

Bully-Proofing Your School

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Introduction

- Bully-Proofing Your School (BPYS) is a school-wide program that is designed to reduce bullying
- BPYS was first developed in 1994 for use in elementary schools, but it has since been adapted for use in:
 - Early childhood settings
 - Middle schools
 - High schools

Reason for Development

- Studies showed that pull-out programs designed to reduce bullying were largely ineffective
 - Need for a new kind of program
- Research showed that the following program components were necessary in order to reduce bullying
 - Increased awareness of bullying (in general and in school)
 - A school-wide approach
 - Involvement of students, particularly bystanders
- These and other research-based components are central to the BPYS program

Program Concepts

- 1. The program is designed as a systemic, comprehensive program that involves all members of the school community
- 2. The main focus is on creating a positive, prosocial school climate
- 3. The program teaches skills and strategies to avoid victimization
- 4. The emphasis is on developing a caring majority by teaching and encouraging bystanders to take action when they see bullying occurring

BPYS Resources

- Detailed resources are available for teachers, administrators, and parents
 - Bully-Proofing Your Child: First Aid for Hurt Feelings
 - Bully-Proofing Your Child: A Parent's Guide
 - Bully-Proofing in Early Childhood
 - Bully-Proofing Your School: Teacher's Manual and Lesson Plans for Elementary Schools
 - Bully-Proofing Your School: A Comprehensive Approach for Middle Schools
 - Bully-Proofing for High Schools—Strategies and Interventions
- These resources provide step-by-step, practical guides for implementing this program

Necessary Elements for Successful Implementation

- Staff acknowledgement of the problem of bullying and their commitment to the creation of a safe school
- Administrative support for the program
- School-wide discipline plan in place
- Bully-Proofing Cadre formed to design and guide implementation of the program
- Assessment of current school climate and safety issues
- Training of staff
- Training of students—classroom curriculum
- Support from the parent community
- Strategies for ongoing development of the caring community
- Evaluation of the program

Strategies for Victims of Bullying

- HA HA SO strategies
 - Help
 - Assert Yourself
 - Humor
 - Avoid
 - Self-Talk
 - Own It

***If these strategies aren't working, leave or disengage from the situation!

Guidelines for All Students

- Respect yourself and others
- Contribute to a healthy and safe learning environment
- Use empathy and extra effort to include others
- Take a stand for what is right
 - Students are taught to recognize the different types of bullying
 - The distinction between tattling and telling is made to help students to feel comfortable reporting bullying
- Encourage creative and peaceful problem solving
- Follow all school rules

Research on BPYS

- Berkey, Keyes, & Longhurst (2001)
 - Qualitative
- Beran & Tutty (2002)
- Epstein, Plog, & Porter (2002)
 - Four-year longitudinal study
- Menard, Grotspeter, Gianola, & O'Neal (2007)
 - Five-year evaluation of BPYS

Beran & Tutty, 2002 (Study 1)

BPYS School (3 month)

- Significant decrease in the amount of bullying students reported seeing
- No change in students' attitudes toward victims of bullying
- Increase in students' positive perceptions of school climate
 - Approached significance

No-Program School

- No change in the amount of bullying students reported seeing
- Significant worsening of students' attitudes toward victims of bullying
- No change in students' perceptions of school climate

Beran & Tutty, 2002 (Study 2)

- Study involved four schools
 - Comparison (no-program)
 - 3-month program
 - 1-year program
 - 2-year program
- Sample included 197 students in grades 4-6
- Results
 - Better outcomes in 3-month school compared to no-program school
 - Better outcomes in 2-year school compared to 3-month school
 - Students reported that they:
 - Saw bullying occurring significantly less often
 - Held more positive attitudes toward victims (not significant)

Effects of BPYS

Elementary Schools

- Decrease in bullying behaviors
- Greater sense of safety
- Increase in use of problem-solving strategies
- Fewer disciplinary referrals
- Fewer suspensions

Middle Schools

- Healthier conflict resolution
- Greater class attendance
- Fewer tardies
- Fewer class disruptions
- Higher rates of on-task behavior

Research Conclusions

- Students in schools with BPYS show better outcomes than students in schools without BPYS
- The positive effects of BPYS appear to increase over time
- A great deal of evidence supports the use of BPYS in elementary schools, but results are not as strong for middle and high schools

Limitations

- May be less effective for middle and high school students
 - More research is needed!
- Some positive effects may be delayed
- Barriers to implementation
- Less emphasis on bully-victims

Potential Barriers to Implementation

- 1. The belief that children should solve their own problems and that school staff should not intervene
- 2. Preference for/habit of ignoring the problem
- 3. Lack skills to intervene
- 4. Feeling uncomfortable intervening and/or being intimidated by students
- 5. Feeling isolated/unsupported

BPYS resources provide advice regarding how to overcome these barriers!

Strengths

- The central components and concepts of BPYS are research-based
- Research largely supportive of BPYS
- Targets both attitudes and behaviors
- Involvement of school staff, all students, and parents
- Includes prevention and intervention components
- One of few interventions to have a high school component
- Resources available in Spanish

Order Information

- Sopris West Educational Services
- Orders may be placed:
 - By calling 800-547-6747
 - Via their website: www.sopriswest.com

