

Helping Children Deal with Bullying/Peer Conflict

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The Facts:

- Everyday when Alex gets home, the family across the street shouts obscenities. This happens to several families in the neighborhood.
- When Alex says something, the obscenities get worse and threats start happening.
- The Police are alerted, but this doesn't deter the behavior.

Here's a Scenario.... What would you do??

- “Bullying is when a stronger, more powerful person hurts or frightens a smaller or weaker person **deliberately** (on purpose) and **repeatedly** (again and again).” From *The Bully Free Classroom*, Beane, 1999.
- “Common definitions of “bullying” involve repeated acts of **aggression, intimidation** or **coercion** against a victim who is weaker in terms of physical size, psychological/social power, or other factors that result in a **notable power differential.**” From *Bully Prevention in Positive Behavior Support*.

What is Bullying? Let's define it!

Why is Bullying Hard to define?

- We each have our own experiences and background that lead us to our own definitions.
- “The broad range of physical, verbal, and social behaviors, the intent to harm, the repetition of confrontation and the imbalance of power between the perpetrators and victims are key features of bullying that make it extremely difficult to recognize and measure...” From BP-PBS.

What are bullying behaviors?

- **Bragging**
- Damaging things
- **Embarrassing people**
- **Hurt people’s feelings**
- **Intimidation**
- **Laugh at people**
- **Make fun of people**
- **Racist or Sexist jokes**
- **Leaving people out**
- **Put people down**
- **Sarcasm**
- **Gossiping**

The difficulty with bullying...

Common Myths

- Bullying is just a problem for children/teenagers.
- Bullying and Teasing are the same thing.
- All bullies have low self-esteem.
- An eye-for-an-eye approach is the best way to deal with a bully.
- Only boys are bullies.
- Bullying “just happens”.
- When someone tells, they are tattling.

The Reality

- Bullying is a symptom of societal norms.
- Bullying is physical and emotional aggression/intimidation, teasing is not.
- The reasons behind bullying are far too complex to box in to the “low self-esteem” theory.
- Getting even often escalates the issue and people get hurt. We need to train people to be assertive, rather than aggressive.
- Girls can be bullies, too. Often girls and boys bully in different ways.
- Bullying is a learned behavior.
- We need to teach our kids the difference between tattling and reporting.

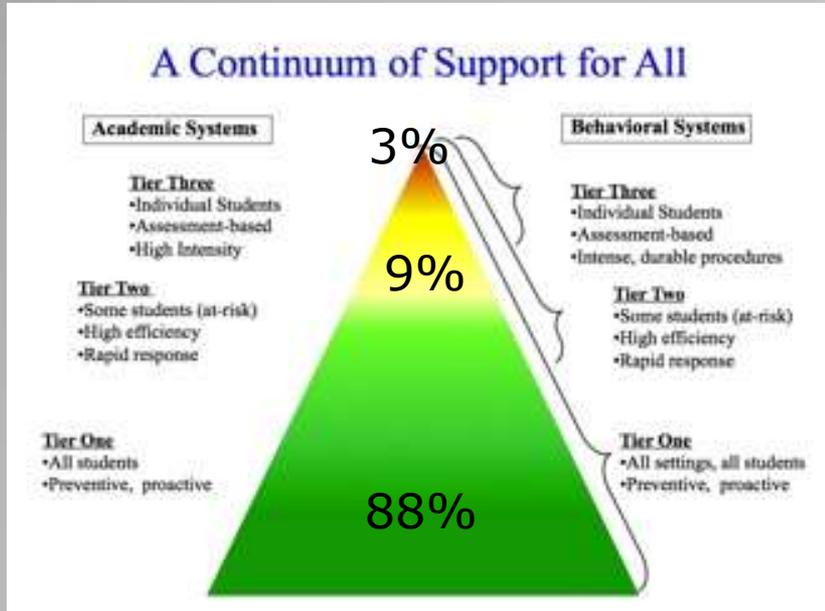
Myths about bullying...



- Many think that Zero Tolerance is the idea that a student will be immediately kicked out, suspended, given the toughest consequence for an incident.
- Schools still have the responsibility, just as police and law makers do, to investigate a situation fully before putting in a consequence. This is called Due Process.
- Consequences are then decided upon after the incident has been investigated and prior incidents are considered.
- The school cannot report out another student's consequence to a victim's family.
- **Something to think about...do we live in a Zero Tolerance world???**

A note about Zero Tolerance...

Iveland's Latest PBIS Data



- What we notice the most...
 - Many students have a hard time knowing what to do when they are having a conflict with someone.
 - Many situations are not outright bullying situations, but they escalate due to an inability to solve conflict.

Where do we stand with behaviors at Iveland?

- **Gentle/Good Teasing:**
 - You feel liked by the person,
 - You don't feel like the person is trying to put you down
 - If you tell the person, they will stop.
- **Unintentional Bad Teasing:**
 - You don't like it,
 - The person may not realize how you feel or dismisses your feelings because they don't understand how strongly you feel.
 - If you tell them to stop, they won't tease you anymore.
- **Mean Teasing:**
 - You know the teasing is done to make you feel bad, insecure or embarrassed.
 - You are teased about something the person knows you don't feel secure about.
 - If you say something, the person might blow you off, or say you are being too sensitive.
 - The teasing doesn't stop automatically.
- **Bullying:**
 - The teasing is done in a physically or emotionally aggressive way.
 - The teasing is done repeatedly day after day.
 - You feel scared to tell anyone, or the person threatens you not to tell.

_ Borrowed from *Queen Bees and Wannabes* by Rosalind Wiseman

**Helping students tell the difference
between teasing and bullying...**



- Self-Acceptance
- Assertiveness
- Good Role Modeling
- Teaching Boundaries
- Bill of Rights for Friends (Rosalind Wiseman)
- Accepting and Tolerating Others
- The concept of Code-Switching (Dr. Hollie).
- Understanding bullying and teasing.
- Using "I messages".
- For older students: The Seal Method (Stop and Strategize, Explain, Affirm, Lock).

How do we help our children?

**Questions, Comments,
Concerns???**