Bullying: Creating a Culture of Respect in Your School
Kentucky School Board Association
November 8, 2011
Dignity is not negotiable

Connection makes life meaningful

You matter in a child’s life
Happiness

- Satisfying work (curiosity)
- Hope of being successful
- Social connection
- Meaning beyond oneself
But conflict is inevitable
What are your colleagues thinking?
I'd like a solid definition of bullying so we're not "crying bully" when we should be helping kids work through average teen drama.
I think the word "bullying" is overused. I believe it exists, but I think some parents and students use it to label everything, and it's as overused as "ADD." Kids have a right to choose who their friends are.
We, the PTO and principal, are all wary of "bullying" becoming such a litigiously-charged buzzword. On the other side, there's also concern that there will be an anti-bullying backlash. I've already heard a parent say something like “My kid says there's nothing at all like bullying going on. It's the parents that shove this down our throats."
School lawyers advise administrators like me not to get involved if bullying, sexting and cyberbullying occurs outside of the school day. However, if this is happening after school it will eventually spill over into the school setting. At that point, there is no excuse for us to look the other way.

Sandy Romanowski, Superintendent, Bradford, PA
I do not advocate ignoring bullying but I can tell you that while I am sure it goes on, I am not aware of it. I am busy teaching. I don’t mean to sound unkind but wading into the abyss of teenaged social cruelty is just not on my agenda. I am a foreign language teacher, not a psychologist or counselor. So please stop asking me to assume roles for which I am unprepared and frankly, uninterested. Stop wanting teachers to do every job that come down the pike, and then be all surprised that instruction suffers. You raise your children, I will teach them French.
Your Students “Happiness” at School Is Based on Three Fundamental Concepts:

The right to be treated with dignity by others.

The responsibility to treat others with dignity.

Valuing the development of social competence as a critical academic skill.
56% of students were involved in aggression and victimization. 25% pure aggressors, 14% pure victims, and 17% both.

Kids don’t fall into stable roles of bully and victim.

There were equivalent rates of aggression among boys (43%) and girls (42%). However, girls were significantly more likely to be harassed than boys (27%) and have more attackers.

Girls harass other girls more frequently than boys harass other boys but boys harass girls far more frequently than girls harass boys.
Social Networks and Aggression

Aggression is most frequent within rather than across racial groups.

Family structure and parent occupation do not significantly effect either aggression or victimization.

There is no evidence that overall aggression increases subsequent status.

Students intervened in 23% of incidents (highest being with younger students).

19% were reported to adults.
Teasing

**Good Teasing**
- You feel liked by the person
- You don’t feel that the person wants to put you down
- They will stop if you ask.

**Unintentional Bad Teasing**
- You don’t like it but the teaser either doesn't know how you feel or dismisses your feelings.
- They blow you off with, “I was just joking.” “You’re so sensitive!”

**Bad Teasing/ Bullying**
- You’re teased about something you’re insecure about.
- If you defend yourself, you’re labeled as uptight or threatened with ending the friendship.
- The teasing is relentless and in front of other people.
Telling to get someone in trouble.
The goal is to make the problem bigger and more public.

Snitching

Telling because the problem is too big to solve on your own.
The goal is to right a wrong.

Reporting

VS.
No offense, but those words don’t mean the same thing as in your generation. It’s just what we say. We’re just joking!
Listening!

- Have strategic timing!
- Affirm feelings but don’t react by asking a million questions.
- Ask if he’s venting or wants advice.
- Don’t use her slang.
- Share your own experiences without telling him how you would have done it.
- Be prepared to be changed by what you hear.
- Don’t just do something, stand there.
The Child is the Target

You **Don’t** Say:
- Bullies are insecure, jealous, or weak.
- That’s just the way the world is
- Punch them in the face

You **Do** Say:
- I’m so sorry
- Thank you for telling me
- Together we are going to work on this.
The Invisible Game

Katie: Did you see Matt trying to guess what we were talking about? He’s so annoying!

Amanda: Yeah, I guess.

Katie: During recess, let’s pretend he’s invisible.

Amanda: I don’t know....

Katie: Don’t feel bad for him!

Amanda: I do sort of.

Katie: Are you like in love with him? OMG, you are!

Amanda: No! I’m not!

Katie: Yes you are!!!
STOP: Breathe, listen, and think when and where, now or later?

EXPLAIN: What happened that you don’t like and what you want.

AFFIRM: Affirm and acknowledge.

LOCK: In the friendship, take a vacation or lock it out.
In the moment

- Assess on the approach
- Don’t ask the group who is responsible. State quick SEAL to the group
- Get group on task with promise to follow up individually
- You can use SEAL to help child think through the process
- Code word for aggressor or target to remember
Stop: Put your bad feelings to words. Choose time (before recess).

Explain: I don’t want to do the secret language now or pretend anyone is invisible. It looks like a game but it’s not.

Affirm: You don’t have to be friends with Matt but we can’t be mean. Pretending someone’s invisible is mean.

Lock: This was really hard but you’re my friend and I wanted to tell you.
Did you hear what she’s saying about you?

Common responses:

• Disappear until graduation
• Immediately talk, text and FB whoever you can for reconnaissance.
• Plot with your friend about how to get back at the person who you think started it.
• Say, “Whatever, it’s not worth it.” But really worry about it a lot.
Getting Some Control

STOP-What is the messenger’s motivation? Your answer: “Thanks for telling me. Please don’t share this with others.”

Explain-I understand that you’re saying bad things about me. Is that true?

Affirm/acknowledge-If I did something that upset you I want to know. But even if you’re mad at me, you don’t have the right to spread rumors about me.

Lock out-We used to be good friends. We don’t have to be anymore but if you ever want to talk about it, I am here.
Accepting Apologies

Don’t

- Whatever
- Don’t worry about it

Do

- It’s okay
- Thank you
The Child is a Bystander

“I’m sorry this is happening. Thanks for telling me because I know it can be hard to come forward about things like this and I really respect the fact that you did. Now let’s think about what we can do about it.”

USE SEAL TO FRAME STRATEGY
Choosing Your Moment
Mark: Forwarding those pictures of Michael was messed up.
Andy: No it wasn’t! It was amazing!
Mark: You know he was really mad.
Andy: No I don’t! If he was so freaked out why didn’t he say anything?
Mark: Because than you would make fun of him even more.
Andy: It’s not my fault he’s so weak. And wait a minute, you laughed just as much as I did.
Mark: I’m not proud of this but I laughed because I was nervous. All I’m asking is you lay off.
Andy: Fine I’ll back off but you do realize how gay you’re being about this whole thing right?
Mark: Right, I’m gay because I want you to stop making a kid miserable. Whatever.

They go back to the game.
The child is the Bully

Remind parents this is one moment not a lifetime.

If people are upset, ask them to slow down because you want to hear them.

Tell them you will talk to the child and get back to them.

To the students: With paper in hand say, “X was reported to me. Is this accurate? Is any of it accurate? If the person was sitting right here, what would they say-- even if you think it was wrong.”

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They go over your head

Thank you for meeting with me. I know that you have already spoken to (insert head of school/your supervisor here). I want to talk to you about X but I also think it’s important to discuss the reason you didn’t feel comfortable or that it would be ineffective to talk to me. What would you like to discuss first?

Possible responses: Mike has repeatedly told you X and you aren’t doing anything about it.

As Mike’s counselor/teacher I want to do my best for him. This is my understanding of what has happened so far...

Are you saying that it’s my child’s fault...

No, I’m not. I am telling you what I know about the situation so we can work together to solve the problem.
BOYFRIENDS/GIRLFRIENDS

Never Care

Sometimes Care

Boy Crazy

Don't care
How Does Sexting Start?
Fruit Cup Girl

Pros: You get boy’s attention.

Cons: Peers easily ridicule her, doesn’t value other parts of her identity as worthwhile to merit boy’s attention. She can make other girls ashamed/embarrassed so they turn away from her.

Boys have their own version because they have to prove their heterosexuality.
Sexting differences between boys and girls

Common patterns:

- Girls sext in response to a request, to get a boy’s attention, or a dare.

- Girls take pictures in a provocative pose, semi nude, or kissing another girl. Boys are more likely to share it with peers.

- Boys sext pictures of their genitals. Girls are more likely to tell an adult. The public nature is limited meaning it’s less likely peers will know.
As a parent your responsibilities include:

“Cell phone is a privilege, not a right. You have a responsibility to use it ethically.
That means you won’t use it to humiliate, embarrass, misrepresent yourself or someone else, use passwords without the person’s permission, compromise yourself by sending pictures of you naked, half-naked, or sharing embarrassing information or pictures of other people. It’s so easy for things get out of control you know it and I know it. So I reserve the right to check your online life. If I see that you violate the terms of our agreement, I’ll take your technology away until I can see through your actions that you are responsible enough to use it according to these terms.”
Technology

Role model behavior: No texting and driving, no texting at the table, no talking to people on the phone when you pick your child up from school.

Not being manipulated by your children.

Working in collaboration with the school. NO ANGRY EMAILS IN ALL CAPITALS.
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Resources

http://www.youthvoiceproject.com/

Network Centrality, Gender Segregation, and Aggression, Robert Faris and Diane Felmlee, American Sociology Review February 2011

Social Networks and Aggression at the Wheatley School, Robert Faris and Diane Felmlee, Department of Sociology, University of California at Davis September 2011

South Park “Kyle Has No Friends” episode and “Breast Cancer Show Ever”

Alone Together: Why We Expect More From Technology and Less from Each Other: Sherry Turkle, Basic Books 2011

Reality is Broken: Why Games Makes Us Better and How They Can Change the World: Jane McGonigal, Penguin 2011
My Relationship Rights

<table>
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<th>List the three rights that are most important to you in a relationship or friendship.</th>
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<td>1.</td>
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### My Deal Breakers

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<th>1.</th>
<th>List three ways that someone could treat you where you would consider ending the friendship/relationship.</th>
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Qualities I’m looking for in an ally include:

1. opinionated but not judgmental
2. honest
3. reliable
Finding My Ally

My top 3 choices for an ally are:

1.
2.
3.
Jason: Look, I’m not the best player…

The Pick Up Game

Carl: How about the most retarded!

Jason: You think it’s funny to be mean to me about being gay or short. I want it to stop.

Carl: We’re just joking, relax! You know I love you!

Jason: You’re saying just joking so you can get away with being mean.

Carl: (Laughs, rolling his eyes) Fine I won’t joke around with you ever again!
Explain: Gabby, I thought about last night and I want to talk about it. We used to sit together all the time. But when the other girls are there, you say inside jokes and you roll your eyes whenever I say anything. If I eat with you I don’t want you to make me feel like you don’t want me there.”

“I knew you were going to be so dramatic about this! You’re the one who’s sitting with us! It’s not like anyone’s forcing you!”

Affirm: “I realize I haven’t been giving you a lot of space and we don’t have to be friends like we used to. But you can’t keep me guessing about how you’re going to treat me every day.

Fine! I really don’t care.

Lock (vacation): OK so I’m not going to sit with you for awhile.