



# **North Warren Regional School District**

**New Jersey's**

**Anti -Bullying Bill of Rights Act  
Parent Informational Session**

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# *Some Facts About Bullying*





# Introduction

Bullying leads to:

- Increased absenteeism
- Lowered academic achievement
- Suicide
- Incidents of severe violence in schools



# Increased Absenteeism - Did you Know?



- Seventy seven percent of all students will be the victim of a bully at some point during their educational career (Hoover, Oliver & Hazler, 1992)
- Students who have been victimized by bullies are fearful of school and view it as an unsafe place to be (Banks, 1997)



# Effects on Academic Achievement - Did you Know?



- Victims of bullies suffer from physical ailments such as headaches and stomachaches that effect their academic achievement in school (Winters & Orecklin, 2000)
- Students who are targeted by bullies often have difficulty concentrating on their schoolwork (Lumsden,2002)
- In fact, students have reported that bullying effects their ability to learn (Hoover & Oliver, 1996)
- Ten percent of students who drop out do so because of bullying (Weinhold & Weinhold)

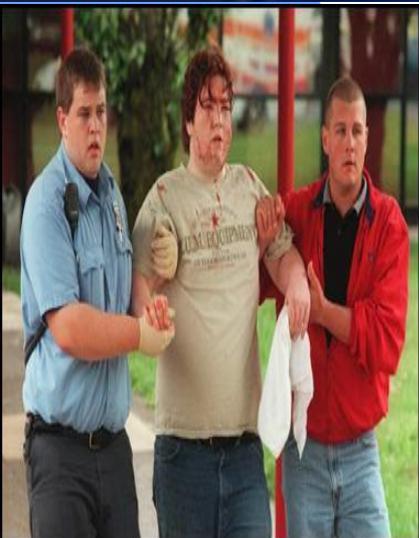


# Suicide - Did you Know?

- Adolescent students who have thoughts of suicide or who have had attempts to harm themselves report having been victimized by bullies (Koki, 1999)
- On March 2, 1987, Nathan Ferris brought a gun to school and shot and killed a classmate before killing himself.
- He had decided that he didn't want to be called "*chubby*" or "*walking dictionary*" anymore.
- When asked why they targeted Nathan, his classmates said that they had nothing against him, that "He was just someone to pick on" (Barone, 1997)



# Incidents of Severe Violence – Did you Know?



- There have been more than **forty – six** additional school shootings around the world since the one at Columbine High School





# What Does This Have To Do With Bullying?

- The number of children committing murder, suicide or both after being the target of peer victimization is increasing
- The one thing many of the perpetrators of school shootings have in common is the fact that they have been ostracized, picked on, made fun of and physically abused by their peers
- The fact is, they have been **“bullied”**





# What Does This Have To Do With Bullying?

- 75% of children 12 – 18 years old report having been persecuted at some time
- The U. S. Secret Service – a majority of school shooters studied have endured “bullying and harassment that was longstanding and severe”





# Characteristics of Bullies

- Have a need to control others
- Quick tempered and impulsive
- Take pleasure in seeing a person or an animal in distress
- Find it difficult to see a situation from another person's point of view
- Refuse to take responsibility / deny wrongdoing
- Blame the target (they got what they deserved)
- Good at talking their way out of situations
- Intolerant of differences
- Feel they are superior to others
- Lack of empathy – insensitive to feelings / needs of others



# Effects on Bullies

## ***Negative effects occur over time***

- Learning difficulties
- Relationship issues
- Work issues
- Interference with friendships
- Mental health issues
- By 24 years of age, 60% of all boys characterized as bullies in 6<sup>th</sup> thru 9<sup>th</sup> grade had at least one court conviction and are 4 times as likely to have had 3 or more convictions



## ***Kids who bully become adults who:***

- Exhibit antisocial behavior
- Commit crimes
- Abuse their spouses and children
- Produce offspring who bully

***“Bullying is the first and perhaps most identifiable stop on a trajectory that leads almost directly to criminal behavior”***

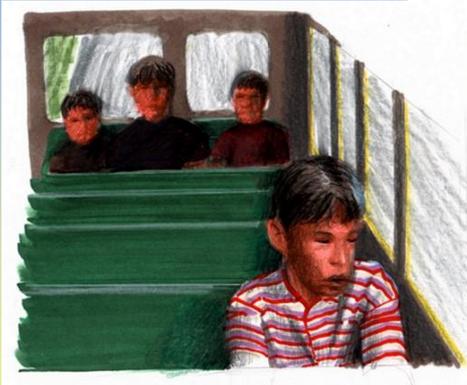
# Characteristics of Targets

- Low self confidence
- Anxiety
- Fearfulness
- Submissiveness
- Depression or sad appearance
- Limited sense of humor
- Poor social skills
- Few or no friends
- Excessive dependence on adults
- Or they may be different in physical or cultural characteristics, someone who is envied by the bully or someone competing with the bully for dominance in the social group



# Effects on Targets

- Those who have been targeted are rejected by other children
- Increasingly isolated as time wears on
- Few friends
- Loneliness
- Low self esteem
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Extreme sensitivity
- Psychosomatic ailments
- Poor mental health



***“Those involved in bullying showed the highest risk for suicide ideation and suicide” (Rigby and Slee, 1999)***



# A Poem Written By a Bullying Target

*I shall remember forever and will never forget*

*Monday: my money was taken*

*Tuesday: names called*

*Wednesday: my uniform torn*

*Thursday: my body pouring with blood*

*Friday: it's ended*

*Saturday: freedom*

**He was found hanging from a railing in his home on Sunday.**



# Results of Bullying

## **BULLIES**

- Fifty percent of all bullies are already behind their age appropriate grade by the end of elementary school.
- They tend to drop out of school and hang out with others who are also aggressive which, which ultimately may be what turns the child bully into an adult criminal.

## **TARGETS**

- 20% report being scared throughout the day
- Grades suffer
- Some turn to weapons possession
- Some can see no escape and turn to drastic measures such as homicide or suicide



# Bullying & Schools

- Sarah was 14 years old when she was stripped to the waist by a group of ten boys and girls and forced to beg on her hands and knees to get her clothes back. She was pushed, she was punched and her hair was pulled. She did not tell because she feared a worse incident. When it happened a second time and she did report it, the school's response was that it was “only horseplay” (Garner,2003)
- Theresa was 13 when she was physically assaulted and stripped in front of a group of boys by a group of nine girls. The school's response was to give detention to her attackers.



# School Climate and Bullying

All students and staff must have a safe and secure environment in order for optimal learning and personal growth to take place

## *Unfortunately:*

- Many people still foster an attitude that bullying is “just part of growing up”
- If schools are not safe and secure then they are threatening and uncomfortable for children
- As children get older, and begin to reach late middle school and high school age bullying becomes more verbal than physical, more often taking on the form of rumor spreading and exclusion





# Do Bullies Discriminate? -or- Who Actually Gets Bullied?

- fat children
- skinny children
- smart children
- children who get poor grades
- children who smell
- children who wear certain types of clothes
- children who talk funny
- children who walk funny
- teacher's pet
- special needs children
- minority children
- blonde haired girls
- curly haired children
- children with freckles
- children with diseases



# It's Not Just Physical

## 4 Types of Bullying

Physical



Verbal



Relational / Exclusionary



Non Verbal

Cyber Bullying





# **New Jersey's Anti -Bullying Bill of Rights Act**



# What is the intent of the law?

- To strengthen the procedures of reporting, investigating and responding to reported acts of bullying, including those that may occur off of school grounds



# What does the law require?

- The Anti Bullying Bill of Rights Act (ABR) expands the definition of what bullying is
- It places new and significant requirements on school districts regarding the reporting, investigation, discipline and appeal procedure
- Public report on HIB twice a year
- Establishes new positions that every district **MUST** have
  1. Bullying Coordinator in each district
  2. Bullying Specialist in each school
  3. Anti-Bullying Team in each school



# Anonymous Reporting

- Anonymous reporting is allowed but formal action for violations may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report



# Consequences and Remedial Measures

- for any person who commits an act of HIB
- for any person who engages in reprisal and retaliation
- for any person falsely accusing someone as means of HIB or means of retaliation



# Bullying Defined

## Traditional Definition

- Bullying is when someone is exposed **repeatedly and over time**, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons (Olweus, 1993)



# Bullying Defined

## Anti Bullying Bill of Rights Definition

- Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying means any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act or any electronic communication **whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents**



# Specifically...

The act or conduct must be:

- Reasonably perceived as being **motivated** by any actual or perceived characteristic such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability



# Specifically...

- These characteristics may be “actual” or “perceived”
- The definition also protects students against acts motivated by **any other distinguishing characteristics**



# How Do We Define an ABR Act?

1. The act must take place on school property, at a school sponsored function, on a school bus or under certain conditions, off school grounds
2. If a reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the act will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming the student or damaging the student's property, or placing the student in reasonable fear of harm to his person or damage to his property



# How Do We Define an ABR Act?

3. the act has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students in such a way as to cause substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.
4. The act creates a hostile educational environment for the student by interfering with the student's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student



# ABR Behavior Off School Grounds

- We are bound by the law when we know of ABR behavior that occurred off school grounds
- when that behavior has **substantially disrupted or interfered with** the orderly operation of our school or the rights of other students
- And either -



# ABR Behavior Off School Grounds

- A. a reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the act will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming the student or damaging the student's property or
- B. The alleged behavior places a student in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm or



# ABR Behavior Off School Grounds

- c. The alleged behavior has the effect of insulting or demeaning a student or group of students or
- D. The alleged behavior creates a hostile educational environment for the student by interfering with his or her education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student



# Examples

- Fight off school grounds over perceived sexual orientation that results in student being fearful and distracted in school
- Race based comments posted at home through a peer's Facebook page or Twitter account and student's grades begin to drop



# What About CYBERBULLYING?

- Includes all the acts defined in the HIB definition but through the use of electronic communication



# The Dangers of Cyber-Bullying

- Victims often do not know the perpetrator or why they are being targeted.
- The hurtful actions and messages are viral –that is, a large number of people can be involved in the cyber-attack or incident very quickly and easily.
- It is easier to be cruel using the anonymity of computers and cell phones from distant locations. The perpetrator may not realize the harm done because the response of the target is not seen or known.
- Parents and adults have a difficult time monitoring the use of technology and may miss online events.



# Consequences and Remedial Actions

- Appropriate consequences and remedial actions for students who commit an act of HIB are those that are:
  - graded according to the severity of the offense(s),
  - consider the developmental ages of the pupil offenders, and
  - Consider the pupils' histories of inappropriate behaviors.



# School's Responses to ABR

## NO ONE SIZE FITS ALL

- We don't want to focus only on how to punish offenders, but on how to change the climate in which bullying occurs
- Principal, with Bullying Prevention Specialist, determine range of possible responses available to respond to ABR violations  
e.g.: in school counseling, support services, intervention services, “and other programs as defined by the commissioner”



# Factors for Determining Remedial Measures

## Factors for Determining Remedial Measures – Environmental

- School culture
- School climate
- Pupil-staff relationships
- Social-emotional and behavioral supports
- Social relationships
- Community activities
- Neighborhood situation
- Family situation



# Examples of Remedial Measures

- Modifications in pupil routes or patterns traveling to and from school
- Supervision of pupil before and after school, including school transportation
- Targeted use of monitors (e.g., hallway, cafeteria, locker room, playground, school perimeter, bus)
- Teacher aides
- Small or large group presentations for fully addressing the behaviors and the responses to the behaviors



# Difference between Conflict and HIB

## Conflict

- “Mutually” competitive or opposing action or engagement.
- Includes disagreements, arguments and fights.
- A normal part of growing up and of life.

## HIB

- HIB is one-sided.
- One or more students are victims of one or more person’s aggression
- The intent is to physically or emotionally



# How Can Parents Help?

- Students perform better in school when there is communication between the school and the home and when parents become actively involved in their child's education.
- When parents become more educated regarding bullying, they then have the tools to assist the school district in preventing bullying behavior.



# Bystanders

Bystanders are important because:

- Bullying most often takes place in front of peers.
- Bullying almost never happens when adults are watching.
- Most bystanders want to do something to stop the bully.
- Bullies like an audience. If the audience shows disapproval, the bullies are discouraged from continuing.

Bystanders can make a situation even worse by:

- instigating the bullying by prodding the bully to begin;
- encouraging the bullying by laughing, cheering, or making comments that further stimulate the bully;
- joining in the bullying once it has begun;
- passively accepting bullying by watching and doing nothing; or
- providing the audience that the bully craves.



# Bystanders

## Silence encourages bullying

- The best way to break the silence is to empower kids to feel safe and supported when they stand up to the bullies on behalf of other kids, or tell an adult about the bullying.
- We need to remind children that this is not tattling; it's doing the right thing.

## Why is it bystanders don't intervene more often?

- None of my business
- Fear of becoming a target
- Feel powerless
- Don't like the target
- Fear retribution
- Telling adults won't help or may even make it worse
- Don't know what to do



# Turning Bystanders into “Upstanders”

- Emphasize the power of many, strength in numbers;
- Help them see that their silence makes aggressive students more powerful and contributes to the harm done to victims;
- Model positive behavior for them;
- Protect them from retaliation;
- Discourage them from directly confronting aggressive youth about their behavior;
- Encourage them to tell adults about the cruel behavior they see;
- Help them find ways to befriend peers who are isolated and those who are targets of HIB.



# Additional Resources can be found on the North Warren Web

[North Warren Regional Schools Website](#)



**IF IT'S MEAN...**

**INTERVENE**



**QUESTIONS??**



**SHOW ME  
WHERE  
THE BULLIES ARE**

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