

STRATEGIES FOR COMBATING BULLYING IN SCHOOLS: A HOLISTIC GUIDE

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Bullying in schools is a widespread problem that has an impact on children's social, emotional, and mental health. It describes recurrent acts of aggression in which a person or group purposefully hurts or upsets another. Physical assault, verbal abuse, social rejection, and cyberbullying are just a few ways that this behavior can appear. Bullying has repercussions that go beyond just the victims; it affects the whole school community as well as the bullies themselves, making preventive and intervention strategies comprehensive.

The first kind of bullying is physical bullying, which includes acts of bodily violence including shoving, striking, and causing damage to personal property. It may cause serious bodily and psychological injury and is frequently the most obvious type of bullying. The second category is verbal bullying, encompassing verbal abuse that involves threats, slanderous comments, and name-calling. Although verbal bullying is less obvious than physical bullying, it may have a serious negative effect on a victim's mental well-being and sense of self. The third type of bullying is social bullying, sometimes referred to as relational bullying, which entails harming someone's reputation or interpersonal connections. It involves public shaming, expelling people from groups, and spreading falsehoods. Last but not least, cyberbullying has increased in frequency as a result of technological advancements. Harassment through text messaging, social networking, and online gaming is referred to as cyberbullying. The fact that cyberbullying can occur at any moment makes it difficult for victims to escape.

Effective prevention of bullying requires an understanding of its underlying causes. Environmental influences: Bullying frequently takes place in settings where aggressiveness is accepted or disregarded, such as schools with inadequate anti-bullying regulations. These are some of the factors that lead to bullying behavior. Peer pressure, or the desire to fit in or improve one's social status, can lead students to engage in bullying behavior as offenders or bystanders. Family dynamics: Teenagers who witness violence in their homes or don't have good role models may be more prone to bully others. On the other hand, victims may come from homes where abuse or neglect has occurred. Mental health problems: Aggression is a coping mechanism used by some bullies to deal with their frustration, fear, or anxieties. To address the underlying problems influencing their conduct, they might need assistance.

Bullying may have disastrous and frequently lifelong effects. Emotional distress: Bullied individuals frequently suffer from anxiety, sadness, and low self-esteem. Suicidal thoughts may result from bullying in extreme circumstances. Children who face bullying frequently struggle to concentrate in class, which can result in lower academic performance, not focused in their studies that result to higher dropout rates. Social isolation: Bullying victims may avoid social situations, which leaves them without support systems or friends and might make them feel even more alone. Bullies might encounter disciplinary measures, exhibit antisocial personality traits, and experience challenges in their interpersonal relationships as they grow older.

Creating a healthy school climate is the first step in preventing and addressing bullying. Schools should promote an inclusive environment that values kindness, empathy, and respect. This objective can be accomplished with the use of programs that support social-emotional learning. The next step is to establish and uphold comprehensive anti-bullying policies that can be beneficial to the bullied students. These guidelines can serve as a foundation for dealing with bullying when it happens. Clear definitions, reporting guidelines, and sanctions for bullying behavior should all be part

of these rules. The third strategy is by empowering bystanders: By instructing pupils how to be proactive bystanders, schools may transform their culture. In order to lessen the societal acceptance of bullying, bystanders should feel empowered to denounce bullying and offer assistance to victims. The fourth step is to support both bullies and victims. Mentorship programs and counseling services can assist victims in processing their experiences and creating coping mechanisms. In a comparable manner, intervention programs that target the root causes of bullies' conduct may be beneficial. Engaging parents and communities is the final step. Schools should have discussions about bullying with parents and community members and provide them with tools and assistance to help them identify and deal with the problem at home.

Bullying in schools is a complicated issue that calls for a multipronged strategy including parents, teachers, students, and the community. Each student can succeed in safer and more inclusive school environments if we cultivate a culture of empathy and respect, put supporting policies into place, and offer resources to all parties. By working together, we can eradicate bullying and raise a new generation of kindhearted people.

References:

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