BRAVE INTERVENTION
BULLYING RESPONSES AND VISIONS FOR EQUITY

a presentation by

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Diversity as a Central Component
A Call To Action

- A 2009 (Gini & Polozzi) study demonstrating the association between bullying and health problems concluded that bullying should be considered a significant international public health issue.

- Bullying has long-lasting impacts, including leading to more bullying, retaliation, depression, excessive school absence, dropping out of school, and suicide.
The term "diversity" encompasses differences of culture, background and experience among individuals and groups. Such differences include, but are not limited to, differences of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, and disabilities, as well as political and religious affiliation and socioeconomic status.

- Riddle Scale (1973) – Nurturance
- Depersonalization/Dehumanization
Diversity and Bullying

- **Sexual Harassment** - 81% of students had experienced some form of sexual harassment at some point during their school lives. Physical sexual harassment was experienced by 58% of students (AAUW, 2001).

- **Dating Violence** - Highest rate is in middle school with one study reporting 36% experienced physical dating violence (Schwartz, Hage, & Bush-King, 2005).
Diversity and Bullying

- Homophobic Aggression
  - Type of bullying often encouraged by peers
  - Only type of bullying that has been found to increase in high school
  - Increase in mental health symptoms of victims and these students view the school climate as unsafe and negative
  - A 2009 (GLSEN) study reported that 84.6% of GLBTQ students heard homophobic remarks from other students frequently
BRAVE: Diversity-Based Approaches

- Systemic - The atmosphere of the school has a direct relationship to the bullying behavior of the students
- Contextual - Each school atmosphere is unique
- Ecological Model - There are multiple influences on each student
- Problem-Based Learning Approach – Using experiential approaches to teach
The atmosphere of the school has a direct relationship to the bullying behavior of the students:

- Nurturant Philosophies
- Multiculturalism
- Social Norming
- Stages of Change
- Ethnic Identity
Stages of Change

- Pre-contemplation
  Bullying is a rite of passage
- Contemplation
  I want to address bullying at our school, but the problem seems overwhelming
- Preparation
  Our school is coming together to address bullying
- Action
  We are taking important steps to stop bullying
- Maintenance
  We have to work to keep up our bullying program
Ethnic Identity Theory & Model

Stage 1: Diffusion-Foreclosure
- Feeling: Ambivalence

Stage 2: Moratorium
- Feelings: Hostility and/or Shame

Stage 3: Identity Achievement
- Feelings: Pride and Acceptance
Contextual Factors

- Each school atmosphere is unique
- Prevention Contexts (Risk and Protective Factors):
  - Biological
  - Psychological
  - Socio-cultural
  - Within each of these areas, additional contextual variables such as developmental level, gender, and ethnicity all play critical roles.
Ecological Model

- There are multiple influences on each student
  - The ecological system is important for understanding the behavior of both the bully and victim.
  - Social Ecological Framework for Bullying
Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Model
Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) Ecological Model

Example 1: If it is the belief of the culture that parents should be solely responsible for raising their children, that culture is less likely to provide and take in resources to help parents (microsystem).

Example 2: Unmonitored technology is bad to the byte (exosystem).
Problem-Based Learning Approach

- Using experiential approaches to teach
  - Case Study Analysis
  - Experiential
  - Have the knowledge and skills to apply a diversity-based philosophy to many situations.
  - Example – calling someone gay.
Our Research Study

- Southwestern School District Initiative
- Specific to two large middle schools
  - Mixed Methods Study – surveys and focus groups
    - 1255 completed surveys given to middle school
    - Focus groups with students and teacher were completed in the spring, 2012.
    - Three sixth, seventh and eighth grade focus groups per grade and one teacher focus group - data is currently being analyzed.
Results From The Survey

- 32.3% of respondents reported being bullied this past year.
  - This is higher than the national average of 15 to 25%.
  - 23% of this group are bullied weekly
  - 13% of this group are bullied on a daily basis

- The bullying occurs most often in hallways, classrooms, and bathrooms.

- The most common form of bullying is name-calling and teasing followed by exclusion and threats.

- 30.5% of students reported bullying other students this past year.
Students addressed bullying by either standing up to the bully or trying to avoid the bully. Low on the list was telling a teacher, staff member, or parent.

When witnessing bullying, students report that they step in if it is a friend or do nothing.

9.4% of students have carried a weapon or dangerous object to school for self-protection.

The majority of students, 44%, do not report bullying because they do not want to be labeled as a snitch.
The most comfortable methods for students to report bullying are to:

- Speak to an adult staff member,
- Speak to a school resource officer, and
- Via an online reporting option.

Approximately 30% of students have witnessed gang-related graffiti, clothing or other symbols, and threats.

36.4% of students reported always feeling safe in school; 23.2% safe in some areas, but not others; 34.1% somewhat safe; and 6.1% reported never feeling safe.
Results From The Survey, con’t.

Have you ever witnessed bullying related to:

- Race/Ethnicity – 46.7%
- Family Income/Wealth – 22%
- Sexual Orientation – 31%
- Appearance – 49%
- Religion – 23%
- Disability – 26%
- Other – 12%
Facilitator: “Why are kids bullied at this school?”

Student: “I think it’s them being different. I mean, being different isn’t like something that is... it’s not something bad but some people think of it as like the worst thing in the world! Everyone is different - your race, religion, how you look, if you're good at sports or in band, if you're gay or sound gay, if you're in special ed, if you're dad's in jail, if you get good grades. Anything can make you different.”
During a discussion about how many middle school students bully those who are different from them:

“I think that it really can be anything that separates us [students/adolescents]. If you want to be different or if someone wants to make you different than them then they can really choose anything about you to point out that you are different from them.”

“In elementary school, everyone was a lot more accepting of everyone else. You know, like, even if you were different, they still would include you. But in middle school, as the years progress, it gets more and more of ‘oh you’re different, I don’t want to talk to you’ and whatever.”
Emergent Qualitative Themes

- More Monitoring – More security guards, backpack inspections, metal detectors, drug tests, hallway cameras
- Adult Awareness and Responsibility – Administrators, teachers, and parents need to be more attentive, keep “better watch,” stay “on top of things,” and “do something” when they witness bullying as opposed to doing “nothing.”
- Better and Clear Communication – Regarding bullying plans, interventions, consequences, reporting systems, and in general conversations aimed at understanding bullying.
Nurturance of Differences Scale

- Gender:
  A boy who carried a purse to school
- Religion:
  Someone who does not believe in God
- Appearance:
  Someone who is overweight
- Behavior (in-group/out-group):
  Someone who acts different than everyone else
- We also have questions on Language, Class, Sexual Orientation, and Ability
Prevention Overview

- Pre-intervention Research
  - Primary Prevention Interventions
  - Secondary Prevention Interventions
  - Tertiary Prevention Interventions

- Prevention Services Delivery Systems
Strategies for Developing Diversity

- Diversity Assemblies
- Cultural Sharing Circles
- Social Justice and Multicultural Leadership
- Promoting Ethnic Identity
- Social Norming & Youth-PAR
- Conducting a Diversity Audit
Federal Policy

- Although no federal law that directly addresses bullying, it often overlaps with discriminatory harassment.
- Discriminatory harassment is covered under federal civil rights laws enforced by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) and the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ).
Contact Us

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