The Triad Of Bully, Victim, and Bystander:

Long-term Implications and Immediate Interventions
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A DEFINITION OF BULLYING

- BULLYING AT SCHOOL is defined as "AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR WHERE ONE OR MORE PUPILS PURPOSEFULLY INTEND TO HARM THE VICTIM PSYCHOLOGICALLY, VERBALLY OR PHYSICAL, REPEATEDLY OVER TIME, AND IN A SITUATION WHERE THERE IS A POWER IMBALANCE BETWEEN THE VICTIM AND THE BULLIES" (28 -29, 42).

AN ANALYSIS OF BULLYING

- BULLYING is typified by what is known as the "Double I-R" definition (Imbalance of power, Intentional acts, and Repeated over time).

Components of Bullying

- The Bully Triad Consists of:
  - Bully: someone who perpetrates violence or aggression toward another who is perceived to be weaker in some way
  - Victim: those who are the objects of aggression, verbal or physical. Victims will sometimes occupy dual roles, as victim in certain situations and bully in others; this is perhaps the most complex role to understand
  - Bystander: Bystander roles are broken down into four distinct categories: the assistant; the reinforcer; the outsiders; and the defender (Rivers, et al., 2009)
THE FORMS OF BULLYING

- **BULLYING MAY BE PHYSICAL**
  - More typical of young males
  - Results in fear and intimidation of the victim
  - Causes psychological and emotional harm
  - Achievement declines
  - May result in suicide

- **BULLYING MAY BE RELATIONAL**
  - More typical of young girls
  - Results in fear and intimidation of the victim
  - Causes psychological, physical, and emotional harm
  - Achievement decline
  - Victim is isolated or ostracized
  - May result in suicide

What does the Dear Colleague letter (DCL) do?

- Clarifies the relationship between bullying and discriminatory harassment under the civil rights laws enforced by the Department of Education’s (ED) Office for Civil Rights (OCR).
- Explains how student misconduct that falls under an anti-bullying policy also may trigger responsibilities under one or more of the anti-discrimination statutes enforced by OCR.
- Reminds schools that failure to recognize discriminatory harassment when addressing student misconduct may lead to inadequate or inappropriate responses that fail to remedy violations of students’ civil rights. Colleges and universities have the same obligations under the anti-discrimination statutes as elementary and secondary schools.
- Discusses racial and national origin harassment, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, and disability harassment and illustrates how a school should respond in each case.

What are the possible effects of student-on-student harassment and bullying?

- Lowered academic achievement and aspirations
- Increased anxiety
- Loss of self-esteem and confidence
- Depression and post-traumatic stress
- General deterioration in physical health
- Self-harm and suicidal thinking
- Feelings of alienation in the school environment, such as fear of other children
- Absenteeism from school

School’s obligation

- Once a school knows or reasonably should know of possible student-on-student harassment, it must take immediate and appropriate action to investigate or otherwise determine what occurred.
- If harassment has occurred, a school must take prompt and effective steps reasonably calculated to end the harassment, eliminate any hostile environment, and prevent its recurrence. These duties are a school’s responsibility even if the misconduct also is covered by an anti-bullying policy and regardless of whether the student makes a complaint, asks the school to take action, or identifies the harassment as a form of discrimination.

http://wdcrrobcolp01.ed.gov/CFAPPS/OCR/ContactUs.cfm
DATA ON YOUTH VIOLENCE

Statistics on Violence

- Data collected between 1994 and 1999 showed that 172 students between the ages of 5 to 18 were killed at or very near school grounds (Anderson, et al., 2001).
- April 14, 1999 – Columbine High School

- 2005, Jeff Weise, a Minnesota student entered his school at the Red Lake Indian Reservation, killing nine people, injuring seven, and then turning the gun on himself (Feder, Levant & Dean (2010). Quote from Weise: “I should have taken the razor blade express a long time ago”.

- Data kept on juvenile criminal events indicate that 10% of the 20,000 homicides committed yearly, are committed by individuals under the age of 18, and juveniles account for 16% of all violent criminal arrests (Feder, et al., 2010).

VIOLENCE AND YOUTH

- According to the Centers for Disease Control, in 2001, 5,486 young people ages 10 to 24 were murdered, an average of 15 each day (Feder, et al., 2010, p. 4).
- Youth suicides remain alarmingly high, and many times these suicides are tied to acts of bullying or aggression against the student.

- In 2001, there were 3,971 suicides of young people ages 15-24 making suicide the leading cause of death in this age group (Feder, et al., 2010).
- Centers for Disease Control reported that suicide in young people between the ages of 10 and 24 is the third leading cause of death; it results in 4400 lives being lost each year (2011).

Youth Suicide and Bullying

- According to the CDC more young people survive suicide attempts than actually die. Across the United States, in one year, over 149,000 children between the ages of 10-14 were treated in hospital emergency rooms for self-inflicted wounds.

- Surveys conducted in America’s public and private schools for youths between the ages of 14-18 found that 15% of the students reported seriously considering suicide, 11% reported creating a plan, and 7% reported trying to take their own lives.

- Feder, et al. (2010) reported that acts of suicide and homicide account for more than 25% of all deaths involving youths ages 10-24.

The Weapons Connection

Contributory Factors to Violence

- The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (2001) reported that an estimated 200 million firearms are in the hands of private citizens (enough to arm 3 out of 4 Americans).

- Each year 20,000 children and youth under 20 are killed or injured by firearms in the U.S.

- Brener, et al. (2005). In 2003, 1 in 16 high school students reported carrying a weapon to school.

- In 2003, 7.4% of high school students reported violent threats to their lives. Brener, et al. (2005) reported that this figure jumped to 10% in 2005.
Bullying Research

- Rivers, et al. (2009) looked at the mental health implications of those witnessing bullying, but having no participation in bullying behavior as bully or victim. These individuals were classified as assistants, reinforcers, outsiders and defenders (see earlier descriptions).
- Results revealed that being a witness to bullying significantly predicted elevation on several subscales of the BSI even after controlling for the effects of also being a victim or perpetrator.
- While chronic bullying did not predict elevated levels of mental distress on the Interpersonal Sensitivity subscale (measures items such as hurt feelings, or feelings of inferiority), being a victim or witnessing peer victimization did predict elevated levels on this particular subscale (Rivers, et al., 2009). Furthermore, being a perpetrator and victims to bullying predicted elevated levels of substance use, while this was not the case for victims of bullying.

- Perren and Hornung (2005) conducted research on bullying and delinquency in adolescence, and the relationship to several factors including antisocial behaviors, peer relations of victims and perpetrators, and family relations of victims and perpetrators.
- Insecure attachment style and overprotective parenting were significant predictors for victimization, whereas bullying behaviors were generally associated with parenting styles that adhered to corporal punishment, and time spent without adult supervision.

Research on Bullying is ongoing

- Some Final Questions
- Do we create bullies in society? Do we create victims?
- Do we engender those students who decide to ignore, or encourage what is happening?
- And most importantly, are there correlates between bullies and victims that are too powerful to ignore?
- These are questions to be addressed in future studies of bullying and bullying behaviors. The conclusion of the current review is that prevention and reduction are certain as we discover the structure and mechanics of bullying behaviors.

References
