# Bullying

**Our Panel:**

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# Facts & Figures

✓ Studies conducted in the United States confirm that bullying is a pervasive problem in our schools. . . .

✓ Bullying is widespread in American schools, with more than 16% of U.S. school children saying they had been bullied by other students during a single semester (National Institutes of Health)

✓ Every school day: 160,000 students miss school because they are afraid of being bullied.

Heinrichs, R. (2003). *Perfects Targets: Asperger Syndrome and Bullying*

- 62% of students in grades 6-8 said that they had been cyber bullied by another student at school

  (Kowalski et al. 2005)


- 1 in 3 teens has experienced online harassment (Pew Internet & American Life Project)


- Incidents of crime are reported at 86% of high schools, 94% of middle schools, and 74% of primary schools


  (Crime, Violence, Discipline and Safety in U.S. Public Schools: Findings from the School Survey on Crime and Safety: 2003-04, National Center for Education Statistics, 2006)

# What Are the Essential Elements of Bullying?

- Intentional

- Meanness for meanness' sake

- *Usually* unprovoked

- Intended to inflict psychological or physical pain

- Imbalance of power: actual or perceived

- Usually repetitive, but not always

# Types of Bullying Behavior

# Direct Bullying

- Face to face physical contact
- Verbal confrontation
- Direct verbal threats
- Name-calling
- Cruel teasing
- Taking or damaging belongings

# Indirect Bullying

- Social Exclusion

- Spreading Rumors

- Placing individual in a negative light

- Intimidation

- Threatening behavior

- Set-Ups

- Creating atmosphere of fear/anxiety

# Cyberbullying (electronic bullying):

Sending messages that are mean, vulgar, or threatening via email, texting, or instant messaging; posting offensive and/or private information on social or other websites

# Primary Victim Categories

- Passive Victims

- Provocative Victims

- Bully-Victims

# Passive Victims

- Tend to be shy, insecure, & lacking in social skills

- Often play alone at school (or isolate)

- Give in easily

- Fearful of bullying

# Risk Factors That Predispose Persons with Disabilities to Become Passive Victims

- High level of anxiety

- Fearful

- Lack of social understanding / Poor social skills

- Poor critical thinking skills

- Social isolation

- Inability to report bullying

- Conditions that affect appearance

# Provocative Victims

- Tend to be more hyper (action-oriented)

- Inadvertently irritate and annoy others

- Often act without thinking, due to impulsivity

- Have difficulty understanding or respecting boundaries

# Characteristics of Persons with Disabilities that Can Set Them Up to be Provocative Victims

- Can exhibit annoying / irritating behaviors

- Impulsivity

- Lack of social understanding

- Lack of understanding of boundaries

- Easily led / set up

- Problems in theory of mind, particularly lack of perspective-taking / empathy

# The Relationship Between Special Education Placement & Bullying

**C**hildren in special education are bullied and teased more than students in the regular classes.

Dorothea M. Ross, Ph.D., *Childhood Bullying and Teasing: What School Personnel, Other Professionals, and Parents Can Do*

# The Relationship Between Special Education Placement & Bullying

Studies have found that almost five times as many children with special needs are the targets of bullies

Garrity, C., Baris, M., & Porter, W.  *Bully-Proofing Your Child:  A Parent's Guide*

What happens when the bully is a person with a disability?

# Provocative Victim or Genuine Bully?

They may engage in the *same* type of behavior, but they do so for *different* reasons.

# The Difference Between Provocative Victims and True Bullies

Provocative victims may irritate and annoy **but**:

- They are not purposefully mean or malicious (e.g., push buttons to get a response).

- They fail to appreciate the effect of their behavior on others.

- When the behavior is explained to them they often express true remorse.

# What Can We Do?

# Useful Resources/Websites

*Responding to the Culture of Bullying and Disrespect:  New Perspectives on Collaboration, Compassion, and Responsibility*.  Authors:  Marie-Natalie Beaudoin & Maureen Taylor

*Cyberbullying and Cyber Threats.*  Author:  Nancy Willard

*Bullying and Teasing:  Social Power in Children's Groups.*  Author:  Gayle L. Macklem

School-wide Prevention Model:  Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (www.clemsonedu/olweus/)

Second Step:  Committee for Children® - Steps to Respect:  A Bullying Prevention Program (www.cfchildren.org)

Website:  www.learn2bebuddies.blogspot.com

# Useful Resources & Websites

Website:  www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/bullying

Website:  California Department of Education –
   www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ss/bullyprev.asp

Kid-oriented website:  Stop Bullying Now – www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/kids/
   (Website offers webisodes)

Website:  www.ancomm.com (Talk About It): "The nation's first and only anonymous online and text based reporting and emergency notification service for schools")