

Bullying Prevention Strategies

by Joshua Preece



Through an effective *schoolwide proactive approach*, some bullying behavior can be eliminated before it starts. Creating and maintaining a safe and positive learning environment takes much time and effort from the entire school community. Although strong leadership is needed, one person cannot do this job single-handedly.

- **Interact with students.** Greet or talk to students in the morning, during class transitions, and after school.
- **Equip your students.** Organize team-building activities and social skills discussions. Frequently revisit the duties of a caring citizen and what it means to be a member of community.
- **Equip your staff.** Prepare your staff with training, practice, and challenge activities. Having staff lead such activities not only fosters leadership within your school, but allows staff to learn with their peers.
- **Talk about bullying and social interactions.** Have an open dialogue between staff and students to help students hear other points of view, create understanding, and dissolve an egocentric mindset.
- **Hold witnesses responsible.** Practice "What would you do?" scenarios to help bystanders understand ways to address bullying situations.
- **Provide several safe and private ways for students to report bullying behaviors to school authorities.** Reduce student fear of retaliation or social backlash from peers.
- **Acknowledge addressed reports.** Victims need to know that their voices are being heard.
- **Use data to guide your decisions.** Gather data from staff observations, student/parent concerns, behavior reports, office referrals, and attendance reports to determine when and where incidents are happening.
- **Assign staff members to monitor ever-changing transition "hot spots".** Staff unstructured and unsupervised times in these high incident areas.
- **Reward examples of anti-bullying behavior.** Rewards can fit easily into a school's PBIS work or other positive character development programs.
- **Create policies and change rules as needed.** Schools must address the proper use of technology and social media.
- **Get the community involved.** The more people that are looking out for our students, the safer they will be. This also helps to spread the anti-bullying message so that the school can be a leader within the community.

"Meaningful bullying prevention is dependent upon children, teachers, administrators, parents, and the community working in partnership."

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