

Bullying FAQs: A Fact Sheet for Job Corps Staff

What is bullying?

Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional and involves an imbalance of power or strength. It can involve physical violence, threats, shunning, name calling, or cyber bullying. Bullying is not usually provoked by the target.

Who does bullying affect?

Bullying can affect everyone on center. Those who are targets of bullies often feel unsafe. Their physical, emotional, and academic well-being maybe affected. Bullying contributes to a negative climate on center that can interfere with learning and the perceived safety.

Who do bullies target?

Anyone can be a bully's target; however, some students are at an increased risk. Students who are smaller, weaker, or seen as different are more often bullied. Gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) individuals and young people with disabilities are often targeted by bullies.



How can tell if a student is bullied?

If you suspect that a student is bullied, talk with the student and observe the involved parties. Try to determine the relationship between the parties. Warning signs that a student is bullied may include:

- Unexplained cuts, bruises, and/or scratches
- Decreased interest in academics or trades
- Complaints of stomachaches or headaches
- Appears sad, depressed, or moody
- Appears anxious and/or has low self-esteem
- Personality changes, especially when a student is suddenly quiet, sensitive, or passive

What should I do if I think a student is bullied?

If one particular student or a group of students fall target to bullying, you must act quickly. There are some do's and don'ts when intervening in a situation that involves bullying.

Do

- Intervene immediately. Stop the bullying behavior as soon as you see it or hear about it.
- Talk to the bully and the target separately. If more than one student is involved, talk to each of them individually, in quick succession. Follow up until the situation is resolved.

Don't

- Set up mediation. If a peer mediation program is already in place, be careful with referrals where bullying is involved because of the power imbalance between bully and target. The target may feel additional intimidation and/or may not have the communication or assertiveness skills necessary for successful mediation.
- Blame the target. Do not go about intervening as you would if you were breaking up a fight. Bullying is not the target's fault.

What can bystanders do?

Bystanders should be encouraged to support targets rather than bullies. They should be encouraged to report this behavior to a staff member.

How do I work with the bully?

You should have a conversation with the bully. Ask questions such as: "What did you do?", "Who did you hurt", "What were you trying to accomplish?", "Next time you have that goal, how will you meet it without hurting anybody?"

Your center should have progress sanctions to deal with bullying and harassment. These sanctions should be uniformly applied. View the Sample Anti-Bullying Policy section in this toolkit.

References

Crisis Prevention Institute, 10 Ways to Help Reduce Bullying in Schools.

<https://www.crisisprevention.com/Blog/10-Ways-to-Help-Reduce-Bullying-in-Schools>

What You Can Do? September 29, 2017. Available at: <https://www.stopbullying.gov/resources/what-you-can-do>

Bullying Statistics. PACER'S National Bullying Prevention Center. Updated: May, 2020. <https://www.pacer.org/bullying/resources/stats.asp>

Teaching tolerance. Bullying basics. <https://www.tolerance.org/professional-development/bullying-basics>

Understanding the Role of School Administrators in Community-Wide Bullying Prevention Efforts. https://www.stopbullying.gov/sites/default/files/2017-09/hrsa_guide_school-administrators_508.pdf

Learn more about bullying, suicide, and violence prevention on the SafetyNet, located on the Job Corps Community website.