CHILD & ADOLESCENT BULLYING: A GROWING PROBLEM

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Why bullying, why now?

- Bullying and victimization are a **common experience** for kids today.
  - 50% of students are affected by bullying (Nansel, Haynie, & Simons-Morton, 2007)
  - 6-15% of children are bullied weekly or more (Rigby, 2000)

- Bullying has serious and lasting implications.
  - ABC News Bullying Story: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Wcx2qM5C4g](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Wcx2qM5C4g)
Implications for Bullying

- Anxiety
- Low self-esteem
- Isolation
- Depression
- Somatic complaints
- Self-harm
- Low quality friendships
- Decreased academic performance
- Loneliness
- Suicidal ideation
The Language of Peer Aggression:
Let’s check with “Webster”

- Peer Aggression: Includes physical, verbal, and relational aggression, affecting both boys and girls. (Crick et al., 1999)

- Physical Aggression: Damage to another’s physical well being. (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995)
  - Ex. Hitting, punching, kicking, pushing, etc.

- Verbal Aggression: A communication of intent to cause pain.
  - Ex. Yelling, name calling, threats, etc.
Relational Aggression: Behavior that is intended to harm someone by damaging or manipulating their relationships with others. (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995).

- Ex. Gossiping, social exclusion, isolation, writing mean notes/online posts/texts, alienation, withholding friendship, ignoring someone.
- Can be more difficult for parents and teachers to detect.
Cyberbullying: Attempts to destroy victim’s reputation or humiliate through technological means: internet, cell phone, text messaging.

How common is cyberbullying?

- In 2002, 13 million children in the United States were victims of cyberbullying.
- 1 out of 10 students said that they had bullied others via e-mail or instant messaging.
- About 1 out of 5 students reported either being a cyberbully or being the victim.
Bullying: A Researcher’s Definition

“A person is bullied when he/she is exposed repeatedly over time to negative actions on the part of one or more persons. It is a negative action when someone intentionally inflicts or attempts to inflict injury or discomfort upon another” Olweus, 1996 (p. 10)

3 Criteria
1. Intentional harm
2. Repeatedly carried out
3. Imbalance of power in the relationship
   - Physical status or Social status
Bullying Roles

- Aggressor: The person who chooses to hurt another person or damage a relationship.

- Kid in the Middle: The person or persons who are not aggressors or victims but are caught somewhere in between.
  - Also known as the “bystander”
  - Scared, silenced, stuck

- Victim: The person who is targeted or harmed by the aggressor(s).
Danger Signs for Parents
(The Ophelia Project, 2005)

- Your child complains that he/she is a victim of relational aggression.
  - “No one likes me, everyone is mean to me, they left me out on purpose.”

- Your child shows sudden signs of sadness, loneliness, or risky behaviors.
  - Change in eating or sleeping habits, complains he/she doesn’t want to go to school or engage in favorite activities.
Danger Signs for Parents (The Ophelia Project, 2005)

- Within your child’s friend group, certain kids appear to be accepted, liked, and “good” but suddenly that changes.
- Your child frequently demonstrates patterns of relationally aggressive behavior.
  - Spreading rumors, mocking other kids, exclusion of certain friends.
References

- The Ophelia Project, [http://www.opheliaproject.org](http://www.opheliaproject.org)