

A Critical Review of Literature: Understanding Bullying Behaviors of Children

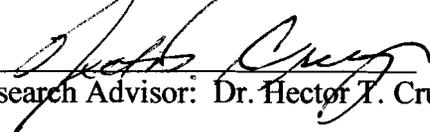
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ABSTRACT

Each day children are victims of bullying. These acts of aggression and violence keep many students from attending school. Many times they are physically threatened or they're unable to endure another emotionally degrading day. It is important to gain an awareness of bullying behaviors and to implement prevention and intervention programs that help promote pro-social behavior. The purpose of this paper is to review the literature pertaining to the types of bullying that exist in school today and to investigate how students today bully. Physical, verbal, emotional, and even bullying via the internet will be examined. Other areas to be explored are to identify who bullies, the victims of bullies, as well as other key players, who are involved with bullies, such as teachers, parents, and bystanders. The effects that bullying behaviors have on individuals, both long and short term are also explored. Finally the critical analysis chapter offers recommendations to combat bullying behaviors in schools.

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To Gabriel, I am so lucky to be your mother. I don't know what I ever did to deserve a dear boy like you. To my parents, I will never ever be able to repay the time, the patience, and the amount of love that you have shown me. Finally to Hector Cruz, without you I may have never finished. I appreciate you and all you do.

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Chapter I: Introduction

Bullying behavior has been proven by numerous studies to be a serious problem worldwide. According to the national Association of School Psychologist, "Everyday approximately 160,000 children in the United States are absent or skip school out of fear of being picked on, humiliated or beaten up by a bully." Various reports and studies have established that approximately 15% of students are either bullied or initiate bullying behaviors on a regular basis. Due to the high number of victims, the frequency, and the consistency of bullying behaviors there has been a lot of new interest, information and insight into the complex behaviors of bullying. These new observations, research, and evaluations suggest that "bullying is an unpredictable behavior that appears to strike without pattern and becomes a difficult problem for about one in six students." Bullying occurs in all schools and is not restricted by race, gender, class, or other natural distinctions, but appears worst during early adolescence and "there is compelling evidence that the impact of bullying has lifelong debilitating consequences." (Sullivan, Cleary, and Sullivan, p. 2) The issue of school bullying has received enormous media attention over past few years due to an increase of school shootings in various parts of the country across the United States. In this year alone there have been 22 school shootings in 2007. The vast amount of media coverage has drawn attention to the immense and widespread problem of bullying and has helped to challenge some of the common beliefs that have helped maintain bullying.

Bullying Defined

“Bullying is a negative and often aggressive or manipulative act or series of acts by one or more people against another person or people usually over a period of time. It is abusive and is based on an imbalance of power.” Most definitions of bullying include repeated aggressive acts that are intended to harm without or provocation by the victim. Bullying contains the following elements: (Sullivan, Cleary, Sullivan, p. 5)

1. The bully has more power over the victim.
2. Bullying is concealed, systematic, and organized.
3. Bullies are often opportunistic, but they generally continue to bully over time.
4. Bullying usually occurs over a period of time, yet it can be isolated.
5. Bullying can be physical, emotional, or psychological.
6. Bullying comes in many forms of abuse and it is frequently seen in grades 2 through 6, but it increases and becomes more serious in grades 7 through 9.

Even though bullying behaviors start as early as 2nd grade, their severity and frequency within middle and high school make life in school literally unbearable for children who are bullied during their adolescent years. Schools are intended to be safe places for students to learn and grow, yet it is virtually impossible for students to obtain either of these goals when they are faced with daily humiliation, isolation, or issues with personal safety. Some bully victims are unable to finish their high school degree, because of the excruciating

environment that they must endure. John Hoover, a pioneer in research on bullying found that a significant number of victims reported experiencing social and academic trauma resulting from bullying. (Swearer, Cary, 2003) Many times victims will commonly respond to bullying through escape and avoidance behaviors, such as not attending school, refusal to go to certain locations, running away from home, and in some extreme cases, attempting suicide.

Victims of bullies are generally children who are on the bottom of the social ladder. They tend to be minorities, children with special needs, from families with lower socio-economic status, have few friends, are smaller in stature, or physically uncoordinated. Most victims of bullies are generally passive. They can be anxious, insecure, and quiet, upset or cry easily, have few friends, and can be fearful of confrontation. They generally have low self esteem and believe that they are unattractive, stupid, and even useless. These children lack a great deal of self-worth and confidence. Many times these victims of bullies have physical characteristics such as a small stature. They may also lack physical strength or they maybe clumsy or have poor motor coordination. In addition these victims of bullies commonly have physical defects such as, protruding teeth, speech problems or unusual accents or suffer from obesity.

Bullies are also susceptible to negative behavior and negative life outcomes. For example bullies tend to have poor psychosocial adjustment and criminal activity. (National Mental Health and Education Center) The obstacles that face many bullies and bully victims may literally be life altering that effects their education and or future . These life altering events ultimately threaten their own

and sometimes others health and safety. Bullying behaviors are not only life altering, but they are also potentially life threatening. These are a truly serious issue that face adolescences' education, life skills, potential success, and in extreme cases their life itself.

Bulling: A World-wide issue

Bullying is usually believed to occur within larger urban areas, but in all actuality bullying has no demographic barriers. School size, racial composition, school setting (urban or rural), do not appear to have a direct impact on bullying behaviors, their victims, and the type of abuse that occurs within school settings. Bullying is also not a problem strictly isolated in the United States. Many countries throughout the world including, Japan, Great Britain, and Norway have had long going research and anti-bullying campaigns to combat and provide students, teachers, and parents with understanding and intervention strategies. Today in the United States many school districts have also taken a zero tolerance policy toward bullying in their own campaign against bullying. A lot of progress has been made by addressing the issues that surrounds bullying behaviors. These bullying behaviors impact an individual's education and personal mental health in negative ways and they affect both the victim of bullying and the bully both. To combat bullying behaviors all school should adapt a zero tolerance policy towards any and all forms of bullying. Teachers, students, parents, and all staff members should be educated about the effects, signs, and preventative steps to take to stop bullying behaviors within their school. According to a recent research study about teachers' perceptions of bullying, it was found that all of the teachers who

participated viewed bullying as a problem in varying degrees, but all viewed bullying as a problem. (Dahlheimer, 2004) This helps to provide evidence that bullying within our school is a tremendous problem that need the collective support of teachers, parents, students, and all school staff to work together to create a safe and pro-social environment. We must all work together to provide students with an education that is respectful and safe for al students to reach their true learning potential and social and emotional growth.

Statement of the Problem

Due to the fact that bullying affects children of all ages, ethnic backgrounds, socioeconomic levels, and all demographic areas it is important to develop a deeper understanding of the problem and possible solutions in order to provide bullying education, intervention, and prevention for students, teachers, and parents.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to review, understand and analyze the literature pertaining to bullying behaviors of school children and to implement an ongoing bullying intervention program in the school district of the researcher.

Rationale for the Study

This study is a necessity as it will assist parents, educators, administrators, and students in understanding the types of bullying and its' impact. In addition, a review of literature on bulling behaviors will help combat against these behaviors and help decrease violence levels in their school.

Research Objectives

The goal of the research is to understand and explore the literature pertaining to bullying behaviors, its impact on students, and the need for bullying intervention programs. The four objectives of this study are:

1. To gain a perspective of the types of bullying behaviors that both boys and girls engage in.
2. To understand which children are more vulnerable and susceptible to becoming bullies and victims of bullies.
3. To understand the short and long term affects of bullying on the bullies, the victims, and the bystander.
4. To understand the importance of ongoing early intervention and implementation of anti-bullying campaign.

Definition of Terms

To understand the area bullying behaviors and strategies to prevent it, certain terms need clarification. The terms are:

Bullying – “...student is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students.” (Olweus, 1993, p. 9)

Intervention – To intervene or step in when an act of bullying is occurring and reduce the implication of an act occurring. (Husbey, 2006)

Prevention – To attempt to stop an event from occurring

Assumptions and Limitations

The assumption and limitations of this study provide the boundaries for what the research will include. The assumption of the study is that the researcher will develop an understanding of the importance of early intervention and prevention of bullying behaviors in and out of school and will be able to utilize this information in a follow-up study to gather information and comparing the results of who is bullied, their affects, and preventative measures to combat bullying. The limitations of the study center on the vast amount of research in the areas of bullying within schools and the personal bias of the researcher that can limit which literature is included or excluded.

Chapter II: Literature Review

This chapter includes a discussion of the literature pertaining to bullying behaviors within schools. The topics to be discussed will include types of bullying behaviors, the participants involved, and how bullying behaviors affect the individual and the school environment.

Bullying: An Overview

Not too long ago bullying behaviors by adolescents and their peers were viewed as a normal part of being a teenager. The common viewpoint that kids can be cruel has been accepted by society and as a normal part of growing up by both boys and girls alike. It is very rare that an individual doesn't know, remember, or perhaps was a victim of bullying themselves sometime during their childhood and adolescence. According to bullying researcher, John Hoover found in his 1992 study that 14 percent of all students in rural Midwestern USA had been moderately to severely traumatized by a bully at some point in their school career. (Hoover, 2000) It hasn't been until the latest violent and fatal high school shootings in American society that local communities, school administrators, teachers, parents, and students have begun to take a zero tolerance policy and attitude towards bullies and bullying behaviors. Even though school wide programs have been enacted, bullying behaviors are still prominent within our schools and unfortunately the numbers of incidences of school violence and shootings have increased.

Different types of bullying behaviors

Even though both boys and girls engage in bullying behaviors, their method of bullying is usually quite different. For example boys use more physical violence, whereas girls are usually more verbally abusive and engage in group exclusion. These are two different types of bullying behavior either direct or indirect. Direct bullying can be either verbal or physical in nature. Verbal bullying includes such behaviors as taunting, teasing, name calling, and spreading rumors. Physical bullying encompasses behaviors, such as hitting, kicking, pushing, choking, and destruction of property or theft. Indirect bullying is often more subtle and can include behaviors such as threats, obscene gestures, excluding others from a group, and manipulation of friendships.

Another form of bullying is sexual harassment. The intent of sexual harassment is to humiliate, embarrass, or demean another individual based on their gender or sexual orientation. (Olsen, 2006) Bullying consists of both indirect and direct behavior. Direct behaviors, which are more commonly seen in boys, consist of calling names, teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting, using a weapon, and stealing by one or more individuals against a victim. While bullying behavior of boys is usually more direct in nature, girls tend to use more subtle tactics, which can be more indirect in nature. Indirect behaviors include spreading rumors, exclusion or isolation from peers, and or manipulating relationships and or friendships. In fact bullying victims are also isolated by other non bullying peers, because these peers do not want to be associated with a victim of bullying due to the threat of becoming a victim themselves. This

ultimately isolates bully victims even more. This type of complete isolation is not only painful, but becomes problematical for anyone in coping in a hostile environment with virtually no support or even a friend to help relieve some of the pressure and anguish that a bully victims faces on a daily basis. Other children who witness bullying, the bystander, may also feel guilt that they cannot help the victim, because they either don't know how or perhaps they feel threatened themselves. Being an adolescent has never been easy, particularly in today's desensitized society where violence is prevalent. Adolescence, especially those who are victims of bullying, have a hard time coping and functioning in such a stressful and aggressive environment with little or no support from their peers.

Another form of indirect bullying is called cyber bullying. Cyber bullying is done electronically through the internet via emails and on-line chat rooms. Students can now enter the personal space of their victims that violates them and their rights inside their own homes through their computers. Not only is their school environment a hostile and threatening place, but this hostility and these threats can reach them in the safety of their home. Students who are victims of cyber bullying are subject to threatening emails or have hostile and abusive messages posted about them in online chat rooms.

Characteristics of bullies and victims

Common characteristics of bullies include lack of empathy or concern for others. Bullies also tend to demonstrate a strong need to dominate and subdue their peers. They are usually hot tempered and become enraged easily. Bullies usually tend to pick victims who are weaker and use intimidation such as threats

or compromise one's reputation. Bullies are usually physically aggressive and they tend to be defiant, oppositional, and aggressive towards adults and authority figures. There are three potential reasons for the etiology of bullying. (Olweus, 1993) The first theory suggests that these aggressive behaviors exist within a child's home. Some believe that these children learn intimidation tactics from their parents or guardians. These types of behavior are commonplace within their homes and therefore familiar. Bullies learn these negative interaction styles from their parents and caregivers at home. Therefore, bullying behaviors are essentially modeled at home. The second theory states that these behaviors are reinforced either directly or indirectly by providing the bully with some form of reward or privilege when involved in a bullying behavior. Perhaps the bully feels empowered by the sense of controlling and hurting other people. The bully is rewarded through his misguided sense of control over others. Finally the third theory believes that bullies have misinterpreted perception of other's behaviors and their intentions. For example, if an individual accidentally knocks over a bully's book, the bully may perceive that action as intentional and retaliate by becoming verbally or physically abusive.

Bullies tend to pick victims who exhibit some form of vulnerability. For example, the way a person dresses or looks are all open targets for bullies. Victims are generally not in the "in" crowd. They are usually not in the popular group. The most common denominator for any victim of bullying is "difference". (Ziemann, 2006) Whether a person looks, acts, thinks, learns, or dresses differently can all be valid reason to belittle, taunt, and torment a victim of

bullying. Other factors that may influence whether a person becomes a victim of bullying are poor social skills. For example, their reactions to others interactions and their lack of social awareness contribute to other's perception of them, as different or odd. Unfortunately instead of avoiding peers who exhibit these qualities bullies tend to choose these individuals as their victims of bullying. Another common factor that some victims of bullying share is their lack of friends. The absence of a social peer system leaves victims of bullies vulnerable to initial bullying and being singled out by their peers. It also leaves them without any immediate support during a confrontation with a bully. Individuals who do not have a least one friend are exceptionally vulnerable to bullies and continued harassment that can be both verbally and physically abusive. Since these individuals have no peers to confide in and gain support from, they are prone to depression and suicide from their isolation and torment from peers. The last factor that contributes to an individual's likelihood to become a victim of bullying is being non-confrontational. For example individuals who do not stick up for themselves or who are passive are often singled out by bullies. They are easy and simple targets.

Children who are victims of bullying tend to come from specific types of home environment. Children, who are abused or neglected and come from harsh environments where there is a great deal of maltreatment by one or both parents. These children seem to lack social development, which inevitably impacts their behavior in a negative way. They are often not liked by their peers due to their lack of impulse control, aggression, or social awkwardness that may lead to

rejection from their peers. Sometimes the children from neglectful homes are teased, because of hygiene or self care habits that cause them to stand out from their peers.

In addition to neglectful or abusive parents, children who have over-protective mothers, especially for boys, seem to be targets or victims of bullying, because of impeded progress toward autonomy and self-assertion. Their lack of sense of self and inability to stand up for their rights makes them prey to the bully, who has more power than the victim of bullying.

Types of Bullies

Just as there are different types of bullying behaviors, there are also different types of bullies. According to Olweus's study of the Typology of Bullies from 1978, he identified four different types of bullies. The first type of bully is called the aggressive bully. Most bullies fall into this category. They are impulsive, hot-tempered, belligerent, fearless, coercive, confident to the point of overconfident, and singularly lacking in empathy for their victims. They have a need to dominate people and they overreact aggressively in ambiguous confrontations. They are generally paranoid and are reluctant to follow rules and exhibit a low frustration tolerance. The second type of bully is called the pure bully. This second type of bully is a child who has never been victimized. They generally like school and have few absences. It appears that pure bullies are healthy individual who use bullying to gain dominance. Pure bullies are described as "cool operators." The third group of bullies is called passive bullies. Passive bullies rarely provoke others or take the initiative in a bullying incident.

They wait until an incident has occurred, then they enter the conflict with great enthusiasm. They are described as “camp followers”. The fourth and final group of bullies is called the bully-victim. One small group of children, about 6% who are actually victims of bullying themselves in return bully other children. Most bullies engage in bully behavior usually takes place out of sight of school staff and other adults. Bullying behaviors by both boys and girls primarily happens in the lunchroom, on the playground, in the corridors between classes, in the locker room, and to and from school.

Effects of Bullying

Bullying behaviors continue to have a negative affects upon both the victims of bullies and the bully. According to the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence, there are both short and long term affects for the victims, the bullies, and the school climate as a whole. (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001)

The short-term effects that victims of bullying often experience include painful and humiliating reaction that can lead to distress, confusion, and overall unhappiness. (Burger, 2005) Many victims of bullying also experience loss of self-esteem, anxiety issues, and feelings of insecurity. This lack of security usually interferes with an individuals learning ability and concentration level. Ultimately bullying victims lack the ability to learn, because of safety issues. These individuals feel threatened and don't feel safe, therefore they can't succeed in school and they often sabotage their own learning with frequent absences and poor school attendance. Many times victims will develop psychosomatic

symptoms, such as stomach aches and headaches that interfere with their ability to attend school regularly.

A long-term effects of bullying behaviors on victims is low self-esteem. There is a high correlation between students who are bullied and poor mental health. Many times these students are withdrawn, worried, fearful of new situations, and are introverted. Victims of bullying have very few, if any good friends and they are often lonely. Many victims of bullies drop out of school due to lack of school satisfaction. Their school environment is so intolerable that they sacrifice their education for daily relief from their tormentors. The inability to obtain their high school diploma has life long effects that impact the rest of their lives. Bully victims also tend to have higher levels of depression later in life than non-victimized peers. In severe cases victims of bullying will suffer from depression that may result in violent acts or suicide. (McIntyre, 2003)

Not only does the victim of bullying suffer long and short term affects, but the bully also has consequences that impact their lives. Bullies who have been physically abusive or violent toward another individual are at moderate risk for committing a serious violent crime. Bullies are also four times more likely to be convicted of a crime before the age of 24. Bullies, in adulthood (particularly males) are more apt to participate in delinquent and antisocial behaviors, such as stealing, vandalism, and drug use (Espelage, 2002)

Bullying behaviors also impact and affect the overall school's social climate. As previously stated the school atmosphere lacks an element of safety for many students. This hostile environment is one reason for increase of school

drop out and truancy rates. Besides safety reasons individuals, who are victims of bullying may lack a feeling of school satisfaction, which may be another factor for increase in drop out and truancy rates. Either way, both threaten an individual's ability to achieve success in school in a safe, caring, community of learners where students feel accepted. If bullying behaviors are not resolved properly or improper tolerance policies are used, bullying behaviors become increasingly accepted. This improper treatment of bullying behaviors increase school tensions and can increase violence in schools. Unfortunately this school tension can erupt into one of the many school shootings that have tragic consequences for everyone involved.

Students who bully are also more likely to engage in illegal behaviors, such as drug use and other anti-social behaviors. Victims of bullying suffer from low self-esteem, anxiety, safety issues, depression, and in extreme cases suicide. Due to these and many other factors discussed bullying behaviors have both life long effects on an individual's mental health, physical health, and academic achievement and overall success in school. The impact of bullying has far too many negative impacts to be ignored as a normal childhood passage. Due to the widespread affects of bullying for both the victim and the bully can we ignore and allow bullying to continue within our school.

Even though bullying has a negative impact on the victim and the bully, we often ignore a large group of children, the bystanders. The bystander is an individual or individuals who are not victim to the bully or an active participant in bullying, but they are a witness to the act of bullying. Bystanders don't always

have a clear understanding of the situation. Sometimes this lack of understanding can lead to an inability to deal with their own emotional reaction or perhaps they experience a sense of guilt for their inability to find an appropriate strategy to deal with the bully or the victim. A bystander may feel anger, sadness, fear, and sometimes indifference. "Research has also found that victims and bystanders sometimes react similarly physiologically. In fact, both victims and bystanders in contact with violence over a period of time may begin to repress feelings of empathy for others, a response that also desensitizes them to negative school behavior." (Harris and Petrie, 2003 p. 8)

"Kids will be kids." is not an acceptable attitude toward verbal and physical abuse among children and their peers. Whether these behaviors occur at school, on the bus, at a game, or on the way home, we must find ways to prevent and provide intervention techniques within our schools.

Chapter III: Summary, Critical Analysis, and Recommendations

This chapter summarizes the literature reviewed on the types of bullying behaviors, who suffers from bullying behaviors, and the effects of bullying behaviors. This chapter will also include a critical analysis of the findings from the literature review related to preventions and interventions strategies related to bullying. Finally, recommendations will be presented for areas of further research.

Summary

Bullying certainly is not a new problem in schools throughout history, but the level of and frequency of violence associated with bullying has soared to an all time high. Serious and deadly school shootings have escalated and it seems impossible to ensure that our schools are safe. For schools to be effective we must ensure that our students have a safe environment that is free from threats and violence. It is obviously unrealistic to expect an individual to learn in such hostile environments. The quality of a child's education is not the only area that is negatively impacted by bullying behaviors; victims and bullies both suffer from mental health issues that not only effect their ability to learn, but impact their lives for years to come.

Bullying behaviors come in a variety of forms. Bullying is not simply physical in nature and it isn't always obvious to school staff or even family members. It can be indirect in nature and there are not always bruises or cuts left behind. Most victims of bullying don't have physical wounds that are visible to the human eye. The pain of bullying does not always heal like a bruise. The pain

of bullying continues to haunt victims of bullying long after a student leaves school. The wrath of bullying may affect one's ability to establish healthy relationships, achieve life and educational goals, and maintain a healthy sense of self worth and self-esteem. Due to the large number of both individuals involved and the number of potential bullying behaviors, it is essential that we actively combat bullies and the negative consequences that may impact all participants involved.

Bullying not only affects the bully and the victim, but it also affects individuals who are simply exposed to the aggression of bullying (bystanders). These exposures impact the overall climate of the school. Over time these negative behaviors build a sense of acceptance or tolerance of bullying behaviors. Students who are not directly involved also experience negative consequences of bullying. Sometimes bystanders feel a sense of guilt for not aiding victims of bullying, but they can also feel intolerance for bullying behaviors. They begin to lack compassion for bullying victims and they become compliant about bullying behaviors. They no longer view them as an injustice, but as a warranted behavior. Bystanders may begin to lack a sense of empathy for a victim over time due to exposure to bullying events. This type of compliance is unacceptable in our schools today.

We must actively and continuously fight against bullying behaviors and the negative consequences that affect everyone in our school today. It is imperative that we ensure the educational success of all students to guarantee and encourage pro-social behaviors that foster positive mental health.

Bullying behaviors affect everyone. Due to the vast amount of bullying there is rarely anyone who hasn't been bullied themselves or been a witness to bullying. Bullying behaviors, bullies, and victims of bullying are present in all areas of the United States and bullying is simply not isolated to our country alone. Decreasing bullying in our schools will not only benefit the positive climate of the school, but it will also benefit social competence for tomorrow's adults.

Critical Analysis:

Since bullying behaviors are a common problem in schools today, it is essential that all schools create an active and ongoing prevention and intervention program to combat bullying. Even though it is ideal to prevent bullying behaviors before they start, it is also fundamental to intervene when incidences of bullying occur. It is also essential to include an intervention policy that is not solely based on punishment. It is important to provide consequences for bullying behaviors, but it is also crucial to incorporate a counseling component that provides bullies with the tools to learn a new behavior. Since many bullying behaviors are learned, bullies need to learn a new set of pro-social behaviors that do not negatively impact those around them.

For any bullying prevention program to be successful it is necessary for each school to have a clear and easily understood philosophy that promotes a safe and positive environment. This philosophy should start during the early childhood years and continue throughout high school. Three values which promote a positive climate and develop a basis for a bullying prevention program include the belief that all children can learn, people should be treated with respect

and dignity, and there is no place for violence in the school. (Orpinas & Horne, 2006. p. 85) Every child has the ability to learn academic material and the behavioral skills to develop positive relationships. Even bullies who have repetitive patterns of bullying can change when given the proper resources. On the other hand, children who are not supplied with new effective tools will use what they know and they will continue to use aggressive tactic. The second value that schools need to maintain to combat bullying is to maintain that “all people in the school community deserve to be treated with respect and dignity.” (Orpinas & Horne, 2006. p. 86) Children who are not treated with respect will in return treat other with a lack of respect. If children are expected to be respectful of other students and teachers, then they must also be treated by teachers and other students with the same respect and dignity. To reduce bullying behaviors teachers and other adults must model and set the tone for reciprocating behaviors that show respect and dignity for all people in the school community. Finally the third school value that helps promote a positive school climate is to adopt a zero tolerance policy for violence, aggression, and bullying. These types of behaviors are not acceptable in school. Both students and teachers are held accountable for maintaining a pro-social environment. Aggression towards teachers and students is an unacceptable behavior for both students and teachers alike. Again, teachers need to practice and model pro-social behaviors with their students, as well as with the colleagues that they work with. Therefore it is crucial that all staff members create and maintain a positive working community to ensure the success

of a positive climate at school. Without the full support of the school community we are helpless to effectively fight the war against bullies and bullying behaviors.

Teachers and students are not the only ones, who need to be aware of bullying behaviors and how to change them. It is also essential for parents to be aware of their child's school policies and philosophies about bullying behaviors. Since many of these bullying behaviors are learned, it is crucial that schools rely on families to help reinforce pro-social behaviors. Many times many parent are unaware of the child's school policies or the fact that their child may be a bully or a victim of bullying. Many times victims of bullying do not inform their parents of abuses that they are suffering at school. Many times these students don't want to be viewed as incompetent of fixing their problems or as inadequate. They may also worry about the threat of the bullying finding out and retaliating against them, or perhaps they don't want to burden their parents or make them worry. It is clear that a school approach must be taken to combat bullying behaviors that involves administrators, teacher, school staff, parents, students, and even community members. The support of the entire community is required. The parents of the bully and the victim of bullying need to be included to provide training and education.

Awareness is another critical requirement for school to combat bullying behaviors in schools. If a school is unaware of a bullying problem, it is impossible for such an incident to be resolved. Whether teachers or administrators are in denial about a problem or whether they are unaware of a problem; it still remains an unresolved issue for students. To simply be aware of

the problem is also futile in an attempt to resolve issues with bullying.

Unfortunately many schools may believe that awareness means a resolution. This erroneous thought only identifies that there is problem. It obviously doesn't solve the problem. Schools need to be honest with themselves and the ability of their school to create a safe and positive environment for the students. School administrators and teachers must also take an active approach to physical monitoring of children and remain constantly vigilant to prevent bullying behaviors within their schools.

Not only do teachers need to have a clear understanding of bullying behaviors, but students need to be aware of bullying behaviors and how to combat them in their school. Children need to be provided with the training to become socially competent. Children who are more socially competent have skills that allow them to be more competent to solve conflicts without violence, resist negative peer pressure, make friends, and have future plan. (Orpinas, Horne, 2006. p. 108) Children who are socially competent have an awareness of unacceptable behaviors, such as bullying. They also have the emotional base to recognize and empathize with other's feelings and the character development to show respect for others. Children who are socially competent are also able to identify positive and negative consequences for their choices. Socially competent children are obviously less likely to engage in bullying behaviors. Therefore it is important to provide training, resources, and other tools to enhance and nurture social competence in all children.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Through the review of literature, the researcher identified the need to maintain an active and ongoing bullying prevention and intervention program that fosters awareness, education, and training is necessary to ensure a positive school environment. Even though bullying prevention is in place in many schools, more needs to be done. It is important to evaluate the effectiveness of the programs to ensure that progress is being made to ensure a safe environment for students. Thus, the following recommendations are offered for areas of further research and investigation.

1. It is recommended that all schools maintain an active and ongoing anti-bullying campaign that provide awareness and education for the entire community, including administrators, teachers, school support and staff members, students, parents, and community members.

2. Further investigation to identify schools with successful anti-bullying programs and then conduct research in assessing school that have been successful in lowering their incidences of bullying.

3. It is recommended that teachers, administrators, and all staff members receive specific training on the importance of and effective strategies to combat bullying behaviors.

4. A strong home-school connection is recommended to create parental awareness of anti-bullying policies that provide guidelines for creating a positive and safe environment that fosters pro-social behaviors.

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