

# The Parent Information Center of Delaware

*Inform. Educate. Advocate.*

## Using Social Skills to Address Bullying

*In collaboration with the Center for Disabilities Studies and Delaware  
Department of Education*



# About the Parent Information Center of Delaware

Established more than 30 years ago, the Parent Information Center is a statewide non-profit organization that provides tools for parents, caregivers, and advocates of children to secure appropriate education and related services. PIC empowers parents to become their child's lifelong advocate and for youth to become self advocates.

**Our Mission:** To advance effective parent engagement in education

**Our Vision:** For all children to fulfill their potential to succeed

## The Parent Information Center of Delaware

*Inform. Educate. Advocate.*

[www.picofdel.org](http://www.picofdel.org)



# Our Support & Services

**One-to-One Consultations** provide parents and caregivers with the information and skills necessary to ensure their children receive free and appropriate special education and related services as guaranteed them under the IDEA

**Learning opportunities** such as trainings, audio conferences, and annual education and parent leadership conferences build awareness and advocacy skills

**Online resources** such as the PIC website and weekly e-news connect thousands of families, caregivers and professionals to important and timely information

**Outreach** to all families of children with disabilities opens doors to understanding and collaboration

**Systems advocacy** ensures that the interests of children with disabilities are considered at both local and national levels



# Add PBS slide



# Learning Objectives

- Definition & Characteristics of Bullying & Cyberbullying
- Status of bullying in Delaware
- Recognizing signs of bullying
- Delaware Regulations
- Steps you and your child can take to prevent and respond to bullying
- School practices to address bullying

# Delaware's Definition of Bullying

Any intentional **written, electronic, verbal or physical act** or actions against another person that a reasonable person under the circumstances should know will have the effect of:

- Placing that individual in substantial harm
- Creating a hostile, threatening, humiliating or abusive educational environment
- Interfering with a students learning environment
- Perpetuating bullying

# Bullying

**Various definitions, however generally defined as:**

- **Imbalance of Power:** people who bully use their power to control or harm and the people being bullied may have a hard time defending themselves
- **Intent to Cause Harm:** actions done by accident are not bullying; the person bullying has a goal to cause harm
- **Repetition:** incidents of bullying happen to the same the person over and over by the same person or group

# Cyberbullying

Use of technology to bully or harass another person through:

- Emails
- Instant or text messaging
- Social networking sites (i.e., Facebook/
- Twitter)
- Web Pages
- Blogs
- Chat rooms or discussion groups
- Other cyber technologies





# Cyberbullying comes in many forms

- Sending mean messages or threats to a person's email account or cell phone
- Spreading rumors online or through texts
- Posting hurtful or threatening messages on social networking sites or web pages
- Stealing a person's account information to break into their account and send damaging messages
- Pretending to be someone else online to hurt another person
- Taking unflattering pictures of a person and spreading them through cell phones or the Internet
- Sexting, or circulating sexually suggestive pictures or messages about a person

# Bullying

Bullying can take many forms. Examples include:

**Verbal:** name-calling, teasing, verbal intimidation, threats\*, coercion\*

**Social:** spreading rumors, exclusion, or alienation, breaking up friendships

**Physical:** hitting, punching, shoving, property damage and/or theft

**Cyber or Electronic:** using the Internet, mobile phones or other digital technologies to harm others



Source: [www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov)

\*Source (Delaware Bullying Prevention Association)

## How about Delaware schools?

46% of elementary  
37% of middle  
30% of high school



**Students agreed or agreed a lot** that bullying is a big problem in their individual school\*

\*2016 Delaware school climate Survey of 154 schools

10% of elementary  
23% of middle  
16% of high school

**Teachers agreed or agreed a lot that bullying is a big problem in their individual school\***



\*2016 Delaware school climate Survey of 154 schools

# Bullying and Students with Disabilities

Percentage of parents responding “once or twice a month” or more:

“My child was bullied in this school” (General)

**41.7%** of students with  
**Emotional Disturbance**

**6.6%** of students with  
**Other Health Impairment**

**5.9%** of students with  
**Specific Learning Disability**

*COMPARED TO*

**5.2%** of students **without**  
**disabilities**

“A student said mean things to my child” (Verbal)

**50.0%** of students with  
**Emotional Disturbance**

**12.2%** of students with **Other**  
**Health Impairment**

**27.3%** of students with **Visual**  
**Impairment**

**20.0%** of students with **Hearing**  
**Impairment**

*COMPARED TO*

**10.2%** of students  
**without disabilities**

# Bullying and Students with Disabilities

Percentage of parents responding “once or twice a month” or more:

“Students left my child out of things  
to make him/her feel badly”  
(Social/Relational)

**16.7%** of students with  
**Emotional Disturbance**

**8.7%** of students with  
**Hearing Impairment**

**27.3%** of students with  
**Visual Impairment**

**14.5%** of students with  
**Autism Spectrum Disorder**

*COMPARED TO*

**4.6%** of students **without disabilities**

“My child was hit or  
kicked and it hurt”  
(Physical)

**9.1%** of students with  
**Emotional Disturbance**

**4.2%** of students with  
**Hearing Impairment**

**9.1%** of students with  
**Visual Impairment**

**3.4%** of students with  
**Autism Spectrum Disorder**

*COMPARED TO*

**2.3%** of students  
**without disabilities**

# Bullying & Students with Disabilities

- Easily targeted
- May not always pick up on social cues
- May be thought of as “stupid” or “slow” and so be more vulnerable to bullying
- May be less likely to defend themselves
- May be picked on because they’re different with other students not realizing it’s a disability



# Cyber bullying data



# Characteristics of Bullying

## (What to look for)

- Increased absences from school
- Changes in behavior i.e., withdrawn, or disruptive
- Reports losing items such as books, electronics, clothing, or jewelry
- Has unexplained injuries
- Complains frequently of headaches, stomachaches, or other physical complaints
- Trouble sleeping or eating
- Loses interest in visiting or talking with friends
- Avoids certain places
- Loses interest in school work or begins to do poorly in school
- Appears sad, moody, angry, anxious or depressed when they come home
- Talks about suicide



# Handout with resources regarding suicide

# Traditional view of bully-victim



# Bullying is typically a group phenomenon

*(Swearer et al., 2012)*



## Implications for bullying prevention?

- Must target peer norms, values, beliefs, acceptance, including bystanders (reinforcers, defenders, and passive bystanders)
  - Bullies tend to be popular (depending on norms), victims unpopular (and worse as bullying progresses)
  - One function of bullying is to gain social status
  - Often difficult, but very important to rally support of popular students

# Anyone can be a victim of bullying....



Delaware law requires that schools have a procedure in place to investigate bullying and to determine the reason “why” the bullying is occurring. Reasons may include race, age, marital status (such as having gay/lesbian parents), creed, religion, color, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or national origin. Or, it may be because of a person’s physical appearance or some other unknown reason.

Any staff member must report suspected bullying

14 Del Code 4112D(b)(2)(e)

Subsection e.

A requirement that any school employee that has reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to **suspect** that a person is a target of bullying shall **immediately** report it to the administration.

# Bullying Prevention Law & Cyberbullying Regulation

- Requires schools to report both allegations of bullying and substantiated incidents to the DOE within five business days
- Requires school administration to identify and report the reason for the bullying
- Districts and charter schools must adopt state's cyberbullying policy language
  - Defines cyberbullying
  - Allows schools to discipline for off-campus cyberbullying which is causing a substantial disruption to the educational process
  - School must inform students of social media sites which are considered to be available to a broad audience regardless of privacy settings

AG's School Ombudsperson Contact Number is 1-800-220-5414



# Other Legal Requirements

- Schools identify an appropriate range of consequences
- A procedure in place for students and guardians to provide information on bullying activity
- That the guardian of both the bully and the target be notified by the school
- That the school forbid retaliation following a report of bullying
- That the school bullying prevention program be implemented throughout the school year
- That a procedure be in place for communication with medical professionals treating students for bullying issues



# Bullying & Students with disabilities

## Bullying and Harassment: Denial of FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education)

- *Disability harassment under Section 504 and Title II is intimidation or abusive behavior toward a student based on disability that creates a hostile environment by interfering with or denying a student's participation in or receipt of benefits, services, or opportunities in the institution's program.*
- *Harassing conduct may take many forms, including verbal acts and name-calling, as well as nonverbal behavior, such as graphic and written statements, or conduct that is physically threatening, harmful, or humiliating.*

Dear Colleague Letter: July 25, 2000 Office of Civil Rights.

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/disabharassltr.html>

# Bullying & Students with Disabilities

States and school districts have a responsibility under **Section 504, Title II**, and the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**, 4 which is enforced by OSERS, to ensure that a free appropriate public education (FAPE) is made available to eligible students with disabilities.

Disability harassment that adversely affects an elementary or secondary student's education may also be a denial of FAPE under the IDEA, as well as Section 504 and Title II.

Harassment of a student based on disability may decrease the student's ability to benefit from his or her education and amount to a denial of FAPE.

# Detecting and Intervening in Bullying Situations

## Adults...

- Have difficulty recognizing bullying
- Fail to recognize the importance of intervening
- Uncertain *how* best to intervene
  - Adults often don't know how best to intervene in bullying, especially with special populations (LGBT, racial/ethnic minority, overweight youth)
- Lack time

## Students...

- Rarely report bullying to adults
  - Just 21% of students involved in bullying had reported the event to a school staff member



So... what do we do?



# The Bystander

## Hurtful Bystanders



## Helpful Bystanders



# Add handout about tattling vs. telling

# How can schools address bullying?

Consistent with previous research, students in Delaware report **less bullying in schools with a positive school climate** and where teachers emphasize the use of techniques for developing strong teacher-student relationships and students' social and emotional skills. This effect was strongest in elementary school.



“Bullying is a relationship problem that requires a relationship solution.”



National Center on Safe Supportive Learning  
Environments, Training Toolkit for Creating a  
Supportive Classroom Climate





# Positive Behavior Support

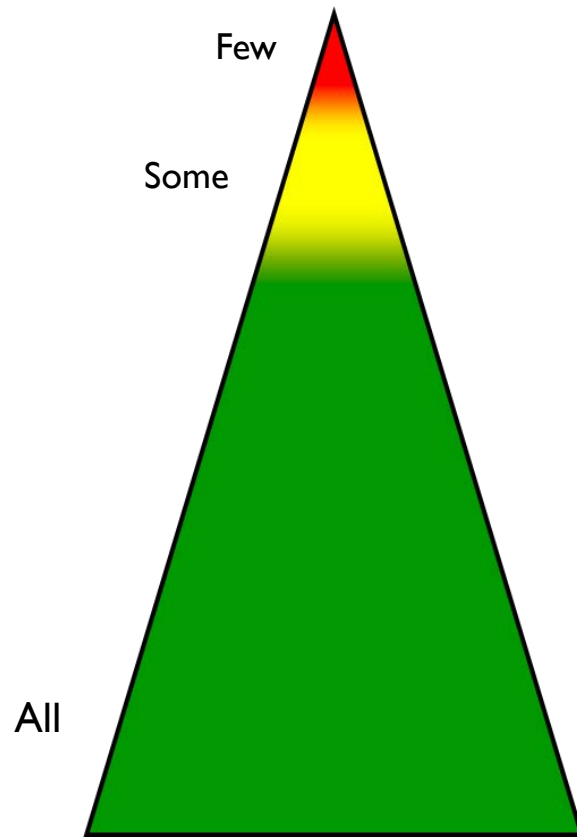
Schools use Positive Behavior Support as a framework to teach and respond to behavior.



# Three levels of positive behavior support/MTSS

## Behavioral Systems

Research-Based System:  
Positive Behavior Supports (PBS)



### TIER 3 (approximately 5% of students)

- Individualized FBA/BIP for behaviors which are unresponsive to classroom or small group interventions, existing over a period of weeks
- Wrap Around Supports

**Multiple resources/staff members involved**

### TIER 2 (approximately 15% of students)

- Small group instruction aligned with core curriculum
- Daily point card (with some individual features)
- Check in/Check out

**Additional staff members involved**

### TIER 1 (approximately 80% of students)

- Prevent (employ classroom environment strategies),
- Review classroom and school expectations, teach appropriate behaviors/replacement behaviors,
- Conduct whole class lessons/meetings, reinforce using positive behavior techniques.

**Classroom Level!**



PBS is a framework for teaching and responding to behavior

# Use appropriate corrective strategies

## Recommended Strategies: Tier 1

### **When minor bullying behaviors are observed...**

- Correct the behavior immediately
- *Always* combine correction with recognition of positive behaviors
- Use inductive discipline
  - Emphasize impact of the behavior on the victim and relations with others
- Communicate that it is the behavior you dislike, *not* the student
- Communicate that it is a shared responsibility to help improve the misbehavior
- Communicate optimism that the bullying behavior will not be repeated



# Implement a universal bullying prevention or self curriculum

## Recommended Strategies: Tier 1

**Packaged programs available for purchase/training that are supported by research showing they reduce bullying victimization in *elementary* schools:**

- KiVa Bullying Prevention Program
- Olweus Bullying Prevention Program
- Second Step
  - Focuses on social-emotional skills

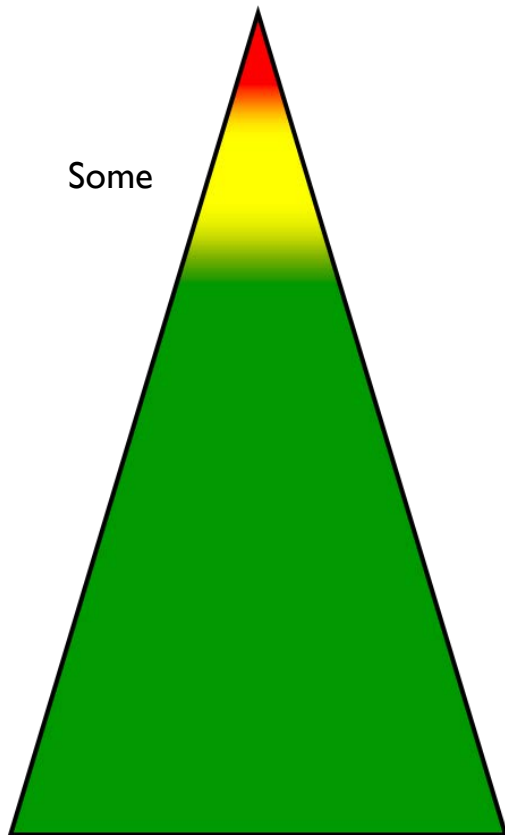


- Other popular programs (e.g. SWPBIS, Restorative Justice, Bully Proofing Your School, and Second Step: Bullying Prevention Unit) have been shown to lead to positive



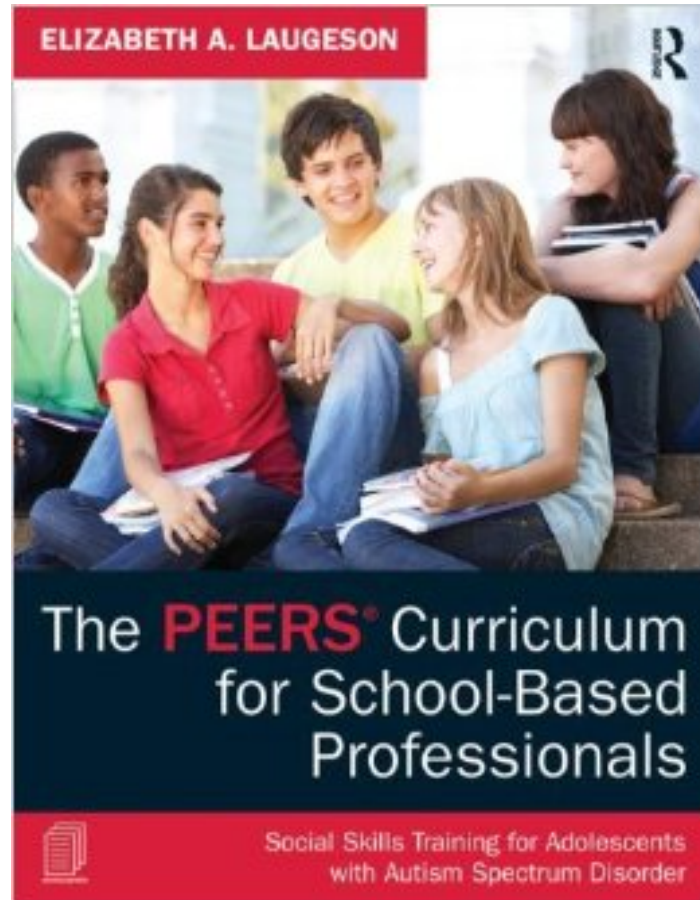
# Provide social skills/sel training

## Recommended Strategies: Tiers 2 & 3



- Target specific prosocial skills and antisocial behaviors related to social acceptance, friendships, and bullying victimization
- Use lessons from a Tier 1 bullying prevention or SEL curriculum
  - E.g. Steps to Respect or Second Step
- Use evidence-based curriculum lessons designed for use at Tiers 2 and 3
  - E.g. Incredible Years, Coping Power, and PEERS
  - Include training for targeted students **and** their parents

# Why PEERS for Social Skills?



# Add handout for where PEERS groups

# Why PEERS?

- **Evidence-Based Social Skills intervention**
- **Skills were developed by looking at what socially successful teens do**
- **Friendship is based on common interests**
- **We find common interests by trading information**
- **Trading information describes good conversation.**
  - **Verbal and non-verbal communication**



# Teaching Methods

- ✓ Didactic Lessons using specific steps to learn new skill
- ✓ Ecologically Valid Social Skills
- ✓ Socratic Method
- ✓ Use of Buzzwords
- ✓ Behavior Rehearsal Exercises
- ✓ Coaching with Performance Feedback
- ✓ Homework Assignments
- ✓ Role Play Demonstrations
- ✓ Perspective Taking Questions

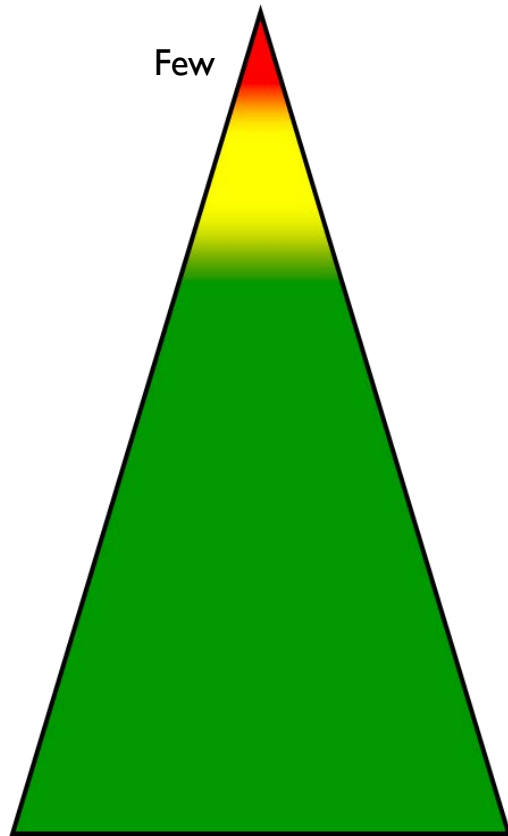
# Role Plays

- **Appropriate Example**
  - **Inappropriate Example**
- 
- ✓ Use live role plays
  - ✓ Use CD from the Science of Making Friends book
- 
- Must be connected to the Perspective Taking Questions!
    - **“What was that like for \_\_\_\_\_?”**
    - **“What do you think \_\_\_\_\_ thought of me?”**
    - **“Is \_\_\_\_\_ going to want to talk to me again?”**

# Peers: Handling Cyber Bullying

- Don't feed the trolls
- Have friends stick up for you
- Lay low online for a while
- Block the cyber bully
- Save the evidence
- Get help from adults
- Report cyber bullying to the proper authorities

# Tier 3 strategies



## TIER 3

- Individualized FBA/BIP for behaviors which are unresponsive to classroom or small group interventions,
- Short term Individual counseling for victims of bullying in school
- Referral/wrap around supports

**Multiple resources/staff members involved**



The FBA/BIP helps to determine the cause of behavior and develop a plan to teach new behaviors for individual students.

# What can families do?

## If your child discloses bullying:

### **DO:**

- Stay calm
- Get the facts
- Ask questions
  - Describe what happened
  - What led up to it
  - Where did it happen
  - How long has it been happening
- Reach out to the school
  - Set up a meeting with the principal
  - Find a point person at school for your child to talk to when there is a problem
  - Ask for a plan in writing as to how the situation is going to be addressed and monitored

# What can families do?

If your child discloses bullying:

## **DON'T:**

- React emotionally
- Take away technology or punish
- Speak with the bully or bully's parents directly

# What you can do if you suspect your child is being bullied

- ✓ Educate yourself about bullying
- ✓ Educate yourself about the school's policies on bullying AND the school's current climate & culture (are those policies being followed?)
- ✓ Familiarize yourself with the 'warning signs'
- ✓ Talk to your children about the signs and 'speaking up'
- ✓ Teach them the differences between '**Telling**' & '**Tattling**'
- ✓ Talk about appropriate ways to respond, i.e., seeking help, etc.
- ✓ Encourage students to embrace their differences: Connect them with peer/support groups
- ✓ Work with school or community groups for anti-bullying intervention programs

# Cyberbullying

## FOR TEENS:

Talk to a trusted adult

Report to the content or website provider

In some instances: IGNORE THEM

Block the person/username

## FOR PARENTS:

**Communicate with your children.**

**Be aware of where your children go online.**

Familiarize yourself with the technology they are using.

**Develop and enforce rules.**

Work together and come to a clear understanding about when, where, and for what purpose phones and computers can be used. Develop clear rules about. Decide on fair consequences and follow through consistently.





# What NOT to do

## **FOR PARENTS:**

- Do not blame your child for being bullied.
- Do not encourage your child to harm the person who is bullying them.
- Do not contact the parents of the students who bullied your child.
- Do not demand or expect a solution on the spot.

## **FOR TEENS:**

Do not retaliate

Do not forward or share information or a photo you receive of someone

# Resources

- DELETEBullying - <http://pcadelaware.org/intro-to-delete-bullying/>
- Stop Bullying.Gov - <http://www.stopbullying.gov/>
- Delaware Department of Education -Training Materials for School Bullying Prevention [http://www.doe.k12.de.us/infosuites/students\\_family/clmate/](http://www.doe.k12.de.us/infosuites/students_family/clmate/)
- Common sense Media – Bullying  
<https://www.common sense media.org/blog/bullying-is-everybodys-business>
- PACER Kids Against Bullying - [www.pacerkidsagainstbullying.org](http://www.pacerkidsagainstbullying.org)
- National Bullying Prevention Center –PACER <http://www.pacer.org/bullying/>

# Thank You!

Learn more at

[www.picofdel.org](http://www.picofdel.org)



Follow us on Facebook  
**Parent Information Center of Delaware**



Twitter **@picofdel**

Share the Knowledge

**Sign up for the Weekly E-News & Events**

Support us!

**Donate Online or Volunteer Today!**

