

Teasing and Bullying

2000 - 2008

Project Director: Nancy Mullin, M.Ed.

"A student is being bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more students. Bullying can take many forms - both direct and indirect - but always involves a power imbalance that makes it difficult for the victim to defend him or herself."
(Olweus)

Bullying in its various forms is prevalent in schools around the globe. Children learn, practice, and experience bullying beginning at a very young age. Research indicates that this form of aggression is a growing problem affecting student learning, social interactions, and school climate. It has been implicated as a contributor to school violence.

The Project on Teasing and Bullying worked to examine and counteract the effects of the culture of bullying on children and youth. We addressed these complex issues by raising awareness about bullying and by exploring the links between bullying, other forms of aggression, and violence. We did this through a combination of research, action, and advocacy. Central to our work was addressing the impact of societal messages about gender and gender roles on the development of aggressive and violent behavior.

Project goals

- Promote awareness about bullying and the negative impact it has on school climate

- Explore the links between teasing and bullying and other forms of aggressive and violent behavior

- Develop high quality curriculum and educational materials that are solidly based in both research and practice

- Provide staff development opportunities that provide a strong conceptual framework about bullying

- Reduce bullying by promoting effective links between parents, community, and school personnel

- Assist schools in developing school-wide interventions about bullying

Working for Change

Project initiatives included research about bullying, various training opportunities for adults, and development of curriculum and other educational support materials designed for school personnel, parents, and

community groups (including childcare programs and disability advocacy groups).

Project activities

Provide high-quality training about bullying and related topics including:
Teacher-initiated and classroom curriculum-based training for grades K-8

Workshops for parent and community groups

Training for school personnel and community groups about promoting friendship and empathy

Specialized training for school personnel about the link between gender stereotypes and bullying

Workshop series on various topics offered at Wellesley College

Facilitate implementation of school-wide approaches to bullying:

Operationalize school-wide approach according to school needs

Provide Olweus Bullying Prevention Program™ training with nationally certified master trainer

Provide training and consultation to schools

Develop materials to facilitate implementation of school-wide approaches to bullying

Collect and analyze data about the incidence of bullying in school settings

Supervise trainers as part of a national network

Disseminate high-quality curriculum and support materials about bullying including:

- [Quit It!: A Teacher's Guide on Teasing and Bullying for Use With Students in Grades K-3](#)
- [Quit It!: A Guide for Parents](#)
- [A Selected Bibliography About Teasing and Bullying for Grades K-8](#)
- [Relational Aggression and Bullying: It's More Than Just a Girl Thing](#)
- Plus other support materials for parents and school staff

Training for School Personnel

The project offered specialized staff development for teachers, administrators, health/prevention specialists, school guidance and other personnel in grades K-8. Each session provided a theoretical framework about bullying as well as proven strategies and practical hands-on activities for preventing and responding to bullying behaviors at school and promoting prosocial behavior.

Workshops were tailored to the needs of a particular group. Training about bullying and related topics was available (e.g., promoting empathy and friendship, gender issues and bullying, or focus on a particular WCW curriculum). All sessions addressed the role of gender, bystanders, and

courage. A typical training session about bullying included:

- Research about bullying and implications for classroom practice
- Selected activities from our curriculum guides [Quit It!](#) and/or [Bullyproof](#)
- Resources and tips for successful implementation of a classroom approach
- School-wide strategies to reduce bullying
- Strategies for dealing with individual incidences of bullying

The following options were available:

- Full-day or part day training sessions
- Intensive training (over several days)
- Staff training paired with parent session
- On-site training
- On-site consultation
- Workshop series held at Wellesley College

A master packet of supplemental reading materials was provided for each session. Curriculum guides could be purchased separately for participants. PDP and CE credits were typically available (please verify). Note: Fees were based on session location, audience, format, and options selected.

Training in Olweus Bullying Prevention Program™

The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program™ was a highly effective, comprehensive school-wide intervention developed by international researcher Dan Olweus. This research based program was one of the Blueprints Against Violence approved by the U.S. Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Programs, and had also been named an Exemplary Program by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention. Project staff were part of a national BPP cadre of certified trainers and had extensive experience assisting school districts across the U.S. to successfully implement this program.

Initial telephone consultation, provided to schools at no cost, was designed to help schools determine whether the BPP model is a good match for current needs and circumstances and reviews the Bullying Prevention Program model, guidelines, materials, and fees.

Additional consultation and training were available to help schools or school districts implement the program. A two-day training for a school-based bullying prevention committee included information about all aspects of the program model, curriculum, and other program support materials needed to carry out the BPP effort. Monthly follow-up consultation was provided to the local school at no additional charge to insure successful implementation of the program.

For a summary of the national Bullying Prevention Program™ model, please refer to this [Model Program](#) developed for the U.S. Olweus Group.

Training for community groups

The project offered workshops about teasing and bullying to parent and community groups, and child care programs to increase awareness about bullying problems, to promote strategies for appropriate intervention, and to strengthen communication about this issue between home and school.

A typical workshop about bullying provided facts and background information as well as practical problem-solving strategies geared to helping parents and caregivers of students in preschool, elementary and middle school. A typical one-and-a-half- to two-hour workshop included:

- Myths and facts about bullying
- How to recognize and successfully respond to incidents of bullying
- Prevention strategies designed to "bullyproof" children
- Strategies for working together with school personnel to stop bullying at school

Workshops could be held independently or in conjunction with school staff development sessions. Parent sessions were often sponsored by PTO and/or PAC groups. Other community-based sessions could be tailored according to the particular needs of the audience or sponsoring group and have included topics such as promoting empathy and friendship.

Copyright © 2002 Nancy Mullin, Wellesley Centers for Women, Wellesley, MA, 781-283-2451. Please cite this source when using the information provided.