Preventing Bullying and Harassment of Targeted Group Students

COSA

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Definition

Bullying is unfair and one-sided. It happens when someone keeps hurting, frightening, threatening, or leaving someone out on purpose.
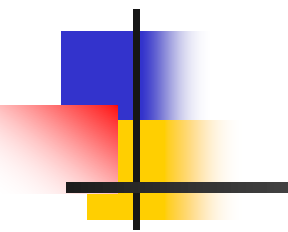
Defined another way as:

Intentional, repeated hurtful acts, words or other behavior, such as name-calling, threatening and/or shunning committed by one or more children against another. Acts are not intentionally provoked by the victims. An imbalance in real or perceived power <u>must</u> exist between the bully and the victim.

US Dept. of Education

Oregon Law (ORS 339.351

(1) Cyberbullying means the use of any electronic communication device to harass, intimidate or bully.

(2) Harassment, intimidation or bullying means any act that:

(a) Substantially interferes with a student's educational benefits, opportunities or performance;

(b) Takes place on or immediately adjacent to school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided transportation or at any official school bus stop;
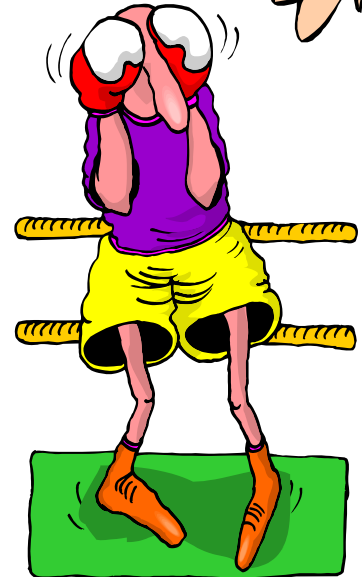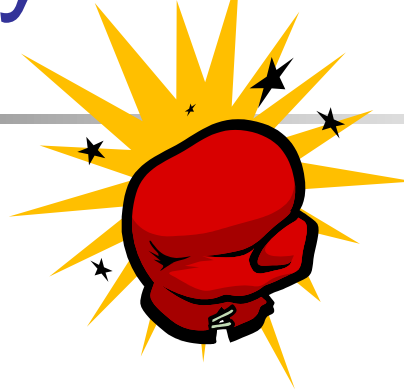
Oregon Law

(c) Has the effect of:

- Physically harming a student or damaging a student's property;

- Knowingly placing a student in reasonable fear of physical harm to the student or damage to the student's property; or

- Creating a hostile educational environment, including interfering with the psychological well-being of a student;

Bullying May Be:

- *Physical*
- *Verbal*
- *Emotional*
- *Sexual*

Physical bullying includes punching, poking, strangling, hair pulling, beating, biting and excessive tickling.

Verbal bullying includes such acts as hurtful name calling, teasing and gossip.
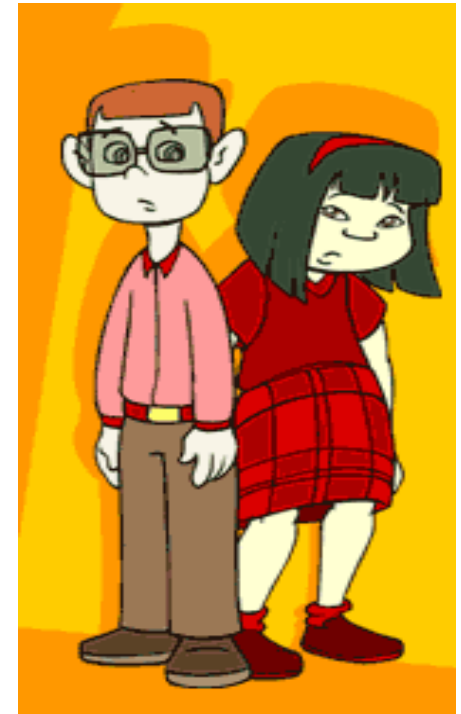
Emotional bullying includes rejecting, terrorizing, extorting, defaming, humiliating, blackmailing, rating/ranking of personal characteristics such as race, disability, ethnicity, or perceived sexual orientation, manipulating friendships, isolating, ostracizing and peer pressure.

Sexual bullying includes many of the actions listed above as well as exhibitionism, voyeurism, sexual propositioning, sexual harassment and abuse involving actual physical contact and sexual assault.

US Dept. of Education

Vicky & Victor Victim

Children who are victimized tend to display "vulnerable behaviors".

- Passive loners, cry easily, and lack social skills
- Shy, sensitive, insecure
- Don't pick up on social cues
- Unable to deflect a conflict with humor
- Generally sad, anxious, cautious, suffer low self-esteem
- Do not defend themselves or retaliate and tend to lack friends

Juvonen, J. & Graham. (2001). *Peer harassment in school: The plight of the*

Gender Differences

Boy bullies often use physical threats.

Girl bullies often use verbal put-downs or hurt people's feelings

How prevalent is it?

- **75 percent** of middle school students are involved in bullying- as a target, aggressor, or bystander
- **Six out of ten** teens witness bullying at least once a day
- Students targeted by bullying **are 2 to 9 times** more likely to consider suicide
- **160,000** students stay home from school because they fear bullying
- **50 percent of teens** have been targeted by cyberbullying, 25 percent have experienced repeated incidents
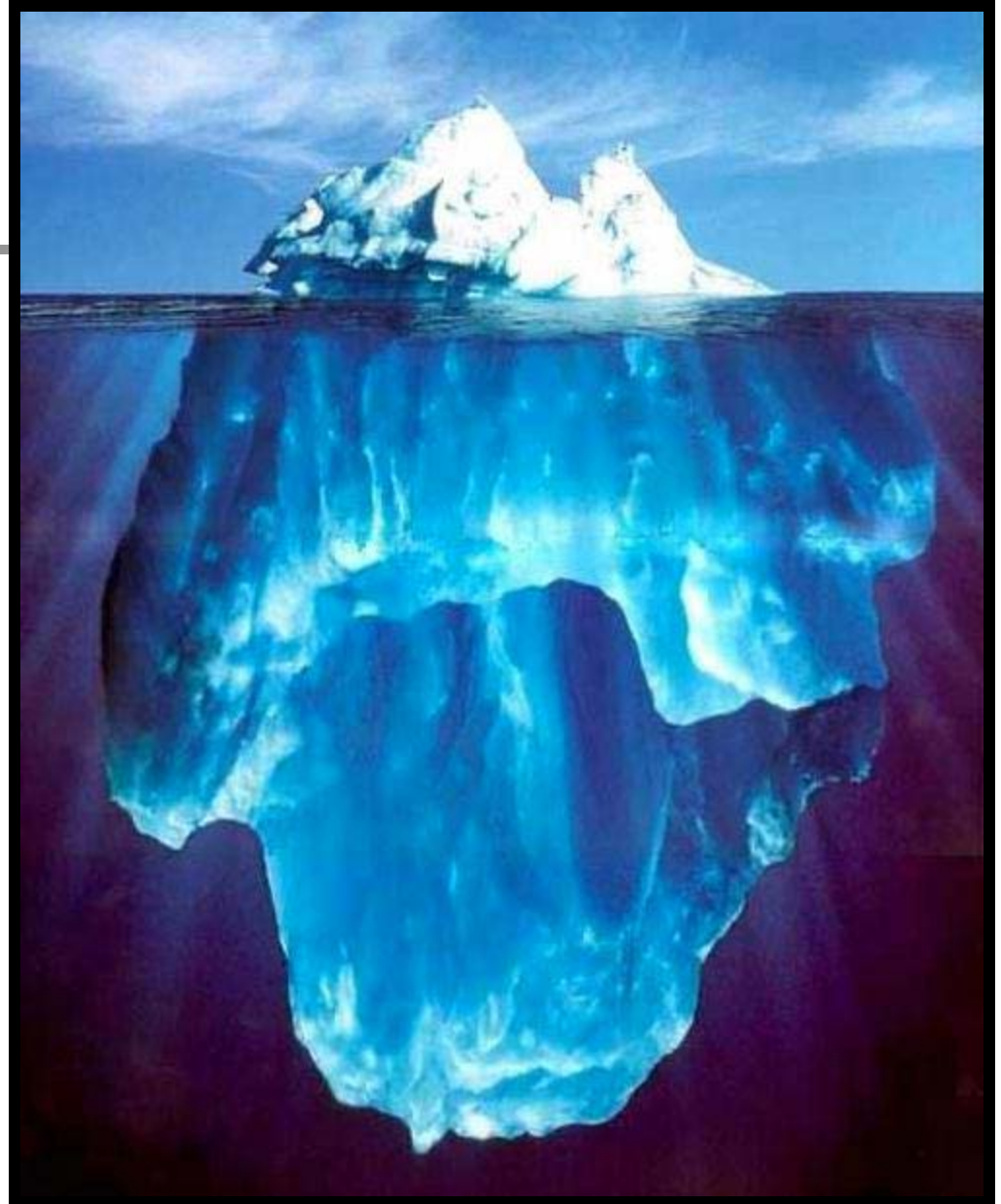
School District 4J Climate Survey Data 2010-2011

- Approximately 42% of secondary students report being bullied during the past year.
- 42% of students report being harassed in the last year.
- 43% of students report observing harassment based on sexual orientation once a month or more
- 42% report observing harassment based on disabilities one a month or more.
- 31% report observing harassment based on race once a month or more

Adults only see the tip of the iceberg.

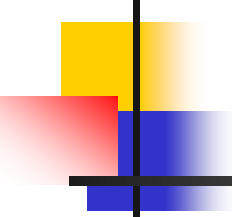Scott Ross, University of Oregon

Do Sweat the Small Stuff!!

- *The majority of incidents are low level – name calling; exclusion; low levels of physical contact (pushing; shoving; etc.)*

- *There is research to show that high rates of low level behaviors are associated with a greater probability of high intensity incidents*

- *Ignoring low level incidents is an invitation to escalate social aggression.*
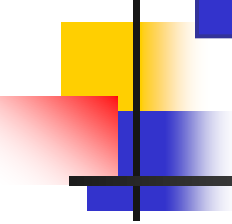
What Reinforces Bullying?

- **Attention from Bystanders**

- **Reactions from the Recipient**

- **Access to Items**

Purpose of Universal Prevention

- This is about changing social culture
- Social culture is controlled by your 85%ers, not by the 4-5 bullies in your school
- What you're hoping to change is the behavior of the 85%, so that the bullies respond to those around them, so that they are socially influenced by their peers in a positive way
- For the 4-5 bullies, what you need is an FBA and a Behavior Support Plan.
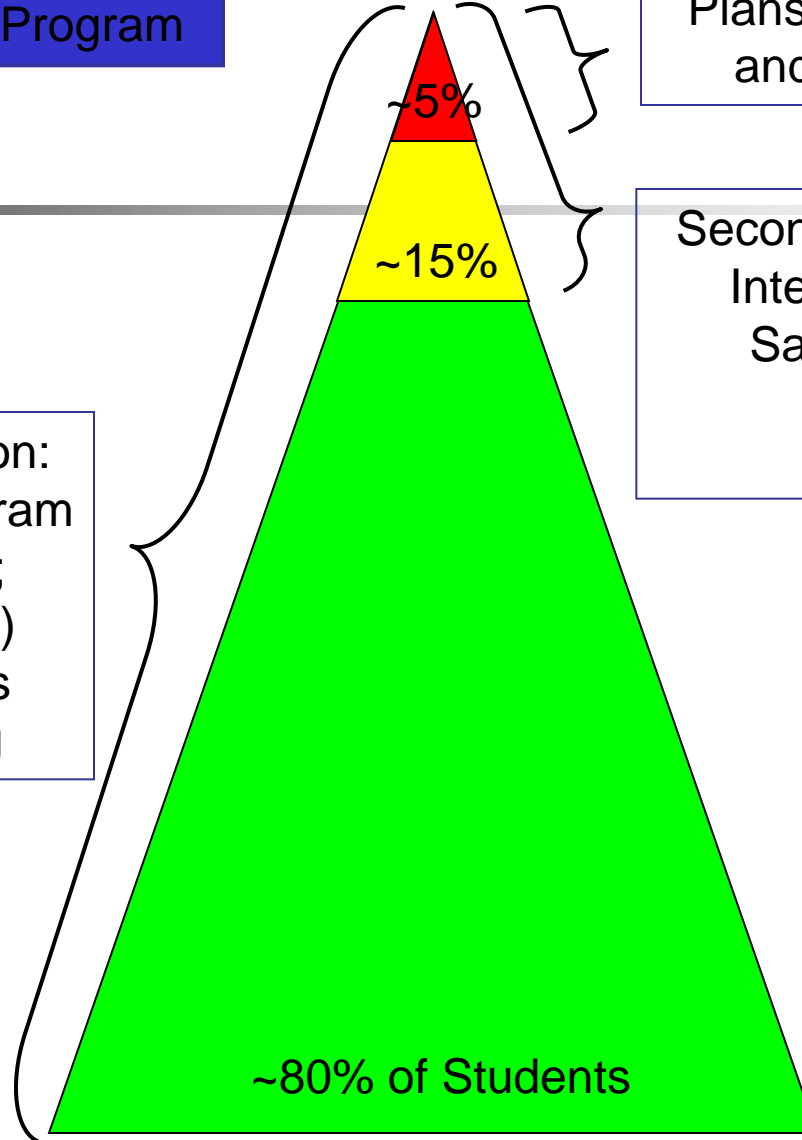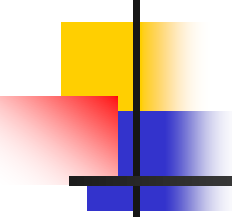
CONTINUUM OF SCHOOL-WIDE Bully Prevention Program

Tertiary Prevention: Behavior Support Plans for Perpetrators and/or Recipients

~5%

Secondary Prevention: Intensive Practice Safety Plans for Recipients Mediation

~15%

Primary Prevention: School Wide Program (Stop/Walk/Talk; Expect Respect) Student Forums Adult Coaching
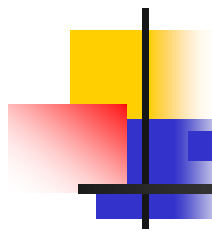
~80% of Students

Critical Features of Prevention Effective Programs

- Facilitate student participation
- Teach adults how to interrupt social aggression, and how to respond in a supportive way to student concerns
- Reduce interactions that reinforce bullying
  - Target Recipient Behavior; Perpetrator Behavior; and Bystander Behavior
- Teach students how to respectfully interrupt socially aggressive behavior
  - Establish a School-Wide Stop Phrase
  - Teach Student Strategies
- Deliver the intervention with sufficient intensity to maintain positive effects
- Closely monitor implementation fidelity

Effective Programs Teach Students Skills

Example: Skills taught within "Expect Respect"

- Stop Strategy

- Stopping Strategy

- Bystander Strategy

- Seeking Support Strategy

- Adult Coaching Strategy

☐

Steps To Respect
Adult Skills" The 4 A's

- Affirm
- Ask
- Assess
- Act

Impact: Kids Who Are Bullied

- Depression and anxiety, increased feelings of sadness and loneliness, changes in sleep and eating patterns, and loss of interest in activities they used to enjoy. These issues may persist into adulthood.

- Health complaints

- Decreased academic achievement, GPA and standardized test scores, and school participation. They are more likely to miss, skip, or drop out of school.

Kids Who Bully Others

- Abuse alcohol and other drugs in adolescence and as adults

- Get into fights, vandalize property, and drop out of school

- Engage in early sexual activity

- Have criminal convictions and traffic citations as adults

- Be abusive toward their romantic partners, spouses, or children as adults

Bystanders are negatively affected

- Social and peer difficulties
- Fear retribution or problems with peers
- Feel helpless or guilty
- Have increased use of tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs
- Have increased mental health problems, including depression and anxiety
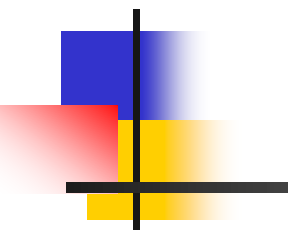- Miss or skip school
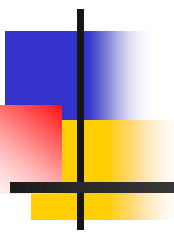
Federal Anti-Discrimination Laws

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
  - Prohibits discrimination in public schools on the basis of race, color, and national origin.
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
  - Prohibits discrimination in public schools on the basis of sex.
    - Title IX prohibits sexual harassment and gender-based harassment of all students, regardless of the actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity of the harasser or victim.
    - Although Title IX does not prohibit discrimination based solely on sexual orientation, it does protect students, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) from sex discrimination.

Sexual Harassment Guidance

A school will be in violation of Title IX if the school "has notice" of a sexually hostile environment and fails to take immediate and appropriate corrective action[63]. A school has notice if it actually "knew, or in the exercise of reasonable care, should have known" about the harassment
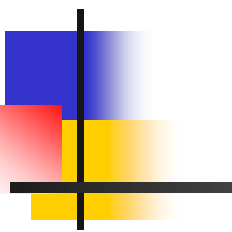
Sexual Harassment

Once a school has notice of possible sexual harassment of students -- whether carried out by employees, other students, or third parties -- it should take immediate and appropriate steps to investigate or otherwise determine what occurred and take steps reasonably calculated to end any harassment, eliminate a hostile environment if one has been created, and prevent harassment from occurring again.

Racial Harassment

- Standard Different Treatment

- Hostile Environment

Racial Harassment

To establish a violation of title VI under hostile environment, OCR must find that: (1) A racially hostile environment existed; (2) the recipient had actual or constructive notice of the racially hostile environment; and (3) the recipient failed to respond adequately to redress the racially hostile environment.

Some Next Steps

- Develop and teach anti-bullying/harassment policy and procedures
- Assessment and monitor with data
  - Identify form and prevalence of bullying
  - Patterns of bullying in your school
    - Location and times bullying occurs
    - Who is involved?
    - Social norms that may support bullying
- Inform school staff, parents, and students
  - Bullies, victims, and bystanders

What We've Learned

Critical Implementation Variables:

- **Intensity**: Enough to engage the students in problem solution

- **Fidelity**: Systematic checks particularly regarding adult coaching and follow through with interrupting behaviors

- **Sustainability**: Continued effort needed to obtain long term results

What We've Learned

- *You need a team to monitor implementation*

- *Keep the conversation going*

- *Facilitate active participation from the students and keep it real!*

- *Solicit feedback from the staff and maintain staff involvement*

Questions? Comments?

Resources

- The Region X Equity Assistance Center
  - http://educationnorthwest.org/equity-program
- U.S. Office for Civil Rights
  - http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/about/contactus/index.html
- Oregon Department of Education
  - Michael.mahoney@state.or.us
  - Winston.cornwall@state.or.us

- **StopBullying**.gov: Home

- Lenssenj@mindspring.com