

Examples: Identification and Understanding of Bullying 7th-12th grades

Work on identifying whether an incident is bullying or not. The key is to identify what questions to ask to determine if bullying is going on. What pieces of information would inform whether bullying or sexual harassment is occurring, and the best way to obtain that information. Then determine what are the best possible responses to each situation (regardless if the situation is bullying or not, as students need to feel their voice matters).

Response Example:

A younger male student is pushed into the girls' restroom by several older male students.
The younger student says it was just a joke.

Information Needed:

- Identify if the student regular spends time with the male students
- Identify who the younger student does spend time with. If they are isolated.
- Talk to all individuals who might be involved: possible witnesses, friends of victim (if there is one), girls who may have been in the restroom and possibly heard what happened.
- Then talk to victim and bullies. Get each to write down what occurred, independent of one another.
- Ask what occurred, as explicitly as possible.
- Ask the bully(ies) why they performed the behaviors they did.

Responses:

- Ask the victim what he would like to do.
- Make sure the victim is involved in a group that supports them.
- Refer to counseling to make sure they are not being harassed in other venues. Helps to deal with self esteem issues.
- Bullies need to have consequences based on actions/behaviors that is determined by school policy.
- Bullies need counseling/program assistance to help them develop empathy for the victim(s).

- Potentially have bullies be involved with mentoring middle school or elementary school kids to help them learn positive interaction skills for weaker kids.
- Inform all parents of decisions of the school.
 - Offer assistance to parents in maintaining expectations.
 - Educate parent on policies and procedures, communication network, contacts for such situations, etc.

Bullying Examples:

Attempt to identify necessary information to determine if bullying is occurring, what form of bullying and how to respond. Then, assuming bullying occurred, identify possible responses to the bullying to reduce the likelihood of it happening again.

A female student, who normally eats lunch with several other girls in a group, has begun to eat alone, or in the classroom with a teacher. She also has missed a few days of school and is not as focused in school, although not failing.

Another student informs you that one female student is regularly called overweight by a host of other students. The informing student does not know who specifically and the victim refuses to inform you who said it.

An anonymous note is left informing you that a male student (they identify the student) is constantly being called “gay” by other students.

You are informed that a rumor is going around the school about a girl that she is a lesbian and sleeps with older women. The student is on sports teams, but does not have any regular group of friends.

Two girls, who have been friends stop hanging out with one another after they get into an argument about a guy they both like. One begins to date the boy.

You are informed that a freshman is being physically harassed off campus after school everyday by some older students, threatening him if he tells anyone.

A boy, who has ADHD, is made fun of by other students because of how active he is, and tends to be a little socially awkward. He bothers teachers as well, who constantly have to redirect him, as well as struggle to get the rest of the class to focus.

During lunch, a group of popular girls stand near a girl who is not as popular as the aforementioned girls and say negative things about her to one another that are loud enough for her to hear, but they never direct them at her.

A girl who is continuously told by the “popular girls” that she cannot sit with them during forms her own peer group and claims her own table. She then forbids the girls at “her table” to interact with the girls at the “popular table”, so the girls at the new table avoid the “popular girls” table.

A girl tells the other girls in her group that they are not allowed to hang out with a specific girl at school because her clothes are not in style.

A popular girl claims an area of the school as hers for her peer group to use when they want. The other kids accept this and allow her access to the court when she wants it.

A child tells you that there are mean things written about her on an internet website that were written by several students in her class. The site is not school-based, but is instead an independent website.