FAMILY ENGAGEMENT CORNER by Tina Norris

The Role of Families in Bullying Prevention

October is Bullying Prevention month and family engagement plays a vital role in assisting one dealing with this widespread epidemic. Understanding the definition of bullying will help families identify when their loved one is being targeted. Bullying is aggressive and unwanted behavior that is intended to harm, intimidate, or humiliate the victim; involves a real or perceived power of imbalance between the aggressor or aggressors and victim; and is repeated over time or causes severe emotional trauma. It is important to know that bullying also includes cyber bullying. Children who bully continue their behavior when they realize it is hurting someone, and are satisfied by the feeling of power and control.

There are varying types of bullying and educating yourself to the warning signs can help safeguard your loved ones; verbal (using words which are often quick and direct), physical (kicking, hitting – these are easy to recognize), emotional-social (manipulation, gossip, this type is very calculated and not easily detected), sexual (violation of personal boundaries and cyber (using technology to hurt or harm). Bullying interferes with the child’s education (avoiding school and loss of focus), health (physical and emotional distress) and safety (harming themselves or others).

Students with disabilities already address challenges in their academic environment and unfortunately they are two times more likely to be bullied than their nondisabled peers.

Research demonstrates that family engagement, no matter the age of the child, can be a powerful force of change in bullying behavior. In this ever changing society families must carve out time to engage with one another. This can be done through establishing “family meetings”. This time should be an anticipated event for everyone. Your child should know during this time they have the parent’s undivided attention. Here the child can share things of importance to them and gain the support needed from their parents. Never underestimate the quality time you invest as a family.

Each moment you spend with your child creates a safe haven of love, support, and encouragement to your child, especially the one being bullied. Families educate both directly and indirectly. Children gain the skills through family interaction to aid them in navigating through life. A strong family support system builds confidence and self-worth, equipping the child to handle uncomfortable situations head on, knowing they have support. This can make the difference for your child. If your child is non-verbal, set up a technique for your child so that they can communicate when they are feeling harassed.

Begin a dialogue with your youth about bullying to see how much they already know. Gradually ask, “Do you know anyone being bullied?” “Have you ever been bullied?” If it ever happened to you – do you know that you can tell me? Assure them that that are special and valued and will always have your support no matter what! End your conversation with a hug and perhaps an activity to lighten the mood. This is family engagement at its finest!
EARLY INTERVENTION CORNER by Lakeshia Yancey
Proactive Bullying Prevention

In this day and age “bullying” has become a hot topic in our society. Many of us are asking why is this so prevalent now, what has changed over the years to make bullying now a national concern? To find a person who can say that they have never bullied, been bullied, or witnessed bullying, would be like finding a needle in a haystack. Some may even still stand by the old adage of “Kids will be kids”.

In the world of Early Childhood there is a concentrated focus on building positive social skills. So you may be thinking, “Are there Preschool Bullies?” The answer is yes. The severity and form of the bullying may not be the same as that of an elementary school aged child, but it does exist. We see little girls being catty, saying things like; “You’re hair is ugly”, or “You are not a pretty princess” and boys using verbal and physical aggression to express their feelings or get what they want. There is such a thing as “typical” social behavior for this age group, but excessive teasing, ridiculing, and physical attacks are not the norm.

How do young children learn bullying? Like most behaviors children mimic what they witness adults and older children saying and doing.

Examples of parent bullying:

“You’re being such a cry baby!”
“You are so messy!”
“Do what I say, or else!”
“You are behaving so badly!”
“I don’t want to hear it!”

There are several ways that we can teach children to display positive and acceptable social behavior. This way we can hopefully prevent them from becoming bullies or victims. Role playing in your classrooms and homes is an easy way to introduce bullying to young children. Give them “let’s pretend” scenarios for them to figure out what the bully did that was wrong and how things could be done in a nicer way.

Early Bullying Prevention Tips:

* Teach children to self-manage their feelings and behaviors through positive channels
* Tell them how to stand up for themselves
* Let them know that they have worth
* Teach them to be humble and empathetic to others

---

PEATC Trainings and Events - October 2014

Saturday, October 11, 2014 - “A Gathering of Connections: A Resource Fair”, 9:00 am -3:00 pm, Carver Recreation Center at the Jefferson School, 324 4th St NW, Charlottesville, VA 22903. For further information, please contact Heidi R Hull, MS OTR at Lhullot@gmail.com or (434) 806-4797.

Monday, October 13, 2014 - "How to Talk So Schools Will Listen (and Listen So Schools Will Talk)", 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm, Plaza Middle School, Kiva 1, 3080 South Lynnhaven Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23452. Sponsored by the Virginia Beach Special Education PTSA (VBSEPTSA). For more information/to register, please contact Megan Inglesby at (757) 353-0009 or VBSEPTSA@gmail.com.


Tuesday, October 14, 2014 - Pláticas: “Revisemosel IEP detenidamente(Componentsdel IEP)/Let’s Review the IEP Thoroughly (Components of IEP)”, 7:00 pm -8:30 pm, Location: PEATC Offices, 100 N, Washington Street, Suite 234, Falls Church, VA 22046. Please register at 703-923-0010 or partners@peatc.org, or join us online at: https://cc.readytalk.com/r/y2q11n6etbyt#com.

Thursday, October 16, 2014 - "ABCs of Behavior, 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm, in Lynchburg, VA. Sponsored by the Lynchburg City Schools Parent Resource Service. For location information and to register, please contact Carolyn Martin at martineb@lcsl.edu, net or (434) 515-5180.

Tuesday, October 28, 2014 –“Moving on to Life in the Community: A Resource Fair”, 6:30 pm -9:00 pm, Lake Braddock Secondary School, 9200 Burke Lake Road, Burke, VA 22015. For more information, please contact Lisa Divers at 703.718.2592 or LADivers@lcps.edu.
Responder Ante el Acoso: Averigüe qué sucedió

Si detuvo una situación de acoso de manera inmediata, o si ha recurrirlo a usted en busca de ayuda, siga los pasos a continuación para determinar la mejor manera de proceder.

• Obtener información
• Determinar si es acoso escolar

Obtener información

• Mantenga separados a todos los niños involucrados.
• Consiga el relato de los hechos de varias fuentes, tanto de adultos como de niños.
• Escuche sin culparse.
• No llame al acto "acoso escolar" mientras intenta entender qué sucedió.

Puede resultar difícil conocer toda la historia, en especial si los alumnos involucrados son varios o si la situación de acoso implica acoso social y acoso por Internet. Recopile toda la información disponible.

Determinar si es acoso escolar

Existen muchos comportamientos similares al acoso pero que requieren enfoques diferentes. Es importante establecer si se trata de una situación de acoso o de alguna otra problemática.

Revise la definición de acoso. Es posible que la ley estatal y la política de la escuela tengan pautas adicionales para definir el acoso.

Para determinar si se trata de una situación de acoso o alguna otra problemática, pregúntese lo siguiente:

• ¿Cuáles son los antecedentes entre los niños involucrados?
• ¿Han existido conflictos anteriores?
• ¿Existe un desequilibrio de poder? Recuerde que el desequilibrio de poder no se limita a la fuerza física. A veces no es fácil de reconocer. Si el niño que padece el acoso siente que existe un desequilibrio de poder, probablemente sea así.
• ¿Ya ha pasado antes? ¿Al niño le preocupaba que vuelva a suceder?
• ¿Los niños han tenido una cita? Existen respuestas especiales para la violencia en las citas de adolescentes.
• ¿Alguno de los niños involucrados forma parte de una pandilla? La violencia de pandillas tiene diferentes intervenciones.

Recuerde que quizá no importe "quién comenzó". Algunos niños que son acosados pueden ser vistos como molestos o irritantes, pero eso no es una excusa para un comportamiento de acoso escolar.

Cuando logre determinar si se trata de una situación de acoso, brinde apoyo a los niños involucrados.

Fuente: http://espanol.stopbullying.gov/responder/descubra-qui%C3%A9n-pas%C3%B3/z9a/%C3%ADndice.html

Respond to Bullying: Find Out What Happened

Whether you’ve just stopped bullying on the spot or a child has reached out to you for help, follow the steps below to determine the best way to proceed.

• Get the Facts
• Determine if it’s Bullying

Get the Facts

• Keep all the involved children separate.
• Get the story from several sources, both adults and kids.
• Listen without blaming.
• Don’t call the act “bullying” while you are trying to understand what happened.

It may be difficult to get the whole story, especially if multiple students are involved or the bullying involves social bullying or cyberbullying. Collect all available information.

Determine if it’s Bullying

There are many behaviors that look like bullying but require different approaches. It is important to determine whether the situation is bullying or something else.

Review the definition of bullying. State law and school policy may have additional guidelines for defining bullying behavior.

To determine if this is bullying or something else, consider the following questions:

• What is the history between the kids involved? Have there been past conflicts?
• Is there a power imbalance? Remember that a power imbalance is not limited to physical strength. It is sometimes not easily recognized. If the targeted child feels like there is a power imbalance, there probably is.
• Has this happened before? Is the child worried it will happen again?
• Have the kids dated? There are special responses for teen dating violence.
• Are any of the kids involved with a gang? Gang violence has different interventions.

Remember that it may not matter “who started it.” Some kids who are bullied may be seen as annoying or provoking, but this does not excuse the bullying behavior.

Once you have determined if the situation is bullying, support the kids involved.

October is Bullying Prevention Month!

TRANSITION CORNER by Sherri Coles

Transition and Bullying

Adapted from “Bullying and Disability Harassment in the Workplace: What You Should Know”, National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability: http://www.ncwd-youth.info/information-brief-29.

There is real national concern about bullying in public schools. It happens in pre-school through high school - but does it end there? What about a young adult who is now finished with school and working or in college? Unfortunately it doesn’t always end when the student graduates or ages out of school. One would hope that adults were mature enough to know that bullying is wrong, but unfortunately, not all adults understand that.

Youth with disabilities are 10 times more likely to be bullied than a typical student [or worker, or post-secondary student] according to PACER (http://www.pacer.org/bullying/about/media-kit/stats.asp).”

So what is bullying?
• It’s done intentionally
• It is repeated—not a one-time incident
• It is done with words or mean, and sometimes violent, acts. It is meant to hurt and/or humiliate
• It happens to those who have little or no social power
• It can cause hurt that lasts a lifetime

The person who is bullied is a target for those who try to build themselves up by tearing down someone they perceive as less powerful than they are. Using the word “victim” implies that a person has no recourse or power to change their circumstances, or that they are to blame for what is happening. The term ‘target’ suggests that a person who’s bullied, and the people around that person, can change the situation. That is one of the keys to stopping this damaging behavior.

“Targets of bullying tend to share certain traits. In general, targets of bullying tend to be different in some way. This may mean that they belong to a non-majority culture, have unique physical characteristics, practice a different religion than others, or have a disability. Those differences do not automatically lead to bullying, but do tend to be noticed by youth who are seeking targets. While anyone can be bullied, targets of bullying tend to have one or more of these common traits:
• They might give a vulnerable response to being bullied;
• They have few or no friends;
• They might not assert themselves in a bullying situation; and,
• They can have diminished self-esteem and need to build self-confidence.”

As the schools continue to address bullying, it will have a positive impact on bullying in the workplace and in post-secondary situations. Schools and the workplace need to make sure that they do not tolerate bullying in any form. One good way to combat bullying is for those who witness bullying to stand up for the target of that bullying. That lets the bully know that their target is not isolated, that others care what is happening to their colleagues/classmates, and that bullying is inappropriate in any form or in any place.

Useful References:
* Understand Bullying from the Centers for Disease Control: http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/pdf/Bullying_Factsheet-a.pdf

PEATC On Demand and In the Spotlight: "ADHD College Success" by Leslie Edwards

Did you know that a whopping 40% of all students with ADHD will fail their first semester of college? Considering these same students have been vetted after undergoing a rigorous college selection process, this high statistic is baffling as well as troubling and raises many questions:

Why do so many fail? What causes/leads to this failure? And most importantly, what can be done about it and when?

For the past 25 years, Dr. Jon Thomas, founder of The ADHD College Success Guidance Program, has been working to empower and prepare ADHD students for college and career success. In this archived webinar recording, he discusses the leading factors that create failure, the essential skills that lead to success, and how to address and resolve these important issues before and during college.

WATCH HERE: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TkxMkhIJ810

NOTE: Each month, PEATC On Demand will spotlight one of our past webinars. Our archived webinars are a ready resource that you can access according to your schedule.