

STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN! BULLYING: NATURE, SCOPE + EFFECTS

WHAT IS BULLYING?

- Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional and that involves an imbalance of power or strength. It occurs across all geographic, racial and socioeconomic boundaries.
- Bullying occurs when a student is subjected to negative behavior, repeated over a period of time, by another student or group of students.

TYPES OF BULLYING

- Bullying can take many forms:
 - **Direct Bullying:** teasing, verbal attacks, shoving, assaults, extortion, destruction of property.
 - **Indirect Bullying:** shunning, spreading rumors, malicious practical jokes, and similar verbal and social behavior.
 - **Cyber-Bullying:** use of Internet technology, including social websites, text messaging and e-mails to threaten, humiliate and shame.
- Verbal bullying is the most common type of bullying experienced by both boys and girls. Boys are more likely to be physically bullied by their peers (*Olweus, 1993; Nansel et al., 2001*); girls are more likely to report being targets of rumor-spreading and sexual comments (*Nansel et al., 2001*). Girls are also more likely than boys to bully each other using social exclusion (*Olweus, 2002*).

HOW COMMON IS BULLYING?

- 80% of primary school students have been bullied, and the majority happen in the classroom ¹

CHILDREN WHO BULLY

- Children who bully tend to have average or above average self-esteem. Other characteristics may include:
 - Impulsive, hot-headed personalities
 - Lack of empathy
 - Difficulty conforming to rules
 - Positive attitudes toward violence (*Olweus, 1993*)

¹ Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris Cognitive Science and Human Development Faculty Dean; STAR, 9 & 15 February 2004

EFFECTS OF BULLYING

The Effect on the Victim:

- Students who are the victims of bullying suffer behavioral consequences, including:
 - Loss of an interest in schoolwork.
 - Reluctance to attend school; poor attendance.
 - Lower grades.
 - Limited social contact with peers.
 - Mood swings, especially toward depression, irritability, unhappiness, outbursts of anger.
 - Report headaches, stomach pains (frequently in the morning before leaving for school), poor appetite, loss of sleep.
 - Visible cuts, scratches, bruises.
 - Loss of personal property because of theft or extortion.

The Effect on the Bully:

- Students who bully others also suffer behavioral consequences, including:
 - Lower grades.
 - Anti-social behaviors, including use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco, and engaging in vandalism.
 - Be truant from school.
 - Drop out of school.
 - Oppositional behavior and defiance directed at adults, including adult authority figures.
 - More likely to be convicted of criminal behavior in a court of law.

The Effect on the Bystander / Witness:

- Students who witness bullying may also suffer behavioral consequences, including:
 - Feelings of anger and helplessness for not knowing what to do.
 - Nightmares about being the next target.
 - Guilt for not taking action.
 - Fear of certain areas in school.