

NATIONAL STOP BULLYING MONTH

History of Bullying Prevention

In 2006, October was first declared as National Bullying Prevention Month. And the 2nd Wednesday in October is National Stop Bullying Day. This year it falls on October 11, 2023.

Since then, October has been a time to acknowledge that bullying has harmful effects on kids and their families.

And while bullies have been around well before the 1970's, it was not until the 1970's that Dr. Dan Olweus, a psychologist, began to study bullying behavior and its effects.

In 1983, Dr. Olweus developed one of the very first bullying prevention programs for schools in the United States, as a response to the tragic suicide of three boys who were being bullied.

Then in 1999, the heartbreaking and tragic shooting at Columbine High School occurred, which began a movement where not only anti-bullying policies were introduced but efforts were also undertaken to empower bystanders.

What is Bullying?

So what exactly is bullying? Bullying definitions differ from source to source. The Anti-Bullying Alliance defines bullying as “the **repetitive, intentional** hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an **imbalance of power.**” A person or persons intentionally hurting/harming another person or persons through behavior intended to cause harm.

Where it Occurs

We know most of the bullying that is reported occurs and/or starts at school. Bullying at school most of the time happens during less structured times throughout the school day such as during recess, in the hallways in between classes, lunch or the bus. It should be noted that it does also occur outside of school, such as in the youth's neighborhood, or on the internet and social media sites (cyberbullying).

Why do Kids Bully?

There are a lot of different reasons as to why kids bully. Knowing and understanding the motives behind bullying behaviors can help schools as well as parents better address the behavior through intervention strategies. Below are some examples of different components that can play a role in bullying behavior:

Peer Components:

- The desire to attain or maintain social power or to elevate their status in their peer group
- Easily influenced by peer pressure (engage in bullying behavior to try to fit in)
- Envy or jealousy of other peers

Family Components:

- Home life where bullying, aggression, or violence occurs
- Parents/caregivers who are too indulgent/lenient
- Home life where there is low parental involvement and little emotional support

Emotional Components:

- Having been bullied in the past or currently
- Feelings of insecurity and low self-esteem
- Inability to manage emotions
- Lack of skills to handle social situations in healthy, positive ways

There are numerous organizations dedicated to helping address or prevent bullying, including Pacer's National Bullying Prevention Center (pacer.org); StopBullying.gov; and Stomp Out Bullying.org, to name but a few. We can all play a role in preventing and stopping bullying.

To learn more in-depth information about bullying and prevention strategies, please visit our website at <https://scipnebraska.com>

References:

<https://www.stopbullying.gov/prevention/at-school>
<https://nationaltoday.com/national-stop-bullying-day/>
<https://www.pacer.org/bullying/nbpm/>
<https://scipnebraska.com/newsletters/archives/>