Bully Prevention Lab
University of Missouri

Bullying Reporting & Investigation Process

Chad A. Rose, Ph.D.

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Agenda

1. Defining Bullying
2. Creating a Bully Prevention Task Force
3. Reporting Procedures
4. Interview Procedures
5. Decision Making
6. Next Steps: Support & Consequences

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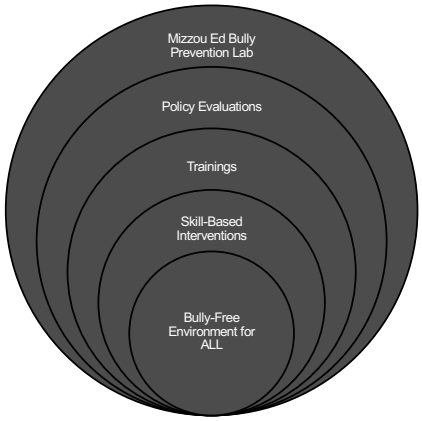

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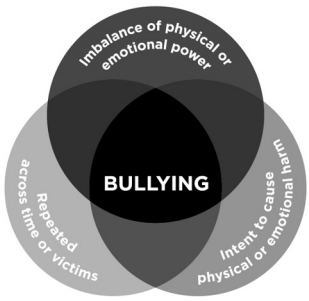
What is Bullying?



Adapted from Olweus (2005)

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Imbalance of Power Defined

Understanding Capital as a Function of Power

Physical Capital refers to the physical size differential between a student who is victimized and the aggressor.

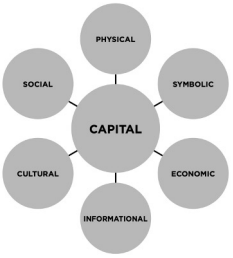
Symbolic Capital refers to the items and belongings, typically sought after or favored, that separates a student who is victimized and the aggressor.

Economic Capital refers to a personal, or family, financial differential between a student who is victimized and the aggressor

Informational Capital refers to the social knowledge differential (e.g., gossip) between a student who is victimized and the aggressor

Cultural Capital refers established cultural norms within a given environment that limits a victimized students entry into preferred social groups, while enables the entry for the aggressor

Social Capital refers to the social network with which a student is embedded, where victimized students tend to have a more limited network, while aggressors may have an expanded network



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Imbalance of Power Examples

Examples Include but are not limited to:

- An older student aggresses towards a younger student.
- A student who is more "popular" and has more social and cultural capital aggresses towards a students who is less "popular".
- A group of students aggress towards an individual student.
- A student or group of students aggress towards a student or group of students who cannot protect themselves due to a disability, lack of resources, or limited social support.
- *Electronically* – A student posts an embarrassing picture via social media without a person's knowledge, consent, or awareness.

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Determining a Repeated Pattern:

Repetition refers to the frequency with which an individual is subject to bullying. While there is currently no rule of thumb related to a specific timeframe with which aggression must occur to be considered bullying, a few factors should be considered:

•Repetition does **NOT** have to be the same topography* of bullying

•Repetition does **NOT** have to include the same aggressor, group of aggressors, victim, or group of victims (i.e., An aggressor can bully more than one student, A victim can be victimized by more than one aggressor)

•Repetition does **NOT** have to occur within the same environment
In addition to the above points, the fear or likelihood of repetition should be considered, including the stability of environmental, social, academic, and prevention conditions. In other words, if these conditions remain stable following the initial bullying experience, the likelihood of repetition increases.

***Topography of bullying means how the bullying looks or the form, e.g. physical aggression, verbal aggression, cyberbullying, etc.**

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Repetition Examples

- A group of students target an individual student before school by selecting one member of the group to throw a ball at his head and laugh as he attempts to dodge. Every day a different member of the group takes a turn.
- A student shoulder checks a younger student on Monday; calls a student with a disability a derogatory name on Tuesday; and on Wednesday pushes another student out of their seat on the bus.
- A student calls a girl in her class a racial slur; on another occasion, she pushes this same girl into a locker. Later that week, she makes sure that all of the girls in the class ignore her.
- *Electronically* - A student posts hateful comments about a peer on social media. After this same student gets caught, she continues to post anonymously and encourages others to post hateful comments towards this same peer.

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Intent Definition & Examples

Bullying is a proactive form of aggression that is grounded in the intent to cause physical, emotional, or social harm. Therefore, bullying, as a form of aggression, is purposeful on the part of the aggressor.

Examples of Intent:

- An older student exclaims to his peer group, "Watch This!", and walks over to a younger student, pushes him to the ground, and laughs.
- A group of students begin calling another student by a derogatory nickname, even though this student expresses his displeasure.
- A group of students act like one of their peers is invisible, and encourage everyone else in the class to do the same.
- *Electronically* – A student posts a compromising picture of a peer on social media with a caption that is extremely hurtful.

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Types of Bullying

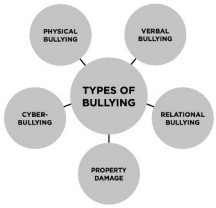
Physical Bullying involves the use of physical force (e.g., hitting, kicking, slapping, tripping, spitting) to victimize an individual or group of students.

Verbal Bullying involves oral or written communication that causes harm to the victim including taunting, name calling, threats, offensive language or notes, and hand derogatory hand gestures.

Relational Bullying (or social bullying) involves behaviors designed to socially exclude or damage the reputation of the victim, including rumor spreading, social isolation, ignoring, and encouraging others to defriend the individual.

Cyberbullying involves behaviors with the intent of harming an individual through electronic means (e.g., social media, text message, gaming, mobile applications), including rumor spreading, posting compromising pictures, name calling, and encouragement of social exclusion.

Damage to Property involves an aggressor intentionally damaging or stealing an individual's property with the intent of causing harm.



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Outcomes

Psychosomatic outcomes can include physical illness and symptoms, sleep disturbances.

Psychosocial outcomes can include depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, stress, suicidal attempts and ideation.

Behavioral outcomes can include internalizing and externalizing behavioral problems and patterns.

Social outcomes can include peer rejection, trouble resolving peer conflict, social and communication skill deficits, increased levels of delinquent behaviors.

Educational outcomes can include academic deficits, poor academic outcomes, low levels of school engagement, and increased absenteeism.

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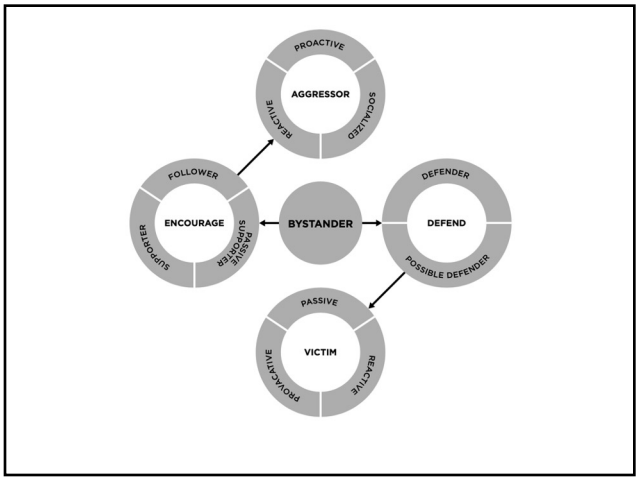

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Traditional Thinking

(Rose, Simpson, & Moss, 2015)

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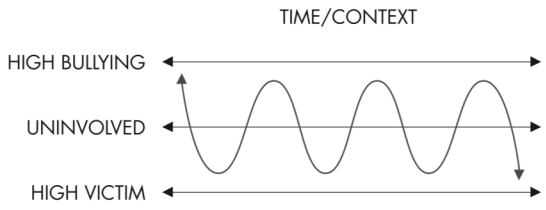
Contemporary Thinking



(Rose, Simpson, & Moss, 2015)

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6. Next Steps: Support & Consequences

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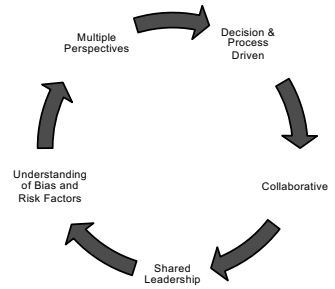
Establish a Bully Prevention Task Force



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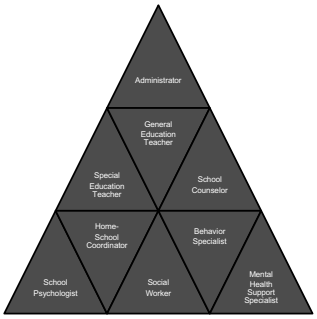
Suggested Task Force Members



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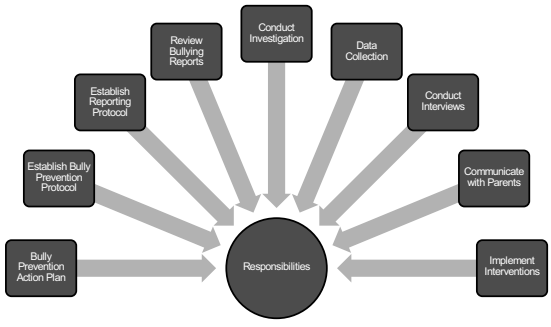
Bully Prevention Task Force Responsibilities



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Establishing Bully Prevention Action Plan – Preliminary Questions for Students and Staff

- Is bullying a problem in this school?
- What types of bullying are occurring?
- Where is bullying occurring?
- Where do students seek help?
- How do students report bullying if they observe or experience it?
- What is currently being done to prevent bullying?

Lewis, T.J. (2011). *SW-PBS bullying action plan*. University of Missouri Center on School-Wide Positive Behavior Support, Columbia, MO.

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Establishing Bully Prevention Action Plan – Preliminary Questions for Staff and Adult Stakeholders

- Are subgroups of students at higher risk for bullying?
- Where do staff feel students should/could seek help?
- What strategies are most successful in bully prevention?
- Are students aware of reporting procedures?
- Are staff aware of district/school policy and procedures?
- What are the parent perceptions of bully prevention efforts?

Lewis, T.J. (2011). *SW-PBS bullying action plan.* University of Missouri Center on School-Wide Positive Behavior Support, Columbia, MO.

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Establishing a SW-PBS Bully Prevention Plan – Identification of Behaviors

1. Identify pro-social behaviors for noted types of bullying behavior.

Bullying Behavior	Replacement Skill	Link to School-Wide Expectation

Lewis, T.J. (2011). *SW-PBS bullying action plan.* University of Missouri Center on School-Wide Positive Behavior Support, Columbia, MO.

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Establishing a SW-PBS Bully Prevention Plan – Teaching Bystander Skills

2. Lesson plans and teaching strategies (with schedule) for each replacement skill

Skill	Bystander Role	Non-Participant Role	Who Will Develop	Due Date

3. Establish a teaching schedule (ALL in school must teach across ALL classrooms)

Lewis, T.J. (2011). *SW-PBS bullying action plan.* University of Missouri Center on School-Wide Positive Behavior Support, Columbia, MO.

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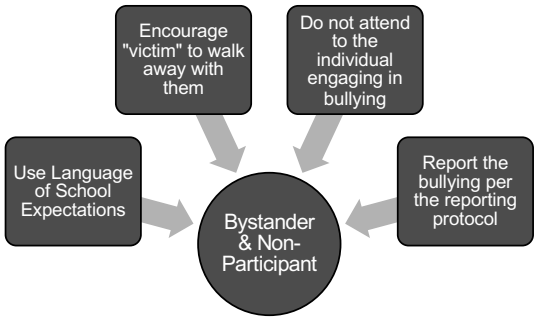
Establishing a SW-PBS Bully Prevention Plan - Bystander & Non-Participant Role



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Establishing a SW-PBS Bully Prevention Plan - Establish a Reporting Protocol

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Establishing a SW-PBS Bully Prevention Plan – Supervision of High Risk Locations

4. Supervision of high risk locations

Setting	Current Supervision	Training & Support Need	Additional Supervision Ideas

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Establishing a SW-PBS Bully Prevention Plan – Teaching Prevention & Response Skills

4. Identify strategies and lesson plans for students who are victimized – Teaching Prevention Strategies

Bully Behavior - Victimization	Desired Student Response	Lesson Plans/Strategies to Teach	Connect Point to School-Wide Expectations

Lewis, T.J. (2011). *SW-PBS bullying action plan.* University of Missouri Center on School-Wide Positive Behavior Support, Columbia, MO.

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Establishing a SW-PBS Bully Prevention Plan – Teaching Alternative Skills

5. Identify instructional strategies and consequences for bullying

Bully Behavior - Perpetration	Desired Outcome (Get/Avoid)	Replacement with Same Outcome	Connect Point to School-Wide Expectations

Lewis, T.J. (2011). *SW-PBS bullying action plan.* University of Missouri Center on School-Wide Positive Behavior Support, Columbia, MO.

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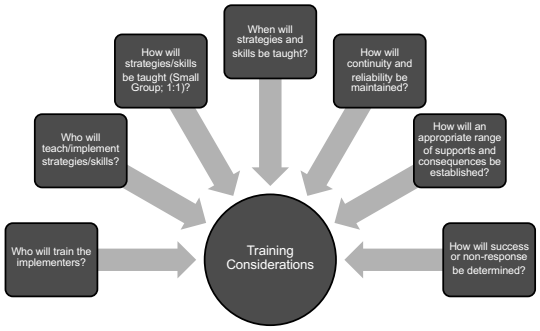
Establishing a SW-PBS Bully Prevention Plan - Training Considerations



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Establishing Bully Prevention Action Plan – Considerations for Strategies and Skill Implementation

- Establish Core Replacement Skill Strategies
- Establish Prompts for Students to use Problem-Solving Skills
- Establish a Plan for High Rates of Reinforcement for Socially Appropriate Behaviors
- Establish Practice Opportunities
- Establish a Plan for Connecting Skills to General Curriculum
- Establish a Plan for Tier I and Tier II Supports
- Establish a Plan for Responses and Consequences

Lewis, T.J. (2011). *SW-PBS bullying action plan.* University of Missouri Center on School-Wide Positive Behavior Support, Columbia, MO.

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Establishing a SW-PBS Bully Prevention Plan – Summary of Action Plan

6. Action Plan Summary

Action	Additional Information Needed	Product Outcome	Who is Responsible	Due Date	Goal and/or Objectives

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Establish a Reporting Protocol

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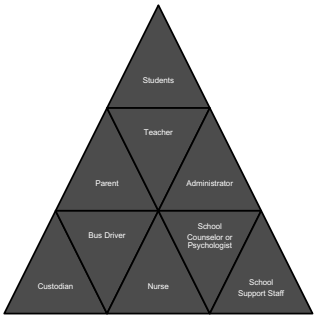
Who Could Make Bullying Reports?



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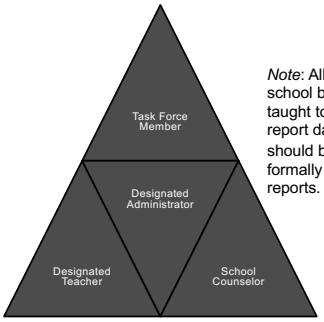
Who Should be Trained to Receive Bullying Reports?



Note: All adults in the school building should be taught to collect preliminary report data, but designees should be established to formally collect bullying reports.

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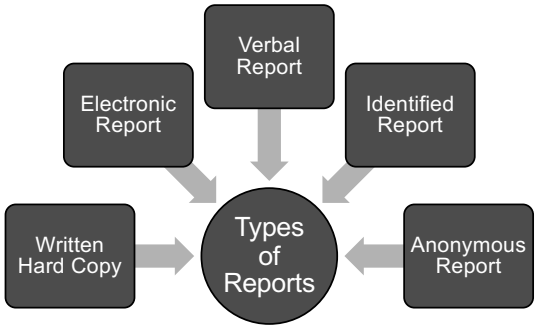
Report Considerations: Types



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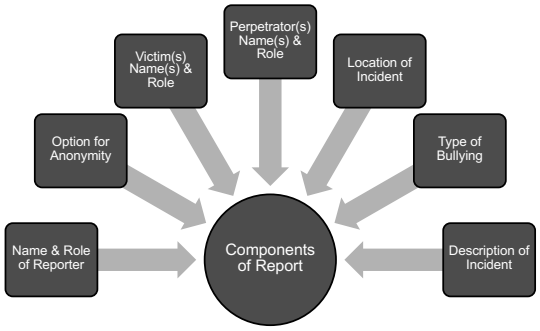
Report Components



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Bullying Report Form

To be completed by witness, victim, or person with information regarding a bullying incident. This form should be submitted to _____.

Name:_____ Date:_____

☐Student ☐Parent ☐Staff ☐Other

Please tell us about the incident in your own words. Use as much detail as possible - what time did the incident(s) take place, who witnessed it, what was said, what types of interactions occurred (physical, written, social, electronic, etc.). Attach a written statement if more space is required.

Indicate here if you prefer to remain anonymous: ☐Yes ☐No

Are you the target of the bullying that you are reporting? ☐Yes ☐No

Date of incident: _____ Time of incident: _____

Person(s) being reported as victims of bullying:

Name: _____ ☐Student ☐Staff

Name: _____ ☐Student ☐Staff

Name: _____ ☐Student ☐Staff

Person(s) being reported as perpetrators engaged in bullying:

Name: _____ ☐Student ☐Staff ☐Other

Name: _____ ☐Student ☐Staff ☐Other

Name: _____ ☐Student ☐Staff ☐Other

Person(s) who witnessed the bullying:

Name: _____ ☐Student ☐Staff ☐Other

Name: _____ ☐Student ☐Staff ☐Other

Name: _____ ☐Student ☐Staff ☐Other

Student(s) experienced bullying in the following place(s): (Check all that apply.)

☐Classroom ☐Locker room ☐Hallway

☐Cafeteria ☐Bathroom ☐Extracurricular Activity

☐Bus ☐Bus Stop ☐Gym

☐Online ☐School or related activity or event

☐ Other: _____

Student(s) were targeted for bullying in the following way(s): (Check all that apply.)

☐ Electronic devices (e.g., internet, Social media platforms, text, email, cyberbullying, etc.)

☐ Written communication (e.g., handwritten notes, other written documents, email, etc.)

☐ Physical act or conduct (e.g., pushing, hitting, destruction of property, stalking, etc.)

☐ Verbal act or conduct (e.g., rumors, lies, name-calling, using derogatory slurs, etc.)

☐ Social (e.g., purposeful exclusion, causing psychological harm, etc.)

☐ Items depicting implied hatred or prejudice were worn, possessed or displayed

☐ Other: _____

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Digital Bully Report Form Example

Bully Report Forms can also be created digitally through google forms or Qualtrics.

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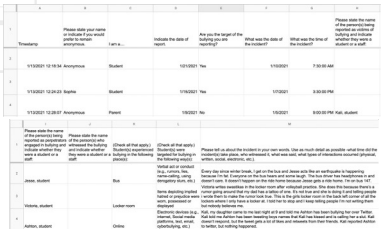
Response in Google Forms



Google Forms automatically fills a Google Sheet with Responses

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Investigation Process

Receive Report
- Upon receiving a report, the Bully Prevention Task Force will investigate **promptly** all reports of bullying or retaliation
- They will consider all available known information, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the person who engaged in bullying behaviors or person who was bullied.

Review Existing Data
- Once individuals involved are established, administrators on the Bully Prevention Task Force will review existing data.
- Examples include formal and informal teacher reports, nurse visits, mental health records, academic records, office referrals, attendance, standardized test scores, date of enrollment, 504/IEP, and assessment data.

Interviews
- The Bully Prevention Task Force will conduct interviews with those involved using an established interview protocol
- If the alleged person who engages in bullying behaviors is/are a staff member, he/she/they will have the right to request union representation during the investigation phase.
- The Bully Prevention Task Force will conduct a brief teacher interview with the core teacher(s) concerning the person who engaged in bullying behaviors or person who was bullied.

Decision Making
- The Bully Prevention Task Force will evaluate all information gleaned from investigation and refer to the reporting protocol for next steps.
- The Bully Prevention Task Force will determine a process for intervention and success monitoring

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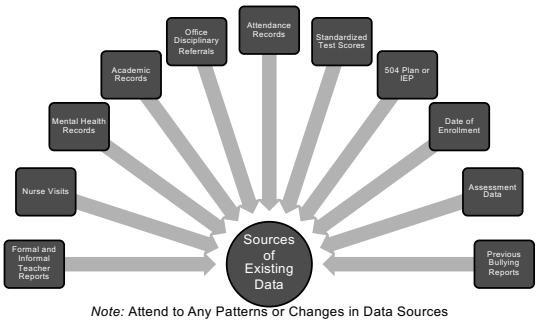
Possible Sources of Existing Data



Note: Attend to Any Patterns or Changes in Data Sources

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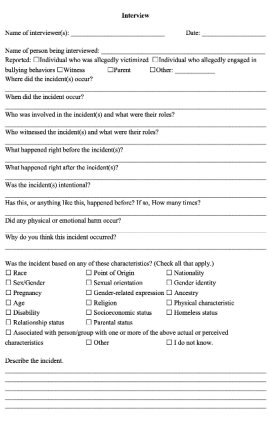
Interview Process

As Bully Report forms are submitted, members of the Task Force should interview the individuals involved.

This should be done with ALL individuals involved in the incident.



Interview

Name of interviewer(s): _____ Date: _____

Name of person being interviewed: _____

Reported: ☐Individual who was allegedly victimized ☐Individual who allegedly engaged in bullying behaviors ☐Witness ☐Parent ☐Other: _____

Where did the incident(s) occur?

When did the incident occur?

Who was involved in the incident(s) and what were their roles?

Who witnessed the incident(s) and what were their roles?

What happened right before the incident(s)?

What happened right after the incident(s)?

Was the incident(s) intentional?

Has this, or anything like this, happened before? If so, How many times?

Did any physical or emotional harm occur?

Why do you think this incident occurred?

Was the incident based on any of these characteristics? (Check all that apply.)

☐ Race ☐ Point of Origin ☐ Nationality
☐ Sex/Gender ☐ Sexual orientation ☐ Gender identity
☐ Pregnancy ☐ Gender-related expression ☐ Ancestry
☐ Age ☐ Religion ☐ Physical characteristic
☐ Disability ☐ Socioeconomic status ☐ Homeless status
☐ Relationship status ☐ Parental status
☐ Associated with person/group with one or more of the above actual or perceived characteristics ☐ Other ☐ I do not know.

Describe the incident.

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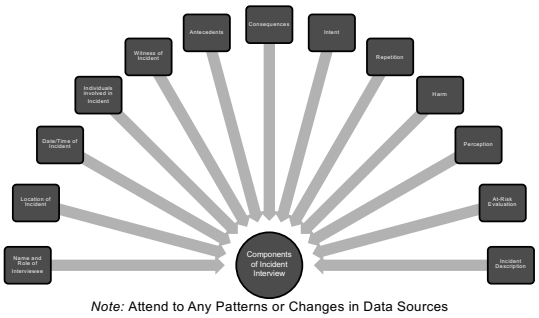
Incident Interview Considerations



Note: Attend to Any Patterns or Changes in Data Sources

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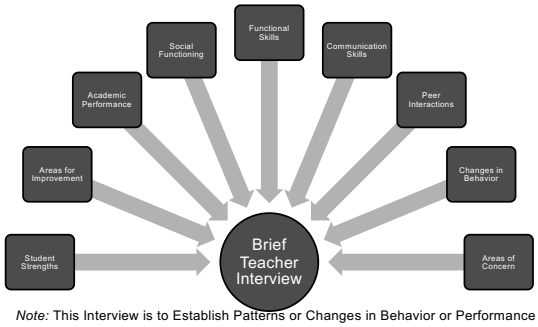
Brief Teacher Interview Considerations



Note: This Interview is to Establish Patterns or Changes in Behavior or Performance

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Establishing a Pattern – Teacher Interviews

Brief Teacher Interview

Name of Interviewer: _____ Date: _____
Name of Teacher Being Interviewed: _____ Subject: _____
Student Name: _____
☐Individual who was allegedly victimized ☐Individual who allegedly engaged in bullying

Student Strengths	Areas Targeted for Improvement

For the questions below, compare how the student is performing *at this time*, compared to *the beginning of the year*.

How is the student performing academically?

How is the student performing Socially?

How are the students functional skills?

How are the students communication skills?

How is the student interacting with his/her peers?

Describe any changes in the student's behaviors.

Describe any areas of concern.

When necessary, Teacher Interviews Can be Conducted

This Interview Protocol is Designed to Establish a Pattern or Discern Changes Over Time

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Decision Making Process

After conducting all interviews and reviewing existing data, the Bully Prevention Task Force should meet to determine if bullying occurred and make a plan for intervention

Review Relevant Data → Determine if Bully Occurred → Establish a Plan of Action → Establish a Follow-Up Plan

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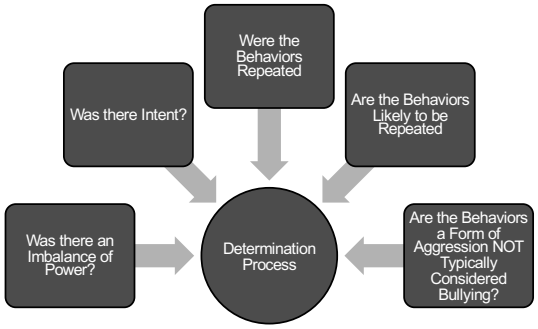
Decision Making Process



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What is NOT Bullying

- Instrumental Aggression
- Retaliatory Aggression
- Jostling

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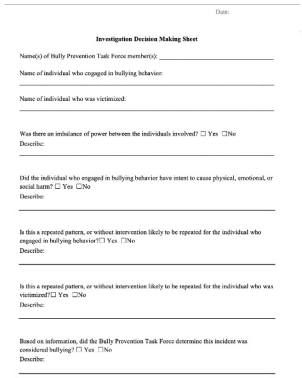

Date:

Investigation Decision Making Sheet

Name(s) of Bully Prevention Task Force member(s): _____

Name of individual who engaged in bullying behavior:

Name of individual who was victimized:

Was there an imbalance of power between the individuals involved? ☐ Yes ☐No
Describe:

Did the individual who engaged in bullying behavior have intent to cause physical, emotional, or social harm? ☐ Yes ☐No
Describe:

Is this a repeated pattern, or without intervention likely to be repeated for the individual who engaged in bullying behavior?☐ Yes ☐No
Describe:

Is this a repeated pattern, or without intervention likely to be repeated for the individual who was victimized?☐ Yes ☐No
Describe:

Based on information, did the Bully Prevention Task Force determine this incident was considered bullying? ☐ Yes ☐No
Describe:

Next Steps for individual who was victimized:
☐ Communication and collaboration with parents
☐ Social skills instruction
☐ Functional Behavior Assessment
☐ Communication skills instruction
☐ Meet with school counselor, social worker, psychologist, etc.
☐ Increased support by school staff
☐ Other:

Next Steps for individual who engaged in bullying behaviors:
☐ Communication & Collaboration with Parents
☐ Social Skills Instruction
☐ Functional Behavior Assessment
☐ Communication Skills Instruction
☐ Meet with school counselor, social worker, psychologist, etc.
☐ Increased support by school staff
☐ Other:

Follow-Up (to be completed at least two weeks following the implementation of next steps outlined above):

Do the next steps for the person who engaged in bullying behavior appear to be effective?
☐ Yes ☐No
Describe:

Do the next steps for the person who was victimized appear to be effective?
☐ Yes ☐No
Describe:

Are there any additional supports or changes that should be made for these individuals?
☐ Yes ☐No
Describe:

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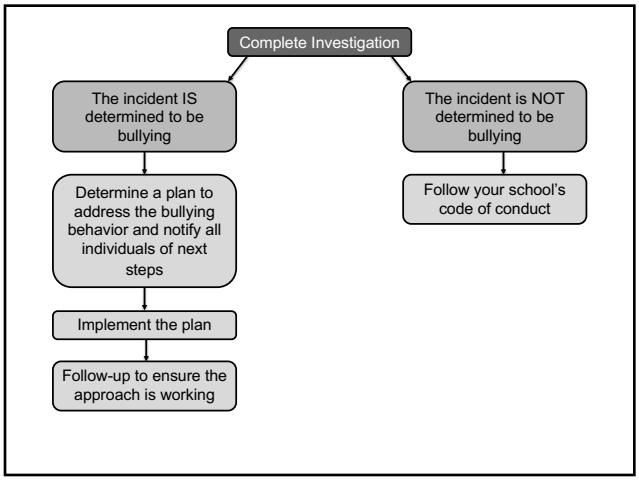

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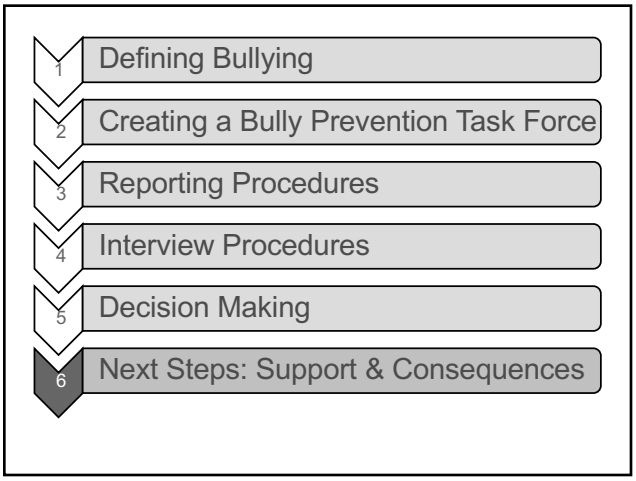

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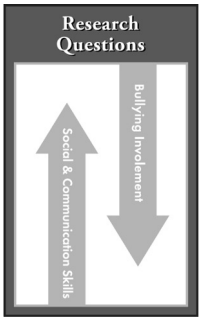
Establishing the Shift



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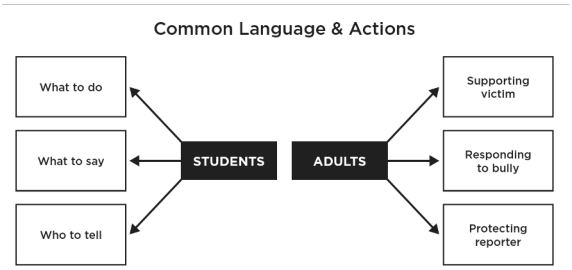
School Wide Considerations



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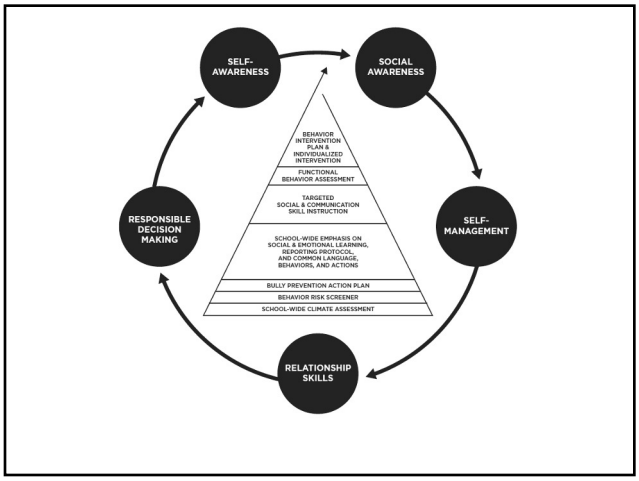

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Skill Building – Teacher Behaviors

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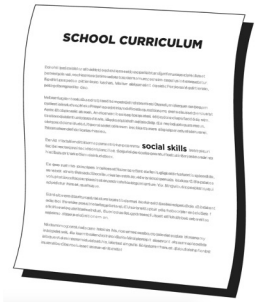
Embed Social and Communication Skills within the Daily Curriculum



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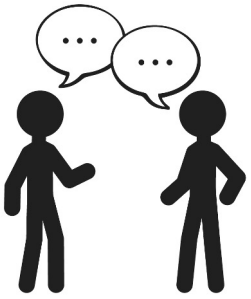
Foster Communication Development



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1. Defining Bullying
2. Creating a Bully Prevention Task Force
3. Reporting Procedures
4. Interview Procedures
5. Decision Making
6. • Next Steps: Support & Consequences

Additional Considerations

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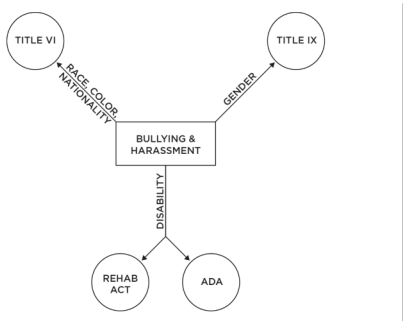
Federal Civil Rights Legislation



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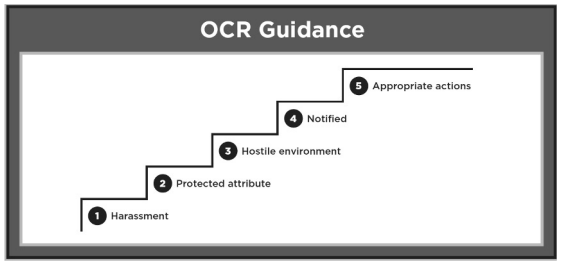
Office of Civil Rights Guidelines



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