

LITERATURE REVIEW ON BULLYING

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Abstract

Bullying is a widespread problem in our schools and communities and has a negative impact on school climate and on students' right to learn in a safe and secure environment without fear. Once thought of as a rite of passage or harmless behavior that helps build character, bullying is now known to have long-term academic, physical, and emotional effects on both the victim and the bully. A student is being bullied when he or she is "exposed, repeatedly and over time," to abuse or harassment by one or more other students (Olweus, 1996). The goal of the bully is to gain power over and dominate other individuals. There are three forms of bullying: physical (including hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, stealing, and destruction of property), verbal (such as taunting, malicious teasing, name calling, and making threats), and psychological (including spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, exclusion from a peer group, extortion, and intimidation) (Cohn and Canter, 2003; Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2001). Bullying has two key components: physical or psychological intimidation occurring repeatedly over time and an imbalance of power. Taunting, teasing, and fighting don't constitute bullying when two persons are of approximately the same physical or psychological strength. Bullies engage in hurtful behavior against those who can't defend themselves because of size or strength, or because the victim is outnumbered or less psychologically resilient (U.S. Department of Justice, 2004; Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 2001). Bullying can have long-term academic, physical, and emotion consequences on bullies, their victims, and bystanders. The incidence of bullying at schools has a negative impact on students' opportunity to learn in an environment that is safe and secure and where they are treated with respect (Shellard and Turner, 2004; Lumsden, 2002).

