

Examining Misdirections in Bullying Prevention

Zero Tolerance Policies

- If bullying is pervasive, a significantly large number of students could be suspended or expelled.
- The threat of being suspended or expelled could discourage students from reporting.
- Bullying others can be indicators of other problems and discipline policies do not necessarily include referrals for behavioral or mental health interventions.

Reflection

- Does your school's bullying policy include interventions beyond traditional disciplinary actions?
- Do your students feel the adults support their bullying concerns and do they feel adults will intervene to stop the bullying?

Conflict Resolution and Peer Mediation

- Bullying is not a conflict; it is a form of victimization.
- Mediation may send the wrong message that both parties are involved equally.
- Facing an alleged perpetrator in a mediation can make the target feel very uncomfortable.
- There is no evidence that conflict resolution or mediation stops bullying.

Reflection

- Is your staff aware that conflict resolution strategies are not helpful in bullying situations? Do they know that bullying is not the same as being in a conflict?
- Are you aware of bullying situations where a mediation or a "talk it out" approach has been utilized?
- Did it stop the bullying?

Group Treatment for Students Who Bully

- Bullying behavior is sometimes addressed in group settings under the intentions of anger management, building self-esteem, increasing empathy and increasing pro-social skills.
- Behaviors might worsen if students serve as negative role models for one another and this group dynamic may reinforce antisocial behaviors.

Reflection

- If grouping students who bully others is not recommended, what other interventions have you seen implemented?
- What referral systems are in place for a student with behavioral concerns associated with bullying? What behaviors have you observed that could be indicators of future bullying?
- What intervention steps would you take if the student who is suspected of bullying others has an IEP or 504 Plan?

Simple, Short Term Solutions

Although well intended, stand alone efforts such as a one-time assembly or a PTO presentation, which is not connected to a comprehensive approach to improving the school climate, have not been found to be effective

Reflection

- List any efforts you have witnessed or helped to implement, to decrease bullying in your school.
- Are the efforts connected to a comprehensive or three-tiered approach, which includes a school-wide, classroom, individual and parent/community components?

[Misdirections in Bullying Prevention and Interventions](#) by StopBullying.gov.