

A MODEL FOR REDUCING BULLYING IN THE MIDDLE SCHOOL [9511]

Dale I. Foreman, Associate Professor
Shenandoah University, Winchester, Virginia
James Gregory Smith, Director of Secondary Education
Shenandoah County Public Schools, Virginia

Workshop Summary

Violence, especially bullying, occurs in middle schools more frequently now than ever before. This challenges these schools to deal with the violent actions of students who intimidate others through threats, pushing, fighting, and so forth, and to face the problems emanating from that violence.

That schools are stepping up to this challenge is illustrated by the large number of students who receive in-school, out-of-school, and full-year suspensions. In these cases, principals work with teachers, and when it can be arranged, with the students' parents. Yet, one of the school's biggest challenges is to identify effective ways to address bullying in the school building and on the playground. Another is to be able to work effectively both with the problem children and their bullied victims, for there are many situations which result in suspension that do not change the behavior of the bully. Schools need to work with such children in a more positive developmental way to help them understand what bullying is and how it might be addressed.

This workshop will feature small group discussions of film clips in which at least one of the students in the film is considered to be a bully based upon his or her actions. The workshop will also include films that illustrate how students are taught to address the problem of bullying and to recognize the need to change. For 15 or 20 minutes at the end of the workshop, participants will discuss the success of the process of teaching bullies to reform their behavior.

Workshop Goal

Participants will learn about and participate in a film- and discussion-based model for addressing bullying in the middle school.

Workshop Objectives

- To give participants a model for addressing bullying in the middle school, noting examples and degrees of bullying
- To help participants explore how film clips that portray bullying behavior and ways to address this problem can be used to address the problem of bullying in the school
- To engage participants in the model by having them screen film clips and then to discuss and evaluate the behavior, responses, and issues portrayed as well as the model itself

Workshop Activities

1. Brief discussion by the presenters of the film clip model.
2. Preparation of participants for using the film clip model by discussing its data collection instruments and learning about their use
3. Organization of participants into groups of four or five—as is done when working with middle school bullies—to brief them on film clip observation techniques and uses
4. Screening of small segments (film clips) of movies that show bullying behavior, and engaging in small group observation, recordkeeping, role playing, and group discussion with a counselor following the discussion question shown in the clip

5. Total group discussion of the actions and responses that were portrayed in each scene in the film clips
6. Conclusion: 15-minute question-and-answer session about the model and its application to various levels of violence

Assessment

A survey will assess the feelings of the participants regarding the model in terms of its application to the target population and ease of use. (See attached for a draft of the survey.)

Resources

- Film clip showing scenes of varying types of bullying behavior
- Documents that illustrate participant response
- Guidelines for the counselor
- Data tables and graphs pertaining to suspension and other punishment
- Information sheet regarding four video learning sets on peer pressure, anger, criticism, and bullies

References

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- United Learning. (n.d.). Wexford Learning Series (video learning sets). Evanston IL: Author. <http://www.unitedlearning.com>
- Wexford Learning Series, United Learning, 1560 Sherman Avenue, Suite 100, Evanston, IL 60201, www.unitedlearning.com
- Video Learning Sets:
- Peer Pressure: Are You Controlling Your Life?
 - Anger: Alternatives to Aggression and Violence
 - Criticism: Striving for Perfection
 - Bullies: Dealing With Aggression