Corpus Christi Bullying Prevention, Intervention and Follow-up Plan

KEY TERMS

What is Bullying?

'Bullying' means aggressive and typically repeated behaviour by a child or youth where,

a) they should know that the behaviour would be likely to,

   i. cause harm, fear or distress to another individual, including physical, psychological, social or academic harm, harm to the individual's reputation or harm to the individual's property, or

   ii. create a negative environment at a school for another individual

b) there is a real or perceived power imbalance based on factors such as size, strength, age, intelligence, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, gender identity, gender expression, race, disability or the receipt of special education.

Bullying is defined as: "typically a form of repeated, persistent, and aggressive behaviour directed at an individual or individuals that is intended to cause (or should be known to cause) fear and distress and/or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, or reputation. Bullying occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance".

What are the Forms of Bullying?

1) Physical Bullying can be:

- Hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting, beating up, stealing, or damaging property.

2) Verbal Bullying can be:

- Name-calling, mocking, hurtful teasing, humiliating or threatening someone, racist or sexist comments, harassment.

3) Social Bullying can be:

- Excluding others from the group, gossiping or spreading rumours, setting others up to look foolish, and damaging friendships;
- Treating people badly because of their identity, saying bad things about a culture, calling someone racist names, telling racist jokes;
- Treating people badly because of their religion or beliefs, saying bad things about a religion or belief, calling someone names, telling jokes about a religion or belief;
- Leaving someone out or treating them badly because they are a boy or a girl, making someone feel uncomfortable because of their sexual orientation/gender identity/gender expression, making sexist comments or jokes, touching, pinching or grabbing someone in a sexual way, making rude comments about someone's sexual behaviour or sexual orientation;
- Leaving someone out or treating them badly because of a disability, making someone feel uncomfortable because of a disability (e.g., mental or physical), making comments or jokes to hurt someone with a disability;
- Treating someone badly because of his/her appearance (e.g., weight-based teasing) or social class (e.g., not having name brand clothing or possessions).

4) Electronic Bullying: Electronic communication lets youth connect with each other in all kinds of ways. Youth use social media to create relationships with others. Healthy face-to-face and online relationships mean that interactions are respectful. Disrespectful interactions become bullying. Cyberbullying is:

- Electronic communication used to upset, threaten or embarrass another person;
- Using email, cell phones, text messages, and internet sites to threaten, harass, embarrass, socially exclude, or damage reputations and friendships;
- Includes put-downs, insults, spreading rumours, sharing private information, photos or videos or threatening to harm someone;
- Is always aggressive and hurtful.

How is Bullying different from Teasing and/or Aggression?

Teasing	Aggression	Bullying
Is equal and reciprocated Is fun and not hurtful Often occurs prior to aggression	Is conflict Can be intentional or unintentional Could be one time Can lead to BULLYING	A form of typically repeated, persistent, and aggressive behaviour Directed at an individual or individuals that is intended to cause fear

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Key Elements of a Whole School Approach to Prevent Bullying and Promote Healthy Relationships

A whole school approach brings everyone together to work toward creating a safe, inclusive, and accepting school where bullying problems are prevented and handled effectively when they arise. A whole school approach involves the administration, teaching and school staff, children, youth, parents/guardians, and the broader community.

A whole school approach is the most effective way to prevent bullying and promote learning. Children's learning depends on having positive relationships at school. When everyone works together for a safe, inclusive, and accepting school, children and youth receive **consistent** messages and responses about bullying. By providing consistent messages, responses, and supports that address bullying problems, school communities can promote positive, healthy relationships for their children and youth.

Bullying prevention and intervention are not just about eliminating bullying—it is also about promoting the development of healthy relationships. The goal is to help ensure that all children and youth have healthy, safe, respectful and caring relationships with everyone in their lives.

Prevention

Bullying prevention strategies provide children and youth with awareness and skills:

1. To initiate and engage in positive relationships;

2. To prevent from bullying others;

3. To cope effectively with being bullied (e.g., walk away or tell someone)

The classroom is one of the primary places where social and emotional skills can be learned and character can be developed, but learning these skills does not always come naturally. Just as with other forms of learning, children and youth learn relationship skills by trial and error and, as with reading and math, we need to provide extra supports to those who are constantly struggling to foster positive relationships.

Goals of Bullying Prevention Activities

1. Promoting positive relationships within and between the entire school to enhance school climate and a supportive learning environment;

2. Educating and developing awareness about bullying, the importance of healthy relationships, and self-awareness about the use of real and perceived power in relationships;

3. Consolidating attitudes which are incompatible with bullying for inclusion, acceptance and respect for all;

4. Developing awareness of bullying issues at the school;

5. Developing positive solutions to prevent and address bullying;

6. Learning positive strategies to address bullying by a) children and youth who are victimized, b) children and youth who witness bullying, c) teachers, and d) other school staff;

7. Building social responsibility and open trusting communication about bullying and relationship difficulties.

Intervention

Bullying intervention strategies are used when children and youth experience problems with bullying. There are two approaches to intervention:

1. Providing individualized supports to promote development in areas where children and youth are struggling (e.g., understanding, social skills, attitudes) and to promote their strengths.

2. Helping to ensure that children/youths' relationships with teachers, peers, family and the community are both positive and support the development of constructive social understanding, behaviours, and attitudes.

STRATEGIES

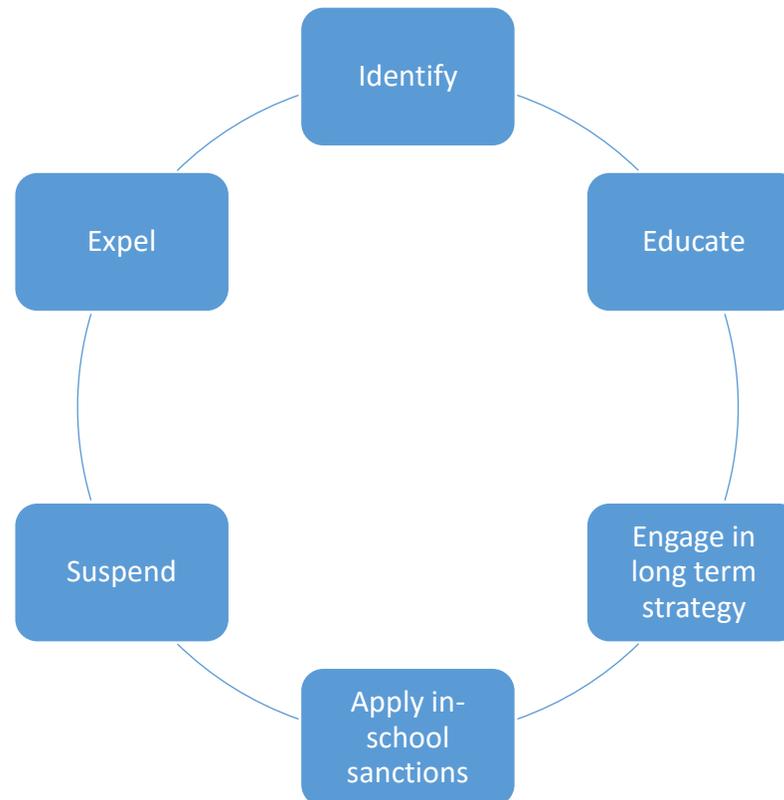| PREVENTION	PREVENTION: ACTIVITIES THAT RAISE AWARENESS AND INCREASE POSITIVE BEHAVIOURS FOR THE WHOLE SCHOOL
Children and Youth	1) Classroom based learning activities that promote understanding of differences, inclusion and positive leadership (i.e. CYW lead classroom visits to engage students in building healthy relationships e.g. Acts of Kindness, Being a good friend, being respectful, conflict resolution, empathy, listening). 2) Announcements with a positive message focusing on healthy relationships 3) Pink shirt day (see www.pinkshirtday.ca for updated dates) 4) Activities for Bullying Awareness Week (week beginning with the 3rd Sunday in November) 5) Recognition of students' positive behaviours 6) Monthly Awards

School Staff	1) Staff identification of strengths and concerns in school
	2) Complete Mental Health in The Classroom Assessment, Monitoring and Reflection Tool
	3) Attend Professional Development Opportunities with professionals from the board and the community
	4) Generate innovative supervision strategies for target areas in the school (e.g., halls, outside)
	5) Develop strategies and tools for effective communication such as between:
	    • Teacher and principal
	    • Bus driver and principal
	    • Teacher and parent/guardian
	    • Student and teacher (e.g., bullying problem/solution box)
	    • Parent/guardian and teacher (e.g., letter: see www.teachsafeschools.org)

Classroom Strategies	1) Tools for Life- FDK and Grade 1 2) Roots of Empathy- Grade 4 3) CYW/Classroom teacher to facilitate Classroom-based learning activities that promote learning and understanding of (e.g. School Mental Health Ontario (smho-smso.ca) activities): • The importance of positive relationships for learning and life • The definition of bullying • Differences between bullying and teasing, aggression and competition, aggression and assertiveness, telling and tattling • Empathy

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	• Positive leadership and recognition
Parents/Guardians	1) Inform parents about bullying prevention activities at school and share with Catholic School Council
Community	1) Partnerships with agencies (e.g. police liaison officer, and social worker) to provide prevention education.
Additional Notes:	There are many creative ways to work with the different levels of a school community to increase awareness and engagement in promoting positive relationships and preventing bullying. The activities that you choose for your school need to fit with the special circumstances of your school. You can get additional ideas for activities for all members of the school community and of the school for all grades on numerous internet sites related to developing a supportive learning environment, positive school climate and preventing bullying.

Here are a few that have whole school activities described:
www.teachsafeschools.org
www.peacefulschoolsinternational.org
www.stopbullyingnow.gov |

INTERVENTION	INTERVENTION: ACTIVITIES THAT FOCUS ON INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE INVOLVED IN BULLYING PROBLEMS – AS THE CHILD OR YOUTH WHO BULLIES, THE CHILD OR YOUTH WHO IS VICTIMIZED, OR THE CHILD OR YOUTH WHO WITNESSES THE BULLYING
School Level	When addressing bullying ask yourself the following questions:

- What are the particular children or youth circumstances?
- What is the nature of the bullying behaviour?
- How frequent and severe is the bullying?
- What is the impact of the behavior on the school climate?
- Where in the school is the bullying taking place?
- What interventions will promote positive behavior in this student and be both corrective and supportive? |

- Is the response based on current school, board and ministry policies and guidelines (e.g., considering mitigating and other factors)?

Below are the steps to be taken when responding to aggressive and/or bullying incidents that could happen at your school. The steps are based on the Progressive Discipline PPM 145. Progressive discipline utilizes a continuum of interventions to provide support to teach appropriate behaviours and consequences to address appropriate behaviour. The six steps to address bullying are outlined in the chart below.

Responding to Aggressive and Bullying Incidents:

Identify

Educate

Engage in long term strategy

Apply in-school sanctions

Suspend

Expel

FOLLOW UP	
	The only way that you will know whether bullying has stopped is by following up with the victimized child/youth. Set up regular follow up meetings. For example, the following meeting schedule can be effective: i) daily for the first week ii) every other day during the second week, and iii) once during the third week if the bullying has stopped. In these follow up meetings, you can focus your discussion on questions such as: 1) How have things at school been for you since we last met? 2) Have you experienced any bullying? 3) Have you experienced any problems because you reported bullying? 4) Are there other students you can stay with so that you feel safe? If children and youth still experience bullying during the follow up period, you need to reinforce strategies with those who are bullying to help ensure it stops.

Final Consideration

To understand and effectively address bullying, a "binocular" view is needed. With only one lens, the focus is limited to the individual needs of students involved in all roles within bullying: those being aggressive, those being victimized, and those who witness bullying. This singular view, however, falls short in providing a thorough understanding of bullying problems. By adding a second lens, as with binoculars, it can expand the focus to include student's relationships. This second perspective takes into account the social dynamics in their peer groups—and the roles that adults play in shaping their experiences. Together these two lenses offer a more comprehensive perspective on bullying problems. This deeper understanding of the complexity of the issues will lead to recognize the multiple approaches required to address bullying problems.

Reference

The content of these slides is based directly on and drawn from the PREVNet document *Bullying Prevention and Intervention in the School Environment: Factsheets and Tools,* 2014, developed by Dr. Debra Pepler and Dr. Wendy Craig (www.prevnet.ca).

For additional information and support in bullying prevention and intervention planning, please contact the HWCDSB Superintendent of Education and/or Mental Health Lead.

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