

# What Is Bullying?

- ▶ Direct bullying = open attack
  - Physical (hitting, kicking, pushing, choking)
  - Verbal (name calling, threatening, taunting, malicious teasing)
- ▶ Indirect bullying = subtle, difficult to detect
  - Relational aggression (social isolation, intentional exclusion, rumor-spreading, damaging someone's reputation, making faces or obscene gestures behind someone's back, and manipulating friendships and other relationships)



# What Is Bullying?

- ▶ Electronic bullying, cyberbullying
  - Sending hurtful or threatening text messages and images in order to damage the target's reputation and relationships
  - Texting, chat rooms, e-mail, Facebook, etc.
  - Difficult for adults to detect or track
  - Almost half of those victimized **do not know the identity of the perpetrator**



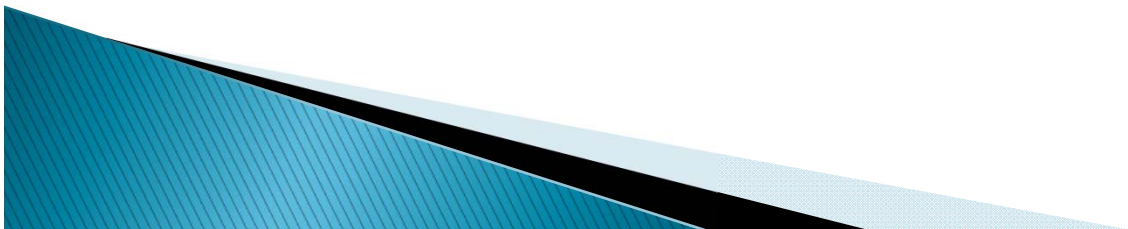
# What Is Bullying?

Traditional definition is evolving. Before:

- Intent to victimize
- Imbalance of power
- Repeated acts

Increasingly:

- Power imbalance is not always straightforward
- Even **just one act** can produce significant physical, emotional harm for the victim and others in the situation



# What Strategies Work?

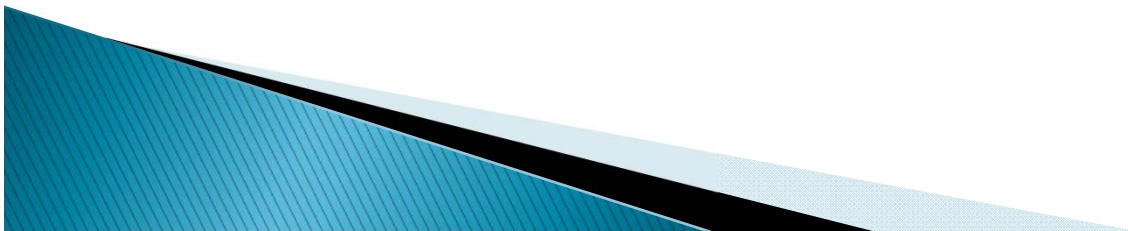
- ▶ Much of schools' intervention focus is on control strategies and bullying prevention programs
  - Mostly classroom curriculum, school context
    - PACT Mega Skills Campaign: Respect/Caring
- ▶ Need to address the differing underlying causes and to differentiating among bullies with respect to motivation
- ▶ Part of comprehensive, multifaceted, cohesive system of student and learning supports



# Adult Behavior

## Adult Models of Behavior

- ▶ Active bystander behavior
- ▶ Respectful and caring behavior to students and each other
- ▶ Demonstrate social problem-solving skills
- ▶ Moral reasoning
  - Anticipate interpersonal problems
  - Change the “coolness” of certain behaviors.



# Individual-level Interventions

## Serious Talks with the Bully or Bullies:

- ▶ Document involvement in bullying
- ▶ Sending a clear, strong message that bullying is not acceptable
- ▶ Warn bully/ies that future behavior will be closely monitored
- ▶ Warn of additional negative consequences if bullying behavior does not stop.



# Individual-level Interventions

## Serious Talks with the Victim & Parent

- ▶ Document specific bullying episode(s): How did the bullying start? What happened? How did it end? Who participated, in what way?
- ▶ Proactively communicate teacher's plan of action in dealing with the bully/ies
- ▶ Attempt to persuade the victim to **immediately** report any new bullying episodes or attempts



# Individual-level Interventions

## Parent and School Involvement:

- *Teacher contacts parents concerned*
- *Meetings can be held together or apart*
- *Might bring counselor or admin. for mediation*



# Other Tips

- ▶ Avoid labeling bullies and targets. Stereotyping contributes to
  - self-fulfilling prophecies
  - De-emphasis of youth's positive attributes for both bully and victim
  - Downplays environment, context that may need to be addressed
- ▶ Most people fill bully and/or target role, at some point
- ▶ Intervention more effective when personalized



# Effects of Bullying

Consequences for bullied children

- ▶ Emotional distress, such as loneliness, anxiety, and depression, as well as
- ▶ Poor school performance and attendance
- ▶ Low self-confidence and self-concept
- ▶ Social marginalization. These effects can be very long-lasting.

Higher levels of depression and anxiety in early adulthood, for bullied adolescents

Damage compounded since same children often remain victims from one school year to the next

(Nansel, Haynie, & Simons-Morton, 2007).



# Bullying Prevention: What Works?

2009 meta-analysis of 59 well-designed evaluations of bullying interventions

Most important components:

- ▶ Parent Involvement
- ▶ Supervision
- ▶ Disciplinary methods
- ▶ Classroom Structure
- ▶ School Programs: Mega Skills; Miss Brittany's Book  
Read: November 16, 2:00
- ▶ Together, We Can Make a Difference

