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Bullying and Cyberbullying: Implications for the Classroom

FOCUS ON THE PRINCIPLES OF CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

1. What does a teacher need to know about bullying and cyberbullying?
2. What can a teacher do to help both the bully and the victim?
3. How can a teacher prevent bullying in the classroom and in the school?

INTRODUCTION

Bullying is one of the most prevalent forms of violence and has become a great concern in Canadian schools, especially with recent media coverage of tragic teen suicides and the introduction of provincial anti-bullying bills. Teachers often feel as though they are on the front lines observing acts of bullying and seeing the pain they can cause. These situations are among the most challenging ones for teachers as they search for appropriate responses and actions that can address the needs of all parties. This increasing concern is timely because, along with the tragic suicide cases, Canada was recently identified as possessing the ninth highest rate of bullying in the 13-years-old category on a scale of 35 countries (Statistics Canada, 2013). The issue of bullying also frequently resonates with teachers at a personal level because it is not uncommon for many adults to have an unpleasant memory related to bullying, either when they were the **victim** of bullying and felt humiliated or ostracised or when they themselves acted as the **bully**. Adults often also have bad memories of having observed acts of bullying. Such memories are deeply affecting, and they often remain in individual psyches as important elements in personal growth and development (Bazelon, 2013). For all these reasons, understanding how to prevent bullying and using appropriate **intervention** techniques and strategies when bullying occurs are part of managing a positive classroom and school environment.

Today, bullying is the most common form of violence experienced by young people with at least 1 in 3 adolescent students in Canada reporting that they have been bullied recently, and 47 percent of Canadian parents reporting having a child who is a victim of bullying (Statistics Canada, 2013). Frequently experienced at school, it is identified by students as a bigger problem than drugs, alcohol, or racism (Hirsch, Lowen, and Santorelli, 2012). Bullying in schools is also receiving a great deal of media attention and concern because it has an enormously detrimental effect on schools as safe learning environments. Once bullying occurs in a person's life, a number of undesirable outcomes are possible, including drug and alcohol abuse, anxiety, low self-esteem and social withdrawal, insecurity, and aggressive reactions. There is, thus, a professional obligation for teachers to understand and recognize bullying in all its manifestations and implications, and it is imperative that they establish some explicit plans for counteracting it when it inevitably raises its ugly head in their classrooms or schools. Carefully watching students' interactions in their classrooms and on the playground is also a teacher's responsibility, as bullying in its various guises can either be extremely obvious or cleverly hidden.

Whatever its manifestation, at its core, bullying is a systematic form of violence that is cruel, devious, and harmful, and which can never be dismissed as benign (Mason, 2013). One of the consequences of bullying in schools is that it infringes on the victims' basic right to human dignity, their sense of freedom and security, and their right to privacy.

CASE STUDY

Joel is an 11-year-old in grade 6 who has recently transferred from his old school to a new one in a new neighbourhood. This transition is a difficult one for him, causing him to feel withdrawn and uncomfortable in this new environment. Joel has noticed that a boy in his class, Mark, has many friends and appears to be a leader and is always the centre of activities. To compound Joel's feelings of insecurity in his new classroom, Mark seems dismissive of any tentative overtures Joel makes to be included.

One day, during recess, Mark approached Joel and said, "Why did you have to come here? I bet nobody liked you in your old school because you are stupid."

Joel could not think of anything to say in response so he just started to walk away.

Mark moved quickly to confront him and pushing his hands into Joel's chest aggressively yelled, "Where do you think you are going? I am talking to you, you little creep!"

A few of the students quickly became interested, gathering around the boys saying, "You tell him Mark!", "Go back where you came from!" and then continually calling Joel "little creep." Other students expressed disgust with Mark's aggression saying, "Leave him alone." Still others said nothing but watched to see what would happen next.

At that moment, Joel started to cry and ran from the school yard, going straight home. While he was tearfully telling his mother about his experiences, the phone

rang. It was the teacher, Miss Aldecott, inquiring about Joel. Sounding very upset, Joel's mother reiterated Joel's story about the incident. Miss Aldecott attempted to defuse the situation by saying, "Boys will be boys," and assuring Joel's mother that she would speak to Mark, assuring her that all would be forgotten by the next day.

The next day, Joel felt reluctant about going to school but his mother promised him that everything would be fine. Joel felt very nervous about going on the school yard at recess, fearing a repetition of the previous day's bullying; however, everyone was acting as though nothing had happened—but then Joel began to notice that several students were looking at their cell phones, glancing at him, and laughing. He pulled his phone from his pocket and checked his messages. Sure enough, there was a message from Mark with a picture of Joel attached with the label, "Only cry-babies run home." Mark's closest friends began to laugh and to fake crying and rubbing their eyes. Joel felt miserable but tried to hide his feelings to avoid further humiliation.

Mark continued to harass Joel by pushing or punching him in the hallways when no one was watching. This behaviour continued for a couple of weeks off and on and Joel became increasingly insecure and unhappy. He did not confide, however, in his parents until his mother noticed a bruise on his arm. When his parents probed, Joel first hesitated but finally told them everything that he was enduring. Remembering the ineffective response of the teacher, his parents decided to call the police.

That same day, the police arrived and Joel told them the entire sequence of events. The police then went directly to Mark's house and asked to speak with him in the presence of his parents. They gave him a strong warning

about his bullying behaviour and told him to desist unless he wanted them to take further action. Mark's parents were horrified and reinforced the police position but began to question why Mark had chosen to be a bully.

The police had really frightened Mark, and his parents' reaction had made him feel ashamed. The next day he went to school and discovered that everyone knew the police had been at his house discussing his behaviour toward Joel. His normal group of friends avoided him, and he began to feel isolated and depressed. Over the next few weeks, his parents grew increasingly worried about his absolute refusal to go back to school. The situation became so extreme that they sought professional medical help for Mark. Mark was not able to attend school for a number of months and when he did return, his parents transferred him to another school.

Questions to Consider

1. Is there something Miss Aldecott could have done to help Joel integrate into his new school more successfully?
2. What actions warranted calling Mark a bully?
3. What did the bystanders do in this case? What could they have done to defuse the situation?
4. What, if anything, could Miss Aldecott have done the first day to have ensured the bullying was not continued?
5. Why did Joel not confide in anyone as the bullying continued?
6. Did Joel's parents do the right thing by calling the police? What other options might have been more effective?
7. In your opinion, which is more common currently: direct bullying or cyberbullying? Which do you believe has the most harmful effects for those involved?
8. At what point did Mark become a victim, too?

BULLYING PATTERNS

It is important to recognize bullying patterns and, to that end, here are three characteristics that describe bullying.

1. The bullying action is repeated again and again. It is not a one-time occurrence.
2. The bullying is intentional. The bully wants to cause fear, distress, or even actual physical harm to the victim. The behaviour is not an accident in any way. Additionally, the bully takes pleasure in the negative impact the behaviour has on the victim.
3. Bullying does not occur when people are evenly matched. There is always an imbalance in power or control between the victim and the bully. Bullies are generally one or more of the following: stronger, older, more popular, or wealthier; possess better technological skills; know something embarrassing about the victim; are homophobic; or focus on a person's limitations.

FORMS OF BULLYING

Bullying can take a variety of forms that are all extensions of the previously mentioned characteristics. First, bullying can be physical, with either a person or his property being harmed or damaged in some way. Physical bullying, which is most obvious to an onlooker, can take the form of hitting, punching, slapping, pushing, pinching, chasing, or kicking. It also take more subtle forms of physical violation, such as locking a person in a confined space or touching a person in an unwelcoming or threatening way or destroying or stealing personal belongings.

Second, bullying can be verbal. In verbal bullying, a person is intentionally hurt through insults or name-calling, threats, or hurtful teasing or taunting, sometimes with the intent of providing amusement to those nearby. A more insidious form of verbal bullying involves the use of racial or homophobic comments. This common form of bullying is particularly devastating, but is not always observed by others, especially by adults, even when they are in the vicinity. Verbal bullying may also take the form of spreading rumours or gossip about others, regardless of whether the information is accurate. This form of verbal bullying is especially prevalent among adolescents.

A final common type of bullying takes the form of social actions. In these cases, a person can be ostracized from a social group. The ostracization is often accompanied by threatening or taunting notes, negative social media messages, and/or threatening telephone calls. Social bullying can manifest itself through mobbing: humiliating or threatening gestures made in public that are designed to put the victim down. Social bullying can also take the form of prominently displaying insulting or threatening graffiti in a variety of places.

A more recent and equally disturbing type of bullying that can be found in isolation or in combination with the methods already mentioned is cyberbullying, which uses online social media—often in the form email or text messaging—to threaten, put down, spread rumours, intimidate, or make fun of someone (Li, 2007).

Cyberbullying

The term *cyberbullying* is a relatively new word the definition of which evolves at about the same pace as the technology that acts as a conduit for this type of abuse, degradation, insult, and rumour generation. Cyberbullying refers to the posting of

usually anonymous, mean-spirited messages about a person (often a student) through a variety of social media and electronic devices (Bolton & Graeves 2005).

The last word of the definition, *anonymously*, also includes being invisible, which are aspects that set face-to-face bullying and cyberbullying apart. In this case, the target is always accessible, the abuse is replicable easily, and the audience for the bullying tactics can be limitless. Many young people who are being harassed online also endure simultaneous face-to-face bullying (Sontag, Clemans, Grabe, and Lyndon, 2011), and the combined damage can be particularly harmful (Hinduja and Patchin, 2010). The hurt that these bullies inflict may have effects that can lead to disastrously extreme results. Recently, there have been several cases where victims of cyberbullying have become so depressed that they ended their own lives.

Another factor that sets cyberbullying apart from traditional bullying is that it is not necessary for the **cyberbully** to have a physical advantage over the person at the “receiving end” of the attack(s). It is also not compulsory for the electronic tormenter to have a mastery of the English language. They have the luxury of composing their insults behind closed doors and taking as much time as they need to tweak their e-insults for maximum injury. Also, children’s digital messages can be edited by others to change the meaning and then forwarded to other children to embarrass, intimidate, and insult—often in an attempt to create humour at the expense of the original message creator.

The electronic nature of cyberbullying allows the virtual perpetrator to abuse the victim but remain hidden behind the technology. In fact, not only is proximity unnecessary, the cyberbully may execute the assaults from anywhere on the planet, thereby allowing a high degree of anonymity; however, the results of the harassment are no less devastating than face-to-face bullying (Limber, 2012). In fact, cyberbullies are not necessarily the same ones who conduct face-to-face bullying. Many young people who are not otherwise aggressive may be perpetrators of cyberbullying because technology grants a sense of safety and distance from the victim (Tokunaga, 2010). Cyberbullies report that they bully online because it makes them feel funny, popular, and powerful—although many reported feeling guilty afterward. Victims of cyberbullying have reported feeling, angry, sad, and depressed after being bullied online. Unfortunately, most young people who are cyberbullied believe they have little recourse when they are targeted in this way. Most of those who admitted to being cyberbullied did not tell anyone about it (Hargrove, 2013; Mishna, Cook, Gadalla, Daciuk, and Solomon, 2010).

A number of different kinds of cyberbullying have been identified (Canadian Red Cross, 2014). These include:

Harassment—repeatedly sending offensive, rude and insulting messages to an individual.

Denigration—distributing derogatory and often untrue information about someone else by posting it on a webpage, or sending it through email or instant messaging, or posting or circulating photos of someone in a compromising position or pictures that are digitally altered.

Flaming—online “fighting” using electronic messages with angry and vulgar language.

Impersonation—hacking into an email or social networking account and using that person’s online identity to send or post vicious or embarrassing material to others or about others.

Outing or Trickery—sharing someone’s secrets or embarrassing information or tricking someone into revealing secrets or embarrassing material about themselves, which is then forwarded to others.

Cyber Stalking—repeatedly sending threatening or highly intimidating messages to the receiver, or engaging in online activities that make a person afraid for his personal safety.

Sometimes cyberbullies combine the previously mentioned methods to humiliate publically the victim; for instance, a cyberbully posts a derogatory message about a fellow student on Facebook and others “gang up” on that student and bombard him with flaming emails. Those who participate in such actions are more likely to be supportive of cyberbullying without realizing the pivotal role they are playing in harming the victim.

SOCIETAL INFLUENCES ON BULLIES

Before considering causes and effects of bullying, it is worth reflecting upon the bigger societal picture that may be related to this issue. Among adult Canadians, 38 percent of males and 30 percent of females reported having experienced occasional or frequent bullying during their school years. Sadly, the bullying experiences of adults are more than memories, as 40 percent of Canadian workers experience bullying on a weekly basis (Statistics Canada, 2013). Children do not learn their behaviour simply by trying new behaviours and either succeeding or failing; rather, they depend strongly upon the replication of the actions of others. Children are often exposed to adults who bully at all levels, including home life, social interactions, the political arena, and frequently in the evening news. They are also often exposed to violent movies and television shows that have bullying embedded and frequently celebrated in the action.

According to Social Cognitive Theory, children learn by observing others, with the environment, behaviour, and cognition as the chief factors that combine to influence development (Bandura, 1991; 2001; 2011). For instance, through observational learning, children may adopt certain values by which they may begin to judge the behaviour of others, and later internalize that behaviour as their own. Bandura (2011) identified that observational learning does not limit itself only to the adoption of new, presumably good moral values and behaviours, it also may enforce or weaken existing values; thus, parents and educators need to be especially cognizant of the role model they are providing for young people in their social relationships. When we consider the various forms of bullying that permeate society and serve as potential role models for children and young people’s behaviour, perhaps it should not be surprising that many children think it is permissible to bully or be mean to others in order to elevate themselves in the eyes of their peers or to feel superior.

A WORLD-WIDE PROBLEM

Bullying behaviours know no limits and can be found in all countries at all levels of society. Wherever it is found and whatever form it takes, bullying runs counter to the UN Convention of 1990 on the rights of children, which determined that any child has the right to feel safe at home, in school, and in the community. As awareness grows of this antisocial behaviour, many countries have identified bullying as a critical public

health issue. For more than 20 years, the World Health Organization has been involved in research studies with international researchers from over 30 countries and has concluded that bullying is a health issue that knows no boundaries (Canadian Council on Learning, 2008). Wherever it occurs, the behavioural patterns and the consequences are the same. Although bullying occurs everywhere in the world, the data is particularly strong for North America, Europe, and Russia, while it appears slightly less prevalent in the Scandinavian countries. We also know that bullying of any kind in any country does not go away without direct intervention. In fact, without intervention, it often gets worse (Larochette, Craig, and Murphy, 2010).

BULLYING AND CYBERBULLYING IN CANADA

Data on bullying has been collected by Canadian researchers since the early 1990s and they have concluded that bullying exists as a serious social problem in schools of all levels in Canada, including the earliest months of schooling, to a degree that it cannot be ignored or discounted (Pepler and Craig, 2011). It is startling to note that among Canadian youth in grades 6 through 10, between 17 and 25 percent report having been bullied once to twice in the past few months. Among adolescents, 1 in 3 students report having been bullied recently (Statistics Canada, 2012). The result of bullying is that the victims often suffer from severe anxiety, intimidation, and chronic fear (Battley and Ebbeck, 2013; Marini, Spear, and Bombay, 1999; Smokowski and Kopasz, 2004). Systematic observations of children on playgrounds note that some type of bullying occurs every 7 minutes. When children are in the classroom, bullying occurs once every 25 minutes (O'Connell, Pepler, and Craig, 1999). Males are more likely to be bullies and females are more likely to be victims and are more likely to report the incident to adults (Li, 2007). More recently, 10 percent of adults who live with adolescents report the occurrence of cyberbullying (Statistics Canada, 2012). Girls tend to be more involved in cyberbullying and are more frequently bullied than are boys. Boys are more likely to both experience and get involved in direct, physically aggressive forms of bullying (Mason, 2013). It should then come as no surprise that Canadian children spend a considerable chunk of their time using communication gadgets. Canadian children between 8 and 18 years old spend an average 6 hours per day using laptops and smartphones for communication, entertainment and as an information source (Rubin, 2014).

According to a Canadian study by Janosz, Archambault, Pagani, Morin, and Bowen (2008), there are equally concerning and serious detrimental effects to merely witnessing school violence. Students who witness violence can feel anxiety and depression, which can result in either aggression or feelings of victimization whether they were the recipient of the violence or not. These feelings, at their root, manifest a sense of powerlessness, fear, and insecurity—none of which are readily acknowledged by youth but which they often articulate as a dislike of school. Over 50 percent of students also report that they hear verbal abuse at least several times a week and often every day in their lives. Over 20 percent of students have heard threats to others and about one in six students reported observing older students harassing younger ones and 12 percent reported having been bullied themselves once a week or more.

It is important to note that there is increasing recognition that this most important topic needs to be viewed in new ways if we are to be successful in creating safe environments for all students. There is an instinctive approach of feeling sorry for

the victim and a desire to provide the victim with help or to punish the bully so that justice appears to be served. Additionally, there is a tendency to identify bystanders and shower them with guilt. This traditional thinking and accompanying actions are questionable because they are largely unsuccessful at having any significant impact (Mason, 2013). Bullies are part of the equation, as are impassive bystanders. If the problem is to be remedied and relationships restored so the community becomes safe for all members, each participant in the bullying situation needs to be addressed so that violation of rules and moral integrity can be repaired for everyone's well-being. It is vital to elevate the repairing of community relationships above the desire for revenge and punishment.

According to the Canadian Teachers Federation (2008), 34 percent of Canadian teachers surveyed knew of students in their community who had been victims of cyberbullying during the past year and additionally, one respondent in five was aware of teachers who had been cyberbullied. In this same survey, 89 percent of teachers ranked cyberbullying as their issue of highest concern. Surveys of Canadian teachers confirm that teachers believe that bullying and violence are serious problems in Canadian schools (Mishna et al., 2010). In 2011, another research project reported that cyberbullying is most rampant on social networking platforms as young people abandon email in favour of text and instant messaging (Knighton, 2012). About half of all victims of cyberbullying report that they know their perpetrators and that they do not reveal their names to adults (Tokunaga, 2010).

Nova Scotia's Cyberbullying Task Force Online Survey in 2011 found that 75 percent of respondents said they believe that cyberbullying is a serious problem in that province's schools. Additionally 60 percent of student responders indicated that they had been cyberbullied (MacKay, 2012).

A Statistics Canada report from 2009 found that girls are more often involved in cyberbullying incidents than boys are (86 percent compared to 55 percent) and that cyberbullying incidents are slightly more prevalent in students between those aged 8 and 12 years old (Hargrove, 2013). Nevertheless, it is a fact in the lives of many young people between the ages of 8 and 18.

In one large study of 7313 grade 6 to grade 10 students, depression was associated with four forms of bullying (Wang, Nansel, and Iannotti, 2011). This study is one of a growing number of studies that examines depression and the association with various forms of bullying and victimization. The forms are identified as physical, verbal, relational, and cyber. These researchers also observe increased depression levels among bullies, victims, and bully-victims (a person who is both a bully and a victim of bullying). It is important to note that higher depression was found in cyberbullying victims than in bullies or bully-victims in face-to-face encounters. Results suggest that more research is needed on this very critical issue that is emerging and evolving with the technology.

CHARACTERISTICS OF BULLIES

Bullies share some common characteristics including the possibility that they may witness physical or verbal violence or aggression at home. As a result, they often see this behaviour through a biased lens that reinforces aggression toward others. It is what they know! They have not been taught to view their actions in relation to how those actions make others feel. Physically they are usually strong, think highly of

themselves, and may be popular with their peers. As they thrive on creating fear, they are constantly teasing or laughing at those around them as a sort of test. They are looking for a victim who does not retaliate or report the incident but rather one who shows weakness and fear. The bully usually establishes a victim after the first interaction when the imbalance of power becomes evident to both the bully and the victim. This pattern explains why children who are targeted usually find themselves in the same situation over and over again even when they change schools.

Bullies are of concern to educators because they have certain characteristics that need modifying as they mature to become productive citizens.

1. They generally lack empathy and concern for others and tend to demonstrate a strong need to dominate or even subdue others.
2. Quick to anger, they are frequently defiant, oppositional, and aggressive toward intervening adults.
3. As they mature, they are at increased risk of becoming involved in criminal activities and often become engaged in illegal drug use and other antisocial behaviours (Beran, Hughes, and Lupart, 2008).

CHARACTERISTICS OF VICTIMS

Victims of bullying are usually people who are perceived to be vulnerable or different in some way. They tend to dress differently, often being part of an under-represented group. Those who learn more slowly or who are unskilled in technological or other skills can also become targets for bullying. Conversely, in some cases high achievers can also be targeted by bullies. Basically, weaknesses or differences of any kind make a person vulnerable to aggressive bullies. Three characteristics have been identified in recognizing exploitable weaknesses in victims.

1. They may have poor social skills that create difficulty interacting with their peers and “fitting in” or in picking up appropriate social cues. These deficits may make the persons appear odd or different from the majority of their peers at an age where “sameness” is valued.
2. They have few or no friends and thus lack a social network to help when harassment occurs. Newcomers to a school may undergo a period of vulnerability in the process of adjustment before they make friends and may become easy targets for bullies.
3. They may be shy and have nonconfrontational personalities, generally failing to assert themselves against their aggressors. Rather, victims may respond by crying, giving in to demands, begging to be left alone, or merely carefully avoiding the bully by changing routes from school or practicing careful avoidance on the playground (Gini, 2008).

Alternatively, some victims may be proactive when attacked by a bully but are socially unskilled, and their actions may irritate their peers and bullies further. They are not accomplished fighters, either physically or verbally, and at times, their behaviour may allow other children or even adults to feel that the attacks are justified. It has also been suggested that this irritation to others can sometimes be caused by hyperactivity disorders in victims (Toblin, Schwartz, Hopmeyer Gorman, and Abou-ezzeddone, 2005).

CHARACTERISTICS OF BYSTANDERS

Most young people have been in the role of bystanders of a bullying incident at some time in their lives where their presence has had the potential to influence both the bully and the victim (Mason, 2013). Bystanders can choose to play a positive role in the bullying situation by trying to make the bully stop, by reporting the incident to someone in authority, or by comforting the victim. Conversely, they can choose to encourage the bully by actively joining in the bullying, by cheering and encouraging, or by laughing during or after bullying incidents. Finally, bystanders can simply remain neutral by choosing not to become involved and by merely observing in silence while providing a passive audience for the bully. The decision to do nothing may actually serve to reinforce the bullies in their actions (Hirsch, Lowen, and Santorelli, 2012). During cyberbullying incidents, which also take place in a public forum with a potentially unlimited audience, bystanders are more inclined to remain passive (Holfeld, 2014). After initially observing the bullying online, however, if the recipients either support negative messages directly or forward them, they join the bullying process (Affan, 2013).

The factors that influence the choices made by bystanders are numerous and include their relationships with the bully or with the victim (Hirsch, Lowen, and Santorelli, 2012). According to Pozzoli and Gini (2012), the context in which the bullying occurs is critical to determining bystander reaction. The contextual environment includes the nature of the peer group, the school, and the parents as well as whether any assertiveness training or bullying intervention has been undergone. Nevertheless, certain general characteristics are common to many bystanders. A primary reason for people remaining passive is the fear of becoming victims themselves by finding themselves as new targets for the bully. Some bystanders feel that if they intervene, they will make the situation worse; therefore, they remain indecisive not knowing what to do. Reporting the incident to authority figures is sometimes viewed negatively as accusations of being a “snitch” or a “tattle tell” can result. They also may feel that adults will not do anything to help the situation. If a culture of respect has been established and a reporting procedure encouraged, however, bystanders are more likely to trust an adult with the bullying information.

While bullies and victims both clearly experience negative effects of the bullying experiences, there are negative effects for the bystanders as well. Bystanders may be afraid to associate with the victim for fear of becoming an additional target. They may also feel guilt and helplessness for not doing anything to stop the bullying. Most concerning is that the power allocated to the bully may become appealing to the bystanders, and they may begin to find bullying acceptable and emulate the bullying activities (Mason, 2013). Teaching bystanders to recognize bullying when they see it, to respond appropriately to it, and to report it to an adult helps alleviate some of the possible negative outcomes for the bystander.

INDICATORS THAT A CHILD IS BEING BULLIED

Although children who are being bullied often remain silent, they do project certain clues to an observant teacher or parent. They may complain in nonspecific terms of being treated poorly by their peers and appear uncharacteristically sad or depressed.

Additionally, there may be physical factors that indicate bullying is occurring; for instance, some children may suffer from lack of sleep and nightmares, or may feel sick, especially in the morning before they go to school. Eating habits may change with children either having no appetite and losing weight or overeating and gaining a large amount of weight. They may also have angry outbursts or become unusually aggressive toward younger children or siblings. Parents may report that their child is unwilling to go to school or that the child changes the route to school or even feigns sickness in order to skip school. A bullied child may come home with torn clothes and unexplained bruises or have inexplicably lost money. Children's relationships and friendships may change. It is likely that both parents and teachers will notice a distinct drop in school performance (Beran, Hughes, and Lupart, 2008).

Studies have shown that children who are bullied or even those who have served as bystanders to bullying generally have higher overall anxiety levels (Carney, Hazler, Hibbel, and Grandner, 2010). Even more concerning is the fact that research studies have found that a major impact of bullying victimization can be found in an increased incidence of depression up to 35 years later, and the younger the child was at the time of the bullying, the stronger the effect was (Ttofi, Farrington, Losel, and Loeber, 2009). Statistics Canada (2012) points out that any participation in bullying increases the risk of suicidal ideas in youth. Canada has recently had a number of highly public cases where bullying has led to teenage suicide. These deaths have served to further raise public awareness and have resulted in concerted preventative actions at the school and board levels as well as at provincial and federal government levels.

In addition to the immediate impact on the victim, research has also established a relationship between childhood and adolescent bullying and criminal offending in later life (Piquero, Connell, Piquero, Farrington, and Jennings, 2013). Researchers unanimously promote the implementation of anti-bullying programs that could be viewed as a form of early crime prevention (Ttofi, Farrington, Losel, and Loeber, 2011).

HOW TO HELP A CHILD WHO IS BEING BULLIED

First, it is imperative for teachers to be alert and observant regarding the behaviours in his class that may indicate bullying. Remember that the victim is not only hurt and fearful but also usually embarrassed and humiliated, all of which leads to reluctance to tattle for fear of further retribution. Children will only talk to you about their bullying experiences if they feel you will listen and help them. For them, this is a crisis situation and you initially need to remember the three S's of crisis management.

1. **Safe and Secure:** Let children know that you will ensure that they are safe and that you will protect them from any harm. Thank them for sharing and ask them to tell you more about it.
2. **Stability:** Keep the current routines and maintain the status quo in the classroom environment. This can provide comfort to a scared child. Avoid appearing upset or angry yourself. This is another instance of the appropriateness of applying the CALM model and remaining in control of your emotions.
3. **Support:** Validate their fears and experiences in the bullying situation and be reassuring that eventually this crisis will pass (Mason, 2013). Avoid being an

interrogator. Instead, ask them to tell you more about it and validate their feelings and their fear during their description (i.e., “I know you feel worried.”; “I see you are distressed.”).

Follow these steps in order to write down what happened. Avoid editorializing and suggesting how they could have reacted differently.

1. What happened.
2. Where and when it happened.
3. Names of those involved.
4. Names of witnesses.
5. Nature of the tactics used by the bully.
6. How the victim reacted.
7. How the bully and bystanders responded (Mason, 2013).

An intervention can be set up by a caring and knowledgeable teacher who remains calm, is supportive and reassuring, and reassures by offering to help. An example of one such intervention that can be used by a caring teacher is the Five-Step Technique.

The Five-Step Technique “It’s All About Me (and You)”

The Five-Step Technique is a first step in solving a bullying issue. This process brings the bully and victim together for a discussion and explanation of the events in the presence of the teacher. This technique is effective when a teacher becomes aware of a case of bullying, and it provides a chance for resolution and perspective taking. Both victim and bully have a chance to express their rationale, feelings, and interpretations of the incidents. If the bullying persists, parents should be informed.

Three elements are necessary for the success of this technique.

1. The victim prepares a list of “I statements”; for example: “I don’t like it when . . .” and “It makes me feel . . .”
2. The bully must be the ringleader and be recognized by all as the leader of the bullying.
3. The facilitator must be able to guide the two participants through the five steps.

Step 1: A meeting is held with the facilitator and the victim to review the victim’s concerns. The victim prepares the list of “I” statements and practices saying the list aloud. The facilitator coaches for eye contact, body language, voice tone, and such.

Step 2: Without prior knowledge, the bully is asked into the room and is seated across from the victim. The facilitator sits to form a triangle of chairs.

Step 3: The facilitator goes over the rules first. The rules include the following:

- a) Be honest with yourself.
- b) Be honest with each other.
- c) Check any bad attitudes at the door.

Step 4: The facilitator starts by looking at the bully and says, “(bully’s name), I understand you have been paying a lot of attention over the past (give time frame) to (victim’s name), and I would like you to hear the results of your actions.”

Step 5: The facilitator looks at the victim and has him read the first concern. Once it is read, the facilitator looks at the bully and says, “I would like you to respond to that.” (The bully may want to avoid eye contact with the victim, but the facilitator should prompt him to do so.) This process continues until the victim’s list is complete with the bully answering each one of the concerns separately.

Ending the Meeting: The victim is excused and the facilitator addresses the bully. “Did you like this meeting today?” Listen to the bully’s answer, and then say, “If you do not want to have another meeting then go back and tell your friends there will be no more bullying of (victim’s name). If I or anyone else hears of you or your friends continuing the bullying, you will be called back for another meeting.”

Note: The bully at this point may try to take on the role of victim, and the facilitator must emphasize that the bully will be brought back in if the bullying does not stop. It might help to suggest the leadership qualities the bully possesses and the fact that others look up to him and the influence he has over the attitudes of others. Finally, make it very clear that this meeting will not be discussed outside the room.

Also: Either the victim or the bully (or both) may shed tears, in which case the facilitator should merely carry on (Michael, 2007).

HOW TO HELP A CHILD WHO IS A BULLY

When you decide to confront a child who is bullying for a one-on-one discussion, and to let him know that while you dislike the behaviour, you like many other qualities you have observed in him. It is, however, vital to make it clear that bullying behaviour is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. Point out that it is harmful to others. Hold the bully accountable for his actions and do not accept any rationalizations made in self-defence. Remember also that some children bully because they have been bullied themselves, so it may be important to watch for this possibility as you are trying to form a picture of what is occurring (Raising Children Network, 2014).

The message to the bully is:

- Stop bullying immediately.
- Bullying will not be tolerated in any form.
- Everyone in every role—bully, bullied, and bystanders—are harmed.
- Bullying sets a bad example for others, especially younger observers.
- Bullying can cause the bully to lose friends.
- Everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Everyone is different and has a right to be different.
- There are other ways to resolve conflict (Mason, 2013).

The discussion could include asking for their side of the story (everyone deserves to be heard). You could also ask about what he was thinking at the time. Contrast that response to what are you feeling now? How do you think the victim is feeling now? What have you been thinking about since the bullying incident(s)? The most important question to which you need to arrive is “What do you need to do to put things right?”

PROTECTING YOUNG PEOPLE FROM CYBERBULLYING

Interventions from teachers and parents may be necessary in some circumstances, but it is increasingly important to try and establish a school or classroom environment where bullying is less likely to occur. Many schools are becoming more proactive about creating policies and pledges to address the issues and have open discussions with students about how they can monitor their own online actions and reputation. It is useful to share all such policies with parents and community partners. Many schools are also training teachers on preventing and responding to cyberbullying.

Students need to understand the harm that cyberbullying causes, and there are plenty of disastrous examples in the news of victims whose parents have shared their stories in the public forum in order to help counter the cyberbullying trend. It is also important that students understand that, generally, whenever there is an online bully and a victim, there are also silent observers (bystanders). A teacher should point out the differences between humour and teasing and hurtful behaviour and taunting, and that the line between them is very fine. They should also identify what is acceptable and what is not.

On the large scale of character development, teachers should model and teach empathy, especially in the context of internet communications. The practical steps of dealing with cyberbullying such as blocking users whose messages are hurtful or threatening should be taught as a first step. Other recommendations include establishing a bullying prevention committee to whom students can report incidents of cyberbullying, either as victims or observers/bystanders. The principal should be informed of these incidents, and he should act upon them. There is also general agreement that there needs to be a national consensus about what constitutes cyberbullying, and similar consequences should apply across the provinces.



Cyber or online bullying concept with two young women students or teenager girls shocked at the text they are reading on their cell phone, perfect for awareness.

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Bring Parents into the Solution

There may already be a policy in place in your school about keeping parents informed, but it is important that teachers make every attempt to ensure that parents understand the full story and become partners in trying to help the bully move past the need to intimidate. Talk about the need to build the bully's self-esteem as well as to provide positive attention both at home and at school. In some cases, a "behaviour contract" may be appropriate. The contract is most effective when it is made with the school, the child, and the parents.

Applying Consequences

If the bully is resistant or repeats the offense, it will be necessary to apply logical and forewarned consequences that are consistent with the policy of the school. It is best to consult with the administration and the parents prior to applying the consequences to gain their support. The key to successfully applying consequences is to avoid punishment for its own sake and rather focus on a discipline that helps the bully learn that his behaviour is inappropriate and harmful (McCready, 2012). Lecturing is not helpful!

Asking how the bully felt while bullying is useful, and follow up by asking how the bully thinks the victim felt. A simple act of kindness to the victim can be effective learning for the bully. For instance:

- For destroying personal belongings: Replace them.
- For physically harming a classmate: Write a note poem or story about what's great about the person (best applied when the victim is a former friend).
- For starting a rumour: Write a letter about how the rumour hurt the person and tell the truth to those who heard the rumour.
- For blaming the victim for something the bully did: Publicly acknowledge and take responsibility (McCready, 2012).

Preventing Bullying in Schools

"No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite." (Mandela, 1995 p. 622)

Given the prevalence of bullying in its various forms and the accompanying enormously destructive results combined with the fact that so much bullying occurs at school, educators have both a professional and moral obligation to understand the phenomenon and to know the best ways to intervene. The nature of intervention and its effectiveness has been under much debate over the years; however, there is agreement that the "Let them work it out" approach or similar ignoring techniques are insufficient. Thus, as the new millennium progresses, every successful teacher will need to be able to recognize the genesis of potential bullying situations and manage these behaviours properly. Teachers must be proficient in defusing such situations and directing students toward more prosocial means of conflict resolution (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, and Schellinger, 2011; Novak and Purkey, 2001). Some educators have suggested that given the prevalence of bully activities, teachers should not wait for bullying to occur but rather assume that it is happening and behave accordingly (Hirsch, Lowen, and Santorelli, 2012). There are several practices

and programs that have been designed to reduce and hopefully prevent bullying and cyberbullying. Many schools are becoming more proactive about creating policies and pledges to address the issues and have open discussions with students about how they can monitor their own online actions and reputation. It is useful to share all such policies with parents and community partners. Many schools are also training teachers on preventing and responding to cyberbullying.

Many governments have implemented “safe school” legislation to enable schools to become free of violence and fear so that learning can be the focus. In the following pages, several proactive prevention methods, interventions, and school programs will be discussed.

WHAT TEACHERS NEED TO LEARN ABOUT BULLYING

Before embarking on any program of intervention or prevention, teachers need to consider the existing anti-bullying legislation from the province, policies of their school board and the school, as well as any existing local initiatives. They should also review current and accurate data on bullying behaviours and victimization. Consideration needs to be given to the population or composition of students and parents including such factors as race, religion, and culture. It is also useful to consider the rates and nature of hate crimes committed by minors in the area. Hate crimes are defined as criminal offenses motivated by hate toward an identifiable group. Unfortunately, hate crimes in Canada are on the rise, with most people aware that the number of hate crimes reported differs sharply from the actual number of incidents as many such crimes go unreported (Dauvergne and Brennan, 2009). Sadly, many hate crimes are perpetrated by 12- to 17-year-olds, with the majority of the hate crimes reported listing race or ethnicity as the reason for the incident (Dauvergne and Brennan, 2009). With the increased discussion of religious differences and the growing intolerance in some provinces for immigrants of other cultures and religions, this issue is becoming more relevant to Canadians. Statistics indicate that issues of ethnicity, religion, and sexual orientation are taken seriously by young people today. Perspectives on these issues are learned primarily from the media, from their parents, and from each other. For this reason, young people benefit from a conscious consideration of their personal perspective through the use of anti-bullying programs.

The reality is that most effective anti-bullying programs require engagement beyond the school, and require cooperation among parents, teachers, and the entire community (Mitchell, 2012). Adults in the school need to be models of respectful and caring behaviour toward students, each other, and the school administration. An example of good modelling occurs when adults avoid being passive bystanders and respectfully and quickly intervene when bullying does occur. Once the prior information and behaviour has been consulted, considered, and acted upon, there are a number of different ways to proceed. It is important to remember that when selecting an anti-bullying program of any kind, due diligence needs to be exercised so that the selected program that has evidence of effectiveness around areas of concern for your school or class. Then, the program must be implemented well and monitored judiciously in order to ensure successful outcomes (Jones, Weissbourd, and Ross, 2012).

SCHOOLWIDE ANTI-BULLYING PROGRAMS

More and more schools are establishing programs that help students develop the skills they will need to successfully handle life's challenges and thrive in their learning and social environments. When social and emotional skills and an understanding of moral standards become the focus of the school or classroom, the resulting climate helps prevent or reduce bullying (Bosaki, Marini, and Dane, 2006; Knoff, 2007).

One such program is called Social and Emotional Learning (SEL). Through this program, students acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that need to successfully identify their emotions so they can exercise the control to demonstrate concern and caring for others, build strong interpersonal relationships, make good decisions, and handle challenging social situations positively and constructively (Hirsch, Lowen, and Santorelli, 2012). The five components to attaining these social and emotional skills are:

1. **Self-awareness:** Being able to accurately assess one's feelings and strengths, which contributes to a sense of self-confidence.
2. **Self-management:** Being able to regulate one's emotions to handle stressful situations and control negative impulses and instead express emotions constructively. Also, to learn to set goals and monitor progress toward achieving those goals.
3. **Social awareness:** Developing the ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others; identifying and following societal standards of conduct; and using family, school, and community resources.
4. **Relationship skills:** Establishing and maintaining strong relationships based on cooperation. Being able to resist inappropriate social pressure and resolving interpersonal conflict and knowing when to seek help.
5. **Responsible decision-making:** Possessing the ability to make decisions based on an understanding of ethical standards, safety issues, respect for others, and possible consequences.

There are many excellent SEL curricula and programs available online that provide sequential and developmentally appropriate instruction in these skills (i.e., <http://www.casel.org/social-and-emotional-learning/> and <http://www.edutopia.org/sel-research-evidence-based-programs>).

Olweus Bullying Prevention Program

One of the most influential anti-bullying programs is the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, developed in 1993 by Dans Olweus of Norway. It is considered to be the one of the most researched and well-known anti-bullying programs in the world. It has also been evaluated several times and employed in over 12 countries, including Canada. It is comprehensive and schoolwide and can be used in elementary or high schools. The elements of this program include:

- Form a Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee.
- Conduct committee and staff training.
- Assess the nature and prevalence of bullying by administering the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire schoolwide.
- Hold staff meetings for discussions and invite parents.
- Hold a school kick-off event to launch the program.

- Increase adult supervision in known “hot spots” where bullying occurs most frequently.
- Establish class rules against bullying that are enforced consistently.
- Hold meetings with students involved in bullying.
- Hold meetings with parents of students involved in bullying.
- Intervene with students who are either bullies or victims of bullying.
- Provide disciplinary methods in a warm and loving framework rather than in a punitive, zero tolerance atmosphere for the best outcomes (Smith, Salmivalli, and Cowie, 2012).

When followed consistently, this program has resulted in a reduction of 50 percent or more in reported incidents of bullying as well as a significant reduction in the number of reports about anti-social behaviour such as vandalism, fighting, theft, and truancy. These results are accompanied by students’ reports of more positive social relationships and more positive attitudes toward school in general (Centre for the Study and Prevention of Violence, 2006).

In Canada, the Education Ministries of most provinces have explicit information for educators about how to prevent bullying in their schools and classrooms by using particular programs (i.e., Ontario: Abuse, Bullying and Violence Prevention—Beyond the Hurt; Alberta: Safe and Caring Schools and Communities; New Brunswick: It Hurts It’s Wrong; Quebec: Action Plan to Prevent and Deal with Violence in the Schools; Saskatchewan: Anti-bullying Action Plan; Newfoundland and Labrador: Bullying Intervention Protocol). There is an emerging consensus in the bullying prevention literature that the whole-school approach is the most effective and long-lasting approach to bullying in schools. The foundation of such programs is the creation of an anti-bullying policy and anti-bullying initiatives that are consistently applied. This means that everyone understands the initiative—from teacher and staff roles and responsibilities, to the code of conduct for students and the clear consequences for bullying incidents. Successful whole-school programs have the following elements:

1. Strong teacher leadership.
2. Strong student-teacher bonds.
3. Clear and consistent norms for behaviour.
4. Use of both positive and negative consequences, with problematic behaviours being identified quickly and just as quickly reprimanded.
5. Parental awareness and involvement.
6. Focused and intense supervision before and after school and during lunch and recess breaks, including awareness of “hot spots” for bullying in the past.
7. Support from all stakeholders including, teachers, staff, administrators, parents, and students themselves.
8. Student involvement at all levels of the program. [This critical element can include regular class meetings to discuss aspects of bullying, including students on the committee overseeing the program and also including them in the implementation of the strategies in use.]
9. An ongoing long-term commitment to the program, with the understanding that the problems cannot be solved in a few months or even during a single year.
10. A focus that is as positive as possible and centres on developing strong social skills, including interpersonal skills, assertiveness, empathy and compassion, and conflict resolution skill. (Public Safety Canada, 2014).

Magical Anti-Bullying Presentation Program

In Ontario, the Reportbullying.com team has created a program that focuses on behavioural solutions to bullying behaviour. In this approach, everyone is considered a **bystander**, so the program focuses on the bystanders' behaviour and outlines their roles in taking a stand by speaking to someone in authority. The program adapts to all levels of schooling from primary to high school and offers action-packed assemblies, audience participation, and "magic." In addition, each school will receive ballot boxes, stickers, instructions on how to report cyberbullying, character education exercises, and a post-program survey. Keynotes for teachers and parents are also offered because maintaining a safe school environment requires a community effort.

Beyond the Hurt

The National Red Cross in Canada has several excellent resources for schools and teachers under their RespectED programs. The *Beyond the Hurt* program is designed to help a school prevent bullying while building empathy and respect among students. It is based on the idea that everyone—bullies, victims, and bystanders—all have a critical role to play in preventing bullying. For adults, there is a four-hour bullying prevention online course, and Red Cross Training Partners can deliver a three-hour Beyond the Hurt workshop to youth. These resources can be found at <http://www.redcross.ca/what-we-do/violence-bullying-and-abuse-prevention/educators>.

Roots of Empathy

As most bullies victimize those they perceive to be weaker than themselves and lack empathy for their victims, the *Roots of Empathy* program attempts to enhance emotional literacy through helping students learn to take the perspective of others (Berkowitz and Bier, 2005). This program is suitable for students from Kindergarten to Grade 8. In Canada, the program can be delivered in English and French and can be administered in urban and rural settings, including Aboriginal communities. It is also delivered internationally. The Roots of Empathy program strives to educate both heart and mind by raising social and emotional competence and thus increasing empathy. Essentially, it identifies a willing parent and infant who come to the classroom every three weeks over the school year. A person trained by Roots of Empathy accompanies the parent and infant and coaches students to observe the baby's development over the first year and to discuss the baby's feelings after each visit. The baby is actually the instructor! The accompanying adult instructor can help students identify and reflect upon their own feelings as well as those of others as a function of watching the baby grow and change. As a result of the program, children learn to challenge cruelty and injustice. Social inclusion and consensus-building activities are also a part of the program, and are designed to build a culture of caring in the classroom to which each student contributes.

The program has been researched extensively and has had consistently positive results; for instance, there has been an increase in social and emotional knowledge and a decrease in aggression (Nagin and Tremblay, 2001). Results have also shown an increase in prosocial behaviour, and perceptions that the classroom is a caring environment. Most importantly, the results have been shown to be lasting (Santos, Chartier, Whalen, Chateau, and Boyd, 2011).

CLASSROOM BULLYING PREVENTION ACTIVITIES

Teachers can create a “Bully-Free Zone” in their classrooms by employing the Crucial Cs to meet their students’ basic needs. These Cs are *Connected*, *Capable*, *Count*, and *Courage*. *Connected* means helping all students feel like they belong, fit in, and are secure. *Capable* means providing all students with the opportunities to take responsibility and demonstrate competence in a variety of activities. *Count* refers to ensuring that every child feels significant and impactful within the group and *Courage* refers to fostering the ability for students to handle themselves in difficult situations and overcome their fear (McCready, 2012). Anti-bullying activities and ideas can be explored by students when a teacher adapts and integrates a variety of such activities into many areas of the curriculum. For example:

Drama

Whether or not bullying has been an issue in the class, skits or small-group student improvisations can be created to illustrate the emotional aspects of bullying. The skits can be created by the students from a teacher-selected scenario (can be as short as a sentence) and be filmed or presented to the class or even to the whole school. Follow-up discussion or deconstruction of the experience is useful.

Background Music

Creating a positive classroom environment can reduce the instances of bullying among students. Although not an absolute panacea, it has been found that calming background music can have an effect on mood and create a pleasant atmosphere where bullying is less likely to occur. The addition of music has been helpful in combination with other intervention programs in reducing aggressive behaviour (Ziv and Dolev (2011).

Writing

Writing activities can be adapted to any type of assignment (i.e., essays, newspaper reports, poetry, narrative, reflective journals or persuasive arguments) at any grade level, and these fit easily into the curriculum. The strength of this approach to bullying lies in the need to formulate ideas thoughtfully enough to write them down, and then to share them with peers and discuss various perspectives. The topic is current and meaningful to most students.

Bulletin Boards

Bulletin board messages (preferably created by students) are an effective and creative way to spread a message, especially in Kindergarten to Grade 8 schools; for instance, the use of words such as *Courage*, *Confidence*, and *Conscience* can illustrate the role of a bystander and help eliminate bystander apathy and fear. Such boards can also illustrate the importance of *Respect* and *Responsibility* to the community. These should be positive messages that empower and promote integrity.

The Power of Words

The activity could start with a circle discussion with the whole class. The circle is important because it signals that everyone’s words matter and can make a difference.

The teacher could introduce the topic of bullying and discuss the characteristics of a bully and responsibilities of bystanders. Students could write a journal entry at the conclusion of the discussion or draw a picture about a time when they were bullies or a time when they observed bullying and did nothing. It is important to stress that the picture and writing activities should share the emotions felt by the bully, bullied, and bystander. The following day, the circle could be resumed and those students who wished to do so could share their writings or pictures. It is important for the teacher to recognize that this issue may be very painful for some students and they may not wish to share. On a subsequent day, the class could generate positive words that reflect the group's ideas about how to prevent bullying in the classroom or school. The words could be posted on a bulletin board and would have additional meaning because they came from the experiences of the students involved in this process.

Bullying Awareness Rallies

A single class could take responsibility for staging a *Bullying Awareness Rally* and thus engage the entire school in committing to attributes such as *Courage*, *Conscience*, *Integrity*, *Responsibility*, and *Respect* for everyone in the school environment. There could be follow-up comments over the course of the year through PA announcements and reminders during Pep rallies before school athletic events. One class could take the lead role on this initiative and monitor how the school environment becomes more positive (Hamilton and Reati, 2010).

List of Books That Address Bullying

The following list contains examples of books that could help teachers use a read-aloud program or novel study to raise the topic of bullying for discussion and critical analysis. Remember to pre-read any book that is shared with a class to determine its appropriateness.

Ages 4–8

- Bradley, K.B. *Ballerino Nate* (2006). Dial.
- D'amico, C. and D'amico, S. (2004). *Ella the Elegant Elephant*. Arthur A. Levine Books.
- Dewdney, A. (2013). *Llama Llama and the Bully Goat*. Viking.
- Geissel, T. (Dr. Zuess) (1961). *The Sneetches and Other Stories*. Random House.
- Jenkins, E. (2008). *The Little Bit Scary People*. Hyperion Books for Children.
- Lovell, P. (2002). *Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon*. Scholastic.
- Sornson, B. and Dismody, N. (2011). *The Juice Box Bully: Empowering Kids to Stand Up for Others*. Ferne Press.
- Steiner, H. (2010). *This Is Gabriel Making Sense of School*. Tefford Publishing.

Ages 8–13

- Blume, J. (1974). *Blubber*. Yearling
- Fox, A. (2009). *Real Friends vs. the Other Kind*. Free Spirit Publishing.
- Ludwig, T. (2006). *Just Kidding*. Tricycle Press.
- Madonna. (2003). *Mr. Peabody's Apples*. Callaway.

- Olson, G. (2007). *Call Me Hope*. Little Brown and Company.
 Rowling, J.K. *The Harry Potter series*.
 Spinelli, J. (2002). *Loser*. Joanna Colter Books.
 Woodson, J. (2007). *Feathers*. Putnam Juvenile.

Ages 12–17

- Anderson, L. H. (2008). *Twisted*. Speak
 Asher, J. (2007). *Thirteen Reasons Why*. Penguin Group.
 Brown, J. (2010). *Hate List*. Little, Brown and Company.
 Collins, S. (2008; 2009; 2010). *The Hunger Games Trilogy*. Scholastic Press.
 Howe, J. (2003). *The Misfits*. Atheneum Books for Young Readers.
 Howe, J. (2007). *Totally Joe*. Atheneum Books for Young Readers.
 Spinelli, J. (2000). *Stargirl*. Alfred A Knopf.
 Wilhelm, D. (2011). *The Revealers*. RR Donnelley & Sons Company.

Summary

In this chapter, we have identified and discussed two major issues for classrooms and schools: bullying and cyberbullying. We outlined the multiple ways that bullying can manifest itself and clarified that, whatever its manifestation, it is a systematic form of violence that is cruel, devious, and harmful. We identified the three basic characteristics of all acts of bullying, which are: (1) The bullying action is repeated again and again; (2) the bullying is intentional with the goal of causing fear, distress, or physical harm; and (3) bullying does not occur when people are evenly matched. There is always an imbalance in power or control between the victim and the bully.

We discussed the prevalence of bullying around the world with particular reference to Canadian statistics as well as the detrimental effects to both victims and bystanders who passively witness the bullying events. We also explored the multiple and negative effects on victims, including severe anxiety, feelings of intimidation, chronic fear, diminished self-esteem, decreased marks at school, and even suicide.

In order to help teachers identify patterns of behaviour related to bullying among their students, we outlined the characteristics

of both bullies and victims. We pointed out that victims seldom discuss the issues with adults and, therefore, we included a series of behaviours that may indicate that a child is being bullied. These behaviors include, but are not limited to sadness or depression, feeling sick, gaining or losing a large amount of weight, angry outbursts, and unusual aggression toward siblings or younger children.

Cyberbullying is a unique form of bullying that we addressed separately as it is a growing and often hidden type of intimidation and victimization. Canadian statistics show that 34 percent of teachers knew of a child who had been cyberbullied and one in five were aware of a teacher who had been cyberbullied as well. The key element of this type of bullying is that it is frequently anonymous with the target victim always being accessible—allowing the bullying to occur repetitively. Another daunting aspect is that the audience can be limitless. Different kinds of cyberbullying were addressed including harassment, denigration, flaming, impersonation, outing or trickery, and cyber stalking.

As teachers learn to deal with bullying, we stressed that victim, bully, and bystander all need intervention. We stressed the importance

of the three Ss of crisis management, which are (1) safety and security, (2) stability, and (3) support. Procedures for helping victims, as well as stopping the bullying and helping the bully were outlined. Finally, the consequences that are appropriate for repeated bullying were shared.

As schools work together to establish anti-bullying policies and bullying prevention programs, we outlined steps and sources for

both schools and individual classrooms. We identified specific activities such as drama activities, use of background music, writing activities, effective use of bulletin boards, using words effectively, and conducting bullying awareness rallies. Finally, we included a list of books that could support both curriculum objectives and raise the issue of bullying for classroom awareness and discussion.

Key Terms

bully: a person who shows a pattern of aggressive behaviour meant to hurt or cause discomfort to another person.

bystander: a person who is neither the bully nor the victim but who witnesses the bullying behaviour.

cyberbully: a person who bullies anonymously through online social media in order to harm or humiliate another person.

intervention: an action that is undertaken, generally by an adult, to stop and/or prevent bullying behaviour.

victim: a person who is verbally or physically tormented or who is tormented through social media and who displays insecurity and vulnerability and is unable and unwilling to challenge his tormentors.

Exercises

1. Think of a time when you were bullied or acted as a bully. Describe the situation and discuss the feelings associated with both points of view. What actions, if any, were taken by teachers or parents?
2. Think of a time when you were cyberbullied or acted as a cyberbully. Discuss the situation and the feelings associated with both points of view. What actions, if any, were taken by teachers or parents?
3. A Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) program suggests 5 components for developing social and emotional skills as a form of preventing bullying. List these 5 skills and discuss their implementation.
4. You are a teacher who has noticed that one particular child in your class is acting in an unusual manner. What are the signs that indicate that this child might be being bullied?
5. You have noticed that there is a child in your class who is being systematically bullied. What actions would you take with the child, the bully, and with the class as a whole? How would you apply the 3 S's of crisis management to protect this child?
6. An older sibling of a student in your class has confided in you that his sister is being flamed and cyber stalked. What is he trying to tell you? What steps should you take now that you have this information with regards to the student, the parents, and the school administration?
7. Identify the various types of cyberbullying and provide an example for each. Use your experience or the experience of others to describe each type in detail.
8. Discuss recent examples of cyberbullying discussed in the media. In your opinion, how has the media contributed to awareness, prevention, perpetuation, and legislation of cyberbullying?

Weblinks

Define the Line

<http://definetheline.ca/dtl/>

A Canadian site that is “clarifying the blurred lines between cyberbullying and digital citizenship.”

PromotePrevent / Preventing Bullying

<http://preventingbullying.promoteprevent.org/cyberbullying/understand-cyberbullying?gclid=CNbL1fznqLwCFQxo7AodRRMAaw>

This website provides valuable information to help understand different types of bullying and the effects of bullying.

The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program

<http://kids-can.ca/program>

The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program is designed to improve peer relations and make

schools safer, most positive places for students to learn and develop.

Abuse, Bullying and Violence Prevention— Beyond the Hurt

<http://www.redcross.ca/what-we-d-/violence-bullying-and-abuse-prevention/courses>

Online training and adult workshops for administrators, teachers, volunteers, bus drivers, school council members, and parents.

Magical Anti-Bullying Presentation Program

<http://www.reportbullying.com>

This program focuses on the bystanders' behaviour and their role in speaking up to someone in authority.