide opportunities for them to use their natural leadership skills in a positive way (e.g., teaching younger students a new sport or skill, learning conflict mediation skills).

To motivate children and youth who bully to change, it is important to engage positively with them, and not model bullying as an adult who uses power to upset a child or youth who bullies. With scaffolding, teachers can provide children and youth with frequent reminders about positive strategies. With clear expectations and an optimistic approach, these children and youth can be directed to stop bullying and find positive ways to be leaders.

Supporting children and youth who are victimized

Children and youth who are victimized need first to be protected and then they may need some support to deal with their experiences within the peer group. An assessment of these children and youths' strengths and needs will indicate where scaffolding is required. These children and youth may require focused coaching to learn:

- their right to be protected from bullying
- coping skills (neither submission nor fighting back is effective)
- support in developing social confidence and skills for building positive relationships
- support in developing their strengths

Children and youth who are bullied often have difficulties standing up for themselves. Teachers can help them practice this skill through role plays and modeling assertive behaviour.

Children and youth who are bullied may have low self-esteem. Encouraging them to participate in activities they enjoy can help them feel good about themselves. Highlighting their talents for other children and youth to see in the peer group (e.g., Select a child to be a leader in a classroom activity).

Students who bully may need scaffolding for:

1. Ability to put oneself in shoes of another and empathize.
2. Appreciation of the rights of others.
3. Appreciation of consequences of actions on others.
4. Control of impulsivity and anger.
5. Finding ways to get peer attention and admiration that are positive for self and others.

Students who are victimized may need scaffolding for:

1. Appreciation of personal right to be respected.
2. Ability to manage negative emotions.
3. Identity and strengths – to develop confidence.
4. Social competence and confidence.
5. Communicating assertively
6. Optimism that bullying problem can be solved.

Supporting children and youth who witness bullying

Peers are present in 85% of bullying episodes and their behaviours can either contribute to bullying problems or help to stop bullying. Although the vast majority of children and youth find it unpleasant to witness bullying, only a small proportion of generally popular children have the courage to intervene. Children and youth who witness bullying can be coached to become "upstanders" by learning:

- the ways that their behaviour contributes to the bullying problem (e.g., attention, reinforcement, joining in, ignoring the plight of the victimized child or youth)
- the importance of reporting bullying when someone is not safe
- strategies for what they can say and/or do to stop bullying and to support vulnerable peers

Everyone needs to provide relationship solutions to bullying

All adults in students' lives are essential in providing support for the development of healthy relationships, social responsibility, and citizenship for our children and youth. Learning how to get along with others and maintain healthy relationships is as critical as learning how to read and do math. It is only through strong, positive relationships that students will be prepared to be the partners, parents, employees, and leaders of tomorrow.

Students who are bystanders may need scaffolding for:

1. Assertively telling the student who is bullying to stop.
2. Supporting the student who is victimized
3. Reporting the bullying to a responsible adult
4. Walking away from the bullying and not being part of the audience.

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Strategies to Inform Scaffolding and Coaching Strategies for Children and Youth who Bully

"Bullying is a relationship problem that requires relationship solutions". What does that mean in terms of responding to children and youth who have been found to bully?

> Teachers are not expected to diagnose, rather they should reflect on what they see happening.

What do Children and Youth who Bully Need?

Children and youth who bully lack some critical relationship skills, understanding, or positive orientation. The central question to ask is: *What does this child need to learn to help ensure that he/she is interacting positively with others?* Every child is different and bullies for different reasons. With your knowledge of the child, try to determine where his/her problems lie. This will help you identify the skills you need to scaffold and coach.

All children and youth who engage in bullying need to learn about why bullying is wrong and what is expected of them, but each child or youth will have individual strengths and weaknesses. The question you need to ask is: *What relationship skills and understanding does the child or youth who has bullied lack or not use?* If you don't know, ask in an open, non-judgmental and age-appropriate way about his/her relationship skills and understanding. Being non-judgmental will help the child or youth open up and reflect, rather than be defensive and hostile. For example, you witnessed that a child/youth was behaving aggressively towards another child. Ask the child/youth how he/she thinks that child feels? The challenge is that you are not asking about what happened but rather what he/she did or how he/she behaved. You ultimately want the child to open up to you.

Below is a list of potential skills and understandings that children and youth who bully need to acquire—and there may be others. It is important to take relevant factors and context into consideration as well as the age of the child or youth.

- o Social Skills
- o Communication Skills
- o Social Problem Solving
- o Emotional and Behavioural Control
- o Empathy and Perspective-Taking
- o Attitudes and Moral Understanding
- o Dealing with behaviours
- o Ability to differentiate playful teasing from bullying
- o Withstanding Peer Pressure
- o School Engagement
- o Positive Leadership

Sample Questions to Determine Social Skills

Interpersonal conflicts, disputes, and incidents of peer rejection and exclusion are commonplace—a normal part of children and youths' social experiences. All children must learn to cope with these problems effectively. They need to learn coping strategies such as compromise, giving in, winning and losing graciously, sharing, taking turns—they need social skills. These questions will help you understanding the social skills children and youth demonstrate.

1. Getting along with others is sometimes hard. What do you think you do well in trying to get along with others?
2. What do you think you have difficulty with in trying to get along with others?
3. How do you join in a game?
4. If you saw a group of friends playing a game and you wanted to join in what would you do?
5. When you disagree or have a problem with a friend, what do you do?
6. When you disagree or have a problem with an adult, what do you do?

Sample Questions to Determine Social Problem Solving

Children who bully others tend to have positive attitudes toward aggression, expect positive outcomes when using aggression, and are more likely to generate aggressive strategies to solve problems. These questions will help you determine how they think about solving social problems.

1. When someone does something that upsets you, how can you solve that problem?
2. Do you think that strategy would make the problem bigger or smaller? (It is always bigger if you hurt someone).
3. What else could you do to solve the problem?

Sample Questions to Determine Emotional and Behavioural Control

Emotions control your thinking, behavior and actions. Children and youth who bully have challenges in self-regulating their feelings, and they often get excited and aroused by aggression. The more excited they are, the less they are able to think logically and monitor their behavior. These questions will help you understand how the child or youth who bullies feels and behaves.

1. What situations at school make you feel really excited?
2. What do you do when you feel excited?
3. What situations at school make you feel frustrated or angry?
4. What do you do when you feel frustrated or angry?
5. What do you do to calm yourself down when you are feeling angry or frustrated?
6. How do you feel when you say hurtful things to someone else?
7. Why do you think you feel this way?

Sample Questions to Determine Coping Skills

Coping is about how individuals respond to stress and conflict. Children and youth who bully others tend to have maladaptive coping skills and behave aggressively.

1. What do you think when someone does something that makes you angry?
2. What do you think when you feel left out and as if no one is paying attention to you?
3. What do you think about to calm yourself down when you are feeling angry or frustrated?
4. How do you feel or think you'd feel if you were bullied?

Sample Questions to Determine Empathy and Perspective-Taking

These questions will help you determine what a child or youth understands about the impact of bullying on victimized children and youth, and whether or not he/she recognizes the impact of bullying on the victimized child or youth. It is important for children and youth to recognize that everyone has the right to be safe and hurting someone is wrong (even if you don't get caught—a very elementary stage of moral development). If you start asking questions in general terms, the child or youth will be less defensive.

1. How do you feel and what do you think when you see someone being hurt or left out by others?
2. How do you feel and what do you think when you see someone being bullied?
3. How do you feel and what do you think when you see someone crying?

Sample Questions to Determine Attitudes and Moral Understanding

These questions will help you understand how morally engaged the child or youth is. Research over the past decade has demonstrated that children who bully others are far more likely to *morally disengage* in thinking about their own behaviour, justifying and rationalizing it in such a way as to minimize their own responsibility for the outcomes or the outcomes themselves. Children and youth who bully tends to have a feeling of pride or indifference rather than shame and guilt about their behavior. They are morally disengaged from their behaviour. Their moral compass is not working well.

1. Do you think it is a problem when you or someone else hurts someone? Why?
2. If you are one of many children or youth bullying someone, do you think it is your problem? Why?
3. Do you think someone ever deserves to be bullied? Why?

Sample Questions to Determine Ability to Differentiate Playful teasing from Bullying

Even for adults, it is difficult to differentiate teasing from bullying. Differentiating playful teasing from bullying, if a child can do this, is an important step in helping him/her stop bullying.

1. How do you know when teasing is no longer fun or has become hurtful?
2. What do you do when you are teasing someone and that person looks hurt?
3. How do you know if you are bullying someone?
4. How do you know the difference between playful teasing and bullying?

Sample Questions to Determine Withstanding Peer Pressure

These questions will help you understand what happens when children or youth are pressured by peers to do something they don't want to do. Because peers provide strong reinforcements for bullying, it may be difficult for children or youth to withstand or avoid engaging in bullying because it is one way to gain attention and status. You want to determine whether this child or youth is able to stand strong in the face of peer pressure.

1. If someone asks you to join in bullying what would you do? Why?
2. If your friends are doing something that you know is not right (e.g., something that breaks the school rules) what would you do? Why?
3. If your friends set you up to bully someone, how would you respond?

Sample Questions to Determine School Engagement

Children and youth who are not engaged at school and who feel stressed are more likely to bully others. These questions will help you determine how connected they are to school.

1. How do you feel about coming to school?
2. Who are the adults in this school that are interested in you and support you?
3. What activities do you enjoy at school?
4. What are your favourite subjects?
5. What would make you want to come to school even more?

Sample Questions to Determine Positive Leadership

Children who bully are seeking power through aggression. By helping them use their power positively through leadership, it will reduce the likelihood that they will seek power negatively through bullying others.

1. What does school leadership mean to you?
2. What formal and informal leadership roles do you play in the school?
3. What leadership roles would you like to play?
4. Can you tell me about a time when you were a leader and you felt good about the experience?

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Not all children and youth who bully are alike

Some children and youth who bully have highly developed social skills and understanding. These children and youth are hard to detect and deal with. They are strongly motivated to be popular in their peer group and will go to great lengths (even bullying) to achieve popularity. Research shows that these skilled children and youth become *more popular* when they bully. They need support in using positive relationship skills and learning positive means of using their power to achieve recognition.

Research has explored the long term *consequences* of bullying and has shown that as adults, children who bully are at risk for later externalizing behaviors and hyperactivity (Kumpulainen & Rasanen, 2000), antisocial behaviour in adulthood (Kaltiala-Heino et al.; Olweus, 1999), as well as delinquency and criminality (Olweus, 1993). These children or youth and their families may need intensive support from community services. Children and youth who bully others may also be experiencing family difficulties or other mental health problems. Be alert to problems at home and how the child or youth copes with stress at home, school and in the peer group. In a Finnish study, Kumpulainen and colleagues found that approximately 70% of students who engage in bullying had a psychiatric disorder, as compared with 21% who were uninvolved children. Among children who bullied others, attention deficit disorders were the most frequently occurring (29%), followed by oppositional/conduct disorder and depression (12.5% each), then somatization (8%), anxiety (4%) and other (4%). Research by Sourander and colleagues (2000), exploring the mental health *antecedents* of bullying and victimization, showed that high levels of self-reported depression at age 8 were significantly related to involvement in bullying *and* victimization eight years later. Thus, for at least some children, early mental health issues may contribute to later bullying or victimization.

Strategies to Inform Scaffolding and Coaching for Children and Youth who are Victimized

"Bullying is a relationship problem that requires relationship solutions". What does that mean in terms of supporting children and youth who have been bullied?

What Do Children and Youth Who Are Bullied Need?

The primary concern for victimized children and youth is that they are not safe. All efforts should be made to help ensure that the children and youths' rights to safety and a supportive learning environment are upheld. Children and youths' safety at school is comprised of many different elements of school board policy, and school plans and climate. The following sections can help you determine your school's effectiveness in creating a safe school.

Safety in Reporting Bullying

Even though the strongest recommendation is for children and youth to disclose when they have been bullied, they often experience shame and fear in coming forward. The following questions will guide you in determining the current context for children and youth to report bullying safely in your school.

1. Are there formal mechanisms that enable children/youth to report bullying in confidence (e.g., designated school staff responsible for addressing bullying, anonymous reporting drop box, student reporting form)?
2. Are there informal mechanisms that enable children/youth to report bullying (e.g., children/youth have identified a trusted adult in the school)?
3. Has school staff been coached in the skills required in responding to students' reports (e.g., reflective listening, non-judgemental, reducing feelings of shame, identifying children's right to be safe)?
4. Are the steps to report bullying clearly identified in the school's bullying prevention plan and school board policies?
5. Have the steps to report bullying been communicated to all members of the school community (children, youth, parents, school staff, relevant members of the community)?
6. Do staff members feel confident in addressing bullying when they learn about it?
7. Do students and school staff see that the school responds to reports of bullying?

Monitoring Bullying Problems

Once bullying is reported and addressed effectively, it is essential to monitor to ensure that it has stopped. The only way that you will know whether bullying has stopped is by following up with the victimized children and youth. The following questions will guide you in determining the current context for monitoring the safety of victimized children and youths following a bullying disclosure.

1. Are the steps to monitor the behaviors of children and youth who bully clearly identified in the school's bullying prevention plan and school board policies?
2. Are the steps to follow up with victimized children and youth clearly identified in the school's bullying prevention plan and school board policies?
3. Is there a system to track bullying incidents at school?
4. Have the steps in monitoring bullying problems been communicated to all members of the school community (children, youth, parents, school staff, relevant members of the community).
5. Do staff members feel confident in monitoring children and youth involved in bullying following a bullying incident?

Safe and Accepting School Climate

A safe and accepting school climate and supportive environment is one in which all members of the school community interact in positive ways with one another. A safe school climate promotes attitudes of respect, acceptance and inclusion, which serve to prevent bullying among students. The following questions will guide you in generally determining the safety of the climate in your school.

1. Are there activities in your school that have been implemented to promote positive relationships and a safe school climate?
2. Are there activities in your school that have been implemented specifically to prevent bullying?
3. Are all members of the school community involved in efforts to promote positive relationships and prevent bullying?

Safety Planning for Children and Youth Who Have Been Bullied

Safety Planning is important to help ensure that bullying has stopped and that victimized children and youth are safe and feel safe at school. Safety planning is focused not only on the absence of bullying, but also on the experience of feeling safe at the school. A safety plan provides children and youth with confidence that their bullying problem is being addressed and that they are safe (see intervention tool for tips on developing a safety plan.)

Safety Planning for Children and Youth Who Have Been Bullied continued...

The following questions will guide you in determining the quality of safety planning for children and youth who have been bullied.

1. What are the current procedures in place in your school to develop a safety plan with children/youth who have been victimized by bullying?
2. Who is responsible for overseeing the safety plan?
3. Does the safety plan include supporting the child/youth to continue to develop relationship skills and positive relationships?
4. Does the safety plan involved training in specific skills to address bullying in the moment when it occurs?
5. Does the safety plan include ways for the child/youth to report bullying if it continues?
6. Are procedures for safety plans and follow up identified in the school bullying prevention policy?
7. Are these procedures communicated to all members of the school community?

Sample Scaffolding Strategies for Children and Youth Who Bully

The goal of interventions with children and youth who bully is to help them learn about why bullying is wrong and what is expected of them. These children and youth may need substantial support developing the relationship skills that they currently lack.

In working with children and youth who bully, there are many ways to plan and implement consequences for bullying that teach relationship skills. The consequences and lessons should be tailored to the individual needs of the child or youth and might include a focus on:

- social skills
- coping skills
- emotional and behavioural control
- alternative problem solving
- ability to differentiate playful teasing from bullying
- withstanding peer pressure, empathy and perspective-taking skills
- attitudes and moral understanding
- positive leadership

Sample strategies to provide educational consequences that promote learning in these areas are provided below. These strategies should be implemented in conjunction with the social architecture strategies (See **Social Architecture for Children and Youth who Bullies Others**).

Social Skills Strategies

Some children and youth lack certain basic skills for successful social interactions, such as joining a game, sharing a toy, or negotiating a problem. If the child or youth is not seriously behind in social skills, a few sessions of role playing some of the circumstances in which he/she struggles can provide practice and a script for successful interactions with peers.

If children and youth do not learn adequately through immediate and ongoing educational consequences for these relationship skills, they may need more formal training to develop the social skills, emotional and behavioural regulation, and social understanding that is expected at their age. An evidence-based example of this type of program is the *Stop Now and Plan*[1] (SNAP®) program, developed by the Child Development Institute in Toronto, Ontario.

Coping Skills Strategies

Coping skills refer to the skills that a child or youth is able to use when faced with challenges or difficulties. If the child or youth is not able to control his/her emotions and think clearly about the problem, he/she might experience emotions that make it more difficult to cope, such as anger, anxiety, and sadness. By role playing with the child, you can help him/her stop and think about how to solve a problem by using either words to express feelings or by walking away to calm down before returning to address the challenge.

Emotional and Behavioural Control Strategies

The ability to regulate emotions and behaviours underlies both academic and social success. Some children and youth who bully have excellent regulation and are usually popular. Other children and youth who bully may lack these important skills because they have not learned them within their family relationships, where such important learning typically takes place in the early years. The goal is to help the child or youth calm down so they can think systematically about what the problem is and how to solve it. By helping children recognize how their bodies feel when they are aroused and what it feels like to be calm, you can help them stop when they are getting over-excited, then use a regulation strategy (such as deep breathing or counting to 10) to calm down before responding. The SNAP® program mentioned above might be recommended for children who require additional support learn these skills quickly.

Alternative Problem Solving Strategies

Some children and youth quickly jump to an aggressive solution to a problem, especially if they are impulsive and have not learned to regulate their emotions and behaviours. These children need help in both calming down so they can think effectively, and in generating and evaluating several solutions to the problem. Providing children and youth with some hypothetical problems and asking them to think about how they might solve the problems in many different ways is one method of raising their awareness of the need to consider several solutions and evaluate which ones will make the problem better or worse. Help them understand it will always be worse if someone is hurt.

Differentiating Playful Teasing from Bullying Strategies

Some children and youth who bully genuinely think that they are just having fun and teasing, rather than bullying (see bullying vs. teasing resource for definitions of these two behaviours). Children who are victimized often try to cover their distress, so the impact of bullying may not be transparent to some children. The difference between bullying and playful teasing (which does not hurt) can be brought to a child's attention by having him/her analyze and differentiate bullying and teasing through a story, a movie or a television show (see Resources below). A child or youth who has had problems in this area might share his/her learning by preparing a presentation for other children and youth that highlight the difference and describes why bullying is a serious problem.

Withstanding Peer Pressure Strategies

Research shows that children and youth who bully have difficulties saying 'no' when their peers encourage them to join in troubling behaviours such as skipping school, smoking, and bullying. Children and youth who bully often want the attention that they receive when they feel accepted and valued by peers, when they join in behaviour that deviates from the norm. These children and youth need to recognize right from wrong and develop strategies for avoiding peer pressure. A discussion of this process can generate some potential strategies to avoid succumbing to peer pressure (e.g., saying you are busy, have an appointment, or need to be home early). Being able to resist peer pressure is only possible in conjunction with other relationships skills, such as having a moral compass, knowing that others value you, and feeling connected to school.

Empathy and Perspective-taking Skills Strategies

To be effective in relating to others, children and youth have to learn to put themselves in someone else's shoes to figure out what that other person is thinking and feeling; this is perspective taking. They also have to learn to sympathize and feel what the other person is feeling; this is empathy. These two skills are incompatible with bullying. There are many stories with the theme of bullying (a popular one is Harry Potter). These empathy skills can be promoted by asking a child or youth to read an excerpt of a story about bullying and discuss the character's feelings with a teacher or counselor and also discuss how he/she would feel in a similar circumstance.

Attitudes and Moral Understanding Strategies

Many children and youth who bully are "morally disengaged". This means that they do not think about what's right and wrong, they do not care if they harm someone else, and they do not take responsibility for hurting someone. The problem is especially evident in bullying, which generally unfolds in the peer group. These moral lessons are usually taught at home starting in the early years. If children and youth have not learned these essential lessons at home, the responsibility falls on the school to help build these essential social understandings and orientations. Children and youth will only do this hard learning if they feel that others genuinely care about them (see relationships discussed below). There are two similar intervention approaches that address bullying as a group problem and push children and youth to take responsibility for others' wellbeing.

1. *The Support Group Method* [2] (formerly the No Blame Approach)

2. *The Shared Concern Method* [3]

The bottom line in both of these methods is that children and youth need to learn about (a) relationships, (b) the rights to be safe and included, and (c) getting along with others at school. Sample scripts for these two methods are appended with this tool.

Positive Leadership Strategies

Children and youth who bully do so to demonstrate their social power. In other words, they want to be recognized and may have the potential to be strong leaders. When bullying, they are using their power negatively, rather than positively. With coaching, guidance and opportunities, those who bully can learn how rewarding it is to be a positive leader in whatever domain they shine (e.g., drama, music, computers, sports). This can be encouraged by providing a consequence that involves serving in a helping role to assist school staff or younger children.

Professional Support and Help

When many strategies have been tried through educational consequences and positive discipline, and a child or youth is still unable to act respectfully at school, then a referral to professional help within the community is often required for the child or youth and his/her family. It is important for schools to have partnerships with community organizations so that this type of referral can be made smoothly and efficiently when a child or youth is struggling with relationship issues.

Resources

Books, Movies and TV Shows

1. Chrysanthemum (by: Kevin Henkes)

2. Hooway for Wodney Wat (by: Helen Lester)

3. Stand up for Yourself and Your Friends (by: Patti Kelley Criswell)

4. Harry Potter Series (by: J. K. Rowling)

5. Blubber (by: Judy Blume)

6. When You Reach Me (by: Rebecca Stead)

7. Loser (by: Jerry Spinelli)

8. Bridge to Terabithia (by: Katherine Paterson)

9. Diary of a Wimpy Kid (by: Jeff Kinney)

10. Jake Drake: Bully Buster
    (by: Andrew Clements)

11. Speak (by: Laurie Halse Anderson)

12. Totally Joe (by: James Howe)

13. Dear Bully (by: Megan Kelley Hall)

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Intervention Strategies to Scaffold and Coach Children and Youth who are Victimized

"Bullying is a relationship problem that requires relationship solutions".

What does that mean in terms of supporting children and youth who have been bullied?

Children and Youth Who Have Been Bullied First Need Protection

The primary problem for children and youth who are bullied is that they do not feel safe. All efforts should be made to help ensure that children and youths' rights to safety and a supportive learning environment are upheld. The following steps can be taken to protect children and youths who have been bullied.

Create a safe environment for children and youth to report the bullying

Even though the strongest recommendation is for children and youth to disclose when they have been bullied, they often experience shame and fear in coming forward. Less than half the children and youth who are victimized report it to adults. The following are strategies to create a sense of safety for reporting.

1. Thank children and youth for coming to you and having the courage to report bullying. Show care and interest in the children and youths' situations and use reflective listening to help them tell their stories about bullying.

2. Reduce feelings of shame by setting a respectful tone to explain that all children and youth have the right to be safe and if they are being bullied they are not safe. Let them know it is your job to help ensure that it stops and you are committed to doing that.

3. Listen non-judgmentally to their story of being bullied and empathize with their distress.

4. Reinforce the children and youths' right to be safe at school and indicate that it is the principal and educators' responsibility to help ensure that everyone is safe at school.

5. Be positive and indicate that you will work with them to help ensure that the bullying stops.

Work to help ensure the bullying stops

The focus of interventions to stop bullying is primarily on those who bully, rather than on those being victimized. (A focus on victimized children and youth is often interpreted as "blaming the victimized students".) See the tools on **interventions for scaffolding and social architecture** to support the children and youth who bully. Nonetheless, children who are victimized by bullying need coaching and relationship support as well.

The only way that you will know whether bullying has stopped is by following up with the victimized children and youth. Set up regular follow up meetings. For example the following meeting schedule can be effective:

  i.   daily for the first week
  ii.   every other day during the second week, and
  iii. once during the third week if the bullying has stopped.

In these follow up meetings, you can focus your discussion on questions such as:

  1. How have things at school been for you since we last met?
  2. Have you experienced any bullying?
  3. Have you experienced any problems because you reported bullying?
  4. Are there other students you can stay with so that you feel safe?

If children and youth still experience bullying during the follow up period, you need to reinforce strategies with those who are bullying to help ensure it stops.

Develop a safety plan

After children and youth report bullying, it is important to develop a safety plan to promote their safety at school using the following strategies.

  1. Find out from children and youth where and when the bullying occurs. Does it happen during class, between classes, at lunch, on the school grounds, on the way to and from school, and/or in cyber space?

  2. Work together with children and youth, as well as with their parents/guardians to make plans to help ensure that the children and youth are safe at school, on the way to and from school, and in cyber space.

  3. Discuss how the children and youth can be paired with people who can help keep them safe. These supportive people may be parents/guardians or peers on the way to and from school, and peers at school.

  4. Isolation is a problem for children and youth who are bullied because they are marginalized in the peer group. Having even one friend is protective against bullying. These children and youth may need help developing friendships, which can help to keep them safe at school and beyond. (See relationship interventions for children who are bullied).

Develop a safety plan continued...

Safety plans can also be developed for electronic bullying. MediaSmarts[1] has excellent information on its website about cyber bullying (www.mediasmarts.ca). For children and youth who experience bullying through electronic means, MediaSmarts recommends:

1. **STOP**	Immediately leave the online environment or activity where bullying is going on (chat room, forum, game, instant messenger, etc.).
2. **BLOCK**	Block e-mails or instant messages received from the perpetrator. NEVER RESPOND.
3. **RECORD**	Record all harassing messages and send them to your Internet provider (Yahoo, Hotmail, etc.). Most providers have policies about users harassing people on their server.
4. **TALK**	Talk about it to a trusted adult; alert the police when bullying involves physical threats.

What Else Do Children And Youth Who Have Been Bullied Need?

Children and youth who are bullied may experience a range of emotional and social problems, sometimes as a result of being abused by peers. Every child and youth is different and may be victimized for different reasons; however, no one deserves to be bullied. To determine the supports that children and youth who are bullied need, it is important to assess whether they have some individual challenges and/or difficulties in relationships. See the tool on social architecture strategies for children who are victimized.

Building Supports

Once children and youth feel safe, they can work with the trusted adults in their lives to build confidence, skills and competencies to help ensure that bullying will not happen again. The term "scaffolding" refers to what adults can do to anticipate children's needs and support their learning. This coaching enables them to do a bit better – reach a bit higher than they would be able to without support. School staff and parents/guardians can scaffold for a victimized student by helping them in any areas where they face challenges.

Coping and safety skills. If students don't know what to do when victimized, they can be helped to learn coping strategies through collaborative problem solving and role plays. When students are bullied, some get understandably very distressed (e.g., crying, acting out). Sadly, this reaction can inadvertently reinforce the child who is bullying and the bullying lasts longer; therefore, they can be coached to do as well as they can in:
- controlling their emotions (e.g., by taking a deep breath, counting to 10)
- trying to get away (e.g., walk away, indicate the need to meet someone)
- seeking help from an adult or peer.

Building Supports continued...

It is important that children and youth have one or more adult in the school that they trust and who are reliable in dealing with bullying problems effectively. This trusted adult can encourage students who are bullied to keep a journal of (a) what happens to them, (b) who is involved (including those who witness bullying), and (c) where bullying occurs. This form of recording not only provides essential information, but also allows the school staff to monitor these students to help ensure they are safe.

Relationship skills. Some children and youth who are bullied have difficulties forming and maintaining friendships, perhaps because they haven't had opportunities to learn these skills through positive peer interactions in earlier years. We need to be very concerned about children and youth who are isolated because a sense of belonging is one of the most important needs we have. By asking about how and when they spend time with peers both in and out of school activities, you will get a sense of children and youths' social integration and peer experiences. Through these conversations, you can also get an understanding of their relationship skills and challenges. In a non-judgmental way, you can ask students about challenges or difficulties that they face and how they cope. Be alert to potential problems outside of school and how students cope with stress at home, school and in the peer group. Students who are stressed and not engaged at school are more likely to have attendance and learning difficulties. See **social architecture strategies tool for children who are victimized**.

Supporting Children and Youth with Special Needs and Differences

Some children and youth are bullied because they have disabilities or are different. These children are often at the margins of the peer group and lack support from friends. If they are bullied, these children feel trapped because they cannot change who they are, nor should they have to change in order to be safe. The onus, therefore, is on the school to work with their peers to help ensure these children and youth are safe and included at all times at school. This requires scaffolding and coaching for classmates and peers, as well as support for the child or youth who is being bullied.

The social model of disability highlights the importance of individuals' social and physical contexts in shaping the degree to which their disabilities are disabling. Therefore, children and youths' experiences of their disabilities arise from their family, school, peer group and community interactions. The goal of intervention is to promote positive relationships for these vulnerable children and youth by supporting their peers to understand and include them. Some strategies for working with peers include:

- fostering understanding of the disability or perceived difference (e.g., what is autism and what are the child's or youth's strengths and challenges)
- helping peers recognize what they can do to make it easier for the child or youth to interact and feel included
- helping peers recognize what they might be doing that makes it more difficult
- strategic arrangements so that children and youth who are bullied are not alone and feel included (this is discussed in the social architecture tool).

Supporting Children and Youth with Special Needs and Differences continued…

Similar to all children and youth, children and youth with special needs who are the victims of bullying require support in coping with their experiences of abuse at the hands of peers. Through scaffolding and coaching, these children and youth can be supported to:

- Develop self-calming strategies
- Ignore provocation
- Identify and joining caring peers
- Communicate assertively
- Report to trusted adults when bullying occurs

Most importantly, when working with children and youth who are bullied, let them know it is not their fault and that they have every right to feel safe at school. You will support them to help ensure that happens.

Sample Script for Individual Intervention for a Child or Youth who Bullies.

It is critical to remember that not all children and youth who bully are alike, and each bullying problem is unique. To have a productive conversation with the student who has bullied, it is critical to use an approach and strategy that are tailored to each unique situation. Using the framework presented in the **Strategies to Inform Scaffolding and Coaching for Children and Youth who Bully** will enable you to develop a better understanding of the child or youth and a sense of the skills and understanding the he/she needs to develop to refrain from future bullying behaviour.

The following sample script is based upon the following scenario:

It has recently come to light that a 13 year-old boy, Sam, has been bullying another boy at school, Jeremy. They take the same public bus to and from school. The bullying has been going on for several months; it is verbal. The majority of the bullying took place at the school bus stop. It occasionally happened during recess and in the hallway by the student lockers. Other students were usually present. The bullying was disclosed by the victimized boy's parents, who became alarmed about their son when he refused to attend school.

From talking with Sam's teachers, you have learned that Sam is an above-average student who is popular and generally well-behaved in class. One of his teachers shared that she has noticed that Sam can seem cynical at times when other students speak in class and she has had to remind him to listen to others respectfully.

Your goals are to help Sam stop the bullying behaviour by:

- developing an accurate understanding of the effects of his behaviour on Jeremy and those who witness the bullying (perspective taking) and to feel empathy for Jeremy (if possible)
- to differentiate playful teasing from bullying
- to shift his attitude toward a more responsible and moral stand
- to identify ways that Sam can demonstrate positive leadership
- to impose a "formative consequence" that aligns with the above objectives
- to clearly communicate that future bullying behaviour will be closely monitored and that more serious consequences will be imposed for future incidents

To achieve these goals, it is vital that you convey a warm and respectful attitude toward Sam while making it clear that his behaviour violates the school code of conduct, and will not be accepted. It is important to be genuinely curious and use questions to build motivation and insight.

Sample Script

Principal: Sam, I've asked you to come in to talk to me because Jeremy's parents gave me a call. Jeremy has stopped wanting to attend school, and told his parents that you've been bullying him since October. What can you tell me about this?

Sam: Oh, it's just joking around. I've never touched the guy or hurt him in any way, I swear! I just like to have fun with him, you know, goofing around while we wait for the bus. Everyone thinks it's funny.

Principal: OK, so you're telling me that there has been no physical stuff, and that's what Jeremy said too. I hear that and I accept it. Tell me, do you think words can hurt as much as physical fighting?

Sam: Yes, I know that words can hurt. Of course I know that, but really, this is just goofing around stuff, just a joke, not serious. Jeremy laughs too! Everyone laughs! We call each other crazy nicknames. People call me nicknames all the time and I don't go crying to my parents.

Principal: So, when everyone laughs, even Jeremy, you think it is just playing around. Is that right, Sam?

Sam: Yes.

Principal: The tough thing is that Jeremy doesn't want to come to school anymore. Why do you think that is?

Sam: I have no idea.

Principal: Well, I have spoken to Jeremy and his parents and I want to protect his privacy, so I am going to be very careful about the words I use. Jeremy said it was OK to tell you this much—he hates taking the bus to school because he feels embarrassed and humiliated. He also tries to avoid you at school because he expects that you will bully him.

Sam: Well, it's not just me doing it, everyone does it. And I am telling you that Jeremy laughs and he calls us crazy nicknames too.

Principal: Yeah, Jeremy said that a lot of students join in on the bullying. But he sees you as a kind of leader, someone who other students want to be friends with. What are your thoughts about that?

Sam: ... (pause) I don't know... (extended pause). OK, well yeah, in a way, I think I'm kind of popular... but, really... Jeremy doesn't ever seem that bothered. So I wouldn't call it bullying. I wouldn't, because, like I said I never hurt the guy...

Principal: It sounds like this comes as a surprise to you?

Sam: Yeah, like I said, Jeremy laughs.

Principal: You know, I understand that boys like to joke around with each other. In fact, using nicknames and teasing happens a lot among guys, even at my age. It happens among friends, and it is a way of saying, "Hey, we're close enough friends to enjoy some good natured humor". So, would you say that Jeremy and you are friends?

Sam: Not really no...

Principal: So, you're not friends, but Jeremy laughs when you call him nicknames and make fun of him. What do you think about that?

Sam: (pause) I don't know.

Principal: You know what I think? Jeremy laughs, or he doesn't make a big deal of it, because other students are usually around. And if he looked upset, then it would be even more embarrassing. So he's saving face. Do you know what I mean?

Sam: (nods)

Principal: Do you ever feel you have to save face with other people your age?

Sam: Everybody does... that's life.

Principal: Well the thing is, life can be pretty tough for young people. And it takes a lot of energy to put up a front all the time, especially if it is in front of people you have to see every day. That gets really tiring and really discouraging. Let's see what we can do to solve this problem, to stop the bullying, to make Jeremy feel safer, and to help you figure out ways to get laughs and have fun without hurting people.

Sample Script for Individual Intervention for Children and Youth who have been Victimized

Every bullying incident is unique and children and youth may be bullied for all sorts of reasons. Some may be bullied because they are isolated and unlikely to defend themselves; others are perceived as different, or thought to have qualities that are not acceptable. Often, it is a complicated set of peer dynamics that precipitates and maintains the bullying. When intervening in a bullying problem, it is important to understand both what has transpired, and the nature of the relationship between those who bullied and the child or youth who was victimized. It is important to put this information into context by gathering information about the history and unique needs of the victimized student. All children and youth who have been bullied need protection, and many need further supports to diminish the chances of victimization in the future.

Sample Script

The Script

The following sample script is based upon the following scenario: Julie was a Grade 6 student who had attended her present school since Junior Kindergarten. From the very first days of school that year, her teacher, Ms. Baptiste, noticed that Julie seemed very isolated. A week later, after an assembly about bullying presented by local high school students, Julie approached her teacher and disclosed that "all of the girls in the class were mean" to her.

Julie was reluctant to provide names of specific students or details about the behaviours and Ms. Baptiste did not probe. Julie said that some of these girls had "always" been mean to her, and now even the girls who used to be her friends weren't nice to her anymore. Ms. Baptiste immediately thanked her for having the courage to come forward and report the bullying. She asked Julie if she had told her parents about it, and Julie responded that she did, and was trying to follow their advice to ignore the bullying and make new friends, but things had just got worse and worse.

The teacher explained to Julie that she was going to involve the school principal, who in turn would contact her parents, as this was the school plan. The teacher emphasized that Julie had the right to feel safe at school, and that together they would come up with a plan to make sure she felt safe at school. She also explained that during the next few days she had already planned several classroom discussions about bullying. She said she would tell the class that at least one student had already reported bullying among students in the class to her and that this could not go on. She would emphasize to the class that it is each student's responsibility to look out for one another, to stand up against bullying, and to report any bullying they observed.

Upon hearing of the situation, the principal gathered the following information. Julie had always been a very shy child. During her kindergarten years she took time to adjust to school and was slow to warm up to her new learning environment. Initially she preferred playing alone but gradually developed her confidence with peers. Her report cards described her as a bright, conscientious, and capable student. She made friends and there were no serious concerns noted until this year.

When the principal called Julie's parents, they explained that they had been contemplating calling the school themselves, since Julie was so unhappy at school. They thought they would wait to call since it was so early in the year. They appreciated the school's proactive approach and were very eager to work with the school to address the problem. They explained that Julie was very sad that Samantha, her closest school friend, had moved away. In fact, Julie had worried all summer about going back to school in the fall.

The principal and teacher developed the following goals for Julie, which were addressed during a meeting with Julie:
1. To reinforce and validate her for reporting her victimization
2. To decrease her anxiety about school
3. To develop her assertive communication skills
4. To connect her to caring peers

Administrator: Julie, first of all, I want to tell you how impressed I am that you came forward and told Ms. Baptiste about the bullying. I am sure this was a really hard thing for you to do. What gave you the courage to do it?

Julie: (after a pause) I guess it was the assembly, when that high school girl talked about how bad bullying made her feel. She said that keeping it a secret makes things worse. I guess she inspired me to tell...

Ms. Baptiste: I was very moved by your journal entry when you wrote about the assembly. You are a wonderful writer and you expressed so much insight into how that young woman must have felt.

Julie: Thank you.

Administrator: Ms. Baptiste and I are really glad you did come forward to report the bullying you have experienced. Everybody at this school has the right to learn in a safe and caring environment. No student should ever feel they have to cope with bullying all alone. It is our job to be there to help. But we can't help unless we know about the problem. You did a good thing by telling Ms. Baptiste, Julie!

Julie: Thanks.

Administrator: I know Ms. Baptiste has been checking in with you every day since the assembly, and you've said there haven't been any more incidents of bullying, is that right?

Julie: Not so far...

Administrator: You sound like you don't think it is going to stop?

Julie: I don't know. It's been happening for a long time...

Administrator: I am sorry to hear that. It must have been pretty tough...

Julie: Yeah...very tough.

Ms. Baptiste: Your mom told us that you really miss Samantha. School must feel different for you, without her here.

Julie: For sure. When Sam was here, when people were mean she would just tell them off or laugh or something. It would hurt my feelings but it was like, OK, I don't care, I have other friends, and I didn't think about it that much.

Ms. Baptiste: It feels different without Sam. You don`t feel like you have other friends now?

Julie: Nobody likes me...

Ms. Baptiste: Julie, remember when we had our class discussions. Many students shared their feelings and I got the feeling that there are many students in our class who are pretty caring... What did you think?

Julie: They might seem caring to you, but you don't know what happens when you're not there.

Administrator: We understand that Julie, when kids are together without adults they can do some hurtful things, some nasty things, things they feel bad about later. That's where we come in, us adults I mean. We are here to remind young people that bullying crosses a line and we won't tolerate it. I know that Ms. Baptiste is working hard to get the Grade 6 class to be a positive place for everyone to learn. But if things go off the track, what do you think you can do?

Julie: I don't know.

Administrator: Well, there are a few things you can try. You've already come to us, and you know we are here for you. So are your parents. You can report to any one of us, and it will be important for you to report who was bullying you and what they did. Then I would be able to do some work with the girls who are bullying you, and I would notify their parents. We are very serious about this. Because if some of the girls continue to bully you, that means they have a problem, and they need adults to get involved. Or... maybe, if it happens again, you can tell whoever is bullying you, "Hey, that's bullying, and that's not OK with me. If you don't stop it, I am going to report you."

Julie: Well... I don't think I could, you know, I don't think I could say that.

Administrator: What do you think would happen if you did?

Julie: They'd probably just laugh at me.

Administrator: Do you think they might listen to you? After all, we have told every student in this school that we take bullying very seriously.

Julie: I don't know...

Ms. Baptiste: You know Julie, I have a feeling that the girls would listen to you.

Julie: I doubt it.

Administrator: Well, it is a hard thing to do, I understand that. So if you don't feel that you can tell them to stop, then just walk away, and tell one of us, or tell your parents. But think about it... Think about standing up for yourself, and think about standing up for others too, because you are a very eloquent person. You express yourself very clearly and you can get your message across. So I know that sometime soon you will be able to use your own voice to speak up for what is right, but for the time being, we are here for you.

Julie: OK...

Ms. Baptiste: Next week I am going to re-arrange the seating plan to make learning groups. I was thinking of putting you with Susan, Mokena, Jeremy, Hasan and Brendan. Are you OK with that? Or is there anyone else you would like to work with?

Julie: Um, no... that sounds good. Those kids are... they're OK, I guess.

Ms. Baptiste: I will be assigning partners to work on our first Language Arts project. I thought you and Susan would be a good match, what do you think?

Julie: OK, yes, I think Susan is nice... she is quiet too. I don't really know her that well.

Ms. Baptiste: Oh good! I think you will find she is a very thoughtful person, and you will enjoy getting to know each other, which is what the project is about. You will find out more about it next week.

Administrator: So Julie, Ms. Baptiste will be checking in with you every day to find out how things are going. And you can come to see me anytime to talk about anything at all; my door is always open to you.

Social Architecture: Supports for Positive Peer Dynamics

What is needed to address bullying problems?

To understand and effectively address bullying, we need a "binocular" view. With only one lens, the focus is limited to the individual needs of student involved in all roles within bullying:

- those being aggressive
- those being victimized
- those who are bystanders.

This singular view, however, falls short in providing a thorough understanding of bullying problems. By adding a second lens, as with binoculars, we expand the focus to include student's relationships. This second perspective takes into account the social dynamics in student's peer groups and the roles that adults play in shaping their experiences. Together these two lenses offer a more comprehensive perspective on bullying problems. This deeper understanding of the complexity of the issues will lead us to recognize the multiple approaches required to address bullying problems. In this section, the focus is on supporting positive peer dynamics and reducing bullying among peers.

Social architecture interventions organize students' social groupings.

Why worry about peer dynamics?

To address the dynamics of bullying, it is essential that *adults* look at the social dynamics—the relationships—within student groups. These social dynamics can shift interactions in either a positive or negative direction[1]. The problem of negative peer dynamics is a central concern in bullying; students who bully have friends who bully, and they reinforce and encourage each other to be aggressive[2,3]. To counteract these natural peer processes, adults must pay attention to and be responsible for the quality of interactions among peers. By paying attention to the relationships in student's groups, teachers can help ensure that all students are included and that troubling behaviours are not given a forum to flourish. In other words, educators must, whenever possible, design the composition of peer groupings to ensure that positive interactions are encouraged and that negative interactions are discouraged. This process has been labeled "social architecture".

What is social architecture?

Social architecture interventions organize students' social groupings. For example, when teachers assign a group project and invite students to form their own groups, they allow the natural grouping processes to occur. Inevitably, this leaves vulnerable students (those who might have a learning disability or speak English as a second language) at the margins of the social process. Students who are like each other (e.g., all are bright or all are disruptive) will congregated, while others who are deemed to be different and may not be included. They will be in the humiliating position of not being chosen and then being forced into a group. Social architecture is also important for the students who bully to ensure they are not together with friends to encourage their behaviours. When these students are together they reinforce each other for the negative behaviours that we are trying to prevent. With a social architecture approach, a teacher can choose a random or planned strategy to create balanced groups in which all students are included and respected.

By taking responsibility for organizing peer groupings and shaping peer dynamics, teachers can set the stage for engaging students in positive interactions with a diverse mix of peers. This diverse organization naturally provides the opportunity to promote the development of social skills, empathy and social responsibility for all students. Teachers may also use social architecture to organize selected students to mentor or support other members of the class or school. It is important to note that students need to learn to make groups independently but need support to learn to do this in a positive and inclusive way. They need opportunities to learn and practice.

Social architecture as a strategy

An example of social architecture can be illustrated with the teaching strategy of a high school science teacher, Mr. B.

In his classes, Mr. B recognized the students who acted as "pillars" (behaved like "sparks"). These students did their homework, were attentive in class and were responsible in conducting the science experiments. They were with him through the learning process. In his classes, Mr. B inevitably recognized those students who were disruptive – the "sparks". These students generally sat at the back of the class, annoyed other students, messed up the experiments and were difficult to teach. Mr. B's strategy was to spread out the "pillars" in his classes to hold up the learning. He strategically placed a "pillar" between two sparks and in this way he created an optimal learning environment for his classes. Mr. B observed the peer dynamics and changed the seating arrangement every few weeks. His students entered the class and on learning they were assigned to a different place, they often complained. Mr. B was not concerned about these complaints and instructed students to take their places and get ready to learn. All students in his classes benefitted from his attention to peer dynamics as a way to help ensure learning.

Social architecture as a strategy continued…

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Social architecture is also important in dealing with a group of children or youth who has been persistently bullying. As they continue to bully collectively and make another child or youth's life miserable, their peer dynamics foster group cohesion. If a group of children or youth persists in bullying, in spite of corrective feedback and scaffolding or coaching, the principal and/or educator may decide that these children or youth no longer have the privilege of being together during lunch or recess times. A primary motivation for school-aged children is to be with friends – it's often the most important reason that they come through the door of the school each day. If a group of children or youth constantly bullies and makes another child or youth's life at school miserable, then it is important to design an intervention that separates these children or youth during free time—until they are able to be inclusive and respectful to the child or youth whom they have bullied. In this case, a social architecture strategy may involve assigning the students to sit in separate spaces (e.g., main office, guidance office) and offered educational activities (e.g., reading an excerpt of a book describing the pain of victimization) so that they come to understand the harm that their bullying is causing and that they must be inclusive and respectful.

Social architecture is not designed to force children and youth to be friends; rather it is designed to help ensure that every child and youth is included, accepted, respected and safe within the school environment. It is about giving children and youth the opportunity to learn and practice skills for healthy and inclusive relationships. In this way, the learning for all children and youth is maximized not only for social-emotional development, but for optimal academic achievement as well.

Understanding Social Architecture: Strategies for Children and Youth Who Bully

"Bullying is a relationship problem that requires relationship solutions". What does that mean in terms of determining the social relationships of children and youth who have been found to bully?

What do Children and Youth who Bully Need?

Children and youth learn how to relate to others through their relationships at home, with peers, at school and in the community. Children and youth who engage in bulling have not learned the critical relationship lesson that hurting others is wrong. They may have learned that using power and aggression is a way to control others and gain attention. They may also have limited opportunities to participate in positive relationships. In developing interventions for children who bully, it is important to consider how bullying behavior might be reinforced and modeled in other relationships. It is also necessary to take into consideration the age and capacities of the children and youth.

In addition to working with children and youth who bully on their relationship skills (see Tool on **Strategies to Inform Scaffolding and Coaching for Children and Youth who Bully**), it is equally important to determine their relationships. Healthy relationships are those that provide children and youth with:

- a sense of security and stability,
- basic needs,
- a sense of being valued and belonging,
- support and guidance to learn essential skills and understanding
- protection from excessive stress.

There are many opportunities to help ensure that children and youth are provided with healthy relationships in the diverse contexts where they live, learn, and play. Through continual moment-to-moment interactions within their many relationship experiences, children's physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development is shaped through the childhood and adolescent years. Below is a list of some of the relationships that influence children and youth who bully—there may be others.

- Families (parents/guardians, siblings, extended family)
- Peers
- School (e.g., teachers, staff, principals)
- Community

"Young children experience their world as an environment of relationships, and these relationships affect virtually all aspects of their development" (NSCDC, 2004, p.1).

Sample Questions to Determine Family Relationships

Children and youth growing up in families where they are consistently loved and guided within developmentally appropriate limits develop self-regulation, social skills, social understanding, and coping skills—all which are the foundation of healthy development and relationships. In contrast, children and youth growing up in families where relationships are strained, inconsistent, and stressful often fail to develop the necessary prosocial skills and develop behavioural problems (e.g., aggression) and emotional problems (e.g., depression).

For example, violence experienced by children and youth within the family lays down patterns of violence in future relationships. Children and youth growing up in dysfunctional families develop dysregulated responses to stress, which undermine healthy development. It is important to consider children's and youth's family relationships and engage families in supporting children who bully others. An effective *Whole School Approach* to bullying prevention has strategies for engaging parents/guardians.

The following questions can guide your thinking about what the challenges families may face, and how to engage and work collaboratively with parents/guardians to support children and youth who bully.

1. Does the family have significant stress (e.g., unemployment, health issues) making it challenging for them to support their child's learning?
2. Are the parents/guardians well connected to someone at the school?
3. Are there any barriers to communicating and working with the parents/guardians (e.g., language, cultural context, employment)?

Sample Questions to Determine Peer Relationships

Peer relationships are important for children's and youth's well-being and development. Peer relationships provide them with unique developmental and social opportunities that are not available in their relationships with adults. In the peer environment, a significant challenge for children who bully is that they are distanced from peers who have the capacity to promote and reward prosocial behaviours. They are drawn toward peers who tend to reinforce and encourage aggressive and other antisocial behaviours.

Children and youth who maintain high levels of bullying over the course of elementary and high school associate with peers who are also involved in bullying (Pepler et al., 2008). Not all children and youth who bully are the same. Some children and youth who bully have highly developed relationship skills and status among peers. These children and youth are hard to detect and deal with. They are strongly motivated to be popular in their peer group and will go to great lengths to achieve popularity (even bullying).

Research shows that these children and youth become *more popular* when they bully. Nevertheless, these children and youth also need support in using positive relationship skills and learning positive means of using their real or perceived power to achieve recognition. The following questions may help you to guide your thinking about the peer relationships of children who bully.

1. Does this child/youth have friends at school? If so, who are their friends?
2. Does this child/youth belong to a peer group that consists of other prosocial peers or peers who also engage in bullying?
3. Does this child/youth get attention from peers for engaging in bullying, acting out, or being aggressive?
4. Does this child/youth have positive or negative power in their peer group?
5. Does this child/youth engage in activities at school to be recognized for prosocial behaviours or positive leadership?

Sample Questions to Determine School Relationships

Schools are a significant part of children and youths' lives, playing a particularly important role in learning and development. The quality of relationships with both peers and adults in the school environment is related to their well-being. Children and youths' connectedness to school refers to their sense that they matter and belong in the school, and that the adults in the school know and care about them. Schools that provide a safe, inclusive, supportive learning environment have children and youth who feel connected to their schools. Those who are connected, compared to those children and youth who do not feel connected, have more positive mental health. Positive relationships at school can be protective: children and youth who are connected to school are more likely to stay in school, less likely to be involved in violent relationships, and more likely to have better outcomes in many aspects of health and well-being relative to those who are not connected to school. Children and youth who have negative experiences at school, in which they do not feel safe, supported and connected are more likely to be increasingly absent from school and are more likely to engage in high-risk behaviours, such as bullying.

The following questions may help you guide your thinking about the school relationships of children and youth who bully.

1. Does the child/youth have positive relationships with one or more adults at school (e.g., teacher, coach, administration, school staff)?
2. Does this child/youth have opportunities to engage in school activities?
3. In which of these activities does the child/youth develop skills, connections, and positive leadership?

Sample Questions to Determine Community Relationships

Communities, the areas in which children and youth live and go to school, can support children's sense of security and belonging. Similar to schools, communities can provide a basis for healthy development when the relationships within the community are positive. Conversely, in negative, violent, and stressful communities with poor quality relationships, children and youth may experience a range of health problems (Pickett, Janssen, & Rosu, 2011).

"Every student is entitled to learn in a safe, caring environment free from violence and harassment."
(The Ontario Curriculum, Healthy Relationships Section, 2010.)

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Sample Questions to Determine Community Relationships continued…

The following questions may guide your thinking about the community relationships of children and youth who bully.

1. What community or organizations does your school partner with to support children and youth who bully?
2. What are the community activities where children and youth can build skills, meet positive peers, and develop positive leadership (e.g., Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, Boys and Girls Club or sports teams)?
3. Who are the adult leaders in the community who could mentor and support children and youth who bully? What other community resources or supports that can be organized to support the children and youth who bully?

Not all children and youth who engage in bulling are alike

By understanding,

a) the different aspects of the strengths and needs of children's and youth's relationships and context, and
b) their individual strengths and needs

you will be in a stronger and more informed position to plan effective interventions and supports.

Strategies to Inform Social Architecture for Children and Youth who are Victimized

"Bullying is a relationship problem that requires relationship solutions".

What does that mean in terms of supporting children and youth who have been bullied? What are the relationship solutions that are going to protect and include these children at the margins of their social groups?

Those who are
bullied need to feel:

- Secure
- Stable
- Valued
- Part of the school community
- Supported
- Protected

What Do Children and Youth Who Are Bullied Need?

The primary problem for victimized children and youth is that they are not safe and are not included in protective relationships. All efforts should be made to insure that the children and youths' rights to both safety and a positive learning environment are upheld. Children and youths' safety at school comprises many different elements of school plans and climate. Children and youth who are victimized need to be embedded in positive and protective relationships and, therefore, it is important to assess the quality of their relationships. Some of these individuals may also need support in developing relationship skills (See the Tool on **Assessment Strategies to Inform Scaffolding and Coaching for Children who are Victimized**). The National Scientific Council on the Developing Child[1] states, "Young children experience their world as an environment of relationships, and these relationships affect virtually all aspects of their development," (p.1). Healthy relationships are those that provide children and youth with:

- a sense of security and stability,
- basic needs,
- a sense of being valued and belonging,
- support and guidance to learn essential skills and understanding, and
- protection from excessive stress.

There are many opportunities to help ensure that children and youth are provided with healthy relationships in the diverse contexts where they live, learn, and play. Through continual moment-to-moment interactions within their many relationship experiences, children's physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development is shaped through the childhood and adolescent years. Below is a list of relationships that influence children and youth who are victimized—and there may be others.

- o Families (parents, guardians, siblings, extended family)
- o Peers
- o School
- o Community

Sample Questions to Determine Family Relationships

Children's and youth's experiences of victimization are not linked to one kind of family dynamic. The important issue is to determine whether victimized children and youth are growing up in families in which they are consistently loved and guided within developmentally appropriate limits to develop self-regulation, social skills, social understanding, and coping skills, all of which are the foundation of healthy development and relationships. In families where there are high levels of stress, children and youth experience the stress in many ways, which contribute to difficulties in regulating both their behaviours and emotions, and in developing their relationship skills. It is important to consider family relationships and engage families in supporting children and youth who are victimized. An effective Whole School Approach to bullying prevention has strategies for engaging parents or guardians because they are essential partners in addressing the problems of victimization. The following questions can guide your thinking about the challenges families face, and how to engage and work collaboratively with parents or guardians to support children who bully.

- Does the family have significant stress making it challenging for them to engage with the school (e.g., unemployment, health issues)?
- Are the parents or the guardians well connected to someone at the school?
- Are the parents or guardians available to collaborate on a safety plan for their victimized child?
- Are there any barriers to communicating and working with the parents or guardians (e.g., language, employment)?

Sample Questions to Determine Peer Relationships

Positive peer relationships are essential for the well-being and development of children and youth. Peer relationships provide children and youth with unique developmental and social opportunities that are not available in their relationships with adults. In the peer environment, a significant challenge for children and youth who are victimized is that the peer dynamics work in ways that increasingly isolate those who are victimized. These children and youth become marginalized and distanced from prosocial peers who have the capacity to include and protect them from bullying.

The following questions may help guide your thinking about the peer relationships of children and youth who are victimized.

1. Is the child or youth's class cohesive? Do the children and youth's classmates generally look out for each other and protect their peers who are being victimized, or are they disconnected?
2. Does this child or youth have friends at school?
3. Is this child or youth most often alone at lunch and recess? Is the child or youth last to be picked for group projects or teams?
4. Does this child or youth belong to a peer group that consists of primarily of prosocial children or youth, or are the peer group members likely those who bully?
5. Does this child or youth engage in activities at school in which he/she can associate with peers with similar interests and find ways to be involved and contribute to the school community?

Sample Questions to Determine School Relationships

Schools are a significant part of children and youths' lives, playing a particularly important role in learning and development. The quality of relationships with both peers and adults in the school environment is related to well-being. Children and youths' connectedness to school refers to their sense that they matter and belong in the school, and that the adults in the school know and care about them. Schools that provide a safe, inclusive environment have children and youth who feel connected to their schools. Those who are connected, compared to those youths who do not feel connected, have more positive mental health. Positive relationships at school can be protective: youths who are connected to school are more likely to stay in school, less likely to be involved in violent relationships, and more likely to have better outcomes in many aspects of health and well-being relative to those who are not connected to school. Children and youth who have negative experiences at school, in which they do not feel safe and connected, are more likely to be increasingly absent from school. Being victimized and not feeling safe at school is a major reason for absenteeism and school dropout. The following questions may help guide your thinking about the school relationships of children and youth who are victimized.

1. Does the child or youth have positive relationships with one or more adults at school?
2. Does this child or youth have opportunities to engage in school activities?
3. Is he/she engaged in some school activities where he/she can develop skills, connections, and a positive sense of self and reputation among peers?

Sample Questions to Determine Community Relationships

Communities, the areas in which children live and go to school, can support children's sense of security and belonging. Similar to schools, communities can provide a basis for healthy development when the relationships within the community are positive. Conversely, in negative, violent, and stressful communities with poor quality relationships, children and youth may experience a range of health problems[2]. The following questions may guide your thinking about the community relationships of children and youth who are victimized.

1. Are there community activities or organizations that the school could partner with to support children and youth who are victimized and need to be included in positive peer activities?
2. Are there community activities where victimized children and youth can build skills and meet positive peers (e.g., Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, Boys and Girls Club or sports teams)?
3. Are there adult leaders in the community who could mentor and support children and youth who are victimized and help them engage positively within their community?

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Not all children and youth who are victimized are alike

By understanding different aspects of the strengths and weaknesses of children's and youths relationships, as well as their individual strengths and weaknesses, you will be in a stronger position to plan interventions to promote the safety, acceptance, and inclusion of children and youth on the margins of the school community.

Tool developed by PREVNet, www.prevnet.ca

Social Architecture Interventions for Children and Youth who Bully Others

"Bullying is a relationship problem that requires relationship solutions."

In thinking about <u>relationship solutions</u> for children and youth who bully, we need to ask: What can be done within family, peer group, school, and community relationships to reduce the likelihood of bullying and promote positive interactions for children and youth who bully?

We focus on relationships because children and youth can only learn relationship skills by experiencing them in the context of positive relationships at home, school, with friends and in the community.

What is Social Architecture?

Social architecture is a term developed to refer to adults' intentional organization of children and youth groupings to ensure that all children are included and that troubling behaviours are not given a forum to flourish. Adults can also use social architecture to organize selected children and youth to mentor or support other members of the class or school.

Why do we need Social Architecture?

Research shows that the social dynamics in children's peer groups can shift interactions in either a positive or negative direction[1]. In their social policy report, Dodge and colleagues[1] argue against putting troubled children together in behavioural classes, which is an ineffective form of social architecture. In these behavioural classes, troubled children and youth form friendships with similarly troubled peers creating a context in which aggressive behaviours are rewarded by peers and, therefore, increase. These peer dynamics work to undermine the educational goals of teaching these children and youth positive social-emotional skills. Research on children who bully indicates that they choose to associate with like-minded friends who also bully and these friends reinforce each other's bullying behaviours[2,3]. To counteract these natural peer processes that lead to bullying problems, adults responsible for children and youth must pay attention to and be responsible for the relationships in their peer groups.

Social Architecture

Adults intentionally organizing children and youth into groupings that promote positive behaviours, interactions and relationships.

Tool developed by PREVNet, www.prevnet.ca

Social Architecture intervention strategies for children and youth who bully

School staff and others involved with children and youth need to be aware of how peer groups are formed, who is included, and who is left out. As peer group dynamics unfold, some children and youth become increasingly influential, controlling, and demanding with the power to bully, whereas others become marginalized and excluded, with an increasing risk of being bullied. Preventing these negative peer dynamics is the objective of social architecture. In the following section, we describe social architecture strategies to address the problems of children and youth who bully.

Organizing children and youth groupings to prevent bullying

When teachers assign a group project or organize for a competitive game, they often ask children or youth to form their own groups or teams. By leaving the decision for group membership with the children or youth, these adults inadvertently allow natural peer grouping processes to occur. These processes bring together the children and youth who are similar—and a concern arises when children and youth who bully or who reinforce bullying are grouped together, increasing the likelihood of bullying. Social architecture requires that teachers and other school staff (e.g., coaches) pay attention to the dynamics within peer groups and intentionally organize groupings to promote optimal peer dynamics and reduce the likelihood of bullying. With a social architecture approach, a teacher and other school staff can choose a planned strategy to create balanced groups in which children and youth who are likely to engage in or reinforce bullying are distributed among the groups and all children and youth can feel included, safe, and able to participate in learning activities to their fullest abilities.

Peer mentoring to prevent bullying and promote positive relationships

There is increasing evidence that children and youth are more likely to identify the intended messages and engage when mentored by peers. There are many programs that engage children and youth as peer mediators who are trained to become involved in a process that stimulates and reinforces the peaceful resolution of interpersonal conflicts on a daily basis. With the support of teachers, children and youth are organized to support their peers which results in a change in resolving conflict, the quality of relationships, as well as an improvement at a systems level in the school climate[4]. Teachers can also engage peer mentors who are trained to deliver workshops in which they present messages and change attitudes about bullying and harassment. One such program in Ontario, the RISE program, engages peers to bring about significant change because the peers act as salient role models, norm enforcers, and preferred providers of advice to adolescents[5].

Key Elements

1. Take an active role in organizing groups.

2. Engage children and youth as peer mentors.

3. Adopt an evidence-based method to change and reinforce peer attitudes.

4. Implement restorative practices.

5. Find a teacher mentor for a child or youth who bully.

6. Collaborate with parents/guardians to ensure a consistent message is being sent to the child or youth at both school and home.

Changing peer attitudes and reinforcement to reduce bullying

Because bullying unfolds in front of an audience almost all the time, the peers who are bystanders play are part of the problem and need to be part of the solution. There are two documented approaches to engaging peers in finding relationship solutions to bullying problems.

The *Support Group Method* was developed by Barbara Maines and George Robinson and has evolved over years. Maines and Robinson recognized that bullying occurs in the context of the peer group, which generally reinforces and supports the children and youth who bully. The *Support Group* problem solving approach does not focus on who is to blame but challenges a group of children and youth involved in bullying to solve the bullying problem and report back to school staff about how the bullying problem has been resolved. This can be a challenging process; therefore, educators should read about it and then practice before using it to address bullying problems with children and youth. For full details on this method, view the most recent publication: Robinson, G. & Maines, B. (2008). Bullying: A Complete Guide to the Support Group Method. London: Sage Publications[6].

A second method, the *Method of Shared Concern,* for addressing bullying problems was developed by Anatole Pikas, a Swedish psychologist. Pikas understood bullying as a collective process in which the peer group has rationalized bullying as acceptable behaviour and peers are, therefore, insensitive to the student being victimized. The *Method of Shared Concern* is based on the principle that if you have a concern and share it with people who can help, the problem may be addressed. In this case, the concern about bullying is shared with those students involved in the bullying. The goal of the method is to help those involved in bullying to stand up as individuals and demonstrate some empathy for the victimized student. The teacher or counselor who works through the method is expected to remain neutral, rather than accusing and punitive. The *Method of Shared Concern* is recommended for late elementary school and middle and high school students. As with the *Support Group* Approach, this method is most effective when practiced through role-playing with colleagues before implementing it directly with students. This method has been recently described in: Rigby, Ken (2011). *The Method of Shared Concern: A Positive Approach to Bullying in Schools.* Camberwell, Australia. ACER Press[7].

Strategies to Engage Peers in Finding Relationship Solutions

1. The Support Group Method[6]

2. The Method of Shared Concern[7]

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Restorative practices

Restorative practices might also be considered a social architecture strategy as this approach brings together individuals who are in some way involved or affected by a harmful behaviour within a community[8]. With the goal of restoring relationships, people are brought together to participate in a respectful dialogue that builds understanding, empathy, and responsibility to find a solution to the harm caused. Restorative approaches for bullying are ones in which the child or youth who has bullied and the child or youth who has been victimized are the primary participants. They are supported in the restorative process by other members of the school community (e.g., parents, teachers, peers). Although school staff will require training in restorative practices, these have been used to resolve bullying problems, by helping the child or youth who has bullied to recognize and take responsibility for his/her wrong-doing. Through this process, these children and youth are also supported in their own development and social adaptation, rather than being punished. In other words, restorative practices provide relationship solutions to the relationship problems in bullying.

Teachers as mentors

Teachers can be important mentors for troubled children and youth, and provide a critical "relationship solution" to those involved in bullying. If a teacher, whom the child or youth trusts, is willing to work with him/her, there are many ways that this relationship can provide opportunities for coaching, acting as a sounding board, meaningful engagement, and providing a sense of value and belonging in the school. A regular check-in with the mentor and the opportunity to problem solve together will build skills, understanding, and prevent problems from growing more serious. Research shows that one caring adult can move a troubled youth off a troubled trajectory and onto a healthy one.

Parent/Guardian involvement

Children and youth who bully at school often bully at home; therefore, they need relationship solutions at home as well as at school. Their parents may need help recognizing their children's problem behaviours and then learning how to work with the school to ensure that the child or youth is receiving consistent messages and supports both at school and at home. Efforts to promote social-emotional development and positive and respectful relationships will enable the child or youth to move forward through school and into adulthood as a safer, happier, and more productive individual.

Social Architecture Interventions for Children and Youth Who are Victimized

"Bullying is a relationship problem that requires relationship solutions."

What does that mean in terms of supporting children and youth who have been bullied? How can peer dynamics be shifted so that victimized children and youth are protected and included in positive peer relationships and they are no longer bullied?

What is Social Architecture?

Social architecture is a term developed to refer to adults' intentional organization of children's and youth's groupings to ensure that they are all included and that troubling behaviours are not given a forum to flourish. Research shows that the social dynamics in children's and youth's peer groups can shift interactions in either a positive or negative direction with the potential bullying[1]. By paying attention to these social dynamics and organizing groupings, adults can shape the nature of children's and youth's interactions. Adults can also use social architecture to organize selected children and youths to mentor or support other members of the class or school.

Social Architecture

Adults intentionally organizing children and youth into groupings that promote positive behaviours, interactions and relationships.

Why do we need Social Architecture?

Children and youth who are victimized need "relationship solutions" to ensure that they are well integrated into school and community activities. Natural peer group dynamics work in ways that increasingly marginalize victimized children and youth. In addition to experiencing the shame associated with being bullied, some victimized children and youth have difficulties forming and maintaining friendships. These difficulties may arise because they have not had adequate opportunities to develop strong social competence, identity, and independence. To correct these social difficulties, victimized children and youth need help in experiencing positive relationships with peers so they can develop a strong sense of being included and valued, which in turn will help them foster a positive sense of self.

Tool developed by PREVNet, www.prevnet.ca

Social Architecture Intervention Strategies

School staff and others involved with children and youth need to be aware of how peer groups are being formed, who is being included, and who is being left out. As peer group dynamics unfold, some children and youth become marginalized and excluded, with an increasing risk of being bullied by those who become more popular and powerful. Preventing these negative peer dynamics is the objective of social architecture. In the following section, we describe social architecture strategies to address the problems of children and youth who are victimized by their peers.

Organizing children's and youth's groupings to include victimized children and youth

Through social architecture, adults can do many things to shape the composition and dynamics in children's peer groups. The goal of social architecture is to promote positive interactions and reduce negative interactions, such as bullying. It is important to be aware of an isolated or victimized child and youth, and ensure that he/she is embedded within a group of supportive, prosocial peers for classroom work, physical education, and other activities.

When teachers assign a group project or organize a competitive game, they often ask children to form their own groups or teams. By leaving the decision for group membership with the children, these adults inadvertently allow natural peer grouping processes to occur. This tends to leaves less-skilled children (who might have a learning disability or be less athletic) in the humiliating position of not being chosen.The teacher will then be required to insert the marginalized children into groups that may be reluctant to accept them. In many ways, this contributes to a child's negative reputation and risk of further victimization. Social architecture requires that teachers and other school staff (e.g., coaches) pay attention to the dynamics within peer groups and organize groupings to promote optimal peer dynamics. With a social architecture approach, a teacher and other school staff can choose a planned strategy to create balanced groups in which all children are included, respected, and can participate to their fullest abilities. When adults organize peer groupings, children are engaged in positive interactions with a diverse mix of peers, which in turn provides opportunity to promote the development of social skills, empathy, social responsibility, and citizenship.

Another social architecture strategy is to find opportunities for victimized children or youth to develop and display their domains of competence. For example, if a child or youth is skilled in such areas as art, music, drama or technology, opportunities can be provided to enhance these skills and help others recognize the his/her talents. There may be leadership opportunities within school clubs or activities that will also serve to promote confidence and build friendships.

Other opportunities to develop confidence and contribute can be provided by inviting the victimized child or youth to assist with younger classes (e.g., as a reading mentor, game organizer). Younger children will look up to and appreciate the older youth who can practice social skills in a context of admiration. This experience will promote a sense of being valued and belonging within the school community.

Restorative practices

Restorative practices can also be considered a social architecture strategy since this approach brings together individuals who are in some way involved or affected by a harmful behaviour within a community[2]. With the goal of restoring relationships, people are brought together to participate in a respectful dialogue that builds understanding, empathy, and responsibility to find a solution to the harm caused. Restorative approaches for bullying are ones in which the child or youth who has bullied and the one who has been victimized are the primary participants. These children and youth are supported in the restorative process by other members of the school community (e.g., parents, teachers, peers). In this way, the process is highly supportive for the child or youth who has been victimized. Although school staff will require training in restorative practices, these have been used to resolve bullying problems. The child or youth who is victimized is able to describe the harm done, and to seek support and reparation. Through this process, victimized children and youth are supported and protected, with recognition of their emotional and social needs (see Morrison[2], 2007 for more detail). In other words, restorative practices provide relationship solutions to the relationship problems in bullying.

Specific peer support for children and youth who are victimized

Sometimes children and youth who are isolated need to be consistently supported and surrounded by prosocial peers. An example of this social architecture strategy is *circles of support*, which are often used to include vulnerable children and youth, such as those with Autism Spectrum Disorder or a disability. For this strategy, classmates are asked to volunteer to be part of a *circle of support*. They are guided in their planning and support through regular meetings with a teacher. The children or youth involved in the *circle of support* can be rotated through the classroom, providing (a) inclusion and safety for the vulnerable child or youth and (b) an exceptional learning and caring opportunity for the other children and youth. Buddy systems are also used for this type of ongoing support and inclusion. Other strategies for inclusion can be explored and supported, such as participation in a school club, activities, and sports.

Changing peer attitudes and behaviours to prevent victimization

Bullying unfolds in front of an audience almost all the time. Observations of bullying reveal that the peers who are bystanders spend 75% of their time paying attention to, joining in, and reinforcing the child or youth who is bullying[3]. In this way, they are part of the bullying problem. Twenty-five percent of the time peers are watching the child who is being victimized. These prosocial peers can become a part of the solution. When they are courageous enough to intervene, the bullying stops within 10 seconds 57% of the time[4]. To shift the peer group behaviours in bullying episodes, teachers need to make concerted efforts to shift children and youth attitudes and behaviours. Children and youth need to learn why bullying is wrong and what they can do to prevent and intervene to stop bullying. It is important to help them understand that confronting the peer who is bullying is only one way of responding to bullying. If they do not feel safe and confident in stepping in, they should be encouraged to report the bullying to a trusted adult who will respond effectively. The *Walk away, Ignore, Talk it out, Seek help* (WITS) program, developed in Canada and available at no cost through the website (www.witsprogram.ca), is designed to reduce victimization by shifting peer attitudes and behaviours.

The two documented and evidence-based approaches to engaging peers in understanding and finding relationship solutions to bullying problems follow.

1. *The Support Group Method:*

The *Support Group Method* was developed by Barbara Maines and George Robinson and has evolved over years. Maines and Robinson recognized that bullying occurs in the context of the peer group, which is generally reinforcing and supporting children and youth who bully. The *Support Group* problem solving approach does not focus on who is to blame but challenges a group of children or youth involved in bullying, even as bystanders, to solve the bullying problem and report back to school staff about how the bullying problem has been resolved.

This is a somewhat challenging process; therefore, educators should read about it and then practice before using it to address bullying problems with children and youth. For full details on this method, view the most recent publication: Robinson, G. & Maines, B. (2008). *Bullying: A Complete Guide to the Support Group Method*. London: Sage Publications[5].

The seven steps in the *Support Group Method* are:

i.   Talk with the victimized child or youth—Interview the child/youth who has been bullied to discuss his/her feelings and to establish who is involved.

ii.   Meet with group—Meet with all the children/youth involved (reinforcers and onlookers included).

iii. Explain the problem—Discuss how the bullied child/youth is feeling. The focus is on feelings, not details of the incident.

iv.   Share responsibility—Focus on what can be done. Focus on resolving the problem rather than blaming.

v.   Identify solutions—Each child/youth suggests a way he/she could help to make the bullied child/youth feel better. Contract with them to implement their suggestions.

vi.   Give responsibility—End the meeting by giving responsibility to the group to solve the problem.

vii. Meet with group again—One week later meet with group members individually to determine whether the bullying has stopped and whether the bullied child/youth feels better.

Although not specifically recommended by Robinson and Maines, the monitoring (Step 7) may need to be completed earlier than a week later, depending on the severity of the situation (e.g. 1 or 2 days later). When the bullying situation involves a child or youth who both is victimized and bullies others, the strategy may need to be turned around—you may need to work with the victimized child or youth to help identify his/her role in the problem and to generate solutions to avoid involvement in bullying.

2. Method of Shared Concern:

The *Method of Shared Concern* for addressing bullying problems was developed by Anatole Pikas, a Swedish psychologist. Pikas understood bullying as a collective process in which the peer group has rationalized bullying as acceptable behaviour and peers are, therefore, insensitive to the child or youth being victimized. The *Method of Shared Concern* is based on the principle that if you have a concern and share it with people who can help, the problem may be addressed. In this case, the concern about bullying is shared with those children and youth involved in the bullying. The goal of this method is to help those involved in bullying stand up as individuals and demonstrate empathy for the victimized child or youth. The teacher or counselor who works through the method is expected to remain neutral and not be accusing and punitive. The *Method of Shared Concern* is recommended for late elementary school and middle and high school students. As with the *Support Group* Approach, this method is most effective when practiced through role-playing with colleagues before implementing it with students. This method has been recently described in: Rigby, K. (2011). *The Method of Shared Concern: A Positive Approach to Bullying in Schools.* Camberwell, Australia. ACER Press.[6]

The steps of the *Method of Shared Concern* are as follows:
1. Gather information
   - Who are the key players in the group of children/youth who have been involved in the bullying (often as many as 6-8 children/youth)?
   - Is the victimized child/youth involved only on the receiving end of bullying or his he/she involved in both bullying others and being victimized?
2. First Meetings
   - Interview each of the group members individually for 5 minutes.
   - Interview the "ringleader" first, immediately followed by other group members and finally the victimized child or youth. Children/Youth should not be forewarned about the meetings.

The following script is suggested for the first meeting[7]:

   - *"I hear you've been mean to _____. Tell me about it."*

   - Follow up the child's or youth's denial with:
     "Yes, but mean things have been happening to _____. Tell me about it."

   - Close the first part of the interview with (once child or youth has acknowledged that there is a problem):
     "Okay, I was wondering what you could do to help _____ in this situation."

   - The interviewer must be prepared to wait patiently. If the proposed solution is unrealistic provide a probe:
     "What would happen if you did that?"

   - If no solution is forthcoming, make suggestions:
     "How about if you asked _____ to sit beside you?"

   - Once at least one workable strategy is agreed upon:
     "Great, try that out for a week, and we will meet to see how it is going. Goodbye!"

3. Follow-up Meetings
   - Individual follow-up meetings are held a week later, with more focus on problem solving if necessary.
4. Group Meeting
   - When Step 3 is successful, implement the final meeting with the entire group to ensure long-term maintenance of the change in bullying behaviour and to reintegrate the group.

Formulate back-up plans to continue addressing the problem if some of the children or youth continue to bully (e.g., formative or educational consequences).

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Teachers as mentors

Teachers can be important mentors for victimized children and youth. If a teacher whom the child or youth trusts and who is willing to work with him/her, there are many ways that this relationship can provide opportunities for safety, coaching, a sounding board, meaningful engagement, and sense of belonging in the school. A regular check-in with the mentor and the opportunity to problem solve together will build skills, understanding, promote integration, and prevent problems from growing more serious. Research shows that one caring adult can make a substantial difference in the lives of vulnerable children and youth.

Parent/Guardian involvement

Parents of children or youth who are victimized have serious concerns about their children's safety and well-being at school and in the community. It is important to work collaboratively with parents to develop safety plans, support their child's skill development, and promote social inclusion at school and in their neighbourhood. Open communication with parents of victimized children and youth is important for building trust, monitoring the situation, and problem solving. If parents feel informed and heard about their concerns for their children's safety, the process for addressing bullying problems will be much more effective.

Professional involvement

Some victimized children and youth experience serious mental health problems that cannot be addressed within the school. In these cases, a referral to professional help within the community is often required for children/youth and their families. It is important for schools to have partnerships with community organizations so that this type of referral can be made smoothly and efficiently when a child or youth is struggling.

Identifying Children and Youth at Risk

How do I identify children and youth involved in bullying?

Early identification of children and youth who are involved in bullying, either as the student who bullies or the student who is victimized, is essential for timely support. As with other aspects of learning and behaviour, there is a wide range of involvement in bullying and different types of support are needed for the different levels of problems.

It is helpful to think of three groups of children and youth with different levels of risk when involved in bullying and/or victimization:

1. Group 1: Those who are low risk and seldom involved in bullying or victimization (approximately 75% to 80%);
2. Group 2: Those who are moderate risk and occasionally involved (approximately 10% to 15%); and
3. Group 3: Those who are at high risk and frequently involved (more than twice a week) or who have a serious and stable involvement over time (approximately 5-10% of students).

What questions can I ask to identify children and youth who are at different levels of involvement in bullying?

There are four main questions that principals, teachers, parents/guardians and others can ask to help determine the seriousness of children and youth involvement in bullying and/or victimization. The answers indicate the level of involvement in bullying or victimization. The more serious the level of involvement on these four indicators, the more likely they are to be in the high-risk group, as indicated in the figure below.

"I want to talk to adults about it but no one really talks or really listens."

1. How often is the child or youth involved in bullying and/or victimization?

The more frequently children and youth are involved in bullying and/or victimization, the more social, and psychological problems they will experience; and the more intense the intervention will need to be. To address frequent bullying or victimization (once a week or more), interventions need to be immediate and monitored so that the bullying is not repeated. For children and youth who bully frequently, consequences that are both educational and appropriate need to be implemented immediately, applied consistently, and monitored closely.

Fact sheet has been developed by PREVNet, www.prevnet.ca

What questions can I ask to identify children and youth who are at different levels of involvement in bullying? continued...

2. How long has the child or youth been involved in bullying and/or victimization?

Children and youth with a long history of bullying and/or being victimized are more likely to be part of the group at highest risk for problems. These students will require the most intense interventions. The longer a child has been involved in bullying and/or victimization, the more likely it is that the behaviour and associated problems have accumulated. The more chronic the involvement, the more likely their need for interventions to help them overcome their difficulties.

3. In how many different places or relationships does the bullying and/or victimization occur?

Bullying can occur anywhere. Children and youth report that bullying at school occurs in areas that have limited supervision, such as playgrounds, hallways, bathrooms, change rooms, and school buses. Bullying occurs in communities (e.g., on the way to and from school, on sports teams, at the mall, and at community centres). Bullying can occur electronically through such places as cell phones, social media sites, and websites. Finally, bullying can occur at home among siblings.

Bullying also occurs in different relationships (e.g., same-sex friendships, mixed-sex friendships, romantic relationships). The more prevalent bullying and/or victimization is (the more contexts or relationships in which it occurs), the more likely a child or youth is to be part of the high-risk group. To determine effective intervention strategies, it is important to assess where and in what relationships children and youth are involved in bullying others or being victimized. The more places bullying happens and the more relations that are characterized by bullying, the more intensive the intervention needs to be.

4. How has the bullying impacted the victimized child or youth?

All bullying behaviour is abuse, but it may vary in intensity, the type of aggression, and impact. It is difficult to directly compare the impact of different forms of aggression, such as physical hitting versus spreading a rumour. Children and youth indicate that social bullying is just as hurtful as physical bullying. The level of seriousness of bullying can be assessed by the distress it causes the victimized student. Consistent involvement in bullying has academic, social, and physical and mental health consequences and impacts. The more serious the bullying or the more harmful its impact on the victimized student, the more likely the student is within the high-risk group. Interventions and supports should consider the mitigating factors (see PPM 145) and they should match the severity and harm caused by the bullying.
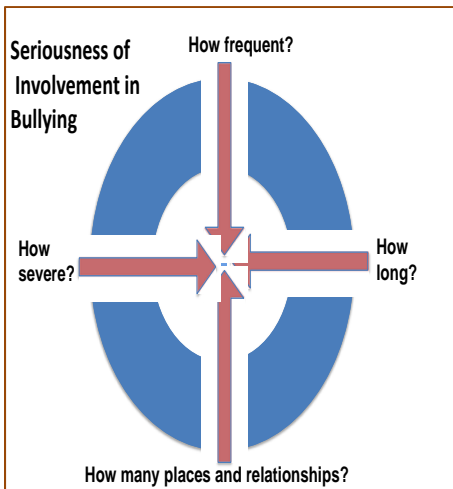
Figure 1: Matching Level of Risk to the Intensity of Interventions

What interventions are needed for children and youth at different levels of involvement in bullying?

1. The outside circle in Figure 1 represents those children and youth who are at low risk because they are seldom involved in bullying and/or victimization. This group has the lowest risk for problems associated with bullying. For the majority of children and youth who are not involved in bullying, a universal intervention (e.g., the whole class receives the same training) will likely be sufficient. These educational interventions are designed to develop students' awareness of bullying, their roles as a witness to bullying, and what they can do to stand up on behalf of victimized students. These general initiatives that promote positive relationships are usually sufficient to improve understanding and promote positive social (prosocial) behaviours among these well-adjusted children and youth.

2. The intermediate circle represents those children and youth who have temporary involvement and who experience problems at the times they are involved in bullying or victimization. These children and youth may exhibit warning signs that indicate a risk of future involvement in bullying and/or victimization. Children and youth who are involved in bullying relatively infrequently or in a transitory way will benefit from a focused and timely intervention specifically designed to address and prevent the continuation of peer relationship problems.

   Bullying. Children and youth who are beginning to bully need education about bullying. They may need individualized support to address their needs and enhance their skills and strengths in areas such as: problem solving, empathy, moral understanding, and positive leadership. These children and youth may also need to be separated from peers who are reinforcing bullying and connected to more pro-social peers.

   Being victimized. Children and youth who are beginning to be victimized by their peers, first need to be protected from this form of abuse. These children and youth may need supports to enhance their skills such as: coping, assertiveness, and emotional regulation. They will also need support to interact with prosocial peers and develop friendships especially because having even one friend is protective factor against bullying.

What interventions are needed for children and youth at different levels of involvement in bullying? continued…

Figure 1: Matching Level of Risk to the Intensity of Interventions

3. Children in the inner-most circle experience the highest rates of bullying and/or victimization as well as emotional, behavioural, and social problems. These children and youth are in need of intensive interventions because troubled peer relationships not only indicate a range of problems, but also predict problems in the future. Schools should draw upon school-based resources, as well as those available in the community to support children, youth and their families.

Bullying. When children and youth engage in bullying others, they report high levels of aggression, sexual harassment, dating aggression, and delinquency. Interventions are critical to move these youth onto a healthy pathway. The interventions must focus on both developing understanding and skills, as well as enhancing positive relationships. Children and youth who bully may require specific support in:
- developing empathy
- controlling emotions and behaviours
- improving attitudes and moral understanding
- increasing social skills
- becoming positive leaders
- solving problems, and withstanding peer pressure.

Being victimized. When children and youth are being chronically victimized, they also report high levels of anxiety, depression, and health problems, as well as being involved in problematic relationships. For these troubled children and youth, an intensive intervention is needed which focuses not only on the serious emotional, psychological, physical, educational, and social adjustment difficulties, but also on their relationship problems within significant social systems (e.g., family, peer group, school, and community). First, these children and youth must be protected and safe at school—it is their right. At the individual level, these children and youth may require intensive interventions for:
- social skills
- coping skills to deal with the bullying (because fighting back is not effective according to research)
- peer skills

They also require support to develop competence and interests, and highlight their talents and opportunities to be leaders in social activities so that they can cultivate a positive sense of self.
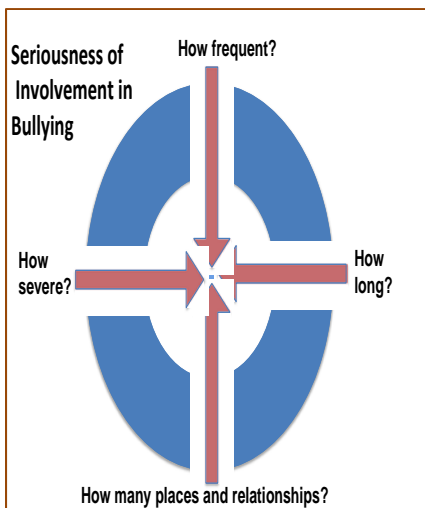
Bullying Identification and Intervention Tool: What type of Intervention do I need?

Identifying children and youth who are involved in bullying is key for timely and effective support. There is a wide range of involvement in bullying which means different types of support is needed for the different levels of problems. Matching the intervention to the level of risk will stop the bullying and promote healthy relationships.

Intensity of Interventions for Students who Bully or are Victimized

Matching Level of Risk to the Intensity of Interventions
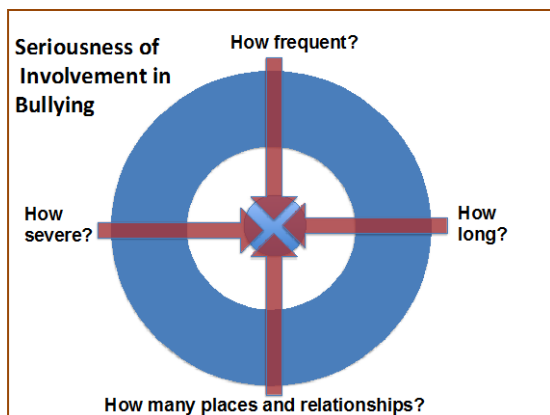
Group 1 (outer circle): Low risk

Group 2 (middle circle): Moderate risk

Group 3 (inner circle): High risk

The following description describes the intensity of interventions for both those who engage in bullying and those who are victimized.

Low Risk (Group 1)	Moderate Risk (Group 2)	High Risk (Group 3)
Whole class interventions to develop children/youth awareness of bullying and their roles as a witness.	Focused and timely intervention specifically designed to address and prevent the continuation of these peer relationship problems.	Intenvisve interventions and possibly additional support from community mental health services and/or community agencies.
Universal education and practice on what they can do to stand up on behalf of victimized children/youth.	May need individualized support to build resiliency, support strengths and enhance relationship skills (e.g., coping and assertiveness).	Individualized support focusing on emotional, psychological, physical, educational and social difficulties that include peer relationship skills.

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CRITICAL QUESTION	LOW RISK (Group 1)	MODERATE RISK (Group 2)	HIGH RISK (Group 3)
How often is the child/youth involved in bullying and/or victimization?	Seldom involved (maybe once or twice in whole school career)	Occasionally involved (once or twice a term)	Frequently involved (two to three times a month)
How long has the child/youth been involved in bullying/victimization?	Involvement started recently	Involvement since beginning of school year	Involved over 1 year or longer
In how many places does the bullying and/or victimization occur?	Occurs in one location only (e.g., playground)	Occurs in more than one location (e.g., class, playground)	Occurs in many locations (e.g., school, home, mall)
How has bullying impacted the victimized child/youth? (Physical/psychologyical health, social/academic functinting)	Minor impact in any number of domains	Moderate impact in more than one domain	Severe impact in most domains
What type of interventions do I need?	Universal involving all children/youth in the school	Focussed and timely intervention with individual support	Intensive intervention likely with outside community support

This tool has been developed by PREVNet, www.prevnet.ca

Choosing an Evidence-Based Bullying Prevention Program

Research demonstrates that having an evidence-based or evidence-informed bullying prevention program improves school climate and can help reduce incidents of bullying (Farrington & Ttofi, M., 2009; American Educational Research Association, 2013). There has been an increase in the number of bullying prevention programs over the past decade; however not all of them are evidence-based or evidence-informed. Bullying is a highly complex problem that is shaped by individual, classroom, peer group, teacher, principal, family, and community factors. It is not surprising, therefore, that an international meta-analysis examining 30 well researched programs found that on average bullying and victimization were reduced by only about 20–23% in experimental schools compared with control schools[1]. The programs that were most successful at reducing bullying were universal programs that focused on all children and youth and implemented a Whole School Approach.

How do you know which program is going to work and be the best fit for your school board and school?

Different programs have varying levels of effectiveness at reducing bullying depending on the school. The first step is to pick a program that is evidence-based or evidenced-informed or a promising practice. Evidence based means that there is demonstrated effectiveness in reducing bullying and victimization. Some programs are *evidence-informed*, which means that they are developed from a strong research base, but have not yet achieved the highest level of being *evidence-based*. Finally, promising practices are those which have been shown to be effective in specific settings and may hold promise for other settings. To identify a program that is one of these types, start the question: *Does the program actually work in reducing bullying and victimization?* There are many programs on the market, but not all of them have been evaluated and not all of them are effective – in fact, some may have a negative impact. A 2005 review of programs revealed that:

Evidence-based or evidence-informed bullying prevention programs identify the need for a well-connected and respected local champion among the key components.[3]

- 68% had evidence that they were effective,
- 7% of the programs made no difference in rates of bullying, and;
- 15% of the programs made bullying problems worse
- 10% of the programs reported mixed results (some positive and some negative)[2].

Because implementing a bullying prevention program in schools takes substantial time and resources, it is important to focus on activities that have been shown to be effective. You also want to avoid programs that might worsen bullying problems at your school. Finally, because the effectiveness of the program depends in part on the school climate (the quality of relationships within the whole school community) and how it is implemented, it is recommended that you assess the program to make sure it is having the intended positive effect.

How can you find evidence-based programs?

Most educators responsible for choosing a program lack the time and access to information to judge first hand whether bullying prevention programs are effective. To simplify the task of finding an effective program, Public Health Agency Canada has developed the Canadian Best Practices Portal, with a Violence Prevention Stream.

The programs presented on this site are from around the world and address a range of issues related to violence, including: bullying, dating violence, child abuse and neglect, and elder abuse. There are now at least 80 programs reviewed and approved for this portal based on evidence of their effectiveness. All of these programs have been reviewed, evaluated, and demonstrated to be successful at achieving their goals and desired changes. This means that the programs on this portal are evidence-based. There are no programs listed on the site that have not been evaluated.

The site has:

- A searchable database of prevention programs
- Detailed annotations of the programs
- Detailed descriptions of the evidence supporting the programs.

The ongoing scientific review process of these programs is being conducted in partnership with PREVNet (Promoting Relationships and Eliminating Violence Network), a Canadian organization comprising the leading experts and authoritative voices on violence prevention through the promotion of healthy relationships. New programs are constantly being reviewed and added.

Bullying prevention programs can be found in the violence prevention stream can be found at: http://cbpp-pcpe.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ (see Page 3 to view the portal homepage).

RESOURCES

Augimeri, L.K., Walsh, M., & Slater, N. (2011). Rolling out SNAP an evidence-based intervention: A summary of implementation, evaluation and research. *International Journal of Child, Youth and Family Studies,* 2.1: 162-184.
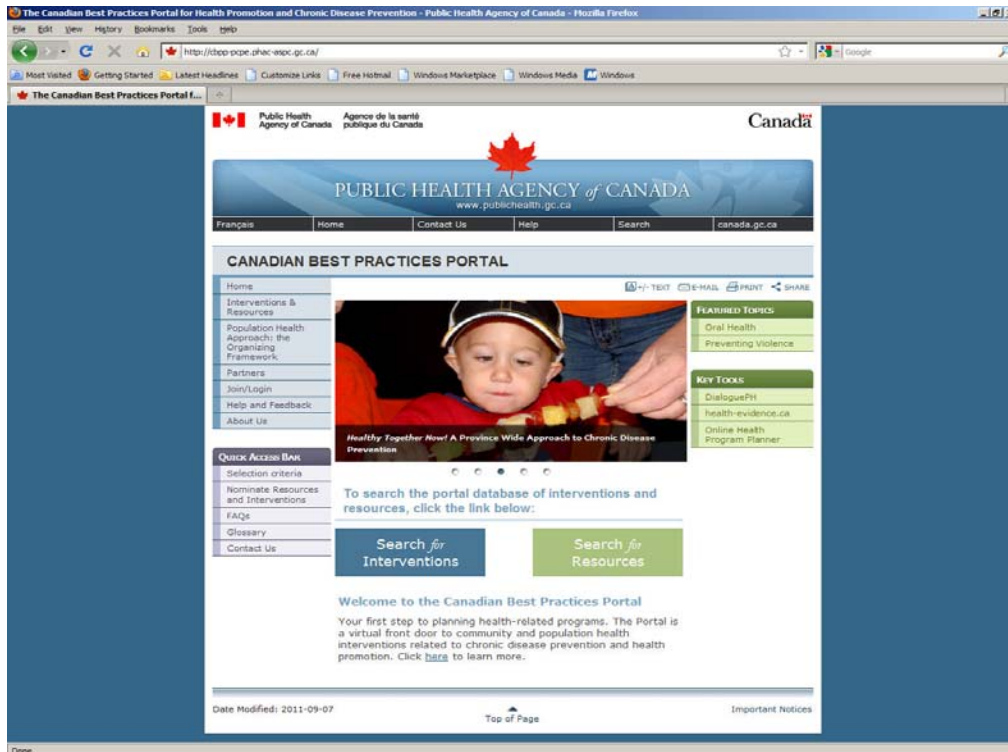
Canadian Best Practice Portal, Public Health Agency of Canada: http://cbpp-pcpe.phac-aspc.gc.ca/

Promoting Relationships and Eliminating Violence (PREVNet): http://prevnet.ca/Home/tabid/36/Default.aspx.

What is important in a program?

A review of the best evidence-based programs by Farrington and Ttofi[1] highlighted the program elements that are linked to reductions in bullying and victimization. These elements reflected a whole school approach in which the program involves children, youth, teachers, leaders, school staff, peers, parents, and the school community.

The most important program components linked to decreases in bullying are:
- classroom rules
- classroom management
- improved playground supervision
- school conferences
- disciplinary methods
- parent learning opportunities
- teacher/staff professional development
- information and/or learning opportunities for parents

The most important program components linked to decreases in victimization are:
- videos and virtual reality computer games to raise awareness about bullying
- disciplinary methods
- work with peers
- cooperative group work
- parent learning opportunities

REFERENCES

[1]Farrington, D. P. and Ttofi, M. M. (2009). *School-Based Programmes to Reduce Bullying and Victimization.* Campbell Systematic Reviews 2009:6 Retrieved from, www.crim.cam.ac.uk/people/academic_research/david_farrington/bullcamp.pdf

[2]Craig, W. M. & Pepler, D. J. (2004). *Developing competence in children 0 through 18.* Review for Nestles (is this Nestle) Canada.

[3]Elliott, D.S., & Mihalic, S. (2004). Issues in disseminating and replicating effective prevention programs. *Prevention Science, 5*(1), 47–52. doi: 10.1023/B:PREV.0000013981.28071.52

[4]Cunningham, C.E., Vaillancourt, T., Rimas, H., Deal, K., Cunningham, L., Short, K., & Chen, Y. (2009). Modeling the bullying prevention program preferences of educators: A discrete choice conjoint experiment. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology, 37*, 929–943. doi: 10.1007/s10802-009-9324-2

What about innovative programs that have these components and are promising?

It takes many years to develop a program and develop it through the following important stages, which are necessary to reach the designation as evidenced-based[4]. Some programs are "evidence-informed", which means that they are developed from a strong research base, but have not yet achieved the highest level of being "evidence-based".

Program Planning requires a review of the scientific literature, the development of a theoretical framework and/or logic model, creation of program manuals, and evaluations and research. A logic model is an important tool because it can help you conceptualize the relationship between the program inputs, activities, target group, outputs, and expected outcomes.

Research and Outcome Evaluation involves several steps including using standardized measures, collecting data before and after the program is delivered, comparing changes to a group that didn't receive the program, analyzing the data and finding significant results that are sustained for at least a year following the program. To be confident of the program, the effectiveness needs to be replicated by a different team than the one that developed the program.

If a program has some preliminary evidence of effectiveness and is "evidence informed", it can be considered as promising. Some of these promising programs are listed on the Canadian Best Practices Portal.

What does not work in bullying prevention?
There is a growing body of evidence on what works and what does not work. The following are examples of approaches to bullying prevention that have proven not to be effective in reducing bullying and victimization:

- Zero tolerance and disciplinary measures that are solely punitive
- Advising children who are victimized to fight back
- Expecting children to solve bullying problems by themselves
- Advising children to avoiding social media as a way of avoiding electronic bullying
- Addressing bullying with celebrity, not expertise
- Offering one time interventions (e.g., a 45 minute motivational speech)
- Limiting interventions to the individual children who are bullying or who are being victimized—everyone needs to be involved in bullying prevention
- Ignoring adults' bullying and relationships—these are models for children.

BOTTOM LINE: Evidenced based programs will likely have the greatest effect.

This fact sheet has

Critical Questions for Choosing an Evidence-Based/Evidence-Informed Program

Bullying prevention involves implementing programs and moment-to-moment strategies. Evidence-based bullying prevention refers to a set of activities that have been proven to be effective to reduce bullying and victimization. There are many different types of programs available and it is often difficult to choose a program from among the hundreds that are advertised on the Internet.

Although all programs claim to have the best solution to reduce bullying, only some of them have any evidence to prove they are actually effective. Effectiveness is determined statistically, by showing that the differences found are significantly different than those that might be found by chance —19 times out of 20 you would find a difference if there <u>really</u> was a difference after implementing the program. Typically you will find:

1. <u>Model Bullying Prevention Programs</u> are the best because they meet the highest scientific standard for effectiveness (scientifically proven), as evidenced in published evaluations: they demonstrate a significant, sustained reduction in bullying and victimization, a reduction in risk factors related to bullying, and/or an increase in associated protective factors. The program results have generally been replicated.
2. <u>Evidence Informed Programs</u> meet scientific standards for effectiveness, but they do not meet all of the rigorous standards of model programs. They are recognized and recommended with the caution that they should be carefully evaluated when used. These programs demonstrate promising (perhaps inconsistent) empirical findings using a evidence-informed conceptual framework and a limited evaluation design (e.g., pre and post measures).
3. <u>Innovative programs</u> test new approaches and theories to prevent and intervene with vulnerable populations. They are based on a strong theoretical framework and they show demonstrated changes through limited research design. These programs can be implemented but require research to ensure that they are effective.

Process of Selecting

Programs can be chosen to meet the needs of a school identified through the results of the assessment in the school.

It may be helpful to have the Safe and Accepting School Committee make a list of recommendations for programs.

There also may be support from the School Board available to help select the appropriate program.

The principal should engage the school staff in the selection process to ensure they feel comfortable with their role in implementing the program.

How do I know it is a model or evidence-informed program?

Preventing and reducing bullying is not a simple process because bullying is a highly complex problem that is shaped by individual, classroom, peer group, teacher, principal, family, and community factors. Even the most evidence-informed and evidence-based bullying prevention programs reduce bullying and victimization by 20-23%[1]. To address bullying problems, you need a menu of approaches to prevention and intervention that involve a formal prevention program, moment-to-moment strategies, and targeted strategies for those who are at risk for becoming involved in bullying or who are already involved.

An effective approach to preventing and addressing bullying in your school combines evidence-based or evidence-informed programs or innovative approaches that have been shown to significantly reduce bullying–with a whole school approach that fosters healthy relationships.

The following set of questions will help guide you in identifying a bullying prevention program that is a model or informed or innovative program and is likely to meet the needs of your school. The first chart helps identify the amount of evidence a program has. The second chart helps identify the evidence-based components of a program, and the third chart helps you identify elements that will help you sustain the program.

Ideally, the best type of program to select is a model program. The questions highlighted in green will help you identify model programs that have the highest level of evidence to support them. The questions highlighted in orange will help you identify whether a program is evidence informed or innovative. The questions highlighted in red DO NOT provide research evidence on how effective the program is and there is weak or no evidence of effectiveness, these programs should likely not be chosen.

All programs should be evaluated through your school assessments because even though there may be evidence to support their effectiveness, the same program can have different effects in different schools. You want to make sure that the program you select is having positive effects and meeting your goal to decrease bullying and victimization. Also, remember, change takes time so the positive effects of a program may not be seen in the first year!

Critical Questions for Choosing an Evidence-Based/Evidence-Informed/Innovative Bullying Prevention Program

CRITICAL QUESTION	Evidence Based	Evidence Informed	Innovative
Are there several studies using a Randomized Controlled Trial design (RCT: a comparison of the program with a control condition, to which participants are randomly assigned) or an Interrupted Time Series design (ITS: pre-post comparison based on measures at multiple occasions before and after the introduction of the program) showing effectiveness in one or more real-life settings, by researchers independent of the program developer?	YES Strongest Evidence	NO	NO
Is there at least one study of effectiveness using a Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) or Interrupted Time Series (ITS) design?	YES Strong Evidence	NO	NO
Is there research using a quasi-experimental design (e.g., group comparisons between students who received the program and those who did not) without random assignment?	Yes Some Evidence	Yes Some Evidence	NO
Is there research using a quasi-experimental design with well matched comparison conditions (two groups that are similar)?	NO	Yes Some Evidence	NO
Is there research evaluating effectiveness with pre-post evaluations without control groups, case study time series (case study followed over time) or qualitative methods over time?	NO	Yes Preliminary Evidence	Yes Preliminary Evidence

The questions below guide you in recognizing when the research available on a program is descriptive only – which means there is no evidence on how well the program works. So if the information available for evaluating the program only contains the type of data listed below, it is **NOT** an evidence-based or evidence informed program!

CRITICAL QUESTION	Evidence Based	Evidence Informed	Innovative
Is the information on program effectiveness based on endorsements (e.g., by government organizations, influential organizations or groups)?	NO	NO	Maybe
Is the information on program effectiveness based on case reports, anecdotes, or stories of program success?	NO	NO	Maybe
Is the information on program effectiveness based on client testimonials (comments or anecdotal reports by program users of the impact of the program on them)?	NO	NO	Maybe
Is the information on program effectiveness based on client satisfaction surveys (e.g., how much did you like the program)?	NO	NO	Maybe
Is the information on program effectiveness based on enrollment, utilization, or descriptive data (e.g., how many students participated in the program, how many students completed the program, demographic data)?	NO	NO	Maybe

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How do I know that the content of the program is evidence based or evidence informed?

The next step is to ensure that the content of the program is based on scientific evidence. The questions below will help you determine whether the content of the program is based on the elements of successful evidence-based or evidence-informed programs. If the program is based on a Whole School Approach, the type of program that has the greatest evidence of effectiveness, then all of the answers below should be YES. If all the answers are not YES, the program is likely not based on a Whole School Approach!

CRITICAL QUESTION

Is the program based on a whole school approach aimed at preventing bullying and promoting positive relationships?	**YES** **Strongest Evidence**
Does the program provide <u>individualized support</u> for children who have bullied others, are bullied, and for those who witness bullying?	**YES** **Strongest Evidence**
Does the program provide <u>class components to promote understanding</u> such as guided discussions of bullying, developing strategies for intervening or getting help, cooperative group work, positive learning environment and class climate, class norms, and classroom management?	**YES** **Strongest Evidence**
Are there <u>peer involvement</u> components such as training in peer intervention, peer mentoring (presentations by peers), and to promote respect and acceptance?	**YES** **Strongest Evidence**
Are there <u>school staff learning opportunities and engagement</u> to foster a positive school climate, raise awareness of bullying, enhance understanding of their roles and responsibilities, and develop skills to report and respond to bullying?	**YES** **Strongest Evidence**
Are there <u>parent learning opportunities and engagement</u> to foster a positive school climate, raise awareness, and provide steps to take if parents are concerned about bullying (e.g., through videos, parent nights, newsletters highlighting the role of parents in helping to prevent and address bullying)?	**YES** **Strongest Evidence**

How do I identify programs that will support sustained implementation for long-term change?

After choosing and implementing a program, it is essential to sustain and maintain the program. One of the challenges is to implement the program as it was designed. Programs that have been evaluated work because of the way they are designed. If the program is changed, it may not have the same positive effects. Consequently, it is critical to adhere to the program and to be consistent in how it is implemented over time (this is often referred to as program fidelity). There are supports that programs can provide to facilitate ensuring that the program has high fidelity and can be sustained over time!

The following set of questions will help you identify programs that have the supports in place to have high fidelity and sustainability. The more times you check YES, the higher the likelihood that you will be able to sustain the program for long-term change in addressing bullying problems.

CRITICAL QUESTION

Is the program fully documented with a manual that clearly outlines prevention and intervention strategies or guidance on implementation?

YES

Does the program provide resources to support its implementation?

YES

Does the program provide training or training materials?

YES

Is the program compatible with your school culture?

YES

Is the program feasible for your school and does your school have the resources?

YES

Implementing a School Bullying Prevention Plan

School boards and schools require bullying policies and plans

A bullying prevention school board policy and school plan is essential for coordinated and consistent efforts to prevent and address bullying. A board policy establishes the framework for bullying prevention with:
- ✓ a definition of the problem
- ✓ a statement of importance
- ✓ implementation and evaluation plans

In Ontario, school boards are required to:
- ✓ have and implement policies on bullying prevention (Policy/Program Memorandum #144).
- ✓ have school wide bullying prevention plans that are consistent with their school board policies. The Ontario Ministry of Education's Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan can be accessed at http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/prevent.html

The board policy and school plan should be based on well-established evidence from research in the field of bullying prevention and intervention. These policies and plans at the board and school levels are designed to help ensure that children and youth are provided with a positive learning environment and that bullying problems are addressed effectively. A regular monitoring and evaluation process is essential to help ensure the policy and plans are being implemented and are effective in preventing and addressing bullying.

Use the Bullying Prevention Policies and Procedures Tool to make sure you have an evidence-based and comprehensive plan!

School plans are created with representatives of the school community

A school plan reflects the values, attitudes, and climate of a school community. Since a plan defines the expectations and behaviours for all those in the school community, it should be developed collaboratively with participation of all groups within the school community (principal, teachers, school staff, children, youth, parents/guardians, and community partners). Including these groups will help to help ensure that the school plan is developed using diverse perspectives and includes the strengths and challenges of the school community. All representatives are made to feel comfortable to participate fully and their input is encouraged. Helping to ensure that there are representatives from all groups in the planning process builds a shared commitment to the importance of preventing bullying and promoting a safe, accepting, respectful and supportive learning environment.

School plans require a clear definition of bullying

Bullying is a complex relationship that takes many forms and involves more than the children and youth who are bullying and being bullied. A clear definition of bullying is a keystone to the school plan so that everyone in the school community is aware of:
- what bullying is
- how it is defined by a power differential (and therefore, different than general aggression and teasing)
- what forms bullying can or may take
- what harms and distress arise from bullying
- what groups of children and youth are especially vulnerable to being bullied by their peers

School plans require a clear reference to the importance of healthy relationships that include rights and responsibilities

Research is clearly establishing that children and youths' healthy development depends on healthy relationships. The quality of school relationships and the school climate influence children and youth's learning and overall development. It is important that policies and plans have a clear reference to the importance and expectation of positive relationships for all members of the school community. The principal and teachers are responsible for the safety and well-being of children and youth at school, as well as for their education.

A supportive learning environment provides a foundation for learning behaviours that respect physical and psychological safety, respect for others, and allow children and youth to have a sense of belonging and being valued within the school community (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 29, 1989).

School plans describe who, when and where the expectations apply

School plans to prevent bullying and promote healthy relationships need to specify that bullying is not acceptable and will be addressed if it occurs anywhere within the broader school context, which includes:

- on school property
- at school-related events
- on school buses
- impact on school climate

It is important to specify direct and indirect bullying, as well as bullying through electronic means, is unacceptable. All forms of bullying are included and will be dealt with because of their potential to negatively impact children and youth's learning and well-being while at school.

School plans require a clear statement of the roles and responsibilities of the principal and vice principal, teachers, school staff, children, youth, parents/guardians, and other adults in the school community.

> All members of the school community need to be informed about the school plan.

School plans mandate support for professional learning and implementation

School plans need to be evidence-based to help ensure that the recommendations are proven and the strategies are effective to prevent and intervene in bullying. All members of the school community, especially children and youth, must be fully informed about the bullying prevention plan. The plan regarding bullying can be printed in student agenda so that all children, youth and staff are aware of:

- the unacceptability of bullying
- the procedures for reporting bullying
- the consequences for bullying

There need to be clear procedures for anonymously reporting bullying. The plan should include the positive term "reporting" to describe the expectation that staff, children and youth will be socially responsible and come forward with information when they witness or experience bullying. The frequency of reported bullying will be greater if there is an anonymous process for identifying incidents of bullying to school staff and administrators. Children and youth need clear guidelines for how to report concerns about bullying that they either experience or witness.

To help ensure consistent and effective responses to bullying, school administrators require clear procedures about how to investigate and respond to any reports of bullying from teachers, children, youth, or parents/guardians. They also need procedures to review and respond to anonymous reports. Teachers approached by children and youth who report bullying should have guidelines for their discussions.

Fact sheet has been developed by PREVNet, www.prevnet.ca

School plans mandate support for professional learning and implementation continued…

Building skills for healthy relationships and bullying prevention education can be supported across the curriculum in all subjects and disciplines. Through the curriculum, educators can support students in building skills for:

- healthy relationships
- cooperation
- concern for others
- social problem solving
- conflict resolution
- tolerance and respect.

Professional learning for the whole school community (i.e., administrators, staff, children, youth, and parents/guardians) will help ensure a shared understanding of bullying problems, rights and responsibilities, the role of those who witness bullying, as well as provide common expectations about how the problems will be prevented and addressed. Since bullying generally occurs in less supervised areas (e.g., halls, outside, lunchroom), school staff can help ensure adequate supervision and monitoring of these areas. Parents/Guardians are an integral part of the whole school approach and need to understand how they can support and advocate for their child or youth with guidelines of whom to contact, beginning at the classroom through to the board level.

"I want the adults in my life to know that I need their help."

Resource

Ontario Ministry of Education. PPM 145: Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour. http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/145.pdf.

School plans describe clear interventions for children and youth who have bullied others

School plans must outline the interventions for children and youth who bully. As part of a progressive approach, they should identify a range of consequences for bullying from positive educational interventions which may include progressive discipline, to suspension or expulsion from school. The interventions with a specific child or youth must take into account that student's individual, family, and social situation. Parents/Guardians involvement in supporting their child or youth is key. They can be involved in supporting their children to learn from their mistakes and to become respectful and socially responsible. Children and youth who bully need to be monitored to help ensure they are learning from the educational consequences and are not continuing to bully (see Fact Sheet and Toolkit on bullying identification and intervention).

School plans describe responses to children and youth who have been victimized and have witnessed bullying

Children and youth who are being bullied need to be protected from further incidents of abuse at the hands of other children and youth. Children and youth who report a bullying incident also require protection from potential retaliation. When a child or youth has been bullied, his/her parents/guardians should be informed and invited to discuss what support and action will be taken to prevent any further acts of bullying. There should be a process for developing safety and monitoring plans for children and youth who are bullied so they can continue to feel safe at school.

School plans specify clear roles and responsibilities for all school staff

School principals, staff and other adults involved with children and youth are responsible to uphold their right to a safe learning environment. These adults must model healthy relationships at all times—if the adults in the school use power aggressively and bully, the children and youth will follow their lead. Adults must also be aware of peer interactions and group dynamics to help ensure that groups do not form to reinforce bullying behaviours. By observing peer interactions in the classrooms, hallways, and other areas of the school, staff will be able to, identify bullying, intervene early, report it and prevent escalation of bullying problems.

Evaluation is an essential element of an effective school plans

The school plan should identify an evaluation procedure to monitor the,
- effectiveness of the plan
- specific bullying prevention programs
- intervention strategies used to address bullying problems.

The evaluation can consist of many elements including:
- data on the number of reported incidents of bullying, the number of incidents that were verified, and the strategies used to address them.
- a survey that is administered once or twice a year to determine the prevalence, nature, location, and responses to bullying problems.
- a report from the survey that identifies areas for improvement and strategies for the school to implement.
- An action plan to address the areas of improvement.

Bullying prevention is the responsibility of all members of the school community. The key mechanism for bullying prevention lies not in the words of the plan, but in the daily interactions within the school. The school plan serves as a guideline for creating a positive school climate and as a statement of commitment to foster respectful relationships. Once a bullying prevention plan is in place, the principal is responsible for strong leadership and support of the plan. The school staff is responsible for responding to bullying, as well as for providing opportunities for children and youth to learn and practice skills for healthy relationships using current curriculum and specific programs.

REFERENCES

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2009). *Policy/Program Memorandum #144*. Retrieved from http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/144.pdf

Bullying Prevention School Plan and Procedures Checklist

The checklist is intended to support a self-evaluation of your current bullying prevention policies. Based on your responses, you may want to review or revise your school plan. An evidence-based plan should indicate 'yes' to all the statements listed in the checklist.

How do I use the checklist?

With your Safe and Accepting Schools Team, review your school bullying prevention and intervention plan. Have each member of the committee complete the Plan Checklist. Discuss the results and the amount of agreement or disagreement on how each of the members rated each statement. How each item is rated provides valuable information to your school about your plan. For example:

- A "Do not know" rating indicates that that plan needs to be more explicitly stated or clarified.
- A "no" rating indicates what needs to be added to your plan.
- A "somewhat rating" indicates where your bullying prevention plan need to be expanded upon.
- A "yes" rating indicates that you have fully addressed that issue in the plan.

The team can use these ratings to identify what areas in the school plan need further clarification and development, and what is working well. Valuable information is also obtained when team members disagree on the ratings.. For example, it may indicate that for certain groups of individuals in the school (i.e., the staff), the plan is clear, but for other groups (i.e., the children and youth, or the parents/guardians) it is not clear. It is critical that all the members of the school community have the same understanding and interpretation of the plan. If there is not common understanding (i.e., disagreement in the ratings), it may indicate that the plan needs to be revised or that parts of the plan and its meaning may need to be more effectively communicated.

The Bullying Prevention Plan and Procedures Implementation Checklist

Please rate the extent to which your school plan is aligned with the following components of an effective bullying prevention policy.	Yes	Some-what	No	Don't Know
1. Your school has a plan that explicitly pertains to bullying prevention and intervention, and promoting a positive school climate.				
2. The plan was created with stakeholder involvement, including children/youth, parents/guardians, school staff, volunteers and community members.				
3. The plan includes a clear definition of bullying including:				
• Real or perceived power imbalance in bullying				
• Different forms of bullying				
• Perceived or actual harm and distress due to bullying				
• Members of certain groups that are more at-risk				
4. The plan includes a clear reference promoting a positive school climate that includes the importance of healthy relationships, rights and responsibilities for:				
• Mental and physical safety of self and others				
• Respect for self and others				
• Feeling valued and having a sense of belonging				
5. The plan clearly describes to whom, when, and where it applies. The plan includes:				
• all children/youth, parents/guardians, staff, and volunteers				
• organization sanctioned events and/or other interactions				
• face-to-face communication (e.g., meetings, one-on-one discussions)				
• electronic (online) communication				
6. The plan affirms the importance of bullying prevention and intervention, and mandates:				
• Developmentally appropriate programming for children/youth to be educated about rights and responsibilities, forms of bullying, the role of witness, and the school's plan				
• Appropriate time and resources allocated to professional learning for school staff/volunteers (including new staff/volunteers) for understanding the school plan				
• Accessible documentation and forms to implement plan				
• Supervision and monitoring of children/youth				
• Parent/guardian education about the organization's bullying prevention plan				
• A safe , clear, confidential and accessible anonymous reporting process for everyone				
7. The plan describes clear responses to children/youth who have bullied others including:				
• Progressive discipline is adopted to enable principals and teachers to choose the appropriate consequence that addresses inappropriate child/youth behaviour. (Progressive discipline involves a continuum of responses that start with formative or educational consequences that develop social understanding, attitudes and skills needed for healthier relationships. If bullying behaviour is repeated, the educational consequences increase in severity (e.g., a meeting with				

parents/guardians, counselling, withdrawal of privileges, recommending expulsion).				
• Responses that take into account the unique individual, family, group dynamics, and diverse situations.				
• When to notify parents/guardians and involve them in working through the problem				
• A follow-up plan to monitor bullying behaviour as long as necessary to help ensure it has stopped				
8. The plan describes clear responses to children/youth who have been victimized by bullying, and who have witnessed bullying including:				
• Protection and emotional support				
• Implementation of an individualized safety plan and ongoing monitoring as long as necessary to help ensure the bullying has stopped.				
• Continued participation of children/youth who were victimized or witnessed bullying				
• When to notify parents/guardians and involve them in working through the problem				
9. The plan specifies clear **roles** and **responsibilities** for all personnel and volunteers with respect to:				
• Modeling healthy relationships at all times by all adults and youth leaders				
• Monitoring peer interactions and group dynamics				
• responding to observations of bullying behaviour or reports of bullying; investigating bullying issues				

• Reporting bullying issues:
  o within specified channels of the organization's management structure
  o to parents/guardians
  o to external organizations consistent with existing Duty of Care policies and local legislation				

• Making decisions regarding Progressive Action for children/youth who bully				
• Assuming responsibility for implementation and follow-up when bullying issues arise				
• Increasing educational programming, supervision and monitoring for groups of children/youth in which bullying has taken place				
• Evaluating bullying prevention and intervention initiatives				
• Being accountable to stakeholders for the Bullying Prevention Plan				
• Reviewing and updating the plan at specified intervals based on internal evaluation findings and current research literature				

Roles and Responsibilities for a Safe and Accepting School Team

How to establish a Safe and Accepting Schools Team?

The Safe and Accepting Schools Team can help prevent bullying in your school by developing, implementing, and monitoring an evidence-based bullying prevention initiative. Every school in Ontario has a Safe and Accepting Schools Team that is responsible for fostering a safe, inclusive, and accepting school climate.

Who must be on the Safe and Accepting Schools Team?

The Safe and Accepting Schools Team should be diverse; it should reflect a wide range of perspectives, knowledge, and experience. The team should be composed of energetic people who care about bullying and are able to get things done. Look for individuals who have advanced other successful school-wide initiatives. The team also needs to represent the school community and should include:

- **Principal.** School safety planning will raise issues related to school expenditures, staff reassignment, professional learning priorities, and implementation of the curriculum that require administrative input, expertise, and advocacy to attain positive outcomes.

- **Teachers.** Innovative teachers who have a supportive learning environment and effective collaboration strategies make excellent team members. Include teachers who have earned the respect of their colleagues, can exert a positive influence and rally support if extensive changes or reforms are recommended. To benefit from additional expertise, you also might invite behaviour specialists within the special education program to join the committee. Consider guidance counselors who have experience in evidence-based interventions for problem behavior.

- **School Staff.** The team benefits from a range of expertise (e.g., Early Childhood Educators, Educational Assistants, Office Administrators, Caretakers). School administrators, lunch monitors, bus drivers, crossing guards, and school staff who interact with children could also join the committee.

Creating a Supporting Learning Environment

MathGains: Classroom Dynamics.
http://www.edugains.ca/newsite/math2/classroomdynamics.html

"Bullying is a problem I need help from adults to solve."

Who must be on the Safe and Accepting Schools Team continued…

- **Parents/Guardians.** Include a parent liaison that can represent the concerns of other parents and communicate with the parental community, including school councils.

- **Children and Youth.** Children and youth representation on the team is vital to help all members better understand the strengths and potential resources for change among the student body. Children and youth also may help the committee identify challenges in implementing a bullying prevention initiative, and develop effective ways to address those challenges. Consider choosing two children or youth representatives with demonstrated maturity, insight, and social skills.

- **Community Representatives.** A community representative should have a direct or indirect stake in school safety issues. This person may be a police officer, a community health provider, or another key partner from the

Possible Activities for Safe and Accepting Schools Teams?

Suggested activities of the Safe and Accepting Team:

- **Plan**: Create a comprehensive plan for developing and implementing bullying prevention initiatives. The plan should include setting goals, determining performance indicators, identifying key activities, and communicating all the activities.
- **Implement**: Help implement the bullying prevention initiatives. Meet regularly to advance the school plan and address barriers.
- **Set school plan**: Develop, review, evaluate, communicate and share the bullying prevention plan.
- **Educate**: Educate the entire school community (children, youth, school staff, administrators, parents/guardians, and community members), through professional learning initiatives, about building skills for healthy relationships, bullying and their role in its prevention.
- **Assess and Evaluate**: Conduct a school-wide environmental scan (assessment) on bullying and review other available data (e.g., incident reports) to track the progress of the bullying prevention initiative and to make necessary improvements.
- **Revise initiatives**. Based on the feedback from the assessment revisit the goals for bullying prevention initiatives and the implementation plans.
- **Advocate**: Communicate to the entire school community about bullying prevention and champion the issue.
- **Sustain**: Develop a plan to help ensure maintenance and sustainability of bullying prevention initiatives over time.
- **Meet Regularly**. Meet at least three times a year—in September, in January, and in June. Communication between meetings is encouraged.

Fact sheet has been developed by PREVNet, www.prevnet.ca

Communicating and Disseminating the School's Plan on Bullying Prevention and Intervention

The school's plan on bullying prevention and intervention is the foundation of effective practice when it is a "living and breathing" document. It represents the school's concern and commitment to creating a positive social climate, and includes clear processes and procedures to address bullying prevention and intervention. To achieve the goal of a consistent, coherent and coordinated response to bullying, it is essential that the plan be well known and understood by all stakeholders. There are many stakeholders for the bullying plan – children, youth, parents/guardians, administrators, teachers, other school personnel, and community members. All stakeholders should be directly involved in creating and updating the school plan. The following strategies will improve communication about the school plan.

Elementary School Children

- Translate the main ideas into simple language and read with children and youth.
- Have children create pictures that illustrate the main ideas.
- Create posters, graphic novels and/or story boards from these pictures. Post them throughout school and share them with middle schools and secondary schools.
- Send pictures home and assign children the task of explaining the school plan to their parents/guardians.
- Do role plays and assign children and youth the role of Principal, parent/guardian, and teacher. Teachers could take on the role of the person who bullied. Have children play their roles and respond to those who bullied in accordance with the school plan.

Have children and youth unpack the school plan and translate it into values, goals, rules and actions they can take.

Middle and Secondary School Youth

- Have youth paraphrase the school plan in their own words.
- Ask youth what they think is missing, what they would change, and what they would add.
- Have youth "unpack" the school plan by separating its components into: (i) Values, (ii) Goals, (iii) Rules, and (iv) Actions.
- Provide youth with hypothetical scenarios and ask them to apply the plan in responding to the scenario.
- Have youth research Safe School and BPIPs in other regions in Canada and other countries. Compare and contrast these different plans. Ask youth whether or not they would change their own school plan as a result of learning about others.
- Have youth create stories or theatrical performances that involve bullying problems and how their school's plan was used to guide responses.
- Involve youth in creating illustrations and graphic designs for printed and online versions of the plan. Post these throughout the school.
- Involve students in using online technology to communicate the plan to parents/guardians and other stakeholders.

A school plan is a living, breathing document in your school. All members of the school community need to know about it and they need to follow it. Do this through:
- Education
- Communication in multiple means
- And most importantly enacting it!

Parents/Guardians

- Communicate the school plan and Code of Conduct in printed form and have all parents/guardians sign it to indicate they have read and understood it at the beginning of each school year. Translate the plan into relevant languages, if possible.
- Communicate the plan in printed resources such as school calendars, agendas, newsletters, and other opportunities (e.g., curriculum nights, parent information sessions and workshops, school council meetings and performances, etc.).
- Review the school's plan during all bullying prevention presentations, including presentations by external "experts", so that parents/guardians understand the school's commitment to the issue and the plan and procedures that will be followed should their child be involved in a bullying problem.
- Use child/youth-created resources related to the plan (e.g., paraphrased versions in simple language, role plays, films, artwork, and power point slides) when disseminating the plan.
- Include the plan on the school's website.
- Invite parents/guardians to engaging "School Plan Workshops" where the plan is first presented, and then parents/guardians participate in small group discussions to express their opinions and feelings about the plan.

School Personnel

- Help ensure that all personnel are familiar with the plan at the beginning of each school year, through disseminating it in printed and online forms.
- Use guided group discussion, role-plays, and the sharing of relevant experiences with the plan to engage reflection and commitment.
- Use examples of how the plan was utilized in actual bullying issues to enhance understanding of how the plan works in reality while respecting the privacy of the individuals involved.
- Conduct de-briefs after the plan was applied to actual bullying issues to identify what worked well and what didn't. Use this information to revise the plan if needed while respecting the privacy of the individuals involved.
- Help ensure that new school staff and occasional teachers have read the plan.
- Devote sufficient time to explaining and clarifying roles, processes, reporting procedures, and documentation so that they will be applied consistently.
- Recognize teachers, school staff, children and youth for developing creative ways to communicate the plan to their students.