Bullying of Children Series

This Month's Topic:

Related Topics to Bullying

Introduction

There are many other types of aggressive behavior that don't fit the definition of bullying. This does not mean that they are any less serious or require less attention than bullying. Rather, these behaviors require different prevention and response strategies. This issue of **NASET's** *Bullying* **series** will focus on the following related topics to bullying:

- **Peer Conflict**
- **Teen Dating Violence**
- **Hazing**
- **Gang Violence**
- **Harassment**
- **Stalking**
- **Workplace Bullying**
- **Early Childhood**
- **Young Adults**

Peer Conflict

It is not bullying when two kids with no perceived power imbalance fight, have an argument, or disagree. Conflict resolution or peer mediation may be appropriate for these situations.

Teen Dating Violence

Teen dating violence is intimate partner violence that occurs between two young people who are, or once were, in a relationship.

Healthy relationships consist of trust, honesty, respect, equality, and compromise. Unfortunately, teen dating violence—the type of intimate partner violence that occurs between two young people who are, or who were once in, an intimate relationship—is a serious problem in the United States. A national survey found that ten percent of teens, female and male, had been the victims of physical dating violence within the past year and approximately 29 percent of adolescents reported being verbally or psychologically abused within the previous year.

Teen dating violence can be any one, or a combination, of the following:

- *Physical.* This includes pinching, hitting, shoving, or kicking.
- *Emotional.* This involves threatening a partner or harming his or her sense of self-worth. Examples include name calling, controlling/jealous behaviors, consistent monitoring, shaming, bullying (online, texting, and in person), intentionally embarrassing him/her, keeping him/her away from friends and family.
- *Sexual.* This is defined as forcing a partner to engage in a sex act when he or she does not or cannot consent.

It can negatively influence the development of healthy sexuality, intimacy, and identity as youth grow into adulthood and can increase the risk of physical injury, poor academic performance, binge drinking, suicide attempts, unhealthy sexual behaviors, substance abuse, negative body image and self-esteem, and violence in future relationships.

Teen dating violence can be prevented, especially when there is a focus on reducing risk factors as well as fostering protective factors, and when teens are empowered through family, friends, and others (including role models such as teachers, coaches, mentors, and youth group leaders) to lead healthy lives and establish healthy relationships. It is important to create spaces, such as school communities, where the behavioral norms are not tolerant of abuse in dating relationships. The message must be clear that treating people in abusive ways will not be accepted, and policies must enforce this message to keep students safe.

Hazing

Hazing is the use of embarrassing and often dangerous or illegal activities by a group to initiate new members.

Gang Violence

There are specialized approaches to addressing violence and aggression within or between gangs.

The proliferation of gang problems in large and small cities, suburbs, and even rural areas over the last two decades led to the development of a comprehensive, coordinated response to America's gang problem by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP).

OJJDP has long supported a combination of activities, including research, evaluation, training and technical assistance, and demonstration programs, aimed at combating youth gangs. Since the 1980s, OJJDP has developed, funded, and evaluated community-based anti-gang programs that coordinate prevention, intervention, enforcement, and reentry strategies.

Recognizing that street gang activities transcend ages of members, in October 2009, the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) merged its existing resources to create a new National Gang Center (NGC), developing a comprehensive approach to reduce gang involvement and gang crime. The reinvigorated NGC is a single, more

efficient entity, responsive to the needs of researchers, practitioners, and the public. The NGC website features the latest research about gangs; descriptions of evidence-based, anti-gang programs; and links to tools, databases, and other resources to assist in developing and implementing effective community-based gang prevention, intervention, and suppression strategies. There is also data analysis of the findings from nearly 15 years of data collected by the annual National Youth Gang Survey (NYGS) of 2,500 U.S. law enforcement agencies. Users can read and download publications related to street gangs, request training and technical assistance as they plan and implement anti-gang strategies, and register for a variety of anti-gang training courses. (http://www.nationalgangcenter.gov)

Based on law enforcement responses to the NYGS, nearly one-third of all responding law enforcement agencies reported gang activity in 2012. It is estimated that there were 30,700 gangs and 850,000 gang members throughout 3,100 jurisdictions with gang problems in the United States in 2012. The number of reported gang-related homicides increased 20 percent from 2011 to 2012. (Highlights of the 2012 National Youth Gang Survey, December 2014)

A national assessment of gang problems and programs provided the foundation for OJJDP's Comprehensive Gang Model, a project developed in the mid-1980s. Its key components reflect the best features of existing and evaluated programs across the country. The model outlines five strategies: community mobilization, social intervention, opportunities for educational and vocational advancements, suppression, and organizational change and development. As most gang members join between the ages of 12 and 15, prevention is a critical strategy within a comprehensive response to gangs that includes intervention, suppression and reentry.

OJJDP collaborates with BJA to ensure that OJP has an array of information and resources available on gangs. OJJDP's strategy is to reduce gang activity in targeted neighborhoods by incorporating a broad spectrum of research-based interventions to address the range of personal, family, and community factors that contribute to juvenile delinquency and gang activity. This approach attempts to integrate Federal, state, and local resources to incorporate state-of-the-art practices in prevention, intervention, and suppression.

Harassment

Although bullying and harassment sometimes overlap, not all bullying is harassment and not all harassment is bullying. Under federal civil rights laws, harassment is unwelcome conduct based on a protected class (race, national origin, color, sex, age, disability, religion) that is severe, pervasive, or persistent and creates a hostile environment.

Although no federal law directly addresses bullying, in some cases, bullying overlaps with discriminatory harassment when it is based on race, national origin, color, sex, age, disability, or religion. When bullying and harassment overlap, federally-funded schools (including colleges and universities) have an obligation to resolve the harassment. When the situation is not adequately resolved, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights and the U.S. Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division may be able to help.

At present, no federal law directly addresses bullying. In some cases, bullying overlaps with discriminatory harassment which is covered under federal civil rights laws enforced by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) and the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ). No matter what label is used (e.g., bullying, hazing, teasing), schools are obligated by these laws to address conduct that is:

- Severe, pervasive or persistent
- Creates a hostile environment at school. That is, it is sufficiently serious that it interferes with or limits a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or opportunities offered by a school
- Based on a student's race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or religion*

Although the US Department of Education, under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 does not directly cover religion, often religious based harassment is based on shared ancestry of ethnic characteristics which is covered. The US Department of Justice has jurisdiction over religion under Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Stalking

Stalking is repeated harassing or threatening behavior such as following a person, damaging a person's property, or making harassing phone calls.

Workplace Bullying

The term bullying is typically used to refer to behavior that occurs between school-aged kids. However, adults can be repeatedly aggressive and use power over each other, too. Adults in the workplace have a number of different laws that apply to them that do not apply to kids.

The magnitude of workplace violence in the United States is measured with fatal and nonfatal statistics from several sources. The Bureau of Labor Statistics' Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) reported 14,770 workplace homicide victims between 1992 and 2012. Averaging over 700 homicides per year, the largest number of homicides in one year (n=1080) occurred in 1994, while the lowest number (n=468) occurred in 2011.

From 2003 to 2012 over half of the workplace homicides occurred within three occupation classifications: sales and related occupations (28%), protective service occupations (17%), and transportation and material moving occupations (13%).

The Bureau of Labor Statistics Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII) reported an estimated 154,460 nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses involving days away from work during the 2003 to 2012 time period. The Healthcare and Social Assistance Industry accounted for over two-thirds of these injuries and illnesses each year.

Data collected by the Consumer Product Safety Commissions' National Electronic Injury Surveillance System (NEISS) that is collected in collaboration with NIOSH (NEISS-Work Supplement) estimated more than 137,000 workers were treated in emergency departments for nonfatal assaults in 2009.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics' National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) estimated the number of nonfatal violent crimes occurring against persons 16 or older while they were at work in 2009 at 572,000.
As an integral part of a broad-based initiative to reduce the incidence of occupational violence in this country, NIOSH conducts, funds, and publishes research on risk factors and prevention strategies related to workplace violence. This site contains information on NIOSH research as well as links to statistical reports, and public and private initiatives to address the problems of workplace violence.

NIOSH solicited grant applications for research to reduce the risk of injuries due to violence in the workplace through targeted Requests for Applications (RFA) in 2002 and 2008. Areas of interest for the applications included reducing the risk of injuries due to workplace violence through the development and evaluation of new intervention strategies, the evaluation of existing interventions, and the adoption of these strategies in the workplace.

Early Childhood

Young children may be aggressive and act out when they are angry or don't get what they want, but this is not bullying.

Early childhood often marks the first opportunity for young children to interact with each other. Between the ages of 3 and 5, kids are learning how to get along with each other, cooperate, share, and understand their feelings. Young children may be aggressive and act out when they are angry or don't get what they want, but this is not bullying. Still, there are ways to help children.

Parents, school staff, and other adults can help young children develop skills for getting along with others in age-appropriate ways.

- Model positive ways for young children to make friends. For example, practice pleasant ways that children can ask to join others in play and take turns in games. Coach older children to help reinforce these behaviors as well. Praise children for appropriate behavior. Help young children understand what behaviors are friendly.
- Help young children learn the consequences of certain actions in terms they can understand. For example, say "if you don't share, other children may not want to play with you." Encourage young children to tell an adult if they are treated in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable, upset or unhappy, or if they witness other children being harmed.
- Set clear rules for behavior and monitor children's interactions carefully. Step in quickly to stop aggressive behavior or redirect it before it occurs.
- Use age-appropriate consequences for aggressive behavior. Young children should be encouraged to say "I'm sorry" whenever they hurt a peer, even accidentally. The apology should also be paired with an action. For example, young children could help rebuild a knocked over block structure or replace a torn paper or crayons with new ones.

Young Adults

Behaviors that are traditionally considered bullying among school-aged youth require special attention and different strategies in young adults and college students.

Behaviors that are traditionally considered bullying among school-aged youth often require new attention and strategies in young adults and college students. Many of these behaviors are considered crimes under state and federal law and may trigger serious consequences after the age of 18.

Although media reports often call unwanted, aggressive behavior among young adults "bullying," this is not exactly accurate. Many state and federal laws address bullying-like behaviors in this age group under very serious terms, such as hazing, harassment, and stalking. Additionally, most young adults are uncomfortable with the term bullying—they associate it with school-aged children.

How Young Adults Can Get Help:

- Encourage young adults to talk to someone they trust.
- Determine if the behavior violates campus policies or laws. Review student codes of conduct, state criminal laws, and civil rights laws.
- Report criminal acts to campus or community law enforcement.
- Consult the college's Title IX coordinator to help determine if the behavior is sexual harassment.
- Many college campuses also have an ombudsperson or similar person who handles a variety of concerns and complaints. He or she can help direct the young adult to appropriate campus resources.
- Young adults may be reluctant to seek help for cyberbullying, although they do recognize it as a serious issue for their age group. Encourage young adults to report cyberbullying.