



State of Washington

Office of
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Bullying: Prevention & Intervention

The School Safety Center

<http://www.k12.wa.us/SafetyCenter/default.aspx>



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HIB FAQ

Welcome!

This presentation will introduce key concepts in bullying prevention and intervention.

It will answer many of the most often asked questions related to new sections in our WA state bullying law.

However, it will probably not answer every question you and others on your staff have.

We encourage you to refer to the resources which are suggested, to contact your local ESD, and to contact The School Safety Center if you need further assistance.

School Safety Center: <http://www.k12.wa.us/SafetyCenter/default.aspx>



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HIB FAQ

QUESTION: What is bullying? How do we define it?

ANSWER:

Bullying is...

when a student or students are being exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more students.

Bullying exists when...

there is intentional harm-doing
where a negative action
is repeated over time;
and there is an imbalance of power



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QUESTION: Is this the same as the definition in the law?

ANSWER: [RCW 28A.300.285](#) defines

Harassment, intimidation, or **bullying** as an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act that

- Physically harms a student or damages the student's property; **or**
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education; **or**
- Is so severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; **or**
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.



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QUESTION: The state law mentions “electronic” forms of bullying. What does that mean?

ANSWER:

Our state law specifically mentions electronic forms of bullying.

This is commonly referred to as “**cyberbullying**”.

Cyberbullying is done in a variety of ways using a variety of devices, but it is *not just a technology issue*.

There is also a very close relationship between cyberbullying and ‘regular’ bullying.

For students, they are very likely one and the same.



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QUESTION: What are some ways in which students bully?

ANSWER:

In general, bullying can be:

Direct:

Physical

Kicking, punching, hitting...

Verbal*

Insults, name calling....

Relational*

Gestures, nasty looks....

Indirect:

Done by a "henchman"

Gossip & rumors

Exclusion & isolation

*** Often also done through *cyberbullying***



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QUESTION: Why is this issue so important now?

ANSWER:

It's **the law**. We are required to address bullying.

It's **the right thing to do!**

There are potential long-term negative effects on those involved.

There is potential negative impact on school climate.

There is a connection between bullying and academic achievement.



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QUESTION: Why is this so important now?

ANSWER:

In addition to state law, there are **liability issues**.

Schools may be found **liable** if it can be shown that:

- The school environment has been altered for a targeted student(s).
- Any staff knew or should have known.
- There was a failure to act.
- There was deliberate indifference.



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QUESTION: Who is involved in bullying?

ANSWER:

Everyone! Bullying is a community event. Thus, it negatively impacts school climate.

The key people are:

- the **targeted student** – the person on the receiving end who often needs help and support
- the **aggressor**, the one who bullies – bullying is a learned behavior
- the **bystanders** – all the rest of us



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QUESTION: Who is involved in bullying?

ANSWER:

Targeted students are sometimes referred to as victims; they can be anyone. Some students tend to be more likely targets than other, though.

Aggressors are the ones who bully, the perpetrators of the negative behavior. Some young people are both *bully and target* depending on their circumstances. They are of particular concern.

Bystanders can be active or passive, can be helpful or hurtful; are negatively affected by bullying and can be a powerful force in stopping bullying.



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QUESTION: Isn't this just kid stuff?

ANSWER:

No, bullying can look like & be related to other aggressive behavior such as :

Harassment – sexual, racial/ethnic, religious...

Intimidation

Hazing

Dating violence

Spousal abuse

Child abuse.

Keep all of these terms in mind when talking about “bullying.”



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QUESTION: What are some of the impacts of bullying on our students?

ANSWER:

Bullying is a community activity and impacts everyone.

Some of those impacts on **targets** include:

- truancy / absences
- lowered self-esteem
- headaches
- depression
- emotional distress / anxiety
- reduced academic risk taking
- increased suicidal/homicidal ideation & attempts



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QUESTION: What are some of the impacts of bullying on our students?

ANSWER:

Bullying is a community activity and impacts everyone.

Some of those impacts on **aggressors** include:

- failure to develop healthy relationships
- more likely to continue to be abusive later in life
- less likely to complete their education

Almost 60% of boys who were **bully-aggressors** in grades 6 thru 9 were convicted of at least one crime by age 24. 40% of them had three or more convictions by that age.

(Fight Crime 2003)



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QUESTION: What are some of the impacts of bullying on our students?

ANSWER:

Bullying is a community activity and impacts everyone. Some of those impacts on **bystanders** & **climate** include:

- feeling vulnerable and afraid
- feeling helpless in the situation
- feeling guilty for not helping
- diminished empathy
- a climate of fear
- overall diminished student learning



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QUESTION: How does bullying differ from other forms of conflict?

ANSWER:

Other Conflict/ Fighting *

Friends/equals/peers
Spontaneous/occasional
Accidental/not planned
No serious, lasting harm
Equal emotional reaction
Not for domination/control
Often a sense of remorse
May try to solve problem

Bullying *

Not friends/ Imbalance of power
Repeated over time
Intentional
Physical/emotional harm
Unequal emotional reaction
Seeking control/possession
No remorse-blames target
No effort to solve problem

* Please remember that specifics will vary with each incident.



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QUESTION: I don't think this happens at our school.
How can we tell?

ANSWER:

There are several ways you can determine the extent of bullying in your district or at your school.

- Surveys – HYS, YRBS, Olweus , Climate, other surveys.
- Listen & observe – What are your staff perceptions?
Parent perceptions?
What are your students telling you?
- Track your data – Incident Report Forms, discipline data, other data points.



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QUESTION: What can we do about bullying?

ANSWER:

Recognize and understand the issues.

Be sure that everyone understands **policy** & **procedures**.

Look over your **data**.

Involve your entire staff and school community in prevention-intervention efforts.

Identify a tested-effective **program** to implement.

Train your staff.

Implement your selected program with fidelity.

Continue to monitor and work with your school community.



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QUESTION: What are the features of a good bullying prevention program?

ANSWER:

A good bullying prevention-intervention program will have **four main components:**

1. a school-wide component
2. a classroom component
3. an on-the-spot intervention component, and
4. a community component.

Individual interventions with targeted students and aggressors may be seen as separate or part of the above.



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QUESTION: What are the features of a good bullying prevention program?

ANSWER:

The **school-wide component** will ensure that everyone knows the rules and “speaks the same language” around bullying prevention.

It often includes a school-wide event or activity and regular school-wide reminders.

The school-wide component also includes a safe reporting process for all students and an incident reporting/tracking process.



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QUESTION: What are the features of a good bullying prevention program?

ANSWER:

The **school-wide component** also includes:

- A system for disciplining students,
- The potential for a restorative justice approach,
- Full staff training,
- Regular surveying / data gathering, and
- Identifying and monitoring known “hot spots”.



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QUESTION: What are the features of a good bullying prevention program?

ANSWER:

The **classroom component** provides materials and strategies which teachers can use within a classroom setting.

Classroom instruction will help students

- further develop their social skills,
- recognize bullying behaviors,
- learn to safely intervene when appropriate and
- report it and seek help from an adult.



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QUESTION: What are the features of a good bullying prevention program?

ANSWER:

On-the-spot interventions give everyone on staff the language, tools and resources to

- recognize,
- immediately step in and
- appropriately intervene

to stop bullying situations.



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QUESTION: What are the features of a good bullying prevention program?

ANSWER:

Individual interventions are used when meeting separately with the targeted student and the aggressor.

They provide a time for information gathering.

They provide an opportunity for help, support, and counseling.

They also allow time to do future safety planning.



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QUESTION: What are the features of a good bullying prevention program?

ANSWER:

The **community component** moves beyond the school building to help ensure that all members of the school community know:

- the policies and procedures,
- where and how to access Incident Reporting Forms,
- the language of the prevention-intervention program, and
- how to work together to create a safe learning environment.



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QUESTION: What about adult HIB?

ANSWER:

Harassment, intimidation and bullying of students is prohibited.

The aggressor may be another student **or** it may be an adult member of the district or school staff.

However, **adult-on-adult** HIB is **NOT** included under the law, the policy or the procedures.



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QUESTION: Are there any final questions?





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RESOURCES

The following is a starter list of HIB resources.
Check the School Safety web site for more.

1. <http://www.cyberbullying.us> – Cyberbullying Resource Site
2. <http://www.cfchildren.org> – The Committee for Children
3. <http://www.olweus.org> – The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program
4. <http://www.stopbullying.gov> – The White House Site
5. <http://www.stopbullyingworld.org> – International Bullying Prevention Assoc.
6. <http://webhost.bridgew.edu/marc> - MA Aggression Reduction Center Site



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For More Information and Resources

Please visit

The School Safety Center Web Page

<http://www.k12.wa.us/SafetyCenter/default.aspx>

Or contact:

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