

Bullying: Working with Aggressive Children & Adolescents

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Podcast: "The Commute"
On: iTunes, Stitcher, iHeartRadio,
Soundcloud

Negative Effects!

- It is estimated that between 14 and 20% of students in schools will experience bullying at least once during their academic career.
- Victims of bullying are more likely than non-victims to report physical and mental health problems, and contemplate suicide.
- Bullies themselves are more likely to drop out of school, spend some amount of time in prison, and become abusive spouses (Elinoff, Chafouleas & Sassu, 2004)

Canadian Bullying Statistics:

- » 64 per cent of kids had been bullied at school.
- » 12 per cent were bullied regularly (once or more a week).
- » 13 per cent bullied other students regularly (once or more a week).
- » 72 per cent observed bullying at school at least once in a while.
- » 40 per cent tried to intervene.

Canadian Bullying Statistics:

- » 64 per cent considered bullying a normal part of school life.
- » 20-50 per cent said bullying can be a good thing (makes people tougher, is a good way to solve problems, etc.).
- » 25-33 per cent said bullying is sometimes OK and/or that it is OK to pick on losers.
- » 61-80 per cent said bullies are often popular and enjoy high status among their peers.

• Source: Centre For Youth Social Development, UBC Faculty of Education

Canadian Cyber-Bullying Statistics:

- - 1 in 5 Canadian Teens have witnessed online Bullying
- 25% of kids between 12-15 have witnessed cyberbullying
- 25% of girls and 17% of boys have witnessed online harassment
- 51% of all teens have had negative experience with social networking
- 16% said someone posted an embarrassing photo of them
- 12% said someone hacked their account

Source: Ipsos Reid 2011 Survey of 416 Canadian Teenagers

Canadian Cyber-Bullying Statistics:

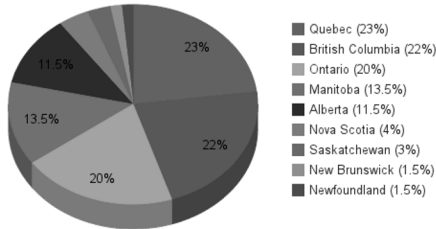
- * 2 in 5 parents report their child has been involved in a cyberbullying incident; 1 in 4 educators have been cyber-harassment victims.
- * Educators consider cyberbullying (76%) as big an issue as smoking (75%) and drugs (75%).
- * The most commonly experienced form of cyberbullying is when someone takes a private email, IM, or text message and forwards it to someone else or posts the communication publicly
- * 38% of girls online report being bullied, compared with 26% of online boys.

Source: Microsoft's Truthworthy Computing division

Canadian Bullying Statistics:

STOP A BULLY
SAFE & ANONYMOUS

INCIDENT REPORTS BY PROVINCE
(StopABully School Reports from May 2009 - July 2013)

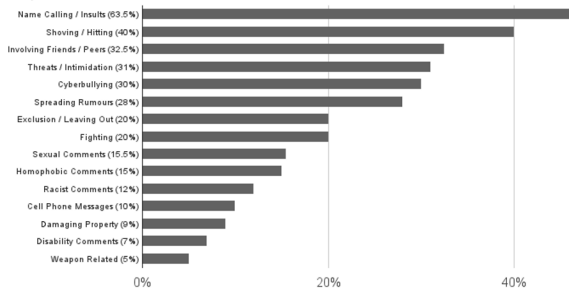


* Stop A Bully receives more Incident Reports from Provinces which have more Member Schools.

Canadian Bullying Statistics:

STOP A BULLY
SAFE & ANONYMOUS

TYPES OF BULLYING REPORTED
(StopABully School Reports from May 2009 - July 2013)

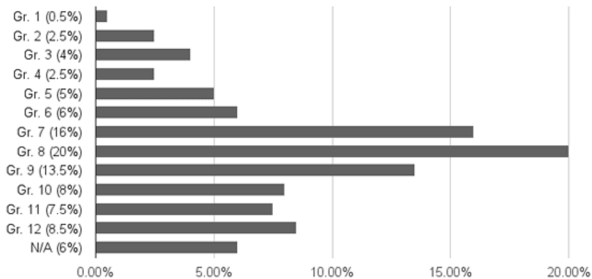


*Multiple types of bullying can be selected.

Canadian Bullying Statistics:

STOP A BULLY
SAFE & ANONYMOUS

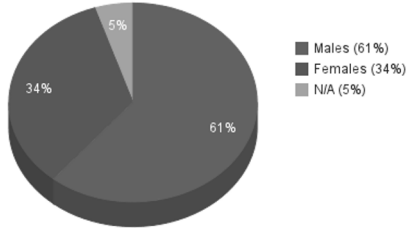
INCIDENT OFFENDER GRADE
(StopABully School Reports from May 2009 - July 2013)



Canadian Bullying Statistics:

STOP A BULLY
SAFE & ANONYMOUS

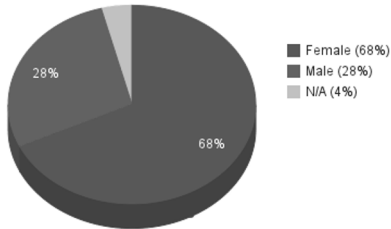
GENDER OF REPORTED BULLY:
(StopABully School Reports from Sept 2011 - April 2012)



Canadian Bullying Statistics:

STOP A BULLY
SAFE & ANONYMOUS

GENDER OF REPORTED CYBERBULLY:
(StopABully School Reports from Sept 2011 - April 2012)



Aggression: Nature/Nurture

- Etiology
 - Brain-based differences (frontal lobe)
 - Anterior Cingulate Cortex (aggression, empathy)
 - Amygdala (mood regulation)
 - Parenting/Environment
 - TV, video games pre-age 2?
 - Addictions/Drugs
 - Esp. marijuana before age thirteen
 - Meth, Ecstasy, hyper-amygdala stimulants

Aggression: Nature/Nurture

- Anger/Frustration = Self-Protection
- Parenting:
 - Impulsive children bring out punishing parenting
 - These children tend to be strong-willed, socially dominant
 - Poor behaviors and anger escalate as coping mechanism in the child

A Few Tips in General:

Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD)

- Often loses temper
- Argues with adults
- Deliberately annoys others
- Is touchy or easily annoyed
- Is angry, resentful, spiteful, or vindictive
- Blames others for his or her misbehaviors
- Often actively defies or refuses to comply with rules or requests
- **Modulate Eye Contact**
- **Escalation Recreates Trauma**
- **Grant Power or Control**

Why Bully?

- It's used as a **coping mechanism** and response to something stressful going on in their lives
- Because they are **insecure** and are trying to detract away from themselves by focusing on somebody else

Why Bully?

- They are **jealous** or feel like you are in some way superior to them - instead of competitive behaviour, they have become abusive
- Because they are **worried they won't be accepted** by their peers if they don't do it

Talking to a Bully

- 1. Understand
- The thing to remember about bullying is the fact that the people who are doing it are often incredibly vulnerable and it usually highlights that there is a bigger issue. It is therefore important to try and understand their reasoning and headspace.
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- 2. Evaluate
- Sometimes it may be unsafe, particularly if you feel it will put you or somebody else in immediate risk of harm
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Talking to a Bully

- 3. Don't shout
- No issue is ever resolved through arguing. If you feel your anger levels increasing, take some time out and deep breaths. It is normal to get angry and to want to shout, but right now it isn't going to benefit you.
- 4. Don't retaliate to shouting
- It is possible that the other person will start shouting. If they do, stop talking and let them shout whatever they want to. Once they have finished, talk normally and calmly. They will gradually start to lower their voice and you will maintain complete control over the situation.

Intentional Dialogue



Steps:

- 1. Mirror ("Let's see if I've got this right...")
- 2. Validate ("You're not crazy for feeling...")
- 3. Empathize ("I would feel the same way because...")

- can combine steps 2&3

(Hendrix, 2007)

Talking to a Bully

- 5. Build an agenda
- Write up an agenda of the things you want/need to talk about before going into the meeting. This helps guide the meeting in the right direction and also means that you very rarely forget things that were meant to talk about.

Talking to a Bully

- 6. What is the end goal?
- **Building a broader structure**
- It may also be an idea to not accuse them of bullying, instead tell them how their behaviour is having an impact on the other person. We all have a different definition of bullying and what it means to bully somebody and it's likely they will become defensive if you start to call them a bully.

Recommendations for Teachers

General Recommendations for Teachers and School Faculty:

1. Become familiar with the school's definition of bullying, bullying prevention policies, and the code of conduct. This will ensure that the same policy is being enforced throughout the school.
2. Clearly explain to your class what behavior you consider to be bullying. Establish clear rules against bullying and define both desirable and unacceptable behavior.

Recommendations for Teachers

3. Educate students on issues related to bullying.
4. Conduct an assessment of your students' beliefs regarding bullying
5. Ensure close supervision during recess periods and in hallways and bathrooms, as this is when most bullying occurs.
6. Be aware of indirect and subtle bullying in the form of social isolation and intentional exclusion, especially among girls.

Recommendations for Teachers

7. Be careful to observe students who are cautious, sensitive, anxious, quiet, or are at a higher risk for being bullied than other students.
8. Create a social environment where there is warmth and acceptance of all students and one where there are high standards for student and teacher behavior toward one another. Teacher attitudes toward aggression partly determine how teachers will react to bullying situations.
9. Teach specific skills and strategies in the classroom such as emotional awareness, seeing others' perspectives, alternative thinking strategies, and problem solving.

Recommendations for Teachers

10. Use mentoring techniques to build solid relationships with the students in order to help them feel like they belong. Create a trusting environment where students feel they can confide in their teacher when the situation presents itself.
11. Provide positive feedback to children who exhibit appropriate social behaviors and model interactions that do not include bullying or aggression.
12. Encourage students to reach out to other students. Enlist classmates to help alleviate the plight of victims by not encouraging the bully, and to include others in group activities.

Recommendations for Teachers

13. Encourage "bystanders", or those who witness the bullying incident, to speak up against bullying. Students can act in ways which are prone to maintain and encourage bullying rather than diminish it, even though attitudes of most children have been found to be against bullying. Teach them that their silence makes the bully more powerful and contributes to the harm done to the victim.
14. Watch your tone-and your message. It is important to examine the tone of voice used when speaking to students. Avoid undue criticism/sarcasm.

Recommendations for Teachers

15. Do not ignore instances of bullying. Send the message that "bullying is not accepted in our school and we will see to it that it comes to an end."
 -initiate serious talks with both bullies and victims and parents of involved students.
 -organize a meeting with the "bully" and the victim" and negotiate an understanding whereby both students can agree to "live together in the same school (*do no harm)

Recommendations for Teachers

16. When witnessing a bullying incident, the following steps are recommended:
- Intervene first by separating the victim and the bully. Name the behavior, reiterate the rules, and review expected behaviors.
 - Discuss the next step with the victim and ask what they think should be done. If a child is in danger, you must act even if the child wants you to do nothing. Do not make promises you cannot keep to the child. However, reassure the victim that all possible steps will be taken to prevent a recurrence.
 - Make it clear that the victim is not to blame.
 - Enforce consequences for engaging in bullying behaviors in a consistent, immediate, non-violent, and predictable manner.

Recommendations for Teachers

- After the bullies face their consequences, engage with them to discuss how their behavior affected the victim, what goal they were trying to reach, and how else they can achieve this goal. Too, guide them in determining more appropriate strategies to express their feelings or resolve conflict.
- Provide the victim with helpful tips to cope with bullying. They may be encouraged to use humor or silence to deflect an onslaught, encouraged to be assertive and use 'I' statements, advised to stay with a crowd or avoid the bully, and reminded not to fight with the bully.

Recommendations for Teachers

17. Don't be part of the problem. Teachers may breed a bully by being overly permissive and thereby sending the message that bullying pays off. Children actually feel more secure when they know teachers will set limits.
18. Consider involving peer groups in developing strategies and solutions for instances of bullying

Recommendations for Teachers

19. Coordinate efforts with other school personnel (e.g., counselors and psychologists). If necessary, pass the bullying situation on to the school counselor, school psychologist, or principal so appropriate measures will be taken.
20. Involve parents of both bullies and victims in the process by informing them of their child's positive and negative behaviors and discuss ways to reinforce certain skills at home in order to help them behave better at school.

For Victims of Bullying:

- □ 1. Tell someone. Do not feel embarrassed, ashamed, afraid to tell someone that you are being hurt or teased, or that your lunch is being stolen. Don't be silent.
- □ 2. Ask the bully to stop. Someone might not know that their behavior is hurting you.
- □ 3. Avoid being alone with the bully. Try to make friends and hang out as a group. Bullies are more likely to trouble you if you are alone.

Victim Empathy Work:

- Possible questions for the Bully to emphasize Empathy:
- 1. What is a victim?
- 2. List all the signs that would tell you that you had hurt or upset someone (Tronick).
- 3. How do you think your behaviour has practically affected your victims? (e.g., homework, fixing damages, medical attention, financial expense, etc)

Victim Empathy Work:

- 4. How do you think your victim's behaviour may have changed since you hurt them?
- 5. How do you think your behaviour has emotionally affected your victim? (e.g., tearful, fear of being alone, upset, angry, unable to trust other people, etc)
- 6. Think back over your life to the times when someone tried to hurt you.

De-Escalation Strategies

1. Gestalt Techniques (brain & body)
 - Depersonalizing via second person
 - "Describe" rather than "Explain"
2. Normalize to Avoid Panic
3. Don't say self-deprecation out loud

Dealing with an Actively Aggressive Child:

- First, calm yourself before interacting with the person.
 - If you're upset, it's only going to escalate the situation. Calm down and then begin to look at the situation and how you can intervene safely.
 - Take a deep breath.
 - Use a low, dull tone of voice and don't get defensive even if the insults are directed at you.

Dealing with an Actively Aggressive Child

- 5 Verbal Tricks to Settling a Situation:
 - "Why" Questions
 - "Easy" instead of Relax or Calm Down
 - The Word "You"
 - Use I or statements
 - We statements (all of us; my students...)
 - The Words "no" and "don't"
 - Focus instead on what SHOULD be done
 - Emotional Distance if Not the Parent

Anger toward Compliments:

- **-Avoid using positive labels** (e.g., "You're so smart," "You're a good boy.") because they will be rejected by a youngster who sees them as being incorrect (given his/her life experience).
- **FOCUS ON (+) BEHAVIOR**
 - "Thanks for holding the door for us. That was a kind gesture on your part."
- **-Prepare the student for your positive feedback**
- **-Note writing**

Dealing with an Actively Aggressive Child:

- Becoming aware of your situation is also critically important. This can include:
 - Other people in the room,
 - Objects; such as chairs, tables, items on a table,
 - and the space around you, like exits or openings, and if you are blocking the person so that they are made to feel trapped.

Dealing with an Actively Aggressive Child:

- Try to look as non-threatening as possible.
 - Appear calm and self-assured even if you don't feel it.
 - Maintain limited eye contact and be at the same eye level. Encourage the child to be seated, but if he/she needs to stand, stand up also.
 - Maintain a neutral facial expression.
 - Place your hands in front of your body in an open and relaxed position.
 - Avoid excessive gesturing, pacing, fidgeting, or weight shifting.
 - Maintain a public space distance, which is 12 feet or more.

Dealing with an Actively Aggressive Child:

- Make a personal connection. Something as simple as asking, "What's your name?" can diffuse a situation quickly.
 - People respond positively to their own name and can make the dialogue more personal.
 - Ask if they're okay
 - Can I get you anything?

Dealing with an Actively Aggressive Child:

- Listening to the person's concerns. - Acknowledge the other person's feelings without passing judgment on them.
 - Empathy needs to be shown during conflict situations. Even if you do not agree with the person's position, expressing an understanding why that person feels a particular way will help resolve the conflict.
 - Clarifying, paraphrasing and open-ended questions all help to ensure that the person is aware you have understood their frustrations completely.
 - Ask for their ideas or solutions.

Dealing with an Actively Aggressive Child:

- Shift the conversation to the future, create hope, and you make yourself less threatening.
 - Using "what" and "we" helps include the person in those future plans.
- Get them to say yes.
 - It is very hard for someone to stay angry towards you if they are agreeing with you.

Dealing with an Actively Aggressive Child

Provide a dignified way out of situation:

1. "I have to check the parking lot (or store room, hallway). Would you like to walk along with me?"
2. "It looks like you might not be feeling too well. May I feel your forehead? It's a little warm. Would you like to lie down in the nurse's office?"
3. "Let's go talk somewhere private. There are too many people around here."

Dealing with an Actively Aggressive Child:

- No person, group, or set of conditions can guarantee that a conflict will proceed constructively.
- If de-escalation is not working, stop!
- If the situation feels unsafe, leave and call for help.

Home Consequences/In the Aftermath:

- Time-out: When used appropriately, time-out teaches children how to calm down.
- Restitution: Restitution may involve loaning his favorite toy to the victim or doing extra chores to pay for the damage. Restitution can give your child an opportunity to make amends.

Home Consequences/In the Aftermath

- Loss of privileges: Take away your child's favorite possession or activity for 24 hours. Losing electronics or a chance to go to a friend's house can be an effective reminder not to hurt anyone else.
- Natural consequences: If your child destroys his own property, a natural consequence may be the most effective. If your teenager throws his phone and breaks it, don't buy a new one. Going without a phone and then buying his/her own replacement can serve as a valuable life lesson.

Managing Teacher Burnout

- Symptoms of Burnout:
 - Feeling like not going to work or actually missing days
 - Difficulty concentrating on tasks
 - Feeling overwhelmed by the workload, with a related sense of inadequacy
 - Withdrawing from colleagues, or maintaining conflict with co-workers

Managing Teacher Burnout

- Symptoms of Burnout:
 - Having a general feeling of irritation regarding students/parents/colleagues
 - Experiencing insomnia, digestive disorders, headaches, etc.
 - Incapacitation or inability to function professionally in stressful situations

Managing Teacher Burnout

- Symptom Resolution
 - Personal Therapy, Medication evaluation
 - "Downshifting"
 - Seek outside interests - become less focused on entire identity being a teacher
 - Relocation (geographic OR within an school/organization)
 - Re-evaluate the goals and ideals which led you to become a teacher
