

Creating a Climate for Learning:

A data-driven strategy to prevent bullying, promote upstander behavior and create even safer, supportive, engaging and responsible schools

Richard Cardillo

Director of Education

National School Climate Center (formerly, the Center for Social and Emotional Education)

rcardillo@schoolclimate.org

Twitter: @richardcardillo



Goals

1. To define and identify what bullying is and is not.
2. To develop and practice practical, impactful, hands-on strategies that can easily be implemented in all areas of school life to prevent bullying behavior and address it when it is present.
3. To consider our understanding about:
 - a) bullying behavior
 - b) legal ramifications of the DASA laws and school mandates
 - c) the targets of bullying and witnesses (bystanders or upstanders).



Goals

5. Reflect on the types of bullying that are present:
 - a. Cyberbullying
 - b. Bullying based on a protected class
6. To learn about implementation steps that support a comprehensive, data-driven, and evidence-based bully prevention/pro-upstander effort and how this necessitates a school climate improvement process.
7. **How to:**
 - a. build on your school's bully prevention efforts that are aligned with research and best practices supporting evidence-based bully prevention/pro-upstander efforts.
 - b. Provide the opportunity for the creation of a common language
 - c. Capitalize on already existing programs, such as **Brighton Believes** and the **Purple Hand Pledge**



The bully-victim-witness cycle

Definitions:

- A person or group of people who have more power than another person or group use their power to intentionally hurt -- socially, emotionally and/or physically -- the other person/group.
- Bullying is generally repeated over time.
- There is virtually never a bully and victim without a witness: bystander or upstander

Bullying vs. Teasing vs. Conflict

- ❖ Teasing: good-natured “give & take” between friends designed to get both parties to laugh
- ❖ Conflict: A struggle, dispute, and/or misunderstanding between 2 opposing forces
- ❖ Bullying: Based on power imbalance, taunting another with intent of harming; continues when other is distressed



The bully-victim-witness cycle (cont.)

Forms of bullying

Direct: Hitting, taunting, name calling

Indirect: Rumors, exclusion, cyber bullying

WHAT DOES *DASA* MANDATE?

No student shall be subjected to discrimination based on their:

- actual or perceived race
- color
- weight
- national origin
- ethnic group
- religion
- religious practice
- disability
- sexual orientation
- gender identity, or
- sex



Prevalence of bullying?

- Up to 25% of all U.S. students are bullied every year
- As many as 160,000 students stay home on any given day due to fears of being bullied
- Cyberbullying – a growing trend! One in three teenagers report being seriously threatened on-line and 60% report that they have participated in cyberbullying
- Boys self-report greater rates of bullying
- Girls bullied by both girls and boys; boys more typically bullied by other boys
- Girls more frequently report being the targets of rumor spreading and sexual comments



Consequences of bullying

- Bully-victim behavior has a toxic and powerfully undermining effect on the bully, the target and the witnesses
- Undermines learning and children's health development
- A public health problem! (Center for Disease Control)



Health Consequences of Bullying

	<u>Bullied</u>	<u>Not bullied</u>
Headache	16%	6%
Sleep problems	42%	23%
Abdominal pain	17%	9%
Feeling tense	20%	9%
Anxiety	28%	10%
Feeling unhappy	23%	5%
Depression scale		
moderate indication	49%	16%
strong indication	16%	2%



Our challenge

- Inadequate bully prevention policies that today tend to focus on:
 - ✓ Identifying the bully
 - ✓ Punishing the bully
- A narrow focus on reading, math and science scores as well as how we assess rates of physical violence.



Breaking the bully-victim-bystander cycle

Overall, what works?

Policy: Educational policy that promotes positive school climate or the norms, expectations, beliefs, teaching/learning and leadership practices that support safe, supportive, engaging, helpfully challenging school communities for students to learn and develop in healthy ways.

National School Climate Standards:

www.schoolclimate.org/climate/standards.php



Breaking the bully-victim-bystander cycle (cont.)

Best Practices , what works (cont)?

- **Small group** (classroom; Advisory) interventions that promote awareness and skill building that supports upstander behavior, including
 - Teaching students about bullying, rules, and the role of the witness: bystander or upstander
 - Social, emotional and civic learning: for students and the adults!
 - Creating a climate for learning
 - Providing opportunities for students to develop upstander skills and dispositions (role plays, campaigns, student led activities)
 - Infusing bully-victim-witness themes into the curriculum and life of the classroom





Breaking the bully-victim-bystander cycle (cont.)

Best Practices , what works (cont)?

- **School-home-community partnerships** that are meaningful, engaged and reflect ongoing learning
- **Focus on strengths**
- **Peer support networks**
- **Individual considerations**
 - ✓ Recognizing and addressing students who chronically 'fall into' the role of bully and/or victim
 - ✓ On the importance of parent-educator-mental health partnerships
 - ✓ On-the-spot interventions and follow-up

BEST PRACTICES...

- ❖ Assess the School Climate.
- ❖ Set aside 20-30 minutes a week for class discussions.
- ❖ Increase supervision in “hot spots”
- ❖ Involve students in prevention plans!
- ❖ Encourage parent involvement.
- ❖ Training for ALL.
- ❖ Integrate anti-bullying themes in curriculum.
- ❖ Investigate and resolve quickly.
- ❖ Create a school-wide climate of caring connections.



School climate

“The quality and character of school life. School climate is based on patterns of people’s experiences of school life and reflects

- norms,
- goals,
- values,
- interpersonal relationships,
- teaching and learning,
- leadership practices, and
- organizational structures.”

Developing Common Language

- ❖ THE BULLY
- ❖ THE TARGET/VICTIM
- ❖ THE BYSTANDER
- ❖ THE UPSTANDER