

## **NURTURING THE EMOTIONAL IQ OF YOUTH AT RISK FOR ENGAGING IN BULLYING BEHAVIORS [5240]**

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### **Workshop Summary**

Brain and behavioral science research shows that deficits in moral and emotional intelligence can sabotage the intellect of children and adolescents. According to researchers, the greatest toll is on children and adolescents for whom risks include bullying and social cruelty, aggressive acts, violent crime, depression, and alcohol and drug use.

Such students who exhibit behaviors of social cruelty show aggression in unprovoked situations; act deliberately, not out of anger; get pleasure from their acts; use power imbalance to intimidate or hurt other students; lack empathy, compassion, and perspective taking; rate high on self-esteem; and lack remorse, act impulsively, and fail to anticipate the consequences of their behavior. To nurture these students' developing character and promote their positive development, emotional literacy must be a key ingredient their education.

Indeed, the child and adolescent literature emphasizes the importance of nurturing and guiding the development of children's moral and social emotional competencies—that is, their emotional intelligence—from birth through adolescence. Emotional intelligence includes self-awareness (regulation of one's moods), impulse control, self-motivation, optimism, social competence, persistence in the face of frustrations, planning and problem solving, and the ability to empathize and cope and to keep distress from overwhelming the ability to think.

Even though a review of the literature suggests that practitioners focus mainly on changing the victim's behavior and protecting the victim from the perpetrator, this workshop will examine the aggressor's behaviors. It will emphasize fostering the development of the social/emotional literacy skills of the perpetrator, although social/emotional literacy skills have implications for all students: bullies, victims, and bystanders.

Specifically, the workshop will examine strategies, needs and responses, and community engagement. The strategies for enhancing the aggressor's emotional/social competence include fostering the development of empathy, altruism, and perspective taking; teaching friendship-making skills; coaching children to use inner speech, imagery, and resiliency statements to control their behavior; enhancing the children's problem solving and goal-setting capabilities; teaching them techniques for handling impulses and anger; and providing opportunities for practicing these skills.

The needs of children and teens for guidance and multiple opportunities to practice being persons of good character can be met through coaching and mentoring as well as through the curriculum, comprehensive approaches to improving school climate, and building a just community. Through adult and peer support, boundaries and expectations for appropriate behaviors, the fostering of social/emotional competence and positive values, children and adolescents receive an opportunity to develop positive identities.

The community engagement aspect will use as a model the Search Institute's developmental asset framework, whereby emotional literacy is woven into all sectors of the community and among all students, faculty, staff, and parents attached to the school, K-12. The goal is to provide all students with the opportunity to learn the emotional/social skills needed to become caring, responsible, and contributing members of society. Aggressive acts, bullying, violence, depression, alcohol and drug use, and other risk behaviors are reduced and academic performance improved.

## **Workshop Goals**

Participants will increase their awareness about the role of social/emotional literacy in reducing aggressive acts and increasing prosocial behaviors in children and adolescents.

## **Workshop Objectives**

1. To provide an overview of social emotional literacy skills and the implications for positive outcomes for students at risk for aggressive behaviors
2. To examine strategies for enhancing the aggressor's social/emotional competence
3. To examine schoolwide approaches to increasing social/emotional literacy
4. To explore how the developmental asset framework can be used to engage all community sectors in promoting positive youth development

## **Workshop Activities**

1. Introduction (including stating learning objectives, looking at goals found in school mission statements, and discussing the implications of healthy social/emotional development—with audience input)
2. Focus on emotional intelligence (including showing a video clip of Daniel Goleman defining emotional intelligence, providing a brief overview of social/emotional literacy skills, and describing outcomes for students who lack social/emotional competencies)
3. Focus on brain and emotional development and the implications for healthy child and adolescent development (including showing a slide of the brain to illustrate the connection between the prefrontal lobe and the amygdala)
4. Focus on bullying (including addressing facts and myths about students who exhibit bullying behaviors, showing a video clip of popular students who bully other students), identifying the characteristics/profiles of bullies—with audience input)
5. Focus on social/emotional competencies (including examining deficiencies, identifying risk and protective factors of aggressive behaviors, and identifying strategies for increasing social emotional competencies that can be applied to all students)
6. Focus on emotional literacy programs (including giving an overview of their optimal design, suggesting classroom and curricular strategies for integrating social/emotional literacy into a comprehensive schoolwide plan to improve school climate and the school culture, and introduce the Search Institute's Developmental Asset Framework as a model for engaging all community sectors in supporting and promoting positive outcomes for children and adolescents to become caring and responsible)
7. Focus on the future (including implications for further research and questions-and-answers)
8. Handouts
  - Examples of social emotional learning programs
  - Approaches used to institutionalize social/emotional literacy
  - Organizations conducting national reviews of bully prevention programs
  - Respect brochure
  - Your Resource Guide to Healthy Communities—Healthy Youth
  - Reference list

## **Assessment**

The presenter will informally assess the success of the workshop in meeting its objectives in two ways by noting: (1) participants' active engagement in the discussion and question-and-answer activities, and (2) their

stated intention to use the strategies and tools presented for creating the thinking, attitudes, and behaviors that contribute to a school culture that promotes respect, responsibility, and rights of students.

## Resources

- Blueprints for Violence Prevention, [www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints](http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints)
- Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, [www.casel.org](http://www.casel.org)
- Committee for Children (Second Step) (Pre-K-9), [www.cfchildren.org/ssf/ssf/ssindex](http://www.cfchildren.org/ssf/ssf/ssindex)
- Community of Caring (K-12), [www.communityofcaring.org](http://www.communityofcaring.org)
- U.S. Department of Education, (Exemplary and Promising Safe, Disciplined, and Drug-Free Schools Programs), [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov)
- High/Scope Educational Approach for Preschool and Primary Grades (pre-K-12), [www.highscope.org](http://www.highscope.org)
- Lions-Quest (K-12), [www.lions-quest.org](http://www.lions-quest.org)
- Paths (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies, K-6), [www.preventionscience.com](http://www.preventionscience.com)
- Open Circle Reach Out to Schools: Social Competency Program (k-5), [www.open-circle.org](http://www.open-circle.org)
- Resolving Conflict Creatively (K-8), [www.esnational.org](http://www.esnational.org)
- Responsive Classroom (K-6), [www.responsiveclassroom.org](http://www.responsiveclassroom.org)
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), (Model Programs), [www.modelprograms.samhsa.gov](http://www.modelprograms.samhsa.gov)
- Search Institute, [www.search-institute.org](http://www.search-institute.org)
- Skills, Opportunities, and Recognition (K-6), [www.preventionscience.com](http://www.preventionscience.com)
- Youth Violence
  - ▶ U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources, (Surgeon General), [www.surgeongeneral.gov/library](http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library)
  - ▶ Hamilton Fish Institute, [www.hamfish.org](http://www.hamfish.org).
  - ▶ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, (HRSA Anti-Bullying Campaign), <http://www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov>
  - ▶ National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC), (Stopping School Violence), <http://www.ncpc.org>
  - ▶ OLWEUS Bully Presentation Program, [www.clemson.edu/olweus](http://www.clemson.edu/olweus)
  - ▶ SAMHSA (15 Plus Campaign), <http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/15plus>

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