

CAP's Bullying Prevention Program

ADULT GUIDE



A Bullying Prevention Program
of the
International Center for Assault Prevention (ICAP)



Program Overview: The Child Assault Prevention (CAP) Project, a primary prevention program that has trained over seven million children worldwide in the prevention of child abuse, is now offering a comprehensive approach to the problem of bullying in schools. CAP's Bullying Prevention Program is designed for Kindergarten through Eighth Grade and is to be implemented in schools that have already had the CAP program. It has a three-prong approach to the problem with workshops for school staff, parents and children.

The Teacher/Staff Workshop: This 1½ to 3-hour workshop helps school staff to discuss the problem of bullying in school as well as present strategies to promote a safe school environment. Components of the workshop are:

- Surveying the staff on bullying issues
- Discussing the prevalence of the problem
- Cultivating an understanding of the roles not only of the child who is victimized and the offender, but also those children who witness bullying
- Discussing school policy and the importance of instituting a “code of conduct”
- Reviewing the roles of conflict resolution, social skills, and anger management training in the reduction of bullying behavior
- Offering resources, strategies and activities that will bring unity to classes

The Parent Workshop: This 1½ to 2-hour workshop has very similar components to the Teacher/Staff Workshop. It helps parents to discuss the problem of bullying in their schools and communities. “Quick Tips” are given on how parents can help children who are victimized, as well as offenders and witnesses, change their behaviors.

Student Workshops Grades K - 2: This two-day interactive workshop for students in Kindergarten through second grade uses a variety of age appropriate techniques to engage young children in activities and discussions about bullying behaviors. These activities develop empathy for children who are bullied and promotes assertive and positive behaviors within the classroom. The use of affirmation and cooperation encourages team building within the group. The following activities are part of the curriculum:

- presentation of the concept of “rights”
- age-appropriate literature
- songs
- hands-on learning activities
- role-plays and group discussion about:
 - name calling
 - possessions
 - siblings
 - tattling and telling
 - exclusion

Role-plays are used to illustrate situations, and children are asked to brainstorm successful strategies. Self-assertion, peer support and telling trusted adults are the strategies CAP facilitators encourage the children to use. These role-plays give every child in the classroom the opportunity to participate in supportive roles as witnesses and to practice positive behavior.

Student Workshops Grades 3 - 8: This workshop is developmentally appropriate for students in elementary and secondary schools. It is a two-session program of 60-75 minutes each on two consecutive days. The following components will be presented for all students attending the workshop:

- Gathering of student feedback about the problem in their school and community
- The seriousness of bullying and discussion of bullying in their classes and school
- Information and sensitization of the role of the children who are victimized, the children who bully and the witnesses
- Strategies to empower students to de-escalate bullying behaviors
- “Cyber Empowerment” delves into the cyber world of today’s youth and explores how some electronic communications are opportunities for bullying, bias crimes and violence among students.

At the conclusion of each day's workshop, children can meet individually with the CAP facilitators for the purpose of reinforcing the bullying prevention skills taught during the classroom workshop. It is also a time when children may ask questions, seek help in problem solving a specific bullying situation and strengthen their belief that all children have the right to be “SAFE, STRONG and FREE.” ©

Administrative Set-up, Implementation Meeting, and Program Review

- During the Administrative Set-up, the CAP Coordinator will meet with the school administrator or administrative team to plan and discuss specific needs of the community.
- The Implementation Meeting will take place with representatives of the community, parents, students, school counselors, teachers and administrators to prepare the presenters for the specific needs and goals of the school.
- A Program Review is offered to conclude the program, so that CAP can meet with school leaders to review the information provided by the student, staff and parents perspectives and make recommendations to focus community efforts against bullying.

CAP DEFINITIONS

The following terms are used within the context of CAP workshops. Their definitions reflect CAP'S philosophy of empowerment.

BULLYING (Grades K-2) "Bullying happens when a person who acts stronger takes away your rights to be **Safe, Strong & Free**. This can be done by calling names, saying mean things, hitting, pushing, taking your things or leaving you out of a group. It usually happens more than once and may get worse each time."

BULLYING (Grades 3-8) "Bullying happens when someone who acts stronger or more powerful takes away a person's rights by hurting, scaring or making the person feel weak. It can happen more than once and may get worse."

CONFLICT is a normal part of life and occurs when people involved have equal power and usually are willing to work towards solving the conflict during which each retains their power and their right to be safe.

CYBER BULLYING happens when someone uses a computer, cell phone and/or other electronic devices to harass, threaten or intimidate another person – taking away his/her rights to be safe, strong and free.

SEXTING (Grades 6-8) is sending, receiving or forwarding sexually suggestive messages or images electronically. It can take away your rights and the rights of the person who is in the picture and those who view it. It can be illegal.

CYBER EMPOWERMENT

When you make a choice to keep your rights and guard the rights of others to be **Safe, Strong and Free** while communicating electronically either on-line, by cell phone or mobile device.

PASSIVE - To give up your rights, you may be *avoiding* the problem.

AGGRESSIVE - To keep your rights by taking away another's rights; you may be *escalating* the problem.

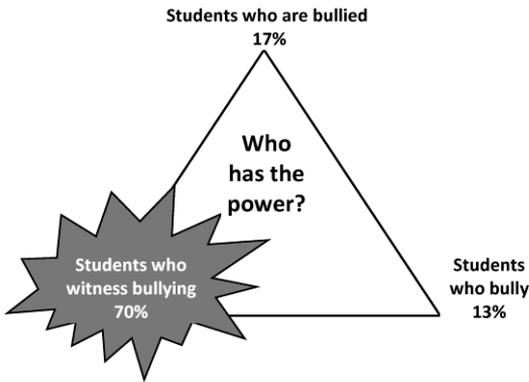
ASSERTIVE - To keep your rights and respect the rights of others; you have decided to *deal with* the problem. You may be de-escalating the bullying.

ESCALATING - Doing things to make it worse, for example, raising your voice, name-calling or getting into someone's space.

DE-ESCALATING - Doing things to make it better, for example, being a good listener, speaking calmly or acting assertively.

Prevalence of Bullying in Schools

- **1 in 4 children are bullied on a regular basis.**
- **1 in 3 children have been cyber-bullied.**
- **Kids who are obese, gay, or have disabilities are up to 63% more likely to be bullied than other children.**
- **It is estimated that 25% of children who are identified as bullies by age 7 may have a criminal record by the time they are 30.**



Worry + Guilt = Stress

“The greatest evil is when good men do nothing.”

*-Edmund Burke
18th Century Philosopher*

“In the end we will not remember the words of our enemies but the silence of our friends.”

*-Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
20th Century Civil Rights Leader*

Tips for Students who are Being Bullied

- ◆ Always remember you have the right to be **Safe, Strong & Free** and no one should take that right away!
- ◆ Refuse to fight. Leave any situation where you do not feel safe.
- ◆ Take a deep breath and try to stay calm.
- ◆ Act strong even though you may not feel strong.
- ◆ Make eye contact. Don't look down. Stand up straight and walk with confidence.
- ◆ If you feel confident enough, say how you feel in a clear calm voice.
- ◆ Try talking quietly. Sometimes a soft voice can de-escalate a situation.
- ◆ Tell a joke or say something funny. Make sure it is not about another person.
- ◆ Try saying something that surprises or isn't expected, like, "Thanks for your opinion!"
- ◆ Talk to friends about the bullying and get their support. Nobody really wants people to be bullied.
- ◆ Tell an adult you trust if you don't feel you can stop the bullying yourself or if it is really bothering you.

Try to Remember

- ◆ Be brave. No one should be taking away your rights!
- ◆ Try to do activities that make you feel good about yourself.
- ◆ Try to be around people who make you feel good about yourself.
- ◆ Make a plan about what to do if someone bullies you and practice with a friend.
- ◆ The kid who is bullying also has a problem - this isn't the way really strong people need to act.

**Remember,
being bullied is never your fault!**

Strategies for Adults

Dealing with an Incident of Bullying

- Don't ignore it.
- Respond to the incident as soon as possible.

For the children who are bullied:

- Listen to the account carefully and empathetically.
- Validate the person's feelings.
- Don't blame the person. **No one** asks for or deserves bullying.
- If the child who is bullied disclosed the behavior, affirm him/her and reinforce the importance of telling.
- Clarify with the person whether his/her rights were taken away by the incident. Does that person feel Safe, Strong & Free?
- Name the behavior as bullying and unacceptable.
- Encourage the person to identify the problem in relation to the effect of the incident on him/her.
- If the person is able to take action, work with him/her on possible assertive strategies for dealing with the problem, including confronting the child who is bullying in a safe environment.
- Get appropriate support for the person.
- Take appropriate action.

For the children who bully:

- Listen to the account carefully.
- Name the behavior as bullying and unacceptable.
- Without blaming the child who is bullying, help him/her to understand the responsibility for the consequences of his/her behavior.
- If appropriate, help the child who is bullying to plan options for making amends to the child who is victimized.
- Take appropriate action- including consistent consequences for the child who is bullying and support for changing the aggressive pattern of behavior and responses.

How to respond when adults or students say “Fighting Back” is the answer.

Adults:

“The only way to handle a child who is bullying you is to hit him/her back.” Or “I dealt with a bullying situation successfully when I was a kid by punching out his lights.”

You will hear this comment often. Here is a suggested response:

“The reason hitting back sometimes seems to work is that it is a show of strength and the child who is bullying understands strength. It’s like speaking their language. The problem with viewing the solution this way is that it is saying to children that there are only two solutions to the problem: 1) Hit the child who is bullying you and be strong 2) Don’t hit and be weak. What can help with bullying is a show of strength, but not one that carries as much risk as physical aggression.”

What would the consequences be if the child who is being bullied hits the child who bullies him/her? We are trying to get them to identify risk for that child’s safety, success in school, and ability to relate to others in a healthy and positive way. We also can point out that our goal for children, whether we are teachers or parents, is to prepare them to deal successfully with problems in life. We know, as adults, that we cannot solve problems with physical aggression without severe consequences, so the great majority of us do not do it. We also know, as adults, that there are many different strategies we can use to solve our problems. We want children to know that they can be empowered by this kind of problem solving.

Students:

“I’m just going to hit him/her back.” “My parents said it was okay to hit anybody who messed with me.” “It worked before.”

What can happen if you hit someone? Can anything bad happen to you? What about a way to keep your right to be safe without getting into trouble or getting hurt? The problem with dealing with bullying by hitting is that it doesn’t work all the time, there are some severe consequences for you, and when you get older you can’t solve problems with physical violence without really getting into trouble.

“I’ve tried telling before and it didn’t do any good. It got worse.”

Sometimes children who exhibit bullying behaviors don’t listen the first time. Behaving this way is a habit that some people learn, and it takes time to break a habit. Sometimes adults don’t know how to help kids with this problem. I’m going to try to help you without making the problem worse. Lots of kids in this school try to help stop bullying, so the child who is bullying doesn’t have to know that you told me.

What Parents/Guardians Can Do About Bullying

Is bullying really a problem for my child?

Most people have had to deal with bullying at some time in their lives. Memories of childhood experiences may still be vivid and painful for adults. Students, parents and school staff in every community report that bullying is a serious problem. Still, many adults want to dismiss bullying as a normal part of childhood, a kind of "toughening up" for kids.

It's a much more serious problem. It is estimated that one in four children who bully will have a criminal record before age thirty.

Bullying hurts the child's sense of self and the witnesses are left sad, anxious, and feeling that the world is not a safe place.

How can you help your child deal with bullying?

- Take your child's complaints of bullying seriously.
- Watch for symptoms that your child may be bullied.
- Contact your child's school as soon as possible about bullying.
- Work with other parents to ensure that the children in your school community feel safe.
- Listen. Encourage your child to talk about school and relationships.
- Model for your child ways to solve problems without aggression and encourage your child to solve problems the same way.
- Help your child learn the social skills to make friends.
- Teach your child that people who bully are people with problems.
- Help your child to develop strategies for dealing with bullying. A child who feels there are many ways to handle a problem is a child who feels empowered.

Tattling vs. Telling

Parents and teachers often complain about children tattling or “snitching” (as it is often referred to with older kids). However, it is vital that parents and everyone working with children know that there is a difference between tattling and telling.

The difference between tattling and telling:

The importance of “telling” has always been a part of CAP’s prevention strategies. CAP facilitators have trained over 3 million children in New Jersey to know that if they are in danger, hurt, threatened or just troubled by something they cannot handle alone, they need to seek a “trusted adult”. CAP also teaches that “tattling” is when we tell just to get someone into trouble. Whereas, “telling” is when we tell because someone’s rights to be safe, strong or free are in jeopardy and we want to help them or ourselves keep these rights.

CAP’s practical way to help adults and children know whether it’s tattling or telling:

When a child goes to an adult to tell/tattle on another child, the adult should ask:

- Is everyone involved in the situation safe?
- Is anyone losing the right to be safe, strong or free?

If a child or someone else is not safe or is in jeopardy of losing their rights to be safe, strong or free, then the adult needs to:

- believe and validate the child
- support “the telling”
- intervene as soon as possible

If safety is not an issue and no rights have been taken away, then the adult needs to:

- point out that everyone seems to be safe
- encourage the child to find some solutions to solve the problem

Even if this is a “tattling” situation, an adult should take the time to brainstorm some options with the child. It will empower the child to realize that this is his/her own problem and that there are solutions to be found. In the long run, brainstorming solutions will increase the child’s ability to solve problems and decrease future tattling.

Don’t tell a child to stop “tattling.”

Do encourage problem solving and telling.

Protecting Children Online

Teach children to stay safe with information and strategies.

- Too much computer time is as undesirable as too much television. The amount of time for chatting or surfing should be determined by supervising adults. Many children who have had problems online spend many hours regularly in front of a computer neglecting other activities and friends.
- Parents need to limit which “chat rooms” children enter to those which are carefully monitored. It is also possible to block out chatting or sending personal messages (IM’s) entirely.
- Children need to know that there may be unsafe people on the internet. Tell your children that if anyone or anything makes them uncomfortable, whether it is a case of cyberbullying or predation, they have the right to say “No” to requests by the other person and end the conversation and then to tell you or another trusted adult. Children should **never** agree to meet people they meet online without your permission and your presence.
- Teach your children not to give any personal information about themselves or their family. This includes pictures or other “clues.” It is also best not to give false information. Children sometimes think they can trick the person, but often are tricked themselves. Just as with strangers, it is best **not to talk at all** with someone you don’t know who makes you feel uncomfortable.
- Your children need to know that if someone does contact them and sends them anything inappropriate or frightening, **it is not their fault** and you will help them to deal with it. Many children are fearful about telling their parents because they went into a “chat room” or told something they were not supposed to tell. Ask your children to print and save a copy of any disturbing email, blog, text message, etc. or to come and get you.
- If you have **any** question about inappropriate internet contact with your children, immediately call your local police. If you need additional assistance, the NJ State Police have a unit which specializes in computer crime. It is important to notify law enforcement both to protect your children and other children in our communities. Your internet service provider (ISP) can offer parental controls as well as help with handling any problems children encounter. Always report suspicious or inappropriate contacts with your children to your ISP.

Resources for Bullying Prevention

- **The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC)** runs a CyberTipline www.missingkids.com/cybertip for anyone with information regarding sexual exploitation of children online. They also have a 24-hour Pornography Tipline at 1-800-843-5678.
- **NetSmartz** offers free, multimedia Internet safety presentations tailored for specific audiences – parents and communities, tweens, teens, and younger children. The website is for Children and Teens <http://www.netsmartz.org> .
- **iSAFE** is a great resource for parents, educators and students. www.iSAFE.org www.cyberbullyhelp.com
- **"A Thin Line"** is aimed at stopping the spread of abuse in the form of sexting, cyberbullying and digital dating abuse. The goal of the initiative is to empower America's youth to identify, respond to and stop the spread of the various forms of digital harassment. <http://www.athinline.org>
- **GetNetWise** is a site on safety for children brought to you by Internet industry corporations and public interest organizations www.getnetwise.org
- **Center for Safe and Responsible Internet Use** is a website for the whole family to help prevent and deal with Cyberbullying www.cyberbullying.org
- **2nd Floor** is a confidential and anonymous 24 hour helpline for New Jersey youth and young adults. 2nd Floor helps youth find solutions to problems. <http://www.2ndfloor.org> 888-222-2228
- If you know of a child/teenager that is feeling suicidal because of bullying; contact the **suicide prevention hotline** at 1-800-273-TALK(8255).



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