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BULLYING

A BIG PROBLEM WITH BIG CONSEQUENCES



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OBJECTIVES

To help parents:

- Understand how to identify bullying behavior, both face-to-face and online
- Understand reasons these behaviors occur
- Develop strategies to help teens handle bullying behavior in themselves or others – as a victim or a bystander
- Learn steps to take whether their teen is bullying others, being bullied, or is a bystander

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DISCUSSION

Write down your definition of bullying.



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BULLYING DEFINITION

Experts define bullying as behavior that is:

- Physically or emotionally harmful
- Directed at people deemed less powerful
- Perpetrated by a person or group repeatedly over time

DIRECT AGGRESSION

- Occurs face to face
 - For example, physical violence or name calling
- Is more common among boys than girls



INDIRECT AGGRESSION

- Also called relational aggression
- Designed to hurt others by damaging their peer relationships (e.g., social exclusion)
- More common among girls, but girls often do not regard social exclusion as bullying

BULLYING IS MISUNDERSTOOD

When we say things like, "Boys will be boys," or "Bullying is just part of growing up" what messages are we giving our children?

THREE B'S OF BULLYING

- Bully
- Bullied
- Bystander



THOSE WHO BULLY

Tend to be:

- Aggressive, hostile and domineering toward peers
- Stronger than victims, and view aggression positively and peers negatively
- Considered popular, generally, with other kids
- Low scoring on measures of acceptable behavior and cooperation
- Impulsive and lacking in self-control

THOSE WHO ARE BULLIED

Tend to be:

- More anxious, insecure, cautious, sensitive, and quiet than their peers
- What others call “loners”
- Prone to feelings of abandonment

BYSTANDERS

Bystanders are the “supporting cast.”



They don't initiate the bullying, but they either join in or simply stand by and let it happen.

FREQUENCY

- Nearly 32% of U.S. teens are involved in bullying, either as victims, perpetrators, or both.
- 11 million students in the U.S. report being involved with bullying.
- 13% of 6th -10th graders report bullying others, and 11% report being the target of bullies.
- 37% of middle school students report someone being mean to them online (cyberbullying).

CYBERBULLYING DEFINITION

- Bullying behavior exhibited online through such media as:
 - Social networking sites or other websites
 - Email
 - Instant messaging
 - Text messages or images on cell phones
- 70% of cyberbullying occurs while kids are home.

PARENTAL CHARACTERISTICS RELATED TO BULLYING BEHAVIOR

- Generally negative attitude
- Tolerance, or even approval, of aggressive behavior
- Use of “power-assertive” parenting methods, such as physical punishment



WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

- Listen to and acknowledge children's feelings
- Identify alternative responses and discuss possible consequences of each
- Use conflict resolution and communication skills to stop bullying; involve both those who bully and victims in interventions
- Closely monitor children's online activity for cyberbullying
- Report bullying incidents to school authorities

ACTIVITY: BULLYING SCENARIOS

- Choose a scenario from the discussion guide that is typical at your local school or in your community
- Read the scenario and brainstorm strategies for dealing with it
- Discuss ideas for stopping bullying - consider what a victim, bystander, and parent can do

ACTIVITY: CYBERBULLYING ROLE PLAY

- Choose one scenario to enact in a role play
- Then discuss:
 - The pros and cons of each approach
 - Based on the parental response, will the teen depicted likely tell their parents the next time they encounter cyberbullying?

HOMEWORK

Talk with your teen at home about what you have learned using the following handouts:

- Bullying Experiences: A Discussion Guide Including Teens.
- Steps for Dealing with Cyberbullying.

CONCLUSION

As a parent, you can make a critical difference in how your adolescent handles bullying.



EVALUATION AND WRAP-UP

Please complete the evaluation before you go:

- Survey is anonymous
- Feedback will help improve future classes

Thank you for participating and completing the evaluation!

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Find more information on parenting on the University of Minnesota Extension website at www.extension.umn.edu.

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