

Bullying Behaviors Chart

Physical Bullying Harm to someone's body or property		Emotional Bullying Harm to someone's self-esteem or feeling of safety		Social Bullying Harm to someone's group acceptance	
Verbal	Non-verbal	Verbal	Non-verbal	Verbal	Non-verbal
LEVEL ONE					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expressing physical superiority Blaming the victim for starting the conflict 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making threatening gestures Defacing property Pushing/shoving Taking small items from others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insulting remarks Calling names Teasing about possessions, clothes, physical appearance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Giving dirty looks Holding nose or other insulting gestures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gossiping Starting or spreading rumors Teasing publicly about clothes, looks, relationships with boys/girls, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ignoring someone and excluding them from a group
LEVEL TWO <i>(some of these behaviors are against the law)</i>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Threatening physical harm to threaten and intimidate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Damaging property Stealing Starting fights Scratching or biting Pushing, tripping, or causing a fall Assaulting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insulting family Harassing with phone calls Insulting your size, intelligence, athletic ability, race, color, religion, ethnicity, gender, disability, or sexual orientation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defacing school work or other personal property, such as clothing, locker, or books Saying someone is related to a person considered an enemy of this country (e.g., Osama bin Laden) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ostracizing using notes, Instant Messaging, email, etc. Posting slander in public places (such as writing derogatory comments about someone in the school bathroom) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Playing mean tricks to embarrass someone
LEVEL THREE <i>(most of these behaviors are against the law)</i>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making repeated and/or graphic threats (harassing) Practicing extortion (such as taking lunch money) Threatening to keep someone silent: "If you tell, it will be a lot worse!" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Destroying property Setting fires Physical cruelty Repeatedly acting in a violent, threatening manner Assaulting with a weapon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harassing a child because of bias against their race, color, religion, ethnicity, gender, disability, or sexual orientation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Destroying personal property, such as clothing, books, jewelry Writing graffiti with bias against your race, color, religion, ethnicity, gender, disability, or sexual orientation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforcing total group exclusion against someone by threatening others if they don't comply 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arranging public humiliation

Adapted from Bitney, J. (Ed.). (1996). *Johnson Institute No-Bullying Program: Preventing Bully Victim Violence at School*. Minneapolis, MN: Johnson Institute.

Strategies for Handling Annoying Bullying

- *Make fun of the tease, not the bully.* Although the automatic response to a put-down or name-calling is to respond in a kind against the bully, it is more effective and less provocative to make fun of the tease.
 - *Persistent Bully:* Look at your shoes, did you get them in a dump?
 - *Target:* You mean this isn't the latest style?

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 - *Persistent Bully:* Here comes Miss Pizza Face...
 - *Target:* Old, old, old –can you find something new to say?
- *Give the bully permission to tease.* Giving permission to tease removes the power from the bully and gives it to the victim. A variation of this strategy is to remind the bully of previous teasing, and then give permission.
 - *Target:* Here comes Jack. I give you permission to tease.

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 - *Target:* Jack, yesterday you were teasing me about my clothes and my hair. Is there anything new today? You have my permission to tease me, but please try to have something new to say.
- *Accept or agree and move on.* A victim should accept some forms of teasing, particularly when the teasing is about a true personal characteristic (e.g., being overweight, having freckles, wearing glasses, being afraid).
 - *Persistent Bully:* Are you afraid to fight?
 - *Target:* Yes, I am. Do you have any other questions?
- *Reframe to a positive.* Most personal characteristics have a bright side, and target can point this out.
 - *Persistent Bully:* Hi Shorty!
 - *Target:* Well, as my mamma used to say, good things come in small packages.

- *Ask for the behavior to stop; be assertive.* Not all bullies will stop if they are asked to stop their negative behavior, but it does work in many situations, and it is worth trying.
 - *Persistent Bully:* [*Pinches a female classmate on the buttocks*]
 - *Target:* Stop it; that is wrong! Pinching is sexual harassment. It is against school policy, and I have to tell the teacher.
 - *Persistent Bully:* What are you a tattletale?
 - *Target:* I think that you need to learn the difference between tattling and reporting.

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 - *Persistent Bully:* [*Pulls the hair of the girl sitting in front of him*]
 - *Target:* Don't pull my hair again. I don't like it.

- *Talk about the behavior.* Rather than reacting to what the bully said or did, the [target] can talk about the behavior.
 - *Persistent Bully:* Sorry. You cannot join us in the class project.
 - *Target:* You can't exclude someone from a work group! That is called relational aggression, and is against school policies.

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 - *Persistent Bully:* [*Pushes the student from behind while he is standing in the cafeteria lunch line*]
 - *Bystander:* You must be new at this school. We don't push kids around in our school. Pushing is against the school rules.

- *Say something positive about the bully, then talk about the behavior.* Every person, even a bully, has some qualities the victim can capitalize on (e.g., a quick wit, athleticism, or good looks). Mentioning those qualities at the start of a conversation can change its whole tone. Then, the victim can talk to the bully about his or her behaviors and may try acting puzzled or feigning confusion about the behaviors.
 - *Target:* I don't understand. Yesterday, you were really friendly in class. Today, you are acting like a mean bully. I like you a lot better when you are friendly.
 - *Target:* This is strange. You are smart; otherwise you wouldn't have gotten a B in class. I don't get it. Why would a smart person waste her time trying to hurt others?

- *Keep a journal.* Reporting a bullying incident to the school's administration can be greatly improved by keeping a log of important details about the bullying events. Victims should document who said or did what to whom, where and when the incidents happened, and the identities of bystanders and their reactions to the bully. Depending on the situation, the victim can also tell the bully that he or she is keeping a journal.
 - *Persistent Bully:* [Knocks the books of a classmate to the floor]
 - *Target:* Oh good, I needed another example of your bullying for my journal. I'm preparing to take it to the school principal.
- *Ignore it.* Ignoring minor problems may be effective, especially if the victim explicitly states that he or she is ignoring the aggressive behavior. However, this strategy has two inherent risks. First, the victim may, consciously or unconsciously, carry a grudge, and the accumulation effect after several bullying incidents may result in an explosion of anger. Second, in some cases, ignoring the behavior can lead to an escalation of the bullying to provoke a reaction.
 - *Persistent Bully:* Good morning, Miss Smarty Pants.
 - *Target:* Good morning. I will ignore your belittling comment for now.
- *Talk it out.* Talking about the problem is a more complex skill, but a very important one when students want to maintain a friendship. The STOPP (Stop, Think, Options, Plan, Plan working?) model used in chapter 5.
- *Stay with your friends.* Staying in a group does not solve the problem but generally reduces the possibility of bullying. Bullies like easy prey, and it is much more difficult to prey on a group than on a lone individual. However, if a student feels so scared at school that she or she always needs to be with friends to avoid victimization, he or she should ask for help.
- *Ask for help.* Students have different levels of problem-solving ability, and some may need help to develop these skills. Asking an adult to intervene best solves some problems, particularly dangerous bullying and persistent annoying bullying. Children may feel uncomfortable asking for help if they do not know the difference between rattling and reporting or between dangerous and annoying bullying. Environments in which adults emphasize that children should stand up for themselves make it difficult for children to admit they need help. Other children may be too depressed to ask for help and blame themselves for being victimized. Adults must remain a source of support for these children.

*Orpinas, P. & Horne, A.M. (2006). Bullying Prevention: Creating a Positive School Climate and Developing Social Competence. American Psychological Association, Washington, DC.

Seriousness of the Bullying Checklist

- Student strengths
- Family strengths
- Frequency of bullying occurrences.
- An ongoing behavior or recent development.
- Verbal, physical, relational, or a combination of all these behaviors.
- Location when it happens (e.g. classroom, playground, bus, gym).
- Types of school interventions tried.
- Types of family interventions tried.
- Successes

Connecting with Persistent Bullies

1. *Establishing an invitational approach:* Frequently, bullies are not invited to participate in the process of counseling; they are ordered, demanded, or forced. When they are required to attend, the relationship automatically begins as confrontational or adversarial, evoking belligerence and defensiveness. The invitational model provides the opportunity to have an open dialogue, illustrated in the following exchange, about the problem:

 - *Counselor:* Mike, I'd like you to come and talk with me.
 - *Mike:* What did I do now? What are you going to fuss about?
 - *Counselor:* There have been some problems in your classroom, in the hallway, and even in the bathroom. I'd like to talk with you about what's going on, to your sense of what's behind the problems. Perhaps you and I might work together to find some way of resolving these problems. Think you can help with that?
 - *Mike:* Well.....I guess I can help you.
2. *Showing respect and dignity:* Generally, persistent bullies are used to being in trouble and expect to be treated ignominiously, without positive regard. It is important that they be afforded respect and dignity. When in doubt about whether the adult's behavior is respectful, ask, "Would I treat a guest in my family—an adult guest—the same way I am treating this child?" The following exchange exemplifies respectful communication:

 - *Mike:* So, what are you going to yell at me about today? I'm so tired of you people being on my case.
 - *Counselor:* I know what you mean. I wouldn't like to have someone yelling or getting on my case. I don't intend to do any yelling, and as for being on your case, I'd rather we talk about what's been happening between you and Gene and see if we can't find some way of resolving the conflict that's going on. I respect you and your ability to find a different way of dealing with problems. Let's talk about how you have seen the conflict, and I'd like your thoughts on what we might do about it.
3. *Being honest and direct:* Bullies are adept at identifying insincerity and become very suspicious when people are not candid with them. The counselor needs to identify a problem and state what is necessary to resolve the problem without moving into blame and condemnation.

 - *Mike:* You counselors always act nice, but I know you're just trying to jerk me around to get me to do what you want.
 - *Counselor:* You are right, I do want to be nice to you, just as I want you to be nice to me. I also want us to find some ways of changing what has been happening, because it cannot continue. We will not allow one student to bully and threaten another student in our school. I want you to be happy here, but those are the rules: Safety comes first. Let's talk about what can be done to resolve the problem, rather than sit and talk about whether I'm trying to blame or trick you. My goals are clear: First, the bullying has to stop; then, we can find other ways for you to accomplish your goals, perhaps by taking on a different leadership role, whatever will work for you without harming others.

4. *Being understanding, but not approving:* The counselor needs to understand the bully's perception of the problem but, at the same time, avoid condoning or giving the impression of approving the inappropriate behavior.
- *Mike:* Well, it really isn't my fault that Gene's an idiot. He's so stupid. I can't help but tease him. He even asks for it, with that dumb laugh of his.
 - *Counselor:* Mike, I understand that you find Gene frustrating and that his laugh irritates you, but I don't accept that teasing and hitting Gene is the solution. We need to find a different way for you to manage your anger and a way for you to tolerate other students, even if you don't like them.
5. *Accepting that the bully and others associated with the bully, such as parents and teachers, are doing the best they can given their circumstances:* Counselors must avoid making judgments. They must operate on the basic belief that bullies and others involved in the offensive behavior do the best they can given their circumstances and that, if possible, they would have done better. Counselors may need to accept the premise that bullies may simply lack the problem-solving, decision-making, or self-control skills to be more adaptive than they are.
- *Mike:* You're just sticking up for the goofball. I can't help it if he drives me crazy.
 - *Counselor:* No, that's not accurate. I understand that he drives you crazy, and I think that you are doing the best you can right now to deal with Gene, but what you've been doing isn't working. The good news is that other things can be done. My goal is to spend some time helping you identify new ways of getting along with Gene and other people, ways you haven't been able to use because you didn't know about them. Mike, I don't think you are a mean person; I think you have been doing the best you can, but that hasn't been good enough because you've hurt Gene. We'll go over some things you can do instead.

*Orpinas, P. & Horne, A.M. (2006). Bullying Prevention: Creating a Positive School Climate and Developing Social Competence. American Psychological Association, Washington, DC.

Resources

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Curricula

- Bully Busters: www.bully-busters.com; www.researchpress.com
- Bully Proofing Your School: www.sopriswest.com