Preventing Bullying in Rhode Island Schools

#PreventBullyRI  #EdChatRI

December 6, 2016
Special thanks to

Hasbro
CHILDREN’S FUND

for its support of this *Issue Brief*
Defining Bullying

Behavior that is aggressive, is carried out repeatedly and over time, and occurs in an interpersonal relationship where a power imbalance exists.

The Spectrum of Bullying
Statewide Bullying Policy

• In 2011, the Rhode Island General Assembly passed the Safe Schools Act.

• The Rhode Island Department of Education implemented the Statewide Bullying Policy on June 30, 2012.

• Reports of bullying and responses to bullying incidents are tracked at the school level.
Who Experiences Bullying?

• Incidents of bullying can be experienced by children of any age group.

• Children can be involved in bullying incidents as a bully, victim, bystander, bully-victim or poly-victim.

• Consequences of involvement in bullying vary depending on how a child is involved.
Students Who Report Being Bullied

Students Who Report Being Bullied*, Rhode Island, by Grade Level, 2009-2014


Note: *In the SurveyWorks! survey, bullied is defined as experiencing one or more of the following in the past 12 months: purposeful exclusion from activities, being teased at school, being pushed, shoved, tripped or spit on, threatened with harm, having property destroyed on purpose, experiencing coercion, having rumors being spread about self, or experiencing cyberbullying. **Elementary school is defined as students in the 4th or 5th grade.
Race and Ethnicity

Rhode Island High School Students, Currently Bullied*, by Race/Ethnicity, 2015


Note: *In the YRBS, currently bullied is defined as within the past year.
Gender

Bully* Status by Gender and Grade Level, Rhode Island, 2015


Note: *In the YRBS, middle school students self-reported ever being bullied and high school students self-reported current bullying. **In the YRBS, physical fight is defined as occurring anywhere in middle school, but only on school property for high school respondents.
LGBT

• In the U.S., LGBT youth report higher rates of bullying incidents than peers.

• Nationally, half (51%) of LGBT youth report having been verbally harassed in school, compared to 25% of their non-LGBT peers.

• In 2015, 20% of Rhode Island high school students who identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual (LGB) reported being bullied on school property.
Youth with Disabilities

• Students with disabilities are overrepresented in the bullying dynamic.
• Nationally, students with disabilities are up to 1.5 times more likely to be bullied than youth without disabilities.
• In 2015 in Rhode Island, 25% of high school students who had been bullied on school property reported having a long term emotional problem or learning disability.
Youth who are overweight

• Children who are overweight or obese are at risk for experiencing weight-based bullying, victimization and bias.

• In Rhode Island in 2013, 12% of middle school and 12% of high school students reported being bullied because of their weight.
Reporting

**Bullied** Rhode Island Students Who Reported Incident and Indicated It Stopped by District and Grade, 2013-2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL DISTRICT</th>
<th>REPORTED BULLYING**</th>
<th>BULLYING STOPPED AFTER REPORTING IT**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ELEMENTARY SCHOOL</td>
<td>MIDDLE SCHOOL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four Core Cities</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remainder of State</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, *SurveyWorks!, 2013-2014*. NA indicates that community has no school at that level.

♦ In Rhode Island in 2015, 8% (1,212) of in-school suspensions and 30% (3,906) of out-of-school suspensions were associated with student bullying infractions, including acts of assault, harassment, hazing, sexual misconducts, threats, and intimidation.\(^8^5\)
# School Climate

## School Climate Factors, Rhode Island, 2013-2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FEEL SAFE INSIDE SCHOOL/HALLWAYS</th>
<th>STUDENTS RESPECT EACH OTHER</th>
<th>STUDENTS RESPECT TEACHERS</th>
<th>TEACHERS TREAT STUDENTS WITH RESPECT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ELEMENTARY SCHOOL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four Core Cities</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remainder of State</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MIDDLE SCHOOL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four Core Cities</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remainder of State</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HIGH SCHOOL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four Core Cities</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remainder of State</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


*Four Core Cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket. NA indicates that no question was asked.*
Bullying Prevention Programming and Best Practices

• Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP)
• Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
• No Bully
• Restorative Justice
Recommendations

• Policies and Data Collection:
  – Continue to implement and publicly track evidence-based anti-bullying laws and policies at all levels.
  – Choose school climate as an accountability measure under the federal 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).
Recommendations

• **Best Practices for Schools:**

  – School districts should implement evidence-based bullying prevention training for all staff who regularly work with students and **develop benchmarks to evaluate effectiveness.**

  – School social workers should assess students for PTSD, depression, and suicidal ideation/behaviors when students are involved in bullying situations.

  – Adopt trauma-informed positive school climate practices rooted in national research.
Recommendations

• **Targeted Interventions:**
  
  – Schools and communities should explore programmatic opportunities for more specific vulnerable populations.
  
  – Schools and communities should implement evidence-based programs to address stigma- and bias-based bullying behavior.
Recommendations

• School and Community Engagement:
  – Ensure that all adults who interact with students are involved in bullying prevention and intervention efforts.
  – Explore opportunities for peer-led bullying prevention programming at the school and community levels.
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December 6, 2016
Pawtucket School District No Bully Examples

Pawtucket School Department
Administration Building
286 Main Street, PO Box 388
Pawtucket, Rhode Island 02862-0388
Phone: (401) 729-6300 Fax: (401) 729-6334 TDD (401) 729-6338

NO BULLY
Workshop for parents & guardians

JOIN US AT ONE OF THE 3 LOCATIONS:
Monday, November 2, 2015 from 6:30PM to 8:30 PM
WHERE: Goff Jr. High Auditorium

Tuesday, November 3, 2015 from 6:30PM to 8:30 PM
WHERE: Slater Jr. High Auditorium

Wednesday, November 4, 2015 from 6:30PM to 8:30 PM
WHERE: Tolman High School Auditorium

How to bully-proof your kid

“Free acceptance in play, partnership and teams is what matters most to any child . . . . Rejection hurts more than anything else that happens at school.” Vivian Paley, the only teacher to have received a MacArthur Genius Award

Student bullying and conflict are persistent challenges in every school, causing students untold suffering, marginalizing diverse youth and impacting the ability our children to succeed in their careers and future relationships.

At this workshop you will:
• Get up to speed on the new face of bullying in our schools.
• Learn how to bully-proof your child to succeed in their friendships so that they are neither a bully or a target.
• Develop skills to coach your child through the inevitable conflicts and bullying of childhood and adolescence.

Cunningham ES No Bully Peace Summit
Bullying Prevention in Washington County

Thomas DiPaola, PhD
Washington County Coalition for Children;
Johnson & Wales University, Educational Leadership Program

Patrick Cozzolino, LICSW
Westerly Middle School
1. Raise Community Awareness

- Conduct trainings for parents, community groups, and area after-school/camp staff
- Use literature to promote/reinforce positive responses of peers and adults
Distributed toolkits to 9 middle schools & 11 public libraries with recommended books and reading lists funded by the Women’s Club of South County
Encourage publication of student editorials

Organize community awareness events like Chalk It Up Against Bullying
be KIND

A single act of kindness throws out roots in all directions and the roots spring up and make new trees.

— Amelia Earhart

BULLYING IS NOT SWEET

Words can hurt

HAPPY!

STRIVE TO ACCEPT YOURSELF
ACCEPT OTHERS
2. Start Young

Start early promoting social emotional skills

1. Created *Planting the Seeds of Kindness in Preschoolers: Lessons & Activities Using Picture Books*

2. Conducted a 2-part training for area early care & education providers
3. Encourage Evidence-Based Bullying Prevention Programming in Schools

Partner with schools to implement the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP)
4 Key OBPP Components

- **Individual** – On the Spot Interventions
- **Classroom** – Regular classroom meetings
- **School** – School Rules/Protocols
- **Community** – Moving efforts beyond school walls

**Our School’s Anti-Bullying Rules**

*Rule 1: We Will Not Bully Others.*

*Rule 2: We Will Try to Help Students Who Are Bullied.*

*Rule 3: We Will Try to Include Students Who Are Left Out.*

*Rule 4: If We Know That Somebody Is Being Bullied, We Will Tell an Adult at School and an Adult at Home.*
Empowering Peers

The Cycle of Bullying

A. Bully
B. Follower or henchman – may even carry out the acts
C. Supporter, takes part in the bullying
D. Passive Supporter – seems to like the bullying but does not take an active part
E. Disengaged Onlooker
F. Passive Defender – dislikes the bullying but does not show open defense
G. Defender – Dislikes the bullying and tries to help the victim

Social Culture
Creative Ways to Engage Youth

- Themes: Hero, Random Acts of Kindness, etc.
- Storytelling Assembly and Writing Workshop
- Contests: Chant, Poster, Editorial, Video
- One Book/One School – “Wonder”
- Pink Shirt Day Celebrations
- Mix It Up at Lunch

KEEP CALM & PINK ON
RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS
and SUPPORT

- Hold door for others
- Help pick up books
- Help with classwork
- Help with homework
- Stand up for what is right
- Remind others to be kind

BE RESPONSIBLE, RESPECTFUL & SAFE
Wall of Intolerance

I was called a girl when I'm not.

I got bullied because the color of my skin.

I witnessed a kid being excluded because of their size and style.

I saw a kid get bullied for being fat and slow in gym class.

I saw someone being bullied because they wore glasses. 😞

I heard someone get bullied.

I've seen someone call someone names because they didn't agree with them!

I saw aesar attack other kids.
“It is vital that when educating our children’s brains that we do not neglect to educate their hearts.”

~Dalai Lama
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