Bullying & Autism

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Objectives:

• The participant will leave with an understanding of how bullying impacts the lives of children with autism.

• The participant will leave with an understanding of how to help children with autism that are being bullied.

• The participant will leave with a list of resources and activities to use with children with autism that are at risk for being bullied or are being bullied.
Bullying is a repeated pattern of aggressive behavior that involves an imbalance of power that purposefully inflicts harm on the bullying victim (Olweus, 1993).

http://education.ky.gov/school/sdfs/Pages/Bullying.aspx
Federal Laws Regarding Bullying & Disabilities

• 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. Disability harassment may result in a denial of FAPE under these statutes.

• [http://www.wrightslaw.com/info/harassment.index.htm#sthash.2grEqGR9.dpuf](http://www.wrightslaw.com/info/harassment.index.htm#sthash.2grEqGR9.dpuf)
House Bill 91: The Bullying Bill

School Requirements for Compliance with HB 91 (KRS 158.156) Procedures to be Followed

- School employees report to principal (suspected student victims of felony offenses under KRS Chapter 508)
- Within 48 hours, principal files written report with local board of education* (through the Superintendent as the executive agent of the BOE), and one of three local law-enforcement agencies (See Section 1)
- Principal notifies parents or guardians of student **
- The agency receiving the principal’s report will conduct an investigation (school and/or board may participate in the investigation if the agency requests)
- If a law or board violation has occurred, school will report incident as part of safe school data reporting
Kentucky Bullying Statics

- 2014-2014 school year there were 20,172 reports of bullying/harassment
- 71% of reported events happened in grades 6-10.
- 72% of reported events involved males

National Bullying Statistics

• Nearly 1 in 3 students (27.8%) report being bullied during the school year (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2013).

• 64 percent of children who were bullied did not report it; only 36 percent reported the bullying (Petrosina, Guckenburg, DeVoe, and Hanson, 2010).

http://www.pacer.org/bullying/about/media-kit/stats.asp
Autism Specific Bullying Statistics

• 63% of 1,167 children with ASD, ages 6 to 15, had been bullied at some point in their lives

http://www.iancommunity.org/cs/ian_research_reports/ian_research_report_bullying
BULLYING & Autism

63% of youth with Autism Spectrum Disorder say they have been a victim of bullying

6 out of 10 youth with ASD say they have been bullied in the past month while only

1 out of 10 youth without ASD say they have been bullied in the past month

49% of ASD youth who were victims of bullying, were bullied between 5th & 8th Grade

To learn more about what you can do visit www.autismaction.org or http://www.autismsafety.org/bullying.php. And make sure to follow us on facebook to find out more about Autism Awareness and Bullying.

The majority of youth with ASD who are bullied have Asperger’s Syndrome.

Source: http://www.iancommunity.org/cs/ian_research_reports/ian_research_report_bullying
Why

- Many of the defining characteristics of autism are the ones that put them at greatest risk of bullying.” Dr. Catherine Bradshaw
- Often socially awkward
- Difficulty communicating and recognizing social cues
- Strict adherence to rituals and habits
Bullying

- Individuals with ASD may not realize they are being bullied:
- Difficulty understanding sarcasm
- Desire to be liked/have friends
- May equate being bullied to how friendships work

-Brenda Smith-Myles
Ways to Support a Student who is bullied

- Assist the student in identifying sarcasm and bullying
- Help the student practice what to say to the bully so he or she will be prepared the next time
- Help the student practice being assertive. The simple act of insisting that the bully leave him alone may have a surprising effect. Explain to the student that the bully's true goal is to get a response.
- Encourage the student to be with friends when traveling back and forth from school, during shopping trips, or on other outings. Bullies are less likely to pick on a child in a group.
WHAT WORKS IN PREVENTING, AND RESPONDING TO, ASD BULLYING.

- School Climate Change
- Safe ways to report (safety net programs)
- Focus on all types of bullying (not just physical aggression)
- Focus on role of bystanders
  - Peer support networks
- Adults model supportive relationships
- Active parent involvement

WHAT Doesn't Work IN PREVENTING, AND RESPONDING TO, ASD BULLYING

- Individual counseling (for bully or victim)
- Accepting bullying as normal
- Focusing on only physical aggression
- Zero tolerance policies
- Isolated efforts (special auditorium events, lectures)
- Stigmatizing victims
  - Adults model intimidation, anger, power

Potential Effects of Bullying:

• Health issues

• Depression & Anxiety

• Decreased academic achievement

• Increased absences

http://www.stopbullying.gov/at-risk/effects/
It is not up to one person to end the bullying; it has to be a community effort. We all have a role to play.
Adult Response is so Important!!

- Adults should listen without judgment
- Adults should make sure that parents are informed
- Adults should provide a safe place to talk about what has happened and help decide what next steps should be taken

Self Advocacy

Students with disabilities must be taught to recognize bullying and steps to take if it is happening to them.
What to do when I am teased or bullied

1. Look at the person.

2. Hold up my hand like a stop sign.


4. Walk away.

5. Tell a trusted adult.

What to do when there is joking or sarcasm:

1. Look at the person.

2. Say:

   “I’m the kind of person who takes things literally. Are you joking or serious?”
We must teach peer’s how to respond to witnessing others being bullied!
Bystanders have Power!!

- Peers are much more likely to see what is happening to peers than adults are.

- Peer influence can be powerful
How can Bystanders Help?

• Tell a trusted adult.
• Be their friend.
• Don’t give bullies an audience!
• Don’t spread rumors.
Children Literature that looks at Bullying

Children Literature that looks at Bullying

Printable teaching tools


Whole Class Toolkits for Bullying Prevention

- http://specialneeds.thebullyproject.com/educators
- http://www.bystanderrevolution.org/
Autism Specific Resources

- [http://specialneeds.thebullyproject.com/](http://specialneeds.thebullyproject.com/)

- [https://www.autismspeaks.org/family-services/bullying](https://www.autismspeaks.org/family-services/bullying)
Resources

- https://www.kycss.org/bullying.php

- http://education.ky.gov/school/sdfs/Pages/Bullying.aspx

- http://stopbullyingnow.com/
Resources

- [http://www.modelmekids.com/bully.html](http://www.modelmekids.com/bully.html)
- [https://www.pinterest.com/pin/AQ5RclVnISLEKpEb3Aforj-DwbVBvaAFnCFq2JHp3Irfe5xcvT0bPgo/](https://www.pinterest.com/pin/AQ5RclVnISLEKpEb3Aforj-DwbVBvaAFnCFq2JHp3Irfe5xcvT0bPgo/)
- [https://www.pinterest.com/pin/77968637275246464/](https://www.pinterest.com/pin/77968637275246464/)
Questions?

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