



Students Who Bully or Have Behaviors That May Lead to Bullying

Behaviors of Students Who Bully or Have Behaviors That May Lead to Bullying

Typically these students:

- feel more powerful than others
- lack empathy or compassion for others
- enjoy dominating or controlling others
- can be aggressive, get into conflicts easily
- lack emotion or remorse when discussing negative behaviors
- refuse to accept responsibility for negative behaviors
- have high self-esteem and a sense of entitlement (However, do have internal problems or issues that contribute to the behavior)
- or may be “trying out” behaviors

Personal Risk Factors of Students Who Bully or Have Behaviors That May Lead to Bullying

Students who bully or have the potential to bully may:

- have been targets of bullying, sometimes by adults
- have few positive role models
- be fascinated or obsessed with video violence (i.e. television, video games, etc.)
- have physical or psychological attributes that allow them to dominate others

Outside of School, Students Who Bully or Have Behaviors That May Lead to Bullying May be Exposed to:

- places where bullying behavior is commonplace and accepted
- aggressive behavior as a means for solving conflicts and disputes
- lack of consistent adult supervision
- role models who exhibit bullying behavior
- violent TV, movies, video games, etc.

Dealing with Students Who Bully or Have Behaviors That May Lead to Bullying

Be firm but fair and consistent.

- Hold the young person accountable for his/her actions.
- Confront excuses that minimize the behavior (“I only called her a name.”) or externalize the cause of the behavior (“I hit him because he kept staring at me.”).
- Help the young person acknowledge the behavior.
- Emphasize that the student had other options for their actions and for the impact of those actions on themselves and others.



Because bullying is a behavior, it can be changed and replaced with more positive pro-social behavior.

Tough kids are still young people—and the window of opportunity to work with them is small. Bullying behavior fills a need. Power and control gives the student a reward.

Helping Students Who Bully or Have Behaviors That May Lead to Bullying

Parents can:

- Learn about bullying and how to recognize the warning signs.
- Talk to their child about bullying and let them know it will not be tolerated.
- Expect their child to set and work toward goals for change.
- Focus on helping them discover the specific goals that the aggression is directed toward. (“What goal were you trying to reach by repeatedly embarrassing Ian?”)
- Help them find other ways to reach those goals.
- Help find ways for them to use the need for power in positive ways.
- Help the young person build positive ties with adult mentors. (Even if it is one person checking in with the student, greeting them daily, connecting at lunch, etc.)
- Teach and help build empathy.
- Work with the school.

Know that this may not be an easy process due to resistance. **Don’t give up!!**

What Works Best

- The most effective interventions don’t focus on just one category of students, but rather teach all students about healthy relationships (and model it)
- Create a safe school climate through building supportive and caring relationships between adults, students and adults and students.
- Teach and model acceptance of differences and diversity.
- Expect the best from students!

Parents, guardians and others who need help with students who bully or have the potential to bully or harass can contact the school for assistance and resources. Referrals for counseling may be made as appropriate.

<http://www.stopbullying.gov>

<http://www.pacer.org/bullying/>

<http://www.webmd.com/parenting/tc/bullying-characteristics-of-children-who-bully>

<http://bullyingproject.com/bullies-and-victims/>

http://www.nasponline.org/resources/bullying/Bullying_Primer.pdf