BULLYING AT School

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A Message from the State Superintendent of Public Instruction

SCHOOL is more than the academic instruction that occurs in the classroom. Our students' education also depends on an environment that supports learning. It is impossible for students to achieve at their fullest potential if they fear for their safety. The long-term effects of bullying, cruelty, bias, and hate-motivated behavior can have a tremendous impact on student success—both for the victims and for the perpetrators. Not until recent tragic school shooting incidents did we fully realize the devastating effect that hate and bullying behaviors can have on students.

Bullying at School has been prepared to address negative behaviors in our schools. The document outlines state and federal laws regarding behavior and discipline issues; it describes studies performed over the past decade that document the effects of bullying, cruelty, and hate on our students' ability to learn and succeed; and it shares proven strategies for addressing bullying and cruel behavior.

We now understand that all students can succeed if they believe that they are valued and supported at school and in their communities. I hope this document will help schools with the task of letting students know that they are important, that they can achieve, and that their schools are safe.

Thank you for your help with this important job.

Jack O'Connell

JACK O'CONNELL
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

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Introduction

ON 1997 the California Department of Education and the Alameda County Office of Education collaborated to address the issue of student-to-student violence predicated on bias and hate in a document entitled *Hate-Motivated Behavior in Schools: Response Strategies for School Boards, Administrators, Law Enforcement, and Communities.* The Department also provided regional training and technical assistance to help school community participants recognize and respond to hate-motivated behavior and to further the Department's commitment to maintain campus safety and to support students and their success.

This 2003 document builds from that original document and incorporates the issues of school bullying, cruelty, and hate- or bias-motivated behavior. It is designed to assist school communities in recognizing, understanding, defining, and responding to those unwanted behaviors. The document outlines the influences that perpetuate cruel behavior and the consequences of tolerating bullying at school. Research-supported strategies help schools respond to destructive behavior; prevent bullying; and build a safe, secure, and welcoming campus environment.

BULLYING AT School

Chapter 1

California's Urgent Challenge

Chapter 1

California's Urgent Challenge

STUDENT performance results and schools' effectiveness in teaching are being scrutinized and compared locally and across California. Schools are seeking ways to increase student achievement scores and gain the confidence of the school community. Besides reaching for the goal of improved test scores, schools must accept the challenge that comes with California's growing population and increased diversity. Although these societal changes provide ever-expanding opportunities, they may also be accompanied by intolerance and behaviors that demonstrate bias, hate, and cruelty toward others who are perceived as being different.

Effective schools are safe schools. Therefore, school communities appreciate the need to prevent incidents or events that threaten safety, and they need tools to respond effectively to such incidents. To achieve schools' mission to educate students and maintain campus safety, schools must be able to recognize and prevent bullying and cruelty and be prepared to respond to acts of bullying when they occur.

Bullying at School is dedicated to helping schools understand the urgent challenges that threaten students' and staff members' safety and provides schools with the tools for addressing these events. The California State Constitution affirms that students and staff have the right to attend safe schools.[1] Therefore, schools have the moral obligation to ensure that every student experiences a sense of belonging, respect, dignity, and safety and that every teacher has the opportunity to teach.

This school-based resource guide is designed to promote discussion, planning, immediate action, and the development of effective long-term responses to hate-motivated behavior and bullying.

[1] Article I, § 28(c), of the California State Constitution, approved by voters in 1982, states that all students and staff of public primary, elementary, junior high, and senior high schools have the inalienable right to attend campuses that are safe, secure, and peaceful.

The enduring message must be that for schools to be effective, they must be safe—free of intimidation, bias, and hate.

The Impetus for Addressing Violent Behaviors Among Youths

THE act of bullying and the harm it causes have typically been given little consideration; bullying is believed to be a natural and unfortunate part of growing up. The prevalence of bullying has come under scrutiny more recently because of the major role of bullying as a precursor to the notorious and avoidable incidents of school violence across the nation. It is now known that bullying behavior is common among children and that the harmful and lasting effects on children deserve special attention. Today, the link between bullying and later delinquent and criminal behavior can no longer be ignored.

A study published in April 2001 in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* noted that almost 30 percent of the 15,686 public school students surveyed reported occasional to frequent involvement in bullying, either as a bully, a target, or both.[2] If students are in fear for their own safety, they are unable to concentrate on learning. However, bullying behavior does not lend itself to the same interventions that may be effective in other types of conflict. Both the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention and the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence find that the most effective model is a comprehensive program using a combination of interventions—schoolwide, at the classroom level, and at the individual level—to create a social environment characterized by:

- Positive adult involvement;
- Firm limits for unacceptable behavior;
- Consistent use of sanctions for rule violations; and
- Recognition that adults are the authority.[3]

Although studies of bullying behavior and antibullying programs have only recently begun in the United States, data from other countries suggest that a comprehensive approach to reducing bullying at school can change student behaviors and attitudes and can increase teachers' willingness to intervene.

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[2] Tonja R. Nansel, et al., "Bullying Behaviors Among U.S. Youth: Prevalence and Association with Psychosocial Adjustment," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, Vol. 285, No. 16 (April 25, 2001) <*http://jama.ama-assn.org/*>. Click on "Past Issues."

[3] "Bullying Prevention in the School; Research-Based Strategies for Educators," *The Challenge*, Vol. 11, No. 3 (Spring 2003) <*http://www.thechallenge.org/past.htm*>.

The Legal Authority for Addressing Bullying and Hateful Behavior at School

TODAY, bullying behaviors at school are recognized as dangerous and harmful acts that victimize the targeted student and bystanders. Bullying can no longer be dismissed as harmless teasing or as a normal yet undesirable behavior. Rather, bullying is a pattern of deliberate, negative, hurtful, aggressive acts that works to shift the balance of physical, emotional, or social power.

Behavior motivated by bias or hate is similar to bullying and is intended to cause emotional suffering, physical injury, or property damage through intimidation, harassment, bigoted slurs or epithets, force or threat of force, or vandalism. Hateful or biased behavior is motivated in part or in whole by hostility toward a person's real or perceived race, nationality, religion, disability, gender, or sexual orientation. (*Education Code* sections 200, 220, 233, and 48900.3 describe policies and intent specific to hate-motivated violence. *Penal Code* sections 422.6, 422.7, 422.75, 422.8, 422.9, 422.95, and 628 define what constitutes hate-motivated crimes.)

The responsibility to establish the school environment lies with the entire school community. The environment evolves from the ideals, policies, practices, and administration of the school. *Education Code* Section 35294 et seq. requires each school to develop and implement a School Safety Plan as a part of its overall local education plan and to revisit the plan annually and amend it as needed. The first step in the planning process, as described in *Safe Schools: A Planning Guide for Action*, is to gather a planning committee that actively involves school administrators, teachers, students, and parents.[4] Community service and civic organizations also have important roles as providers and resources to the school.

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[4] *Safe Schools: A Planning Guide for Action.* Sacramento: California Department of Education, 2002, p. 51 <*http://www.cde.ca.gov/spbranch/safety/*>.

BULLYING AT School

Chapter 2

Understanding School Bullying

Chapter 2

Understanding School Bullying

On a system in which success is measured by an academic yardstick, it is important to understand the effects of school bullying on individual academic achievement. Research indicates that in addition to the negative effects suffered by the direct targets of bullies, witnesses to bullying develop a loss of their sense of security, which reduces learning.[5]

Studies also reveal that students who consciously avoid harm at school are expending energy that could otherwise be devoted to learning. The conclusion of a study published by the National Center for Education Statistics states that "by improving student safety at school, American youth can redirect their concerns to schoolwork and student activities."[6]

Other studies conclude that bullies themselves are also at risk of deficits in learning. A report published in the *Irish Journal of Psychology* states that elementary students who perpetrated acts of bullying attended school less frequently and were more at risk of dropping out of school.[7] In addition, the previously cited article in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* reports that school bullying is a serious and chronic problem for schools. The article supports the growing idea that bullying affects the overall mental health of youths exposed to it.[8]

Research on the effects of bullying and bullying incidents documented by members of the school community validate that bullying

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[5] Elizabeth Davies, Kathryn Chandler, and Mary Jo Nolin, *Student Victimization at School.* Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics, 1995, p. 3 <*http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/getpublist.asp?L1=74&L2=1*>; John H. Hoover and Ronald Oliver, *The Bullying Prevention Handbook: A Guide for Principals, Teachers and Counselors.* Bloomington, Ind.: National Educational Service, 1996.

[6] Kathryn Chandler, et al., *Student Strategies to Avoid Harm at School.* Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics, 1995, p. 4 <*http://nces.ed.gov/pub95/web/9504.asp*>.

[7] B. J. Byrne, "Bullies and Victims in School Settings with Reference to Some Dublin Schools," *Irish Journal of Psychology,* Vol. 15 (1994), 574–86.

[8] Nansel, et al., "Bullying Behaviors," 2094–2100.

directly and negatively affects student learning. To ensure that schools support students and prepare them to accept academic challenges, schools and communities must be aware of bullying and be proactive about the students' safety and the overall school environment.

Definition of Bullying

DURING their school careers many students are involved with teasing or aggressive behavior as either a perpetrator or a target. School staff must be aware of children's taunts that occur from time to time and acknowledge injured feelings and issues in dispute. Bullying becomes a concern when hurtful or aggressive behavior toward an individual or a group appears to be unprovoked, intentional, and (usually) repeated.

Bullying among youths may take place in a variety of hostile acts that are carried out repeatedly over time. The acts involve a real or perceived imbalance of power, with the more powerful child or group attacking those who are less powerful. Bullying may be *physical* (hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing), *verbal* (taunting, malicious teasing, name calling, threatening), or *psychological* (spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, or promoting social exclusion, extortion, or intimidation).[9]

To avoid confusion or doubt about what constitutes bullying behavior, researcher Ken Rigby proposes a definition of bullying:

> A desire to hurt + a hurtful action + a power imbalance + repetition (typically) + an unjust use of power + evident enjoyment by the aggressor + a sense of being oppressed on the part of the target[10]

In addition to direct and indirect bullying behavior, bullying may be of a sexual nature, motivated by bias or hate, or may be a part of a ritual or ceremony:

Sexual bullying includes many of the actions typical of bullying behavior with the added actions of exhibitionism, voyeurism, sexual propositioning, sexual harassment, and sexual abuse (touching, physical contact, sexual assault).

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[9] *Addressing the Problem of Juvenile Bullying.* Washington, D.C.: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Fact Sheet #27, 2001 <*http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/resources/school.html*>.

[10] Ken Rigby, *Defining Bullying: A New Look at an Old Concept.* University of South Australia, Underdale Campus, July 2003 <*http://www.education.unisa.edu.au/bullying*>.

Bias or hate-motivated bullying is a basic bias against or hate for a person or group. If the behavior or incident is *hate-motivated,* it may, in some instances, constitute a *hate crime*. Some examples of *hate-motivated bullying* include taunting one's race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or physical or mental disabilities. The bullying behavior may also be aggressive, antagonistic, and assaultive.

Hazing is a form of aggressive behavior that usually involves intimidation and humiliation during an initiation process for a club, group, or sports team. It may involve harassment through unnecessary or disagreeable actions that ridicule and embarrass the target and may escalate to actions serious and offensive enough to be declared criminal. *Education Code* Section 32050 specifically defines hazing as activities that cause "bodily danger, physical harm, or personal degradation or disgrace," and Section 48900 specifies hazing as a suspendable or expellable offense.

Influences on Bullying

TYPICALLY, school bullies are aggressive and intensely impulsive, and their behavior may be fueled by their own physical strength or strong social position. However, even if small in stature, male or female bullies given the right skills and social standing can manipulate others. Although no single factor determines bully behavior, several influences may explain why some students bully at school:

Family dynamics (how family members relate to one another) teach important first and enduring lessons for a child. A family that uses bullying as a relationship tool teaches a child that bullying is an acceptable way to relate to others and to get what he/she wants or needs. According to University of Georgia Professor Arthur Horne, children raised in a home where family members use "put-downs," sarcasm, and criticism, or where they are subjected to repeated frustration or rejection, or where they are witnesses to the abuse of another family member come to believe the world is hostile and see striking back as their only means of survival.[11]

Media images and messages influence the way one perceives bullying. Bullying and harassment are often portrayed as humorous or as acceptable behavior. Some examples of ways in which media glorify bullying include "reality TV," some talk shows, "shock jocks" on the radio, and popular movies and video games—all of which use

[11] Arthur M. Horne, Dawn A. Newman, and Christi L. Bartolomucci, *Bully Busters: A Teacher's Manual for Helping Bullies, Victims, and Bystanders.* Champaign, Ill.: Research Press, 2000.

embarrassment, humiliation, and the destruction of others as "entertainment."

Images of violence in the media may also be seen as a justification for violent and abusive behavior in real-life relationships. Psychologist David Perry of Florida Atlantic University believes that youths see images or popular role models in the media that support the idea that success can be achieved by being aggressive.[12]

Peer norms can actively or passively promote the idea that bullying is "no big deal." It is typical for peers to stand by during an incident of bullying and, through their silence, indirectly conspire with the bully. Secondary targets may ignore and avoid the bully situation to protect themselves. Sometimes, both perpetrators and bystanders believe that bullying may teach the target how he/she should behave within the established norms.

Technology has made it possible for bullies to exert power by using cyberspace. By using the Internet to communicate and socialize, bullies can deliver hurtful images or messages, threats, and obscenities easily and effortlessly and, at the same time, gain the attention of a bystander audience. With the immediate and anonymous qualities of the Internet, bullies can perpetrate acts of bullying that they would never consider doing in person. Bullies can anonymously post obscene comments about the target and his/her family or friends and post photographs with invitations to others who visit the site to add comments. Some bullies maintain posted hit lists and make use of online e-mail, text messaging, and telephone message and answering systems.

A *school's culture* can contribute to or cultivate bullying behavior if the school community chooses to ignore obvious signs or is truly naive about what can happen in unsupervised hallways and playgrounds. Deliberately hurtful actions can easily affect individual students and escalate to serious safety issues on campus.

Gender and Bullying

All youths, regardless of gender, have a strong desire to be accepted and to belong. Although many expectations of behaviors based on gender have been challenged in the recent past, expectations and standards for behavior still exist for both girls and boys. Being perceived as outside these standards may be costly to students developing self-concepts or those who live by standards fashioned in another culture.

[12] David Perry, "How Is Aggression Learned?" *School Safety* (Fall 1987), p. 25.

Swedish researcher Dan Olweus estimates that 15 percent of all students are involved in some form of violence as a bully or a victim.[13] For many people the prevalence of this phenomena feeds the notion that school bullying is a natural part of growing up.

William Pollack, clinical psychology professor at Harvard Medical School, wrote two books based on many hours of in-depth discussion with boys in America about sensitive life issues, including bullying. He discusses what he describes as a "boy code" that interferes with boys' ability to effectively communicate. He also believes that in boys there is a tendency to especially harass other boys who do not meet the "macho" expectations of what a "man" should be.[14]

In his studies Professor Olweus noted that although direct physical attacks are typically three to four times more likely to come from boys, girls often demonstrate great cruelty in more subtle forms of harassment. Girls are generally more likely to use methods that would affect the social standing of a target, such as exclusion, manipulation of friendships, or spreading of rumors.[15]

Effects of Bullying

A target or victim of school bullying can be expected to experience a variety of emotions: fear, anxiety, anger, frustration, helplessness, humiliation, loneliness, and feelings of isolation and persecution. These emotions can be detected by the student's sudden or ongoing illness, mood swings, withdrawal, inability to concentrate, loss of interest in school, argumentativeness, increased involvement in fights, change in friends and social groups, avoidance of lunch and recess areas, display of suspicious bruises and scratches, and frequent loss of money or property.

If left unattended, the targeted student may go on to develop attendance or discipline problems, fail at school, or even attempt suicide. The student may totally withdraw from family and friends and believe he/she is personally to blame for what has happened. The student may eventually begin to bully others or display other violent or retaliatory acts or may run away from home.

A student who has been the target of bullying and those who have witnessed a bullying incident often hesitate or fail to report it to anyone. Students do not report because they dread being

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[13] Dan Olweus, *Bullying at School: What We Know and What We Can Do.* Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 1993, p. 1.

[14] William S. Pollack, *Real Boys: Rescuing Our Sons from the Myths of Boyhood.* New York: Guilford Publications, Inc., 1995.

[15] Olweus, *Bullying at School,* p. 19.

perceived as tattletales by their peers, parents, or teachers. They also believe adults will not understand the situation, will breach the confidence, or will not know how to handle the situation. Some targeted students may also believe they have done something to deserve the abuse.

Bullying behavior may be short-circuited by a school-based bullying prevention program, peer norms that do not tolerate bullying, or a system of social support. A bully may meet a caring adult who mentors him/her. Consequently, student attitudes and relationship skills are improved and aggressive behaviors diminish. However, without intervention and support, a bully will continue to bully and may practice other types of antisocial behavior, such as vandalism, shoplifting, dropping out of school, or using drugs and alcohol.

Professor Olweus' research suggests that bullying can lead to criminal behavior later in life. His research shows that 60 percent of males who were bullies in grades six through nine were convicted of at least one crime as adults compared with 23 percent of males who did not bully. Further, 35 to 40 percent of these former bullies had three or more convictions by age twenty-four compared with 10 percent of males who did not bully.[16]

Adult may also be bullies. In schools some teachers, office staff, bus drivers, school security personnel, and even parent volunteers use tactics ranging from sarcasm to severe bullying as a means of disciplining students or maintaining power in the school setting. Like the student bully, the adult perpetrator often disregards the hurtfulness of his/her actions or blames the target for overreacting or not being able to "take it."

Bullying behavior permeates the school setting in much the same way that it does in families. For example, coaches who socially ostracize or humiliate a student in front of others may believe they are motivating or disciplining the student. However, students who are embarrassed in front of others are being bullied. When adults are allowed to bully students, bullying appears to be acceptable behavior.

Adults also overlook bullying when they condone mistreatment by students who harass or haze younger students or who use derogatory language or label groups of students. Allowing students to engage in casual cruelty, sexual harassment, hateful or bias-based behavior on campus or in extracurricular clubs or sports programs gives the perception that bullying is an acceptable, sanctioned tradition.

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[16] *Addressing the Problem of Juvenile Bullying,* p. 2.

BULLYING AT School

Chapter 3

Preventing School Bullying and Other Hateful Behaviors

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Preventing School Bullying and Other Hateful Behaviors

ONE important developmental task for children to learn is a sense of connection or belonging in this world. The experience of being in a family helps children to feel connected, and another important opportunity for connection happens at school. The social experience of belonging at school becomes the foundation for children to assume future social roles and responsibilities.

Fundamental to a school environment that promotes this social connection are respect and trust from peers and from adults. Although much attention is placed on the academic curriculum, the *human* curriculum that is practiced daily through thought, word, and action cannot be ignored. Many schools have formalized this curriculum through classroom instruction in anger management, conflict resolution, and leadership training. Personal and social skills training beginning in the early years of a child's education and articulated throughout his/her school experience can provide an integrated, holistic foundation for building trust and mutual respect and preventing social alienation.

The Role of Peers

STUDENTS are the key to shaping peer norms. Student bystanders (not the bully or the target of bullying) make up a majority of the student body in any school. This population must understand that it has the power to create and promote a school where cruelty and bullying are not tolerated. Students are the most authentic voice for the cause and are capable of helping to tailor and refine prevention and intervention programs and materials that meet the needs of their school.

The Role of Adults

SEVERAL factors collectively contribute to bullying and other antisocial behaviors and may be found both in the home and in the school; these are:

- A punitive environment
- A lack of positive consequences and reinforcement
- Inconsistencies in the rules and the consequences for breaking them
- A lack of awareness of or responsiveness to individual differences, including those related to ethnicity, and a failure to recognize a student's effort or accomplishment

School staff members may not be aware that their personality, demeanor, and conduct may project a generally negative tone that creates a punitive and oppressive environment. The atmosphere they create may not only discourage achievement but also increase aggression and attendance problems, making it virtually impossible to create an optimal classroom environment.[17]

Both seasoned and new teachers have to make critical decisions in instruction and classroom management moment by moment throughout a teaching day. Teachers have a strong influence on whether their classroom is a positive or negative environment for students. Whether teachers are making major decisions or minor choices, the tenor of the classroom environment develops around the following basic elements:

- Selection and delivery of appropriate curriculum content
- Student-to-student relationships
- Processes for engaging student participation and learning
- The overall mood and tone of the interactions throughout the day

Connecting these elements to learning and social skills development can be accomplished in subtle and creative ways. For example, connecting curriculum content to social skills development can be accomplished through role modeling and cross-age mentoring or tutoring programs. Fostering student relationships can be accomplished by identifying an appreciation for differences in culture or customs or by illustrating how to ask for help or how to report a bullying incident to someone of authority. It is important for the responsible adult to be consistent in identifying undesirable behavior and praising desirable attitudes and actions.

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[17] G. R. Mayer, "Preventing Antisocial Behavior in Schools," *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, Vol. 28 (1995), 467–78.

Connecting social skills development and curriculum content can also be accomplished through classroom processes by recognizing and celebrating individual or group success or by facilitating classroom community meetings. Such meetings provide opportunities for students to do critical thinking and team problem solving. Establishing a classroom protocol for routine activities can promote classroom expectations and maintain consistency and predictability throughout the day.

Teachers project an overall inclusive mood and tone in the classroom by promoting respect, inclusion, and a sense of community and by designing a physical setting that promotes effective instruction and positive social interaction. Posting clear classroom rules, distributing responsibilities fairly among students in the classroom, and acknowledging individual and group accomplishment and success go far in projecting the impression that the classroom is a safe, all-inclusive place.

Research-Based Strategies

The California Department of Education Web site <*http://www.cde.ca.gov/spbranch/ssp*> references a collection of resources containing research-proven strategies believed to be effective in preventing or responding to bullying in schools. One of the resources available at this site is the United States Department of Education's *Preventing Bullying: A Manual for Schools and Communities*.[18] The manual confirms that a comprehensive approach is the best model for preventing or reducing bullying.

The earliest and perhaps most well-known antibullying program incorporates the concept of combining prevention strategies and intervention methods that involve several levels of participation. Researcher Dan Olweus implemented this model in primary and middle grade schools in Norway in the early 1980s. To date, Olweus's comprehensive program with concepts for action at the schoolwide, classroom, and individual levels has been selected among the top ten violence-prevention programs by the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence.[19]

The Olweus approach to preventing bullying is built around a limited number of key principles derived from research on the

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[18] *Preventing Bullying: A Manual for Schools and Communities.* Washington, D.C.: United States Department of Education, 1998.

[19] D. Olweus, S. Limber, and S. F. Mihalic, *Book Nine: Bullying Prevention Program.* Blueprints for Violence Prevention series. Boulder, Colo.: Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence, 1999 <*http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/publications/blueprints/BP-009.html*>.

development and modification of problem behaviors, particularly aggressive behavior. To prevent or reduce aggressive behavior, the program seeks to develop a school (and ideally, a home) environment characterized by warmth, positive interest, and involved adults. At the same time the program calls for establishing firm limits to unacceptable behavior. Nonhostile, nonphysical negative consequences are consistently applied, and adults act as authorities and positive role models.

Even though many of the Olweus program measures include the students and their role in changing the climate of the school, this bullying-prevention model is based on the premise that efforts to create a better school environment must be initiated and driven by the adults at school. Adult behavior is critical because the adults at school (and, to some degree, at home) must be aware of the extent of bullying and the victims' problems and be clearly committed to participate in changing the situation.

The Olweus program model suggests schools establish the following activities at the schoolwide, classroom, and individual levels:

Schoolwide Activities

CONDUCT a survey of both the teachers and the students to determine the prevalence of bullying (see Appendix A for sample surveys). Establish a school-level committee consisting of teachers, administrators, counselors, other school staff, school-based mental health professionals, parents/guardians, and students to perform the following tasks:

- Evaluate the survey results.
- Develop a coordinated system for supervising students during break periods, which is when bullying occurs most frequently at school.
- Develop specific plans for implementing a program in which different sources convey a consistent message about the school's views and attitude toward bullying.

The committee would also be charged with program oversight and ongoing coordination of the school's efforts to stop bullying behavior at school.

Classroom Activities

ESTABLISH and enforce rules against bullying. Schedule regular classroom meetings with students to discuss antisocial behavior and agreed-upon rules. Engage students in a variety of activities (e.g., role playing, writing, small-group discussions) that help them

understand the harm caused by bullying. Meet with families to expand their involvement both in class and throughout school.

Individual-Level Activities

INVITE concerned persons (e.g., bullies, victims, and parents/guardians of both the bullies and the victims) to help plan and implement activities. Instruct all school staff to provide immediate intervention in bullying incidents. Help students form cooperative buddy or friendship partnerships to inspire personal responsibility for students who are victims of bullying and to discourage bullying in general. Older students can form mentor partnerships to provide one-on-one support for new students or students who find it particularly difficult to fit in with their peers. Encourage families of bullies and victims to convey concern and support for both the target and the bully and to convince other families to help resolve a current incident and eliminate future incidents of bullying. Include school counselors or mental health professionals to deal with more serious incidents of bullying and to help in the larger, ongoing task of restructuring the social environment of the school.

Actions to Address Bullying in Schools

SCHOOL administrators, teachers, students, and parents/guardians are important partners in developing a bullying-prevention program. Administrators lead the team in analyzing school surveys on the prevalence of bullying behavior. If the survey results reveal that both staff and students believe bullying behavior happens, the team members should look further to see whether they understand what bullying looks like and the extent to which the staff responds to bullying incidents when they occur.

Actions for Administrators

ADMINISTRATORS must act to implement the school's policy against bullying. The following practical actions will support a no-bullying policy:

- Schedule playground supervision and make sure students are monitored in class, hallways, restrooms, the cafeteria, and areas identified in the school survey as "hot spots" for bullying.
- Schedule regular schoolwide assemblies and teacher/staff development to raise awareness and communicate the policy of intolerance for bullying behavior.
- Establish a schoolwide rule that states, "No Put-Downs, No Name Calling."

- Post clear expectations for behavior, including the no-bullying rule and the consequences for breaking that rule.
- Establish a confidential reporting system for students (targets of bullying and bystanders) to safely report details of bullying incidents without fear of retaliation.
- Provide schoolwide and classroom activities designed to build students' self-esteem, such as showcasing special talents, hobbies, interests, and abilities. For example, feature in the school newsletter individual student essays or articles based on student interviews.

Actions for Teachers

TEACHERS are the adults who interact the most with students. In the classroom, on the playgrounds, and in the hallways teachers have daily, direct interaction and influence with students. As such, teachers are powerful role models and establish the tone of a classroom through their methods and personal demeanor. The following ideas for teachers support bully-free schools:

- Provide students with opportunities to discuss bullying and enlist their support in defining bullying as an unacceptable behavior. One way to begin a discussion is to conduct a session on current events with bullying as a topic. Students may share views and experiences.
- Involve students in establishing classroom rules against bullying. Such rules may include a commitment from the teacher *not to look the other way* when bullying incidents occur.
- Develop a classroom action plan so that students know what to do when they witness a bullying incident.
- Teach cooperation by assigning projects that require cooperation and teamwork. For example, high school students act as tutors, mentors, or role models to younger students to enhance the younger students' ability to make better personal and behavioral decisions.
- Take immediate action when bullying is observed or reported. By taking immediate action and dealing directly with the bully, adults support both the target and the witnesses.
- Confront bullies in private. Engaging the bully in front of peers may enhance the bully's status and power or lead to further aggression.
- Notify parents of both the bully and the target and try to resolve the problems as soon as possible, including referrals to counseling when appropriate.

- Provide protection for students who may be targeted by bullies. One measure might include creating a buddy system to reduce the risk of attack or ridicule of the targeted student.
- Incorporate activities that foster mutual understanding and appreciation, such as research projects or invitations to guest speakers.
- Avoid attempts at mediating between the bully and the target. When someone bullies, the problem is more than a difference of *opinion;* it is a difference of *power*. Bullies may use the mediation process to persuade the targeted person that he/she is somehow at fault for the attack.

Actions for Students

STUDENTS who are the target of bullying or who witness incidents of bullying often do not know how to react. They experience feelings of guilt, hurt, and stress along with the fear of revealing the experience to anyone. Classroom discussion and activities that help students learn how to react appropriately and safely may help them develop a variety of responses and a level of comfort in getting through such experiences. The following suggestions for students are designed to help foster appropriate responses:

- Try to avoid engaging in acts of bullying and seek help from an adult.
- Report bullying incidents you witness at school to an adult.
- Encourage others to report bullying incidents and help them report if they cannot do it alone.
- Support someone who has been hurt by offering kind words in private and helping them through the next steps.
- Show your disappointment in the behavior by not joining in while someone publicly humiliates, teases, or harasses another and do not participate in the gossip or rumors being spread.

Actions for Families

PARENTS and guardians strive to develop a child's confidence and independence to ensure the child's success throughout life. These qualities also protect the child against being victimized at school. However, when their child is the victim of bullying, parents/guardians must offer to support their child and take action as needed. Families may take the following actions after a child has experienced conflict or confrontation with a bully at school:

- Convince the child who has been the target of a bully that he/she is not at fault, that the bully's behavior is the problem.

- Convince the child that everyone is entitled to respect and that he/she does not deserve being bullied.
- Work *with* the school staff to address a bullying problem whether as an advocate for the bully or the targeted student. Keep accurate records of incidents and be specific about the child's experiences when discussing resolution of the problem with school personnel.
- Note that meeting with the family of a bully may be difficult as family members may interpret the child's behavior as "standing up for himself/herself." However, asking for a meeting that includes the child's teacher, the school principal, or the school counselor may lead to practical advice or intervention that will assist both the family of the target and the family of the bully with issues and interventions that can lead to resolution of the problem.
- Teach the child to be assertive without striking out. This action sends the bully the message that his/her attempts to threaten or intimidate are not having the desired effect and reduces the chances that the bully will continue to single out the confident, assertive child.

Although schoolyard bullies have existed throughout history, not until the mid-1970s was there an effort to understand bullying and its impact on children. It was assumed that coping with bullies was simply a part of growing up. In the early 1980s media reports of two teenage boys committing suicide as a result of severe bullying aroused interest from the general public and the media. In October 2000 the *Chicago Sun-Times* published "Deadly Lessons: School Shooters Tell Why," which reported the results of a study conducted by the U.S. Secret Service.[20] The study described 41 children involved in 37 school shootings across America between 1974 and 2000. A common thread among most of the youths was bullying. Two-thirds of the attackers described feeling persecuted, bullied, or threatened—not teased, but tormented.

Bullying can be stopped with careful and sensitive interventions. The strategies presented in these guidelines will encourage the school community to recognize the benefits of identifying and addressing bullying behavior. A reduction in school bullying not only improves the quality of the school campus and its students but also translates to higher test scores and improved academic achievement.

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[20] "Deadly Lessons: School Shooters Tell Why," *Chicago Sun Times*, October 15–16, 2000.

BULLYING AT School

Chapter 4

Understanding Hate-Motivated Behavior and Crime

Chapter 4

Understanding Hate-Motivated Behavior and Crime

RESEARCH on hate-motivated behavior and crime is limited. First, crimes motivated by hate have been distinguished from traditional criminal offenses by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) only since the early 1990s. Second, research is limited because of the way in which these crimes are reported and defined. The research up to now concludes that the majority of hate-motivated offenders are not organized radical groups, but young individuals who act out their own negative attitudes and emotions concerning those they perceive to be different.[21]

"Crimes of youth" is a phrase created to describe crimes committed by the younger population holding on to stereotypes that underlie hate. One-half of all hate crimes are committed by young men under twenty years of age. Ten percent of all hate crimes occur in schools and colleges.[22] The fastest growing segment of hate-group recruitment and new membership is coming from the fourteen- to twenty-four-year age group of white, middle-class, suburban males. Eighty percent of victims are individuals.[23] Therefore, schools are encouraged to join the fight against hate.

To ensure that students understand the concept of diversity, schools can teach students about the many *similarities* they share in common with people whose race, religion, sexual orientation, or culture may differ from their own.

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[21] Karen Franklin, *Psychosocial Motivations of Hate Crime Perpetrators: Implications for Prevention and Policy* <*http://www.karenfranklin.com/*>.

[22] *Ten Ways to Fight Hate: A Community Response Guide to Hate Crime and Hate Groups.* Southern Poverty Law Center, October 1998 <*http://www.tolerance.org/10_ways/index.html*>.

[23] James W. Fiscus, "Fighting Hate Speech," *The Safety Zone* (Summer 2000), 2–7.

> It can happen in any school—a hateful act by a student, staff member or person outside the school family suddenly poisons the air. . . .
>
> At such a moment, school officials face a number of difficult challenges that include ensuring safety and preventing escalation. As painful and disruptive as a hateful act can be, it's important to remember that a bias incident does not define the school's character. Rather, the real test is the message the school sends to everyone concerned—each day as well as in emergencies.
>
> —*Responding to Hate at School*
> *<http://www.teachingtolerance.org/rthas/index/jsp>*

Hate crimes are message crimes. The perpetrator can send a violent message without even knowing the target. To ensure victory, several perpetrators often participate in a hate crime. The physical damage to the victim of a hate crime may be much more severe than injuries from a typical fight. The perpetrator may want to hurt someone and not be interested in stealing personal items or profiting from the crime. A significant date or location may be the trigger for a perpetrator to commit a hate-related crime.

According to the FBI, approximately 30 percent of the hate crimes in 1996 were crimes against property (e.g., robbery vandalism, and arson). About 70 percent involved an attack against a person (e.g., assault, rape, and murder). Although bigotry is an underlying factor in nearly all hate crimes, one of the following reasons most often motivates the perpetrators:

- The *thrill* or excitement of committing a crime at someone else's expense
- The perception of *defending* or protecting self or family members against a threat from "outsiders"
- A sense of *mission* in belonging to a group or organization with similar ideas about eliminating others because of their culture, socioeconomic status, or race[24]

Hate-motivated behavior may also be a crime as defined in the California *Penal Code*.[25] The acts must be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency, and the district attorney may choose to prosecute the alleged perpetrator. When criminal acts are

[24] Franklin, *Psychosocial Motivations.*

[25] *Penal Code* sections 422.6, 422.7, 422.75, 422,8, 422.9, and 422.95 define hate-motivated crimes. (*Education Code* Section 48900.3 describes these hate-motivated behaviors.)

determined to have been motivated by hate, they become classified as hate crimes. The crimes may include destruction or defacing of property; unusual, seemingly random violent assaults by groups or individuals; certain kinds of vandalism; unlawful use of telephones or mail for harassment, bomb threats, or explosions; or cross burnings (see Appendix B).

Definition of Hate-Motivated Behavior and Crime

A working definition of hate-motivated behavior is any act or attempted act intended to cause emotional suffering, physical injury, or property damage through intimidation, harassment, bigoted slurs or epithets, force or threat of force, or vandalism motivated in part or in whole by bias or hostility toward the victim's real or perceived ethnicity, national origin, immigrant status, religious belief, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, political affiliation, race, or any other physical or cultural characteristic. Those targeted most often are persons of a minority race, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation.

One of the most socially acceptable—and probably the most widespread—forms of hate among teens and young adults is threatening behavior toward and crime against sexual minorities. In a survey of 500 young adults in the San Francisco Bay Area, one in ten admitted to making threats or being aggressive against people they believed were homosexual. One-half of all the young men surveyed admitted some form of antigay aggression.[26]

Although most hate crimes are committed by individuals, perpetrators who commit hate crimes to fulfill a mission are part of a larger, organized group who share the belief that to make the world a better place, they must eliminate those who threaten the culture, economy, and "purity" of the world. These offenders believe their victims to be "subhuman" and feel no emotion or remorse for their actions.[27]

Strategies for Preventing and Responding to Hate-Motivated Behavior

SCHOOLS provide an ideal environment to counter bias. Schools mix youths according to grade level and age, not culture or background. Schools place students on an equal foot-

[26] Franklin, *Psychosocial Motivations.*

[27] American Psychological Association, *Hate Crimes Today: An Age-Old Foe in Modern Dress* <*http://www.apa.org/pubinfo/hate.html*>, 1998.

ing and allow individual interaction. School administrators, teachers, classified staff, students, and the community must be equipped to prevent hate behavior and address hate-motivated incidents should they occur. The following suggestions are intended to help schools address these issues:

Specify the rules of conduct in school documents, presentations, and orientation sessions that are held throughout the year with students, parents/guardians, and faculty. Include the school district and individual school policies that promote tolerance and appreciation of diversity among students and staff, policies concerning activities that would violate acceptable behavior, procedures for reporting a hate incident or crime, and consequences for those who commit hate-motivated actions.

Assess the existing school climate and identify potential problems by conducting student, faculty, and parent/guardian surveys. Surveying the school helps to identify potential problems and to evaluate the effectiveness of behavior standards and the modeling of positive, respectful behavior (see Appendix A).

Provide training for staff to empower them to act immediately and effectively when inappropriate behavior occurs in their classroom or on campus. Schoolwide awareness of such behavior and staff development in dealing with it ensure support for the students and staff if they are faced with a hate- or bias-motivated incident.

Involve community partners as resources for helping to develop both a plan for handling incidents and ways to assist targets and offenders and their families.

Support student-led projects that promote appreciation and respect for people's differences and encourage and promote the dignity, physical and emotional safety, and support of all students.

Supporting and Protecting Targets of Bias or Hate

Acts of hate or bias leave the target feeling traumatized and isolated. Family members and friends who share common traits with the target share these feelings. School staff need to support the target, the families, and their friends throughout the investigation of a crime or incident and throughout any court proceedings that may result. Some ways in which to provide support are as follows:

Provide comfort immediately and calm the target. Listen carefully to his/her perception of the incident and encourage the person to

inform his/her family. Reassure the target that the incident will be given thorough and appropriate attention and assist the person in getting any needed medical attention.

Notify law enforcement on the same day. Make sure further interviews are conducted in privacy and limit the number of times the target must tell his/her story. Include a trusted friend, counselor, or other responsible adult who can offer support and be nonjudgmental during the interview. Do not send the target home unless the person feels safe on release. Keep on hand current contact information for the target to connect him/her and a family member with support resources in the community.

Follow through by offering the target and the family assistance in contacting additional resources (e.g., victim-witness assistance programs, counseling services, or law enforcement and legal advisers) to help them through the investigation period and legal proceedings that may follow. Advocate that the school provide materials to help students and staff understand and appreciate differences in race, religion, sexual orientation, culture, and other issues. Once differences are explained, fear and bias produced by ignorance are diminished.

Working with Perpetrators

An equally important strategy in responding to hateful or biased behavior or crime is working with the perpetrators of the act. Staff should follow these procedures:

Immediately discuss the incident with the perpetrator to determine the level of intent to harm the target and contact the family to meet with them and discuss the incident. Contact a police officer or local law enforcement officer and request the officer's attendance at the family conference.

The same day discuss the discipline process established by the school district board of education and develop a plan of action, an agreement, or a contract for the perpetrator to follow as part of his/her rehabilitation. Provide contact information to the family and the perpetrator to help connect them to social services, counseling services, or mental health resources in the community.

Follow up by continuing to track the perpetrator's progress and behavior and encourage him/her to become more involved in positive school activities. If the incident attracts attention from media, provide noncritical, nonjudgmental responses to their questions.

Restorative justice or any systematic response intended to repair harm typically involves victims, offenders, and communities. Leading victim–offender mediation programs requires a high level of skill and expertise. Before including restorative justice as part of the rehabilitation plan for students involved in hate-motivated offenses, schools must weigh the benefits of restorative justice and the ability of the facilitator against the risks of increasing anxiety, hostility, or fear for either party.

> "We believe that hate is in part learned behavior, as is violence, and it can be reduced," said Karen McLaughlin, Director of the National Center for Hate Crimes Prevention. . . . "Certain kids have a tendency to keep committing hate crimes," . . . and there are sometimes indicators of hate before kids commit hate crimes. "Forming cliques and ostracizing kids can be one early warning sign of trouble." . . . Children first learn hate at home, but parents who utter racist speech at home may still come to their children's school and say that their kids are not prejudiced. "Usually the most effective way of dealing with it is to concentrate on the behavior of students."
>
> James W. Fiscus, "Fighting Hate Speech,"
> *The Safety Zone* (Summer 2000), 1–2
> *<http://www.safetyzone.org/publications.html>*

Actions to Address Hate-Motivated Behavior

The following actions by school staff can help ensure the safety of the victim, provide an appropriate response to and discipline for the perpetrator, and establish a standardized response protocol at the school:

Immediately step in and stop the behavior. Discuss the incident with the students involved and interview possible witnesses. Document the incident and protect the area until law enforcement can photograph and preserve the scene. Do not clean the area or throw anything away that could be evidence or important to the investigation in some way. Impose immediate and reasonable consequences for the perpetrator consistent with the school district's disciplinary policies.

The same day notify school administrators and law enforcement officers and request assistance, if necessary. To prevent rumors on

campus, give students and staff accurate and complete information about the incident. Record all bias behavior, including the names of students involved. Follow the school district's plan for media relations.

Follow through by using appropriate disciplinary action consistent with the school district policy and the *Education Code*. Law enforcement may proceed with a concurrent investigation based on *Penal Code* violations.

There is no single right way to fight hate and no single set of strategies that will work in every community. Schools, community leaders, and parents/guardians must remain open to fresh approaches to provide appropriate sensitivity training and appreciation of diversity for the perpetrators and their families. As a follow-up to the training, schools should devise activities for students, staff, and families to demonstrate what they have learned. For example, in 1993, high school students in Palm Springs, California, wore ribbons they had made to symbolize unity following a brawl between African Americans and Hispanics.[28]

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[28] *Ten Ways to Fight Hate.*

BULLYING AT School

Chapter 5

Working with the Media

Chapter 5

Working with the Media

SCHOOL administrators and staff shudder at the thought of having to deal with a public relations nightmare, but school incidents involving harassment, bullying, or crimes motivated by hate can haunt a school or district for years.

Newspapers and television and radio news play an important role in creating community perception about the quality of the schools. Planning prior to an incident for the day when media comes to a campus will preserve mutual respect and limit the harm caused by erroneous information and rumors.

School Profiles as a Public Relations Tool

In November 1988 California passed Proposition 98 to provide its schools a stable funding source. In return, all public schools must prepare and disseminate information through a School Accountability Report Card (SARC). It may be time to energize your school's profile. Along with your school's results of state test scores and other requirements, consider your school's profile to use as a communication tool for staff recruitment and orientation, for realtors and chambers of commerce, and as an outline for prospective parents and students entering your school.

Highlight key messages about what your school stands for (e.g., Reading Works at ABC Elementary!).

Include comments from parents, distinguished visitors, and community leaders. Use photographs of students and their work.

Highlight student results, including accomplishments and offerings in the art and music programs.

Highlight civic contributions made by students, staff, and parents throughout the year.

Typically, a reporter is assigned by the local editor to report on education and school issues. According to media consultant Thomas K. DeLapp, the average education reporter is young, has been on the job less than six months, and receives several assignments to carry out on any given day.[29] In a 1996 survey conducted by a New York public opinion research and citizen education organization, only 11 percent of educators believed that education reporters were experienced enough to understand the issues at hand, and 91 percent believed the media covered education news according to what "sells."[30]

A proactive media spokesperson can promote quality media coverage about the school's strengths and accomplishments throughout the school year. A favorable report by media can increase community support if an unexpected, unfavorable incident occurs. A motivated spokesperson seeking opportunities for press coverage and wanting to improve the quality of the commentary will also respond to the public's desire to know more about what is happening in the schools.

In the same 1996 survey, 86 percent of educators believed press coverage of education unfairly dwelt upon conflict and failure in the schools, and 52 percent of the public rated the quality of the local broadcast media's coverage of public education as *fair* or *poor*. Sixty-six percent of educators and 42 percent of the public gave *fair* or *poor* ratings to local print media. However, when parents and the public were asked to choose one thing happening in their local community they were most interested in knowing about, 40 percent said public schools, 36 percent said crime, and 22 percent said the local economy.[31]

The study also surveyed members of the education media. Although they agreed that parents and taxpayers were their primary audience (not educators), the majority of those surveyed believed many education reporters were too dependent on school officials for their information and that news about public schools would be better if there were more in-depth reporting.[32]

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[29] Thomas K. DeLapp, Public Image Associates, Inc., Granite Bay, California.

[30] From a survey performed by Public Agenda on behalf of Education Writers Association. Copyright 1997, Public Agenda. For more information about the survey, contact the Education Writers Association, Washington, D.C. <*http://www.EWA.org/*>. A summary of the survey, titled *Good News, Bad News: What People Really Think About the Education Press,* may be ordered from Public Agenda, 6 E 39th Street, New York, NY 10016. Information on the findings reported by the Education Writers Association is available online <*http://www.nspra.org*>.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid.

Inviting the media to sports events, school celebrations, and awards ceremonies provides opportunities for students and parents to contribute to what is written about the school. This invitation to the media represents a symbol of trust. By cultivating a positive relationship with the media, a school gains media respect and understanding when or if school officials deny reporters access to individual students during a crisis.

In a perfect world all media coverage would be complete and thoroughly examined for content and accuracy before being broadcast or printed. In the real world, however, especially if there is a crime, a disaster, or unexpected event that might negatively influence public perception about a school, a school can rely only on how recently and completely it has planned and prepared for the media. *Talking the Talk: A Practical Guide for Effective Media Relations* is a "how-to" manual with practical advice on working with the media.[33]

When planning begins, schools should develop an accurate list of media spokespersons and their contact information. The list should include the local law enforcement contact and the *backup* person designated to provide media information for the school district. These persons, along with other appropriate school and community members, should be responsible for developing a well-thought-out plan of action that includes steps on notifying the media. The plan must be kept up-to-date and accessible. Schools must remember to include neighborhood and ethnic press, radio, and cable television stations in their contracts with the media. Planning and preparation prior to an incident goes a long way in de-escalating an incident, limiting erroneous information and rumors, and calming the community.

Preparation Before an Incident

MANY school districts will want responses to the media to come only from the *district spokesperson;* however, each school should designate a media representative and a backup contact whose responsibilities include calling the media, disseminating information, developing news releases, and following up with the community. Those staff members should be provided with media awareness training. The following guidelines may help staff entrusted with these responsibilities:

Be familiar with state and federal laws and regulations that affect the safety of students. Federal legislation (No Child Left Behind Act)

[33] *Talking the Talk: A Practical Guide for Effective Media Relations*. Sacramento: California Department of Education, 1998.

describes the schools' responsibility to help students overcome barriers that would leave them academically behind.[34] The California *Education Code* also reflects changes regarding school safety plans for schools according to new legislation enacted each year. (See *Education Code* Section 35294 et seq.)

Develop cooperative working relationships with the media during standard school operations. If an extreme or unpredictable event occurs that causes emotions to run high and attracts media attention, an established rapport will ensure an agreed-upon level of cooperation and accuracy in the reporting.

Prepare a statement to use in the event of a critical incident or emergency. Give some thought to possible questions and prepare appropriate and complete responses. Include highlights of specific safety programs and strategies at the school and share positive improvements in student behavior and school climate.

Reactions to an Incident

INCIDENTS that require an emergency response from law enforcement or the fire department are usually ones in which *first responders* are needed. There should also be a media spokesperson at the scene from the school or district. Whether an incident is major or minor in scope, if it involves a victim and perpetrator, schools must protect the privacy of the target and the right of the accused not to be tried in the media. It is important to know public records laws and what schools may divulge to the media.[35] (See *Education Code* Section 49060 et seq. for regulations about confidentiality.)

Television and radio broadcasts generally use portions of taped interviews of school administrators, witnesses to the incident, or law enforcement representatives at the scene. Although portions, or *sound bites,* from the responses are selected and interspersed throughout the story, seldom are the reporter's questions heard or seen in the broadcast. It is important for staff to remember that the story is tailored from the responses. The following tips are offered to help in structuring interviews with the media:

1. *Gather information and compose responses* before beginning an interview. A personal interview or telephone request for comments may occur without notice. For television interviews, select a

[34] No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, PL 107-110 <*http://www.ed.gov/legislation/ESEA027*>.

[35] Patrick Jackson, "Controversial Personnel Issues Require Aggressive PR." Click on "Network" <*http://www.nspra.org/entry.htm*>.

background that portrays a positive image of the school (e.g., the student garden or statuary project, a mural painted by students in a hallway, or an outside wall).

2. *First express compassion for the individual,* as well as the school, if an incident involves an individual victim.
3. *Ask the journalist for a business card,* contact information, or a form of identification to confirm his/her affiliation and to be able to call the journalist later if necessary.
4. *Avoid answering "global" questions* (e.g., "Why is there so much violence in schools?").
5. *Avoid being short or glib,* becoming defensive, or using sarcasm that can be taken out of context.
6. *Restrain the urge to "fill in"* silences or pauses between questions in an interview.
7. *Avoid acronyms* or initialisms that represent entities or associations that are unfamiliar to those outside the education community. Give the entire name of the program or entity (e.g., "Our School Attendance Review Board [SARB] will discuss the issue at its next meeting").
8. *Avoid comparing schools* in terms of their history or profile. Instead, provide information about the school in positive terms.

Follow-up After an Incident

AGAIN, preparation beforehand is critical. Questions must be anticipated and responses agreed on prior to the press conference. It is important not to entertain speculative questions or opinion. The victim and perpetrator must be protected from questioning and secluded from reporters. School staff should keep the following points in mind:

- If the incident has created anxiety and fear at school and in the community, an update or report on the findings of the investigation may be warranted. If the suspect is found guilty, prepare a brief statement that shows what the school district is planning to do to avoid a similar situation in the future.
- If the incident happened off school property and on the student's own time, be sure to emphasize that it is a criminal justice matter.

Media Access on Campus

CALIFORNIA schools have made progress in determining how to provide equitable access for *all* school visitors, including members of the media, as a part of planning for overall school safety. The procedures vary from district to district; however, consistencies in guarding against unwanted visitors include posting signs at all school entrances to direct *all* visitors to the school office, where they may obtain authorization to be on the grounds. In addition, the signs give directions to the office, post the school's hours of operation, and state the penalty for trespassing or entering the school grounds without making one's presence known to school officials.

Schools may deny visitors access to the school grounds or to students in accord with *Education Code* Section 32211. That section provides schools with the authority to ask a visitor to leave if his/her presence becomes disruptive.

Penal Code Section 627 (which also allows school administrators to ban outsiders from campus) specifically exempts reporters exercising the constitutionally protected right to freedom of speech.

In 1996 the California Attorney General issued an opinion that clarifies a gray area for school administrators and provides a caveat that school officials may exercise to limit access by the media to students on campus during unsettling or stressful times. Although opinions by the State Attorney General are not binding, they can heavily influence decisions of the court.

The opinion (79 Ops.Atty.Gen.58, 6/10/96) states that although members of the media may not be prosecuted for violating *Penal Code* sections 627–627.11, members of the press are not given an affirmative right to unlimited, unrestricted access to school premises. School officials may deny access to the media, as they may deny access to anyone, if their presence interferes with the peaceful conduct of the activities of the campus (*Penal Code* Section 626.6). School officials may direct a visitor to leave if his/her presence would be disruptive, regardless of the visitor's intent (*Penal Code* Section 627.2; *Education Code* Section 32211).

School districts must be sure that campus admittance procedures are the same for all visitors. For example, if members of the media are to be escorted by a staff member, then the standard should be an escort for *all* campus visitors.

Schools must also consider that although there are methods for limiting media access to the school and its students, administrators run the risk of future alienation if they are discourteous or violate the constitutional rights granted to members of the media.

Conclusion

CHILDREN learn best when they feel safe, secure, and respected. Incidents of targeted violence surveyed by the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Secret Service were documented in the publication titled *Final Report and Findings of the Safe School Initiative.* The report intensively examined 41 persons who had committed 37 of the school shooting incidents and brought to light the significance of bullying by peers and the effects of bullying on students across the country. In one instance most of the attacker's schoolmates described the attacker as "the kid everyone teased." In witness statements from that incident, schoolmates alleged that nearly every child in the school had at some point thrown the attacker against a locker, tripped him in the hall, held his head under water in the pool, or thrown things at him.[36]

This document, *Bullying at School,* is designed to help schools to recognize bullying and other behaviors motivated by hate or bias and to help communities to develop and implement effective strategies for maintaining respect and understanding among citizens. The document describes the causes of bullying and the influences on bullying and shows how the fear bullying creates among targets and students who witness events can permeate the climate of the school that tolerates it or that fails to recognize bullying and respond to it. The purpose of the document is to encourage schools to recognize the link between bullying, victimization, and various forms of school violence and to undertake efforts to train personnel, families, caregivers, and students in research-based methods that help them respond to and reduce bullying and hate.

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[36] *Final Report and Findings of the Safe School Initiative: Implications for the Prevention of School Attacks in the United States.* U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education, 2002. To order, call 1-877-4ED-Pubs or download at <*http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSDFS/publications.html*>.

Sample Student and Staff Surveys

The following sample questions may be used by schools to assess the level of bias, hate, or bullying behavior in their schools. The survey is adapted from the Days of Respect Program, developed by Ralph J. Cantor, Paul Kivel, and Allan Creighton, veteran teachers and founders of the Oakland Men's Project. The program was developed to bring students, teachers, parents, administrators, and the community together to build respect and stop violence at Albany High School in Albany, California. It has served as the foundation for teaching student leadership and violence prevention in schools across the state. The program received the 1995 Award of Excellence from the California School Boards Association.

Sample Student Survey

	All of the time	*Most of the time*	*Some of the time*	*Not at all*
1. Students treat each other with respect at this school.	o	o	o	o
2. Students treat teachers with respect at this school.	o	o	o	o
3. Teachers treat students with respect at this school.	o	o	o	o
4. Teachers treat each other with respect at this school.	o	o	o	o
5. I feel a part of school life.	o	o	o	o
6. I feel recognized and supported for who I am.	o	o	o	o
7. I feel comfortable walking through the halls.	o	o	o	o
8. I feel safe at school.	o	o	o	o
9. Students at this school respect differences.	o	o	o	o
10. My racial, ethnic, cultural, and religious beliefs are respected.	o	o	o	o
11. I have personally experienced discrimination at school.	o	o	o	o
12. Administrators respect differences at this school.	o	o	o	o
13. Teachers respect differences at this school.	o	o	o	o
14. Students are respectful of others' personal sexual orientation.	o	o	o	o
15. This school is safe for lesbians, gays, or questioning youths.	o	o	o	o
16. Male and female administrators are respectful of each other.	o	o	o	o
17. Male teachers are respectful of female students.	o	o	o	o
18. Female teachers are respectful of male students.	o	o	o	o
19. Students and faculty are respectful of people with disabilities.	o	o	o	o

Used by permission of Ralph J. Cantor, cofounder of the Oakland Men's Project.

I have experienced (or witnessed) incident(s) where my ethnic, racial, or cultural group was disrespected. Yes o No o If yes, briefly describe the incident(s).

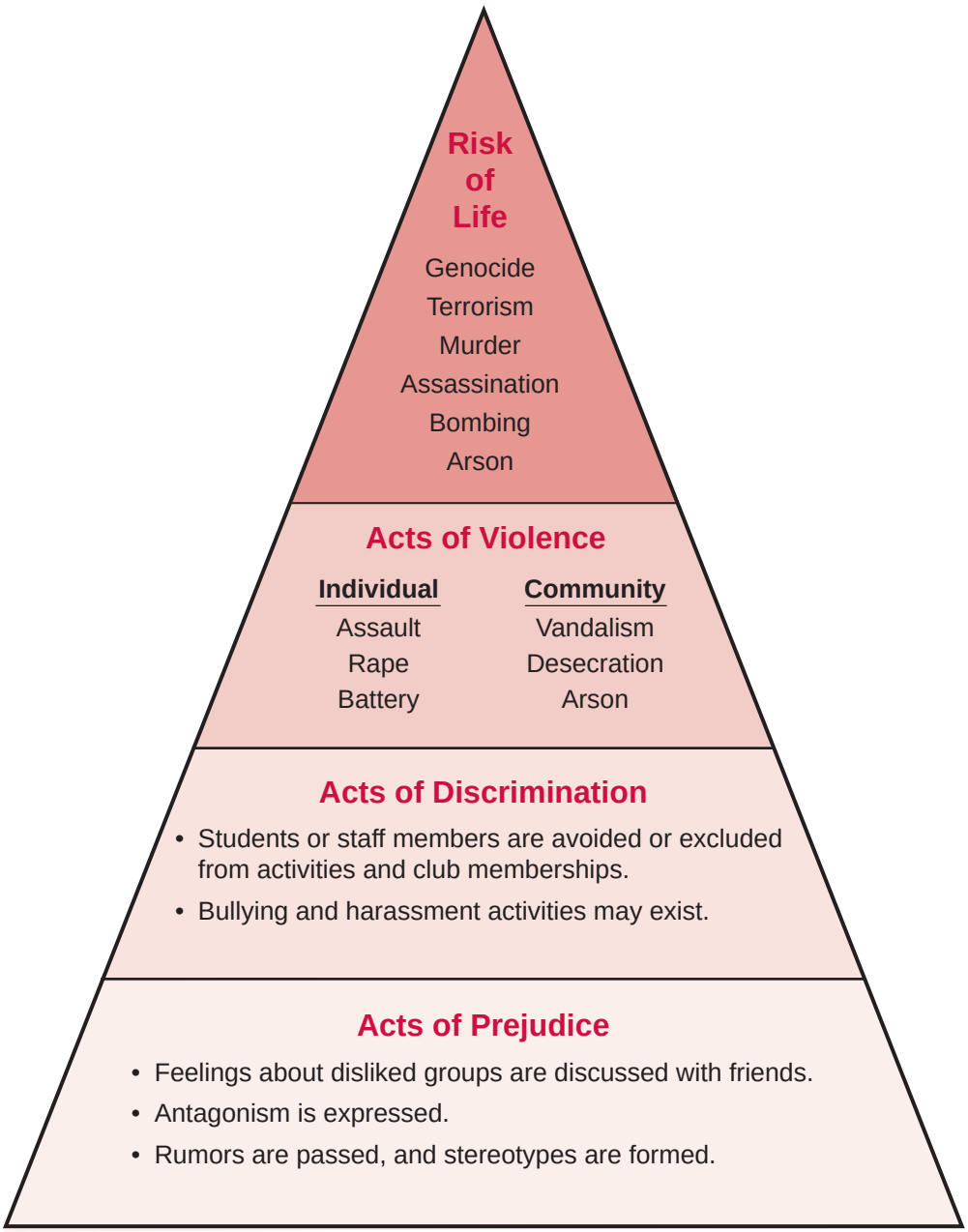
I have contributed to ethnic, racial, or cultural disrespect. Yes o No o If yes, briefly describe the incident(s).

Sample Staff Survey

	All of the time	*Most of the time*	*Some of the time*	*Not at all*
The following four questions pertain to students:				
1. Most students are well included in campus life.	o	o	o	o
2. Most students treat each other with respect.	o	o	o	o
3. Most students treat teachers with respect.	o	o	o	o
4. Special-needs students are included in our school.	o	o	o	o
The following seven questions pertain to faculty:				
5. I believe I am an included member of the staff.	o	o	o	o
6. I am happy to be at this school.	o	o	o	o
7. Teachers treat colleagues with respect.	o	o	o	o
8. Administrators treat teachers with respect.	o	o	o	o
9. I feel supported at this school.	o	o	o	o
10. I enjoy joining other teachers at lunch.	o	o	o	o
11. The humor among staff is respectful (i.e., not at the expense of others).	o	o	o	o
The following four questions pertain to the school community:				
12. People accept cultural differences on this campus.	o	o	o	o
13. People accept differences in sexual orientation on this campus.	o	o	o	o
14. People accept racial differences on this campus.	o	o	o	o
15. People accept socioeconomic differences on this campus.	o	o	o	o

Please add comments that would help to better understand the climate for the staff and the student body and the relations between staff and students at this school. Include examples of typical incidents if appropriate.

Type and Severity of Bias Behaviors



Adapted from A World of Difference ® Institute *Anti-Bias Study Guide* (Secondary Level). New York: Anti-Defamation League, 1998; and *Guidelines for Law Enforcement's Design of Hate Crime Policy and Training*. Sacramento: Commission on Peace Officer Standards, 1999.

Sample School District Policy for Prevention of Bullying

To ensure that California schools act promptly to resolve disputes, taunting, harassment, or bullying, the Legislature and the Governor enacted Assembly Bill 79 (Chapter 646, Statutes of 2001). This bill amended *Education Code* Section 35294.2 to include subdivision (g) directing the California Department of Education (CDE) to develop sample model policies. The model policies are available on the CDE Web site <*http://www.cde.ca.gov/spbranch/ssp/bullyhmb.htm*>.

The sample policy for bullying prevention reads as follows:

The _____ School District believes that all students have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. The district, schools, and community have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance, and acceptance.

The _____ School District will not tolerate behavior that infringes on the safety of any student. A student shall not intimidate or harass another student through words or actions. Such behavior includes direct physical contact, such as hitting or shoving; verbal assaults, such as teasing or name-calling; and social isolation or manipulation.

The _____ School District expects students and/or staff to immediately report incidents of bullying to the principal or designee. Staff members are expected to immediately intervene when they see a bullying incident. Each complaint of bullying should be promptly investigated. This policy applies to students on school grounds, while they are traveling to and from school or a school-sponsored activity off-site, during the lunch period whether on or off campus, and during a school-sponsored activity.

To ensure bullying does not occur on school campuses, the _____ School District will provide staff development training in prevention of bullying and cultivate acceptance and understanding in all students and staff to develop each school's ability to maintain a safe and healthy learning environment.

Teachers should discuss this policy with students in ways appropriate to their ages and should assure them that they need not endure any form of bullying. Students who bully are in violation of this policy and are subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

Each school will adopt a Student Code of Conduct to be followed by every student while he or she is on school grounds, when traveling to and from school or a school-sponsored activity, and during lunch period, whether on or off campus.

The Student Code of Conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following actions and consequences:

- Any student who engages in bullying may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.
- Students are expected to immediately report incidents of bullying to the principal or designee.
- Students can rely on staff to promptly investigate each complaint of bullying in a thorough and confidential manner.

If the complainant student or the parent of the student believes that the investigation or complaint was not resolved appropriately, the student or the parent of the student should contact the principal or the school office. The school system prohibits retaliatory behavior against any complainant or any participant in the complaint process.

The procedures for intervening in bullying behavior include, but are not limited to, the following:

- All staff, students, and parents will receive a summary of the policy prohibiting bullying at the beginning of the school year, as part of the student handbook and/or information packet, as part of new student orientation, and as part of the school system's notification to parents.
- The school will make reasonable efforts to keep confidential a report of bullying and the results of the investigation.
- Staff members are expected to immediately intervene when they see a bullying incident occur.
- People witnessing or experiencing bullying are encouraged to report the incident; such reporting will not reflect on the victim or witnesses in any way.

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