



Pat Friesen <patfriesen@gmail.com>

Bullying for interfaith consultation

1 message

Paul A Olson <polson2@unlnotes.unl.edu>

Mon, Jul 27, 2009 at 3:47 PM

To: BBARNAWELL@aol.com, jdoran@neb.rr.com, patfriesen@gmail.com, cbentjen2000@yahoo.com, blair@prep.creighton.edu, cawindrum <cawindrum@gmail.com>, im50427@windstream.net, robelia@mainstaycomm.net, polson2@unl.edu, Timothy Shaw <peacemaking.workshop@gmail.com>, visgermnj@aol.com, barbarah@homesteadpres.org, Betsy Blake Bennett <deaconbetsy@windstream.net>, shaw1201@inebraska.com

Note from last time and some suggestions below (I will try to do this with each area): Bullying and the reduction of violence in local situations: bullying, gang violence, and domestic violence and its precursors: The Lutherans have some strength in the area of training youth not to bully (and training parents to train children) because of some books published by the Fortress Press. In contrast, the Quakers, Mennonites and Brethren – where they constitute a coherent community (often a rural one) -- are able to induct their young into a culture of nonviolence. The question of what churches could or should do in this area in religious education or in working with the schools is not fully spelled out. The Domestic Violence Centers and IMN have worked to train clergy to work with domestic violence problems, but not all churches have responded. We did not get to dating violence or working in areas where daily violence is egregious such as gang controlled areas. We probably should have more discussions here. In the area of jails, the Friends Meeting in Lincoln, through Marge Schlitt, is teaching *Alternatives to Violence* in the jails and getting a lot done.

Dear colleagues,

I have copied the following page from the Nebraska Department of Education School Safety Center anti-bullying site. If you go to Nebraska Department of Education bullying policy, you will arrive at a site that has many resources for reducing school violence. I am forwarding to you a page from the site about bullying prevention working with the target victim, the bully and the bystanders. This kind of effort to create a less violent atmosphere in the schools could be supported by church efforts to teach doctrines of charity and non-violence. Local churches could approach local schools asking how they could help.

Useful religious books that treat bullying and child violence from a religious perspective that I have looked at:

1. Ron Cram. *Bullying: A Spiritual Crisis*. Chalice Press, 2003
2. Janet Aldridge, *Teaching Children Nonviolence*, Hope Publishing Co
3. Quaker CD, *Teaching Nonviolence*, [QuakerBooks](#), 2006

Below you will find the Department of Education page.

[NDE Home Page](#)

Safe and Drug Free
Schools

- [Library - Violence Prevention Resources](#)

[School Safety Center](#)

[Positive Behavior Support](#)

[What is Bullying?](#)

[Policy Development](#)

[Legal Considerations](#)

[Needs Assessment - Evaluation](#)

[Program Development](#)

[Staff Development](#)

[Prevention and Intervention Strategies](#)

[Parent Information](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions and Responses](#)

[Resources](#)

[Return to Bullying Prevention Home Page](#)

BULLYING PREVENTION: PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

Prevention and intervention strategies include school-wide programs and individual actions to stop bullying behaviors and encourage positive behaviors. All staff, students, parents and others associated with the school or community should share the responsibility for bullying prevention and intervention.

Refer to the [Resources](#) section of the Bullying Prevention website for additional information.

School-Wide Prevention and Intervention

The most effective anti-bullying plan is designed and implemented with specific knowledge and skills consistently trained and used throughout the school district. This plan declares a school's commitment to creating a safe, caring and respectful learning environment for all students. A bullying prevention and intervention plan adopted by the district might include specific behavior programs, forms used, philosophies of interactions, curriculum, or basic protocols. Effective anti-bullying programs or curriculum implement a scope and sequence of knowledge and skills to be learned by all students and requires school-wide involvement and support. Students involved in bullying situations benefit from additional instruction specific to their role as one using bullying behaviors, as a target, or as a bystander/witness.

Prevention Strategies

Prevention is best addressed by communicating and teaching the expected pro-social behaviors.

- Clearly communicate policy and protocols for bullying behaviors to all staff, students and parents
- Discussion and presentations about bullying and caring behaviors are ongoing
- Empower bystanders to promote and take responsibility for creating a safe and welcoming environment
- Provide a means for safely reporting bullying behaviors
- Staff are observant and responsive to reports of bullying
- Students are recognized for caring behaviors
- Adopt a social skills curriculum
- Monitor and adjust local bullying prevention program based on analysis of local school data and best practices in the field of bullying prevention (change in supervision, use of resources, methods of communication, reporting procedures, etc.)

Bystander/Witness Interventions

Activating and empowering the bystanders/witnesses through education about bullying and practice (role plays) in intervening is the most impactful intervention.

Group training for bystanders includes emphasizing that there is strength in numbers and that permission is given with the expectation to intervene respectfully and safely or report the bullying behaviors. Determining specific bystander interventions depends on analyzing the level of risk of a particular bullying situation.

School/Classroom Strategies for Bystanders

- Talk about it with the class
- Emphasize strength in numbers
- Explain the expectation to take action
- Teach and practice skills and strategies to take a stand
- Empower witnesses to take leadership roles in making the school safe for everyone
- Acknowledge and reinforce caring behaviors
- Clarify the difference between tattling and telling (reporting).

Individual Strategies for Bystanders

- Make a safe choice; consider the level of risk in choosing an action for intervening.
- Teach options for intervening:
 - Choose to not participate
 - Report to an adult
 - Encourage the peer group to take a stand
 - Take an individual stand
 - Be friendly toward the target

Target Interventions

Targets need to be supported by a third party and have their reports taken seriously. Target interventions typically include teaching social skills such as friendship, assertiveness and anger management skills. Interventions for targets may be done one-on-one or in a support group. Targets should not be re-victimized by bringing the target and perpetrator together to try to resolve the situation.

School/Classroom Strategies for Targets

- Provide a safe place to report; take all reports seriously
- Assign new or needy students to a buddy
- Assign a caring staff member to "connect" regularly with the students who are potential targets
- Get a caring majority in the classroom; use class meetings/discussion to teach expected behaviors and model value of each person
- Consider how students are grouped so that the targets are not left out and are not paired with someone who bullies them.
- Teach friendship and assertiveness skills.

Individual Strategies for Targets

- Provide options for preventing bullying incidents
 - Avoid the bully
 - Stay in safe areas
 - Share your feelings with someone you trust
- Provide options for responding to bullying incidents
 - Walk away
 - Make an assertive statement, then walk away

- Tell an adult

Bullying Behavior Interventions

School discipline policies, while needed to address student conduct issues and support positive student behaviors, are not sufficient to address bullying behaviors. Bullying behavior interventions may include teaching social skills such as friendship, empathy and anger management in one-on-one settings, not in a group setting. Discipline should be addressed privately. Interventions focus on identifying the expected behaviors.

School/Classroom Strategies for Bullying Behaviors/Perpetrators of Bullying

- Equalize the power - work one on one
- Challenge distorted thinking.
- Use consistent, predictable discipline
- Focus on behaviors and expectations
- Use a problem-solving approach
- Forward documentation to a central location to be reviewed regularly

Individual Strategies for Bullying Behaviors/Perpetrators of Bullying

- State (do not ask) rule violated, feelings of target, and plan of action
- Teach social skills
 - Friendship skills
 - Empathy skills
 - Emotional self awareness
 - Social awareness
- Develop personal management skills
 - Anger and emotion management
 - Assuming personal responsibility
- Provide pro-social consequences

The Nebraska Department of Education offers this website to provide awareness and resources that help schools prevent bullying and provide safe and secure environments. Click on the topics in the column on the left for bullying prevention information.

[Bullying Prevention Site Information](#)

Last updated: July 13, 2009

Please study these matters and look to see if your national church has materials on bullying, youth violence, domestic violence and gangs. If it does, send me the reference. Peace, Paul
