

Introduction

Purpose of the Program

The instructional goal of the second edition of *School House Bullies: Preventive Strategies for Professional Educators* is to provide school staff with the knowledge, resources, and tools necessary to develop a schoolwide, systematic, research-based approach to the problem of bullying. This training program has been developed to help all levels of school staff, including administrators, teachers, counselors, students, parents, and support personnel identify and reduce the types of bullying behaviors prevalent in the public and private schools of today. For real change to take place in terms of student behavior related to bullying, a schoolwide effort that includes professional development for both support staff and certificated personnel will be necessary.

While this video training is not meant to replace a specific bullying prevention program, it is designed to provide a framework for systematically evaluating and addressing the problem of bullying and harassment, as it exists in all elementary, middle, and high schools. After viewing the video and discussing its content, staff will have sufficient information to begin the process of identifying problems and concerns of students, staff, and parents, as well as specific suggestions on how to work with all facets of the school community to effectively eliminate the identified issues.

Content of the Video

The video is divided into eleven units. It is recommended viewers begin with Part One and then choose other units depending on need and interest. Time designated for viewing will vary depending upon on how much discussion occurs between participants and facilitator.

Part One is designed to introduce the viewer to the topic of bullying with emphasis on surveys, the importance of professional development, definitions, and the impact on school climate and academic achievement.

Part Two addresses the frustrations of educators and parents, the dynamics of bully/victim relationships, the use of sarcasm by staff toward students, and legal vulnerability.

Part Three reviews strategies educators can use to reduce the anti-social behaviors associated with bullying and harassment. Social responsibilities, suggestions for counseling, and anonymous reporting are discussed.

Part Four discusses how to support students most prone to bullying behaviors. It explores the subject from the student perspective as well as conferencing tips.

Part Five examines the role of the victim and how educators can assist these individuals. Passive, reactive, and provocative victims are described, and suggestions are provided for educators to use when working with students who may be victimized.

Part Six discusses the role of the bystander and explains specific ways to help this silent majority of individuals. Strategies bystanders can use to assist a victim are included.

Part Seven explores how to build and sustain positive relationships between school officials and parents of the victims, bystanders, and bullies. Expectations and suggestions for what to include in a conference with parents are included.

Part Eight provides information related to supporting parents of the victims. Specific suggestions for helping parents share in the responsibility of resolving the problem are provided.

Part Nine discusses helping parents of the bullies, student codes of conduct, civility, and mutual respect. Included is a discussion of parental legal liability.

Part Ten provides an overview of the problem as it relates to social media, digital citizenship, acronym dictionaries, and legal aspects.

Part Eleven includes elementary and secondary vignettes to be viewed by educators, support staff, and students. Discussion questions for each vignette are included in this guide.

New Features

The second edition includes several new additions to the first edition, including completely new video footage, information on the legal vulnerability of parents and school personnel, additional video vignettes on topics such as bullying on a school bus, cyberbullying on and off campus, a victim's attempt at self-harm, harassment through social media, and tips for counseling victims, bullies, and bystanders. Resources include a prototype of a bullying prevention plan and an example of a written agreement outlining the expectations for an alleged bully.

How to Use This Guide

This training module was developed for use by individuals, in small groups, or with a larger group of a school's staff. This guide provides talking points and discussion questions designed to assist all staff as they apply both new information and existing knowledge in an effort to review, analyze, and solve the issues and dilemmas school personnel and students face related to bullying behaviors.

The eleven units of the video are categorized by topic. Although the units are numbered, it is not necessary for them to be viewed in any specific order—with the exception of Part One. For the sake of staff understanding, this unit should be viewed prior to others. Due to time constraints, school staff may choose to view each part separately. The video was not designed to be viewed in one sitting; rather, individual units should be discussed first by activating background knowledge, viewing the video, and then following up with questions that generate critical thinking and problem solving.

This guide includes both pre- and post-viewing discussion questions. It is recommended participants use these discussion starters as they were intended—to help stimulate and organize thoughts and discussions among staff members.

Chapter 2 includes instructions related to facilitating tabletop exercises. This method of training school staff to respond appropriately to school or classroom emergencies is recommended by the U.S. Department of Education and the Department of Homeland Security. Sample tabletop exercises are included.

Chapter 3 discusses the need for surveying staff, students, and parents while providing a number of tools that will be of benefit to school staff as they assess and monitor the problem of bullying throughout the school year. This chapter includes three survey instruments for students, staff, and parents.

Resources include two important documents. The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan Components provides a framework of a comprehensive, written plan to address the issue of bullying and harassment. The Cease and Desist document is a prototype “contract” that may be used as documentation of intervention when an incident of bullying has been alleged.