




WELCOME TO



OUR MISSION
 TO INCREASE THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR HOME, COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL SUCCESS FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THOSE WHO ARE AT RISK OR WHO HAVE SERIOUS EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCES, THEIR FAMILIES AND THEIR SERVICE PROVIDERS, THROUGH EDUCATION, ENCOURAGEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT ACTIVITIES.





Bullies, Targets, and Bystanders - Responses That Work

Intervention Strategies for Parents of Children with Disabilities

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The Need for Intervention




“Disability harassment can have a profound impact on students, raise safety concerns, and erode efforts to ensure that students with disabilities have equal access to the myriad benefits that an education offers.”

“Dear Colleague” Letter from U.S. Department of Education (2000)

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Outcomes of Bullying




At risk of short and long-term effects such as:

- School avoidance
- Low self-esteem
- Increased fear or anxiety
- Depression
- Lower grades
- Increased violence in the school

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Defining Bullying Behavior



“Bullying among children is commonly defined as intentional, repeated, hurtful acts, words or other behavior, such as name-calling, threatening and/or shunning committed by one or more children against another.”

U.S. Department of Education Bullying Prevention Manual
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Defining Disability “Harassment”




“Disability harassment . . . is intimidation or abusive behavior toward a student based on disability that creates a hostile environment . . .”

Excerpt from “Dear Colleague” letter from
U.S. Department of Education (2000)

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Common Views about Bullying



- "Boys will be boys"
- "Girls don't bully"
- "Words will never hurt you"
- "It is a natural part of childhood"
- "Some people deserve to be bullied"
- "Bullying will make kids tougher"
- "It was only teasing"

Adapted "The Bully-Free Classroom" Beane, Allan L. (1999)

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Children Who Bully

"Bullies can come in all shapes, sizes, races, and gender."

"Your Child: Bully or Victim? Understanding and Ending Schoolyard Tyranny"
Peter Sheras, Ph.D., 1999

The most common characteristic of children who bully — *they seek to demonstrate power.*

Adapted from www.bullybeware.com

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Children Who Are Targets

Children who are bullied are **not** victims, they are *targets* — who can change what is happening to them with help from parents and school staff.

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Types of Bullying—Physical

- Hitting, kicking, or pushing
- Taking property
- Damaging property
- Forced or unwelcome contact
- Perceived intent to harm

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Types of Bullying—Verbal

- Teasing with the intent to hurt/harm
- Name calling
- Threats against the target
- Intimidation
- Demeaning jokes, stories or remarks about another's differences
- Gossiping
- Spreading rumors that hurt one's reputation

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Types of Bullying—Emotional

- Alienation or exclusion from groups
- Manipulation done to harm acceptance into groups
- Damage to reputation
- Public humiliation
- Creating a sense of unease for the target
- "Flaming" or posting slander to the Internet

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Types of Bullying—Sexual

- Sexually charged comments
- Inappropriate or lewd glances
- Inappropriate physical contact
- Exhibitionism
- Sexual assault

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Planning Ahead



- Teach self advocacy skills
- Help your child understand their disability
- Encourage social development
- Build support systems

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When a Child May Be a Target



Many children will be able to easily identify the behavior of another as bullying, but for some children with disabilities, it may be difficult for them to determine or understand that they are a target.

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Talk with Your Child about Bullying



- Listen
- Believe
- Be supportive
- Be patient
- Provide information
- Explore strategies

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Questions to Ask Your Child

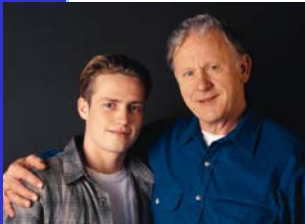


- Did the child hurt you on purpose?
- Was it done more than once?
- Did it make you feel bad or angry?
- Did the child know you were being hurt?
- Is the other child more powerful than you in some way?

(Adapted from *Your Child, Bully or Victim? Understanding and Ending Schoolyard Tyranny* Peter Sheras, Ph.D., 2002)

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Recognize Your Reaction



When a parent discovers their child is being bullied, they may feel a variety of emotions.

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Deciding Appropriate Strategies



Strategies should be appropriate for:

- The situation
- The age of the child
- The child's ability and comfort level
- The supports available for the child

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Reactions to Bullying—Indirect



- Disregard the bully
- Use self-talk
- Practice role-playing and problem solving
- Move away from the situation
- Stay with a peer

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Reactions to Bullying—Direct



- Educate the bully
- Agree with the bully
- Seek the help of an adult
- Do something the bully would not anticipate
- Ask the bully to stop

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Encourage Group Involvement



Studies show children who interact with their peers are less likely to be bullied.

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Seek the Help of Professionals



Professionals may offer support, advice, and information to assist parents in determining the best intervention to stop a child from being a target of bullying.

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Be Involved at School



Parents can take an active role in their child's school. Let the teachers and students know who you are and that you are interested in your child's safety and well-being.

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Connect with Role Models



Parents can make connections with adults (other parents and educators) who are influential, positive role models.

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Promote Change in the School




“Research indicates that creating a supportive school climate is the most important step in preventing harassment.”

U.S. Department of Education; Office for Civil Rights, January 1999. Protecting Students from Harassment and Hate Crime: A Guide for Schools

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Use the Child’s IEP



Develop goals and interventions in the IEP to build skills that prevent bullying and develop methods to intervene against bullying behavior.

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Federal Laws that Apply to Disability Harassment



- Section 504
- Americans with Disabilities Act
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

“Dear Colleague Letter”
<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/disabharassltr.html>

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Free Appropriate Public Education



“States and school districts . . . have a responsibility under Section 504, Title II, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) . . . to ensure that a free appropriate public education (FAPE) is made available to eligible students with disabilities.

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**Respond to Disability Harassment—
The Role of School Policy**



The school district has responsibility to take effective action to respond to disability harassment.

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Prevent Disability Harassment— The Role of School Policy



Create a campus environment that is aware of disability concerns and sensitive to disability harassment.

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Keep a Record



When a child is a target of bullying, based on disability, parents need to **document** the events and develop a record of what is happening to their child.

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Notifying School Administrators



Ten steps for notifying school administrators of harassment concerns.

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Parents Are Their Child's Best Advocate



Parents are the people most familiar with their child's strengths, abilities, and vulnerabilities.

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Bullying Web Sites



<http://www.pacerkidsagainstabullying.org/>




<http://www.pacerteensagainstabullying.org/>

Bullying Web Sites



<http://www.eyesonbullying.org/>

THANK YOU!

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Education Empowerment Encouragement
