



# Bullying Prevention and Intervention in DC Educational Institutions

A Training Toolkit



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Notes for facilitators are indicated by this icon, and should not be read aloud.

## Training toolkit overview

This training toolkit is designed to provide staff in DC educational institutions with information to support their bullying prevention and intervention efforts, in accordance with the Youth Bullying Prevention Act of 2012.

### Learning objectives

Upon completion of this training, participants will:

- understand the required policy components of the Youth Bullying Prevention Act of 2012, including:
  - the definition of bullying,
  - reporting requirements, and
  - appeals procedures;
- be able to determine whether bullying has occurred, using the “Bullying Incident Checklist”;
- know best practices and misdirections in intervening in bullying situations;
- recognize the role of school climate in the prevention of bullying; and
- assess their current capacity for addressing school climate issues.

### Training design

This training is designed to be used in a group setting with school staff (including administrators, teachers, and educational support staff). A facilitator should review all materials and instructions prior to delivering the training. The total time to deliver the training is approximately 2.5 hours. If needed, the training can be broken up into either two 80-minute sessions or four 40-minute sessions.

### Toolkit contents

- Training Overview and Discussion Guide
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  - Requirements of the Youth Bullying Prevention Act of 2012
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  - Three Practice Scenarios
  - Best Practices for Intervention
  - How Do You Prevent Bullying?
  - A Closer Look At Eight Key Elements of School Climate
  - Current Climate Capacity Assessment
- Worksheets and handouts
  - Cyberbullying: Tips for DC Youth-Serving Agencies
  - Investigator Checklist
  - Current Climate Capacity Assessment

## Training overview and discussion guide

### Preparation

- 1) Before the training, make sure all supplies and materials are available. This training requires:
  - a computer, projector, and screen to display the PowerPoint slides;
  - copies of handouts as follows:
    - four copies of the “Investigator Checklist” for each participant,
    - one copy of “Cyberbullying: Tips for DC Youth-Serving Agencies” for each participant, and
    - two copies of the “Current Climate Capacity Assessment” for each participant;
  - a copy of your school’s compliant bullying prevention policy for each participant:
    - policies can be found at: <http://ohr.dc.gov/page/knowyourpolicy>;
  - pens or pencils for each participant; and
  - flip charts and markers (optional).
- 2) Read through all materials and instructions for facilitating training. Pay special attention to the notes section below.
- 3) Ensure training is scheduled with sufficient time to complete all elements. The training can be split into two trainings, with the first ending at slide 29 and the second starting at slide 30.

### Facilitation notes and tips

- 1) Language use during the training is important. Note the following:
  - Bullying is a behavior, not a characteristic of the youth involved. Refrain from calling students “bullies” and “victims.” Instead, refer to them as “the child who bullied” or “the child who was bullied.”
  - Bullying has many common definitions. However, in the District of Columbia, bullying is specifically defined in the Youth Bullying Prevention Act. As such, participants must refer back to that definition.
  - There is no one-size-fits-all solution for bullying. The strategies and exercises contained in this training are a step to help school staff identify what will work for their school.
- 2) Maintain confidentiality of students and training participants. During the training, participants may refer to specific incidents that they have experienced or students have reported relating to bullying. It is critical to maintain confidentiality of all stories. Should an incident be revealed that needs further investigation based on the requirements of the YBPA, it should be reported to the designated bullying prevention investigator.

- 3) The first part of the training covers the requirements of the Youth Bullying Prevention Act. The second part of the training covers strategies to set a foundation to prevent bullying in schools, using a Current Climate Capacity assessment. This assessment is a tool for internal use only and is not part of any formal accountability system.
- 4) The training has been broken up into four 40-50 minute sessions. These sessions can be given all at once, in two, or in four separate trainings. Choose whichever format best fits your school's schedule. If you break the training up, at the beginning of each new session it is helpful to review content from the previous training. The guide provides sample "quick review" activities.
- 5) The below slide-by-slide discussion notes are meant as a guide and should be modified as needed to fit with your school's needs.

### Slide-by-slide discussion notes

For each slide in the provided slide deck, we provide notes and instructions, enabling school leadership to easily conduct a comprehensive training, present accurate details, and answer potential questions. Timing, handouts, and activities associated with each slide are clearly indicated.

**F** Notes for facilitators are indicated by this icon, and should not be read aloud.

### Session 1: The Youth Bullying Prevention Act (40-50 minutes)



### Introductions (10 minutes)

#### [slide 1] Cover slide

- F**
- 1) Display this slide as participants get situated before the beginning of the training, to introduce them to the discussion for the day.
  - 2) Once participants are situated, introduce yourself.
  - 3) If participants are not familiar with each other, have everyone introduce themselves, including name and role in the school.

- 4) Ask each participant to raise their fingers, indicating on a scale of 1 to 10 their familiarity with bullying prevention and intervention concepts. This informal poll can provide you with insight on how quickly to cover the concepts in this presentation.

### Training overview (2 minutes)

#### [slide 2] Training overview

This slide is optional and should be altered depending on whether one, two, or four training sessions will be held.

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#### 4 sessions:

This training will be broken up into four sessions addressing bullying prevention and intervention.

- 1) The first session will provide historical context for bullying prevention and intervention in Washington, D.C., and detail the requirements of the current bullying legislation.
- 2) The second session will be more interactive, providing an opportunity to practice using the youth bullying prevention checklist with three scenarios. This session will also cover best practices for intervention.
- 3) The third session will discuss school climate and detail four of the eight key elements of a positive school climate.
- 4) The fourth session will discuss the remaining four key elements of a positive school climate and allow for independent work time with the Current Climate Capacity assessment.

#### 2 sessions:

This training will be broken up into two sessions.

- 1) The first session will discuss the current bullying legislation, provide time to practice using the Youth Bullying Prevention Checklist with three scenarios, and explain best practices for intervention.
- 2) The second session will discuss bullying prevention, explaining what school climate is and the eight key elements that contribute to a positive school climate. This session will also provide an opportunity for participants to evaluate their school using the Current Climate Capacity Assessment.

#### 1 session: omit this slide

#### [slide 3] Session 1: Bullying legislation (5-10 minutes)

As a way to demonstrate the importance of this series of trainings on bullying and allow the participants to get to know one another and feel comfortable and involved, start with this activity:

- 1) Tell the participants that you are going to do a quick activity before you start the training. Tell them you are going to have them all move to the outside

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edges of the room, and that you will then say a series of scenarios they might have experienced or witnessed during school. When they hear a scenario that they have experienced or witnessed, they should take two steps toward the center of the room. If the scenario is not something they have experienced or witnessed, they will not take a step. Ask if there are any questions. If there are not, proceed with the activity.

- 2) Have everyone stand up and move to the outside edges of the room.
- 3) Say the following scenarios:
  - a. A student has approached you, telling you that they have been intimidated by another student.
  - b. You have witnessed and perhaps had to put a stop to students physically harming other students.
  - c. You have received complaints or reports from students or parents about students using cell phones and or social media to bully their classmates.
  - d. Students have skipped your class and have later told you it was because they were afraid to be in class with another student.
  - e. You have witnessed students publicly harassing other students, physically or verbally.
- 4) Look around the room, and ask people for their reactions to where in the room everyone is standing. For example, if everyone is clumped in the middle, it means that bullying is a prevalent problem in your school that you are all aware of. Thus, the importance of this training. Note that this part of the activity will form organically, depending on the outcome of the activity. Ask for participant contributions. However, limit the response/ reflection time to five minutes at the most.

### Bullying prevention in the District of Columbia (5 minutes)

#### [slide 4] Bullying prevention in the District of Columbia

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- 1) Indicate that this presentation is specific to the policies and procedures in the District of Columbia.
- 2) Ask if anyone knows what the bullying prevention law in the District of Columbia is called and when it was passed.

#### [slide 5] Youth Bullying Prevention Act of 2012

The YBPA was passed and signed into law in June 2012 in an effort to encourage youth-serving agencies to take an active role in the prevention of bullying.

All youth-serving agencies, including schools, are required to have a bullying prevention policy that is consistent with the requirements.

#### [slide 6] Two meanings of the YBPA

The YBPA has both specific requirements as well as an overall message for youth-serving agencies to focus on preventing bullying among youth. The “letter of the law” refers to nine requirements each school must adopt in order to be compliant with the law. The “spirit of the law” goes deeper than surface requirements, addressing the issues the law is intended to address. There are eight key elements that work together to create a strong foundation for bullying prevention. This presentation will first cover the letter of the law—that is, what all schools are required to have in their bullying prevention policies—and move on to the spirit of the law.

### Requirements of the Youth Bullying Prevention Act of 2012 (YBPA)<sup>1</sup> (15-20 minutes)

#### [slide 7] Requirements of the Youth Bullying Prevention Act of 2012 (YBPA)

#### [slide 8] All youth-serving agencies are required to have a bullying prevention policy...

- 1) Ask participants if they are aware of the school's bullying prevention policy.

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#### [slide 9] Find your policy

- 1) Indicate that participants can find their policy here: <http://ohr.dc.gov/page/knowyourpolicy>
- 2) Distribute printed copies of the school's policy. Refer to the actual language of your particular policy in the following slides.

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#### [slide 10] Definition

- The YBPA policies include a comprehensive definition of bullying.
- The definition mandates that bullying is “severe, pervasive, or persistent.”
  - Severe means the incident has caused or will cause significant harm to the target.
  - Pervasive means it is affecting multiple students, causing substantial disruption to the learning environment.
  - Persistent means the behavior is happening often and repeatedly.
- The 24 characteristics that bullying may be based on is a comprehensive, but not exhaustive list. We will further discuss bullying based on characteristics in the next slide.
- An incident is considered bullying if it fits into at

1. The full text of the YBPA can be found here: [http://ohr.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ohr/page\\_content/attachments/YouthBullyingPreventionAct\\_Final.pdf](http://ohr.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ohr/page_content/attachments/YouthBullyingPreventionAct_Final.pdf)

least one of the criteria listed here (fear of physical harm, detriment to health, etc.).

- Later, when we use the “Bullying Prevention Checklist” for three examples scenarios, we will refer back to this definition. It is the core piece of a bullying incident investigation.

#### [slide 11] Key points: bullying based on characteristics

- Just because there is a difference in characteristics does not mean the bullying was based on that characteristic. For instance, just because the aggressor has brown hair and the target has blonde hair does not mean the bullying was based on hair color.
- Characteristics can be real or perceived. For example, if someone is perceived as LGBT, but does not identify as such, bullying can still target their sexual orientation.
- Bullying can also target those who do not have these characteristics, but associate with those who do. For example, if someone is friends with someone who is LGBT but does not personally identify as LGBT, they can still be a target of bullying based on sexual orientation.
- Bullying can be targeted at a characteristic even if the aggressor has the same characteristic as the target. For instance, a black student telling another they are not acting “black enough” is bullying based on race.
- Bullying does not have to be based on a characteristic. For example, an individual can be targeted without any discriminatory reason; when a group of girls target another girl because they think she is weird and annoying, calling her random mean names that aren’t based on any characteristic, this is bullying.

#### [slide 12] Consequences and flexibility

- An agency’s bullying policy should have a list of consequences that result from an incident of bullying. These consequences are designed to **correct** the bullying behavior, **prevent** another occurrence of bullying or retaliation, and **protect** the target of the bullying.
- Consequences should be designed to be **flexible** so that they can be applied uniquely to each individual incident.
- The flexibility of consequences also ensures that their application can be varied in method and severity based on the nature of the incident, the developmental age of the person bullying, and

any history of problem behavior from the person bullying.

#### [slide 13] Reporting

- The YBPA policy contains a procedure for reporting bullying and a procedure for reporting retaliation for reporting an act of bullying.
- It is important to note that the reporting procedure covers **retaliation** against reporting an act of bullying.
- Bullying may be reported **anonymously**, but no formal response will be made based solely on an anonymous report.

#### [slide 14] Investigation

- Whenever there is a report of either policy violations or complaints of bullying or retaliation, prompt investigation is required by the law.
- The YBPA policy includes the name and contact information for the designated investigator. This implies that the agency must designate a specific individual as the investigator. This could be an existing staff member such as the principal, assistant principal, or guidance counselor, among others.

#### [slide 15] Appeals

- The appeals process must exist not only for the target of bullying, but also for the person accused of bullying and any other individual not satisfied with the outcome of the initial investigation.
- This section of the agency’s policy also includes a statement that prohibits **retaliation** against any person who reports bullying. Individuals reporting bullying, whether they are the victim or a bystander, can be putting themselves at risk of retaliation from the bullying perpetrator or individuals associated with the perpetrator. It is important that youth feel like they will be protected, not attacked, if they report an incident of bullying.
- Appeals are made to the designated higher-level authority.
- Appeals must be made within **30 days** of the conclusion of the initial investigation.
- The secondary investigation will be completed within **30 days** of receipt of an appeal, unless:
  - circumstances require additional time to complete a thorough investigation, and
  - the higher-level authority sets forth those circumstances in writing.
  - The additional time is not to exceed 15 days (a total of 45 days after the receipt of an appeal).



- Any party seeking an appeal must be informed of his/her right to seek further redress under the Human Rights Act.

### Understanding cyberbullying in the context of the YBPA (5-10 minutes)

#### [slide 16] Understanding cyberbullying in the context of the YBPA

- F** 1) Distribute handouts of “Cyberbullying: Tips for DC Youth-Serving Agencies”

#### [slide 17] Cyberbullying

- F** This is selected language directly from the YBPA. During the presentation it can be read out loud.

#### [slide 18] Responsibility around cyberbullying

- Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place through technology. It includes, but is not limited to, bullying via computers, social media, cell phones, and gaming devices.
- Agencies should investigate and take action for cyberbullying that:
  - occurs during hours in which youth are using the agency’s services;
  - occurs while using agency property, including technology students may use outside of the hours they are using the agency’s services; or
  - occurs outside the hours a youth is using an agency’s services, on personal or other technology, if it is affecting the youth’s ability to use the agency’s services.
    - For example, cyberbullying is covered under the law if the youth is not participating in services to avoid contact with those engaging in cyberbullying, or if discussion among other youth at the agency about the cyberbullying is affecting their ability to focus.
- In cases where it is determined that the incident is NOT affecting the youth’s ability to use the agency’s services, the law does NOT require the agency’s intervention, However, this does not prevent the agency from addressing the cyberbullying issues in other ways.

#### [slide 19] If cyberbullying is not covered under the policy

- Even if an incident of cyberbullying does not fall within what is covered by the YBPA, the agency can actively take steps to help prevent future incidents.
  - Digital citizenship: Use the incident as an

opportunity to stress the importance of “digital citizenship”—the norms of appropriate and responsible technology use. Use free curriculum to help youth build skills while using technology. In doing so, avoid referring to the particular incident or naming the youth that were involved.

- The incident can be used to increase monitoring of the youth involved.
  - Research demonstrates that youth engaged in cyberbullying (both as aggressors and targets) often play the same roles in in-person bullying.
  - Reports of cyberbullying might indicate ongoing conflict and/or bullying between the youth involved that may fall under the YBPA.

#### [slide 19] Session 1: takeaways

Use this slide as an opportunity for the participants to digest and reflect on the new content. Ask participants to take two to three minutes to write down their responses in a notebook. Take two additional minutes to choose a few participants to share their responses with the group.

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- 1) What was your biggest takeaway from this session?
- 2) Are you more comfortable with this content?
- 3) How could you apply this content to our school’s context?
- 4) Was there anything in this training that surprised you?

### Session 2: Scenarios and best practices



#### [slide 21] Before you begin Session 2, review activity

Before you start session 2, take two minutes and have all participants write down three to five things they recall as important points from session 1. Select two individuals share them with the group.

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### Three practice scenarios (40 minutes)

[slide 22] Three practice scenarios

[slide 23] D.C. Youth Bullying Prevention Investigator Checklist

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- 1) Distribute four copies of the Investigator Checklist to each participant. Give each participant approximately three minutes to read over the checklist. The checklist provides guidance on all of the requirements of the policy as just discussed.
- 2) The case studies are categorized into three groups; (1) clear cases of bullying based on a characteristic, (2) bullying not based on a characteristic, and (3) not classified as bullying. As the facilitator, you should read all of the case studies and **select one from each group** that you deem most appropriate for your school. Read the scenario during the first slide indicated. During the second indicated slide, work with attendees to complete the Investigator Checklist for each scenario before revealing whether the scenario is bullying or not.

Give each participant three to five minutes to fill out the checklist on their own. Then, poll the audience as to whether the scenario is bullying or not. Ask for a volunteer to walk through the checklist for the scenario. If available, use a flipchart and marker to write the participants' responses to the checklist. Each scenario should take approximately 12 minutes to complete.

Example checklists for each scenario are included in the appendix.

**Alternative:** An alternative procedure is to split participants into three groups and have each group work through one of the scenarios and present their findings to the whole group at the end. It is useful to have a flip chart and marker for each group if this option is selected.

[Slides 24-25] Scenario 1: Clear cases of bullying based on a characteristic

#### 1.1 Middle school; bullying based on socioeconomic status

Jaylin is a 10-year-old African-American child in fifth grade at a D.C. public school where all students are required to wear uniforms. Students therefore express their individuality through accessories and footwear.

Unfortunately, Jaylin's single parent lost a pharmacy assistant job three months ago due to reasons unexplained by their employer; the family may soon lose their housing. Buying Jaylin new sneakers is not a family priority. Instead, Jaylin is able to afford one pair of off-brand shoes. Although 85 percent

of students in Jaylin's school are eligible to receive free and reduced lunch, Jaylin has less access to money than before and is losing friendships due to depression and family challenges.

Jaylin is ashamed about her family's financial instability. For the last two months, a number of fellow students have noticed Jaylin's vulnerable state and have been targeting her with verbal, cyber, and physical harassment about being poor. Her classmates call her names when they pass her in the hall, make fun of her on social media outside of school time, and physically hit and push her during recess and in the lunch line.

Jaylin sometimes lashes back at one or two of those students for being overweight. She has confided in a select number of teachers about losing friends and being teased about being poor. The harassment has increased over time online and Jaylin is beginning to fail assignments in math and reading due to frequent absences. She hasn't been coming to class because feels uncomfortable and threatened sitting in class with her peers who are constantly making fun of her.

Is this bullying? YES

#### 1.2 Middle school; bullying based on familial status and perceived sexual habits

Taylor is a 13-year-old multi-racial student who identifies as a Black female. She is an eight-grade student at a D.C. public charter middle school. Taylor has two loving same-gender parents—one is her mom and the other is her stepmother. Until the beginning of eighth grade, Taylor had a tight circle of eight female friends who did everything together including basketball, drama club and community service activities. Taylor began puberty before middle school and has looked very grown-up since fifth grade. Everything changed when Taylor began dating her friend Imari's ex-boyfriend four months after his relationship with Imari ended.

For the past month, everyone has been calling Taylor names and saying she is promiscuous or "fast," since she is dating an old friend's boyfriend. Other girls at her school have anonymously posted mean things on various social media platforms about her parents and how she is desperate enough to snatch other people's men because she does not have one at home.



Now, Taylor, the highest point shooter on the basketball team, is strongly considering quitting the team because she is being excluded from social events and is mocked in viral videos and sexually explicit memes as the “fast girl” on the court. Her boyfriend supports her decision to end her friendships with all of her old friends and says she should forget about them because they are “just jealous.” A teacher saw Taylor physically lash out at one of her friends during a home basketball game after hearing derogatory remarks about her parents, who were in the stands. After going to the office, Taylor tells the teacher that she just couldn’t take the teasing anymore.

Is this bullying? YES

### 1.3 High school; bullying based on sexual orientation and other distinguishing characteristics

Fernando is a 16-year-old El Salvadorian young man who identifies as gay. He moved here with his mother and 13-year-old brother three years ago and is facing challenges at his D.C. public school. Fernando has been suspended for repeated verbal and physical harassment of two students and for skipping school more than two times per week. There is no Gay Straight Alliance (a student-run club in a high school or middle school that brings together LGBTQ and straight students) at this school and students do not always feel supported fully in their sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression.

Fernando’s mother used to tease him about wearing eyeliner and “acting feminine.” He was physically thrown out of his house after his mother saw him kissing another young man—Fernando’s friend from another school in Maryland. After this incident he was placed with a foster care agency. News of this incident soon spread around school. His classmates tease him about his clothes and appearance, and about being gay, giving him the nickname of “dirty fag.” In the hallways and on transportation to and from school, Fernando’s classmates harass him about wanting to kiss other boys. All of this has been going on for at least five months. Fernando’s grades are declining and his teachers report that he is withdrawn and aloof. When his trigonometry teacher approached him about a verbal vulgar outburst made in class to his peers, he threw his chair across the room and walked off campus.

Is this bullying? YES, but there are other issues going on (need for additional mental health support services)

### 1.4 High school; cyberbullying based on appearance

Destiny is a ninth grader in a D.C. public high school. She comes from a single-mother home and has four

younger siblings. Her mom works three jobs and isn’t home much. As a result, Destiny takes on the bulk of the responsibility for taking care of her siblings, cooking meals, and cleaning the house. On top of that, she works a part-time job as a grocery store cashier some days after school and on the weekends in order to help her mom pay the bills. Destiny doesn’t have time to be active or hang out with her friends after school.

Over the summer she gained a lot of weight, and she is now noticeably overweight and larger than most of her friends. In middle school she had many close girl friends and didn’t have a problem fitting in. However, when she started ninth grade after gaining weight, she started having a hard time. Many of her old girl friends are very concerned about their appearances, impressing older boys at school, and fitting in with the group.

Destiny told her teacher, Mrs. Garcia, that for the last two months, every day after school she has been getting texts and Twitter messages from anonymous accounts telling her she is “fat, ugly, doesn’t deserve to have any friends, should marry a donut.” She didn’t know who was sending the messages until last week when the person claimed to be Angela, another girl in Destiny’s class. After that, Angela started posting photos of cows and whales and tagging Destiny on Facebook and Instagram. Many of Destiny’s classmates “liked” the photos posted by Angela and added more comments about Destiny’s appearance. Destiny is very upset and she has stopped completing some of her homework assignments because she can’t concentrate and doesn’t want to go to class.

Is this bullying? YES

**Note:** With cyberbullying incidents, it is especially important to review the situation very carefully and thoroughly. Note that this scenario did NOT happen on school grounds or with school property – it occurred on electronic technology away from school. However, remember that if the incident is substantially affecting the student’s ability to engage in the agency’s services, the agency is required to handle the cyberbullying. Refer to the Cyberbullying Tip Sheet for more detailed information on investigating cases of cyberbullying.

### 1.5 Middle school; bullying based on socioeconomic status

Seventh grader Keandra tells Ms. Johnson that for the past month, ever since her “ex-friend” Jasmine found out that Keandra received reduced-price lunch, Jasmine won’t stop calling her names, like “dollar store baby.” Jasmine started spreading rumors

that she saw Keandra stealing cookies from the cafeteria because her parents can't afford them at home. Keandra saw notes written on the bathroom stalls about her, saying things like "please support the Keandra fund." At lunch and on the bus to and from school other students won't let Keandra sit with them. One day during math class she saw some of the other girls passing notes about her; it made her feel very uncomfortable and she couldn't focus on the lesson, so she left to go to the bathroom. When she came back she found fake paper dollars stuffed into her textbook. This caused Keandra to run out of class crying. She decided it was better to skip class than to sit near those girls. Keandra has been skipping math class consistently over the past few weeks.

As a result of what has happened to Keandra, she said she feels anxious, alone, and sad when she comes to school every day. She doesn't want to attend this school anymore, and if she has to, she doesn't know what she'll do.

Is this bullying? YES

### [Slides 26-27] Scenario 2: bullying not based on a characteristic/unclear situation

#### 2.1 Middle school: bullying not based on a characteristic

Vanessa is a 13-year-old seventh grader at a public middle school in D.C. She has been friends with the same group of girls since elementary school. These girls have always been a really close clique and all the students at school refer to them as the "popular" group. A few months ago Vanessa's friends decided that she wasn't cool enough and they didn't want to hang out with her anymore. Last month the group of girls started to exclude Vanessa from social events. They stopped inviting her to hang out on the weekends, purposefully changing their usual hangout spots without telling her. Then, they wouldn't sit with her on the bus to and from school. A few weeks ago, they stopped letting her sit with them at lunch. Every time Vanessa would come to sit with them they would block the chair and say it was already taken. Vanessa then noticed that they removed her from their group text and Facebook group messages. Vanessa had no idea why they have been doing this and she doesn't have any other friends to turn to. She's started eating lunch in the bathroom stall because she is too embarrassed to go to the cafeteria and sit by herself.

One afternoon Vanessa decided to ask her friend Brandi why none of them will talk to her and Brandi pushed Vanessa up against the lockers. Vanessa immediately reacted by punching Brandi. The next day, when the girls were changing for gym class, Brandi and two other girls cornered Vanessa in the

locker room and started yelling rude names in her face and pushing her up against the lockers. Vanessa couldn't fight back against all three of them and ended up with a bloody nose.

Vanessa feels alone and intimidated every day at school. She doesn't want to report this to her teachers because she is afraid the group of girls will physically hurt her. Vanessa started skipping gym class and, more recently, stopped doing her homework because she doesn't want to go to her locker in between classes or at the end of the day to get her books, because her locker is near that group of girls. The office receives an anonymous report that this group of girls has been targeting Vanessa.

Is this bullying? YES

#### 2.2 High school: bullying not based on a characteristic/unclear

Angelo is a new sophomore at a public high school in D.C. Angelo was the star player of his basketball team at his old school and decides to try out for the team at his new school. After joining the team, Angelo began to find soiled underwear stuffed into his gym locker each day with notes that read, "We don't want you here." One day, upon returning from the showers, Angelo found all of his clothes and cell phone shoved in the toilet, forcing him to walk across school in a towel to call his parents. Angelo tells his parents he wants to quit the team and go back to his old school. Angelo's parents are furious and report the series of events to the bullying prevention contact at his school.

Is this bullying? YES

### [Slides 28-29] Group 3: Not Bullying

#### 3.1 Elementary school; not bullying, sports scenario

During fourth-grade recess, Darnell, Alex, and Xavier lost a basketball game against Romeo, Jayden, and Antonne. The next day Romeo called Darnell a loser and tried to hit him with basketballs during gym class. Darnell got really upset and threw basketballs back at him. After class, Romeo told Mr. Wilson, his gym teacher, what happened and how upset he was. He felt like Darnell, Alex, and Xavier were ganging up on him and he didn't like being in gym class with them.

Is this bullying? NO

#### 3.2 High school; not bullying, involving social media outside of school

Gabriela is a 16-year-old Latina who is in 11th grade at a D.C. public high school. One weekend her ex-boyfriend, Carlos, who attends the University of the District of Columbia, had a party at his house that a lot of their mutual friends attended. Gabriela went to the party with her new boyfriend, Emilio, who attends

a different high school. There was alcohol at the party and a lot of the attendees were drunk, and Emilio got tired and went home early. Along with several other party-goers, many of whom attend Emilio's high school, Gabriela slept over at Carlos' house.

The next day Gabriela went home and discovered messages all over Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter about her being a slut and cheating on her boyfriend. Gabriela didn't cheat on Emilio, but his classmates are spreading rumors on social media that she did.

After school, Gabriela received text messages from anonymous numbers about being easy and promiscuous. Her boyfriend, Emilio, repeatedly posts rude things about her on Facebook. Gabriela knows she didn't do anything wrong, but she keeps getting text messages social media notifications about that weekend.

All of the posts seem to be originating from students from Emilio's school, not Gabriela's, but several students at Gabriela's school have seen the posts and are talking about what happened during school. Several of her classmates have posted to stick up for her. Gabriela is upset, but decides to block the posters and ignore the drama.

Is this bullying? NO


### Best practices for intervention (5-10 minutes; video is additional 6:20)

#### [slide 30] Best practices for intervention

#### [slide 31] When to notify parents

- By talking with the student, the principal or school-employed mental health professional will assess whether there would be further risk of harm if parents or guardians were notified of the incident.
- If the principal, designee, or mental health professional believes that contacting the parent or guardian would endanger the health or well-being of the student, they may delay as appropriate.
- If contact is delayed, the reasons for the delay should be documented.
- For example:
  - outing of a student who is or perceived to be LGBTQ, or
  - informing a parent of the perpetrator's actions and consequences when there is a known violent home environment.

#### Facilitator resource:

 Trevor Project Suicide Prevention Model Policy: [http://b.3cdn.net/trevor/10a65fa42e6ebddc24\\_qem6bvseu.pdf](http://b.3cdn.net/trevor/10a65fa42e6ebddc24_qem6bvseu.pdf)

#### [slide 32] Addressing student needs even if bullying is not determined

- Students feel hurt even if bullying cannot be substantiated under the YBPA policy.
- All students should feel safe and protected, regardless of whether the incident is classified as bullying under the YBPA policy. If something was reported, there is clearly an issue that could escalate into something more serious.
- Supporting a harmed student does not require punishment of the accused student.
  - The harmed student can be offered support in many ways, for example: offer the harmed student opportunities to speak with the school guidance counselor; help the students (accused and victim) resolve their conflict through mediation; or provide the harmed student with recommended coping skills or steps to avoid escalation of the conflict.
  - Work with student(s) and/or parent(s)/guardian(s) to find ways to support them and prevent further harm.
- Use the incident to increase monitoring of specific youth: watch both the perpetrator and the victim to prevent escalation into more serious incidents of bullying.

#### [slide 33] Alternatives to exclusionary discipline

- What is exclusionary discipline?
  - Exclusionary discipline is any type of school discipline that removes a student from his or her usual educational setting. Common examples include suspension and expulsion. The goal is to punish undesired behavior, deter those behaviors in other students, prevent second-time (and third and fourth...) offenders, and promote more appropriate behavior.
- Why seek an alternative?
  - Research shows that exclusionary discipline may result in negative outcomes for the student and the school community. Examples of these include the student having more socioemotional behavioral issues, decreased academic performance, and higher risk for involvement in the justice system.
- What is restorative justice?
  - Restorative justice is thought of as the primary alternative to exclusionary discipline. The primary goals of restorative justice are to provide opportunities for the offender to be



accountable to those they have harmed, create a safe community through relationship building, and increase the pro-social skills of those who have harmed others.

- Why it works:
  - Restorative justice provides a student-centered approach to discipline, where youth and relationships are the focal point.
  - It promotes students' development of social and emotional skills such as decision making and self-control.
  - A disciplinary policy built on restorative justice allows students to problem-solve, take part in constructive conversations, and build positive relationships.

- When investigating and determining the appropriate consequences, seek to understand outside factors contributing to the offender's actions
  - There are many complex factors that impact youths' actions, decisions, and impulse control. Many of these factors are unseen at school, yet dictate how students act and build relationships at school.
  - These factors include violent or volatile home life, undiagnosed learning disability, insecurity, poor mental health, academic performance issues, social pressure, and others.
  - Note that this is not a comprehensive list. In order to understand each student's situation, it is crucial that you speak with them one-on-one. This will help illuminate the driving force behind the bullying, an appropriate consequence, and the necessary support steps to prevent another incident.

**[slide 34] Video**

**[slide 35] Session 2: takeaways**

**F** Use this slide as an opportunity for the participants to digest and reflect on the new content. Ask participants to take two to three minutes to write down their responses in a notebook. Take two additional minutes to have participants turn to the people next to them and share their responses with each other.

- 1) What was your biggest takeaway from this session?
- 2) Are you more comfortable with this content?
- 3) What concrete next steps could you take after today's session?
- 4) Think of a situation during which you could apply what you learned in today's session.

**Session 3: Prevention; school climate and two of the eight key elements (40 minutes)**



**[slide 36] Session 3; prevention; an introduction to school climate and the eight key elements**

Before beginning session 3, briefly review the contents from the previous session with the following activity:

**F**

- 1) Tell the participants that you are going to review the contents of the last session with a quick activity. Remember that the last session addressed bullying scenarios using the Youth Bullying Prevention Checklist. We also discussed intervention best practices.
- 2) Ask the participants to turn to the person next to them. One person will come up with a hypothetical scenario and tell it to their partner. Their partner has to determine whether the situation is considered bullying under the law.
- 3) Tell the participants that after one person goes, they will switch roles. They have two minutes to complete the activity.
- 4) After two minutes, ask one group to share their scenarios and subsequent discussion with the group.

**[slide 37] The spirit of the law**

The letter of the law only scratches the surface of the purpose of the YBPA. This next section will cover the spirit of the law, or as former Supreme Court Chief Justice Warren once said, the part that keeps justice alive.

**[slide 38] Bullying policy vs. bullying prevention**

- To actually prevent bullying, we have to go beyond reaction.
- Remember, the YBPA is called the "bullying prevention" act for a reason.

**How do you prevent bullying? (15 minutes)**

**[slide 39] How do you prevent bullying?**

#### [slide 40] Start with improving school climate

- Every school is unique; effective school climate models and bullying prevention plans are tailored to the school's specific needs and characteristics.
- Schools differ in terms of the student population and demographics, school size, available resources, community engagement, and many other attributes. Attempting to prescribe a "stock" model for school climate will not effectively address the school's or the community's needs. Every student needs to be reached and in order to do so, the school's unique context must be understood.
- Building a positive school climate needs to be both preventive and reactive. This presentation will describe the steps necessary for evaluating the school's specific needs and executing a school climate initiative or intervention, and a bullying prevention policy. It is critical to be attuned to shifting school climate and outside factors, remaining flexible in the initiative design and intent so as to best meet students' needs. With technology constantly changing, bullying quickly takes on new forms and the school must be well-equipped and flexible enough to address these changes.

#### [slide 41] School climate: rainy and sunny days

- Just as the environmental climate relates to the conditions in which we live, school climate includes the positive or negative conditions in which students learn. In all climates, it will be sunny some days and rainy others. But climate drives how often it will be sunny and how often it will be rainy.
- It is nearly impossible to eliminate bullying completely. Schools with positive school climates still report incidents of bullying; what is important is that there are procedures for reporting, addressing, and resolving those incidents so that ALL students feel safe and supported.
- It is important to realize that if you have a zero percent rate of bullying occurrence, your data collection or analysis isn't accurate and you should reevaluate it, and in some cases, collect new data in order to correctly understand the situation.

#### [slide 42] What is a positive school climate?

- A school with a positive school climate has a common language, a common vision, and a common experience, allowing students to thrive and focus on learning, and diverting students from potential negative experiences and outcomes.
- A positive school climate successfully engages students in learning, staff in teaching, parents in their children's education, and the community (law enforcement, health providers, etc.) in partnerships that support student well-being.

- The goal is to build a positive school climate in which every student feels safe and supported, and when they don't, the school is well equipped to provide them with tools, infrastructure, and coping mechanisms to overcome their problems.

#### [slide 43] Engagement, safety, and environment

- Generally, there are **three core areas of school climate**: engagement, safety, and environment.
- **Engagement** includes behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement.
  - Student and school connectedness is a key piece of engagement. This manifests itself as student-student and student-teacher relationships that are trusting, supportive, respectful, and caring.
  - Increased engagement is indicated by increased student participation in class, completion of coursework, and participation in extra-curricular activities
- **Safety** refers to both physical and emotional safety.
  - Physical safety is promoted through the protection of students from violence and exposure to weapons, threats, theft, etc.
  - Emotional safety is promoted through the availability of emotional supports for students and staff, prevention of hate speech, and implementation of programs that teach problem solving, anger management, and positive communication skills.
- **Environment** extends past the physical structure of the school, to include the academic, disciplinary, and wellness environment.
  - A positive academic environment includes high-quality instruction, high academic expectations, and academic supports for struggling students.
  - A positive disciplinary environment is characterized by school rules that are perceived by students as clear, fair, and consistently enforced. The environments favor restorative practices over exclusionary ones.
  - A positive wellness environment provides mental health supports for students and referrals to professionals for complex needs and traumatic situations.
  - A positive physical environment refers to having a clean, safe, comfortable school building where students have access to the materials that are necessary to learn.

#### [slide 44] Benefits of a positive school climate

- Research shows a positive school climate is not only linked to decreased bullying, but also to increased academic achievement, increased attendance, increased graduation rates, and decreased violence.

**F**

**Facilitator resources:**

- Osher, D. (2011, March 23). The Connection Between School Climate & Academics. School Climate Technical Assistance Symposium. Lecture conducted from American Institutes for Research, Washington, DC. [http://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/sssta/20110323\\_Plenary2.pdf](http://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/sssta/20110323_Plenary2.pdf)
- Osher, D., Spier, E., Kendsiora, K., Cai, C. (2009). Improving Academic Achievement Through Improving School Climate and Student Connectedness. American Educational Research Association: San Deigo, CA. [http://alaskaice.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/090414\\_AIR\\_AERA\\_ImprovingAcademicAchievementThroughImprovingSchoolClimateandStudentConnectedness.pdf](http://alaskaice.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/090414_AIR_AERA_ImprovingAcademicAchievementThroughImprovingSchoolClimateandStudentConnectedness.pdf)
- Osher, D. (2011, August). Making the Connection: Creating and Maintaining Conditions for Learning. 2011 OSDFS Annual Conference. Lecture conducted from American Institutes for Research, Washington, DC. [http://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/sssta/20120109\\_MakingtheConnectionCreatingandMaintainingConditionsforLearning.pdf](http://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/sssta/20120109_MakingtheConnectionCreatingandMaintainingConditionsforLearning.pdf)
- School Climate Literature. (2012). Department of Education, Washington, DC. [http://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/sssta/20120417\\_3ResourceListSchoolClimateLiteraturerevMarch2012.pdf](http://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/sssta/20120417_3ResourceListSchoolClimateLiteraturerevMarch2012.pdf)
- Voight, A., Austin, G., and Hanson, T. (2013). A climate for academic success: How school climate distinguishes schools that are beating the achievement odds (Full Report). San Francisco: WestEd. <http://edsources.org/wp-content/uploads/hd-13-10.pdf>

**[slide 45] The foundation for a positive school climate: eight key elements<sup>2</sup>**

**F**

This slide offers a brief introduction to the eight key elements; the following slides will provide a detailed description of each element. This slide only needs to be presented as an introductory slide, listing and briefly describing the elements. Below are lengthier descriptions of each element for your reference or to use as a potential handout for staff. However, there is no need to present the full descriptions with this slide. They will be provided in the subsequent slides on each element.

Distribute the “Current Climate Capacity Assessment Worksheet.”

**A closer look at eight key elements of school climate (25 minutes)**

**[slide 46] A closer look at eight key elements of school climate**

The following slides provide details about each of the key elements. They are aligned with the “Current Climate Capacity Assessment Worksheet,” designed to help school staff determine their school’s effort on each of the eight key components. Schools can score themselves on a scale from zero to two, two representing the ideal state of bullying prevention and positive school climate.

The presentation will provide (1) a brief description of each element, (2) what fully implementing the

element looks like, and (3) examples of indicators of progress toward achieving the ideal, fully implemented state of bullying prevention. Remind participants that these indicators are just examples and that each element can be achieved in different ways. The guided discussion suggests questions that will help participants evaluate their current state in establishing a positive school climate framework and help determine next steps in achieving full implementation (scoring a two).

**[slide 47] Policy and enforcement**

**Policy and enforcement**

Bullying prevention policies need to be not only implemented, but enforced consistently and fairly, and investigations must be timely and thorough.

**[slide 48]**

• **Publication of policy for students and parents**

- Is it fully implemented? Expectations for addressing bullying should be clearly communicated to students and parents.
- To initiate and/or evaluate progress toward full implementation, ask these critical questions:
  - What are your expectations regarding bullying AND bystander behavior? How were they determined?
  - Where are the expectations posted? How did you determine these locations?

2. This framework has been adapted with permission from the Safe School Certification Program, a training and technical assistance organization based in Iowa (see: [www.safeschoolcertification.org](http://www.safeschoolcertification.org)).



- How else are the expectations communicated? How did you determine these methods?
- Examples of indicators that you have achieved this goal:
  - Bullying and harassment expectations are posted in all classrooms and common areas.
  - They can also be posted on the school webpage.
- **School staff understanding of the policy**
  - Is it fully implemented? School staff should fully understand their obligations under the bullying prevention policy.
  - To initiate and/or evaluate progress toward full implementation, ask these critical questions:
    - Who is the investigator and what is the process for investigations?
    - Do school staff ask questions? When and through what avenues can they ask questions?
    - Did school staff receive training on the bullying prevention policy?
- Examples of indicators that you have achieved this goal:
  - Investigators are identified and consistently investigate bullying and harassment reports.
  - Staff trainings/orientation and discussions are scheduled, and differentiated for various groups of school staff when necessary (teachers, admin staff, cafeteria staff, bus drivers, etc.).

[slide 49]

- **Staff enforcement**
  - Is it fully implemented? The policy should be enforced consistently for all reported incidents of bullying.
  - To initiate and/or evaluate progress toward full implementation, ask these critical questions:
    - How have you identified hot spots for bullying (cafeteria, etc.), and what process will be used to minimize bullying in those areas?
    - Are possible bullying incidents regularly reported by staff? Why or why not?
    - Have you noticed any patterns in reports? How have you used this information?
    - How do you intervene with students who are involved in the act of bullying?
- Examples of indicators that you have achieved this goal:
  - Adult supervision is increased in areas identified as bullying “hot spots.”
  - A description of the monitoring system is available for reviewing bullying complaints to

determine whether interventions are consistent and appropriate.

- **Student use**
  - Is it fully implemented? Students should regularly report incidents of bullying under the bullying prevention policy.
  - To initiate and/or evaluate progress toward full implementation, ask these critical questions:
    - Are possible bullying incidents regularly reported by students? Why or why not?
    - How do you positively and appropriately recognize those who stand up for others who are being bullied?
- Examples of indicators that you have achieved this goal:
  - The school has a detailed description of the process for orienting new students to the rules around bullying.
  - The school has an updated record of observed and reported incidents of bullying.

[slide 50] Data collection and data-based decision making

**Data**

On-going collection of valid and reliable data is critical, so the leadership team can assess the conditions for learning at school and make decisions about the best use of resources to address emerging issues. Having a systematic data collection allows schools to identify issues that may not be readily visible and to assess the impact of their efforts. Teachers often underestimate, for instance, the amount of bullying that occurs at school.

[slide 51]

- **Recording reports**
  - Is it fully implemented? All reports of bullying, regardless of the result of an investigation, should be systematically documented.
  - To initiate and/or evaluate progress toward full implementation, ask these critical questions:
    - What type of system do you have to record and keep track of ALL reports of bullying or harassment?
    - Do you record reports of bullying or harassment that, through investigation, have been determined not to be bullying? How?
- Examples of indicators that you have achieved this goal:
  - School has a bullying/harassment incident report form and a corresponding reporting system
  - School has student and parent complaint forms

- School keeps anecdotal progress notes on each incident
- **Documentation of bullying basis**
  - Is it fully implemented? All reports of bullying should include a documentation of the perceived basis for the bullying (which can include an indication that no basis could be determined).
  - To initiate and/or evaluate progress toward full implementation, ask these critical questions:
    - What different bases for bullying exist?
    - Is there a database for all of the reports of bullying that can be sorted by basis?
    - Does the bullying investigation report form record the basis for bullying?
  - Examples of indicators that you have achieved this goal:
    - School keeps records detailing the frequency of different types of basis for bullying.

[slide 52]

- **Survey data from students**
  - Is it fully implemented? Regular student surveys, including measurements of bullying and harassment, should be conducted and data reported back to staff.
  - To initiate and/or evaluate progress toward full implementation, ask these critical questions:
  - What survey(s) are you using to collect data on your school?
  - Examples of indicators that you have achieved this goal:
    - You have a formal plan to administer surveys.
    - You use both quantitative (such as survey data) and qualitative (such as focus groups) data sources. The statistics provided by quantitative data are an important foundation for understanding current conditions and making plans for improvement. Also note that qualitative data plays the important role of telling a story that goes along with the facts.
- **Survey data from school staff**
  - Is it fully implemented? Regular staff surveys, including measurements of bullying and harassment, should be conducted and data reported back to school community.
  - To initiate and/or evaluate progress toward full implementation, ask these critical questions:
    - What survey(s) are you using to collect data on your school?
  - Examples of indicators that you have achieved this goal:
    - You have a survey administration plan.
    - You use both quantitative and qualitative data sources

[slide 53]

- **Reliability and validity of surveys**

**Validity** refers to how well a test measures what it claims to measure. For example, in the case of bullying prevention, how well a question on the student survey tests whether students often feel physically threatened at school would be the validity of that item.

**Reliability** is the degree to which an assessment tool produces stable and consistent results. Reliable items will receive responses along a specific trend line, not answers all over the map.

  - Is it fully implemented? Survey questions should be from existing, reliable and valid measures.
  - To initiate and/or evaluate progress toward full implementation, ask these critical questions:
    - Which of your survey questionnaires/items are valid and reliable?
  - Examples of indicators that you have achieved this goal:
    - You select surveys or survey items from existing questionnaires that have already been tested.
    - You test the validity and reliability of survey items you have created; for example, you have researchers conduct a study using your custom survey.
- **Measurable targets or benchmarks**
  - Is it fully implemented? Measurable targets should be set for all aspects of the bullying prevention or school climate initiative.
  - To initiate and/or evaluate progress toward full implementation, ask these critical questions:
    - How are you setting goals? How are you measuring progress toward those goals?
    - Examples of indicators that you have achieved this goal:
    - You have a record of measurable benchmarks related to bullying and harassment.

[slide 54]

- **Data-based decision making**
  - Is it fully implemented? Programs, trainings, and other efforts should be clearly tied to needs you've discovered through data collection and analysis.
  - To initiate and/or evaluate progress toward full implementation, ask these critical questions:
    - How is your data analyzed? Who analyzes it?
    - What survey or incident data have been identified as areas of concern?
    - What is the desired change for those areas of concern?
    - How does your core leadership team use data?
    - How does your student leadership team use data?

- Examples of indicators that you have achieved this goal:
  - You have data trend lines that demonstrate ongoing data collection; these data can be presented in a report or school publication.
  - Team meeting agendas indicate data is being reviewed, analyzed, and used to make decisions.

#### [slide 55] Staff buy-in

##### Buy-in

In order for a school to be successful in its school climate and bullying prevention efforts, it must gain the buy-in of the majority of the school community. This means that the community is regularly informed of the efforts, they have opportunities to contribute in meaningful ways, and they can see the results of their efforts.

#### [slide 56]

##### • Staff engagement

- Is it fully implemented? Staff should be highly engaged in all aspects of decision making around bullying prevention efforts.
- To initiate and/or evaluate progress toward full implementation, ask these critical questions:
  - What does ideal staff engagement look like? How do you measure it?
- Examples of indicators that you have achieved this goal:
  - Evidence that all staff are engaged in implementation; for example, ALL types of staff are providing feedback, reporting incidents, and asking questions about the policy.
  - Staff attendance at trainings and meetings demonstrates engagement.

##### • Staff commitment

- Is it fully implemented? Surveys of staff buy-in should indicate a commitment of 80 percent or more to addressing bullying and school climate.
- To initiate and/or evaluate progress toward full implementation, ask these critical questions:
  - What survey are you using? How were the survey items developed?
  - What tool(s) are you using to measure initial buy-in? What are the results?
  - Can you collect both qualitative and quantitative data with the buy-in survey?
- Examples of indicators that you have achieved this goal:
  - You have formal buy-in survey data.

#### [slide 57]

##### • Implementation and fidelity

- Is it fully implemented? All staff are engaged in

bullying prevention initiatives, and do so with fidelity, or as designed.

- To initiate and/or evaluate progress toward full implementation, ask these critical questions:
  - What process will you use to assess ongoing buy-in?
- Some outcome indicators that you have achieved this goal:
  - You have an agreement/memorandum of understanding in which staff agree to engage with and implement the bullying prevention policy.
  - You have made observations of program fidelity.

#### [slide 58] Leadership

##### Leadership

School climate and bullying prevention efforts need to be supported and actively engaged with by school administration (principal, vice principal, etc.) in order to be effective. At the same time, all members of the school's community need to feel like they have a role and a voice in making decisions that affect school climate. Schools that engage school staff, parents, and students on leadership teams are higher performing than those who have a more hierarchical model.

#### [slide 59]

##### • Leadership team meeting

- Is it fully implemented? A leadership team should have been formed to address school climate and bullying prevention, and should meet on a regular basis.
- To initiate and/or evaluate progress toward full implementation, ask these critical questions:
  - Who serves on your core leadership team? When and how often do they meet?
  - What group norms have been established? What roles have been specified to facilitate group process work?
- Examples of indicators that you have achieved this goal:
  - Meeting schedules (dates, times location, agendas)
  - Well-defined roles (facilitator, timekeeper, note-taker, etc.)
  - Team meeting minutes, including action steps, who is responsible, and timeline

##### • Leadership representation

- Is it fully implemented? The leadership team should include representation from administration, staff, and students, as well as community members.
- To initiate and/or evaluate progress toward full implementation, ask these critical questions:
  - How were the members of the leadership



- team selected? What is their role?
- Examples of indicators that you have achieved this goal:
  - Leadership team roster, student roster, community member roster, etc.

**[slide 60] Session 3 takeaways**

**F** Use this slide as an opportunity for the participants to digest and reflect on the new content. Ask participants to take two to three minutes to write down their responses in a notebook. Take two additional minutes to have a few participants share their responses with the group.

- 1) What are four of the most important points you learned?
- 2) Were you familiar with this content before this session? Do you feel more comfortable with it now?
- 3) Can you identify aspects of this session that directly relate to your school? What specifically?
- 4) After hearing this session, what changes do you want to make in your school?



**Session 4: The eight key elements of school climate, continued... (45 minutes)**

**[slide 61] Session 4 review and intro**

**F** Because this session is a direct continuation of the last session, review what the eight key elements for a positive school climate are with the following activity:

- 1) Divide the room into four smaller groups (depending on the size of your training sessions, you may need more or fewer groups; groups should have between four to eight participants)
- 2) Tell the participants that they will race to write down the eight key elements for creating a foundation for a positive school climate. They have a maximum of three minutes to write their list with a brief description of each element.

- 3) The first group to complete their list most accurately wins.

**[slide 62] Review of the eight key elements for a positive school climate**

Use this slide to have participants check their lists that they made during their activity. Once the activity is complete, continue with the training. This session begins with “student engagement.”

**F**

**[slide 63] Student engagement**  
**Student engagement**

Students must be actively engaged in changing the school climate and preventing bullying. When students are engaged, they are much more likely to improve their behaviors and reconnect to school.

**[slide 64]**

**Leadership team involvement**

- Is it fully implemented? The leadership team should include student representatives who play an active role in decision making about bullying prevention and school climate.
- To initiate and/or evaluate progress toward full implementation, ask these critical questions:
  - What student groups (e.g. cliques, social groups, and demographic diversity) are represented by the student leaders?
  - How many students are members of the leadership team?
  - How do you evaluate and measure students’ contributions to the leadership team?
- Examples of indicators that you have achieved this goal:
  - You have a student leadership roster.
  - Meeting minutes including contributions from student representatives.

**Student feedback**

- Is it fully implemented? Students should regularly be given opportunities to provide feedback and insight into bullying prevention and school climate efforts.
- To initiate and/or evaluate progress toward full implementation, ask these critical questions:
  - What is your plan to get feedback from students?
  - How regularly do you seek feedback from students?
- Examples of indicators that you have achieved this goal:
  - You do qualitative surveys of students, where their feedback can be openly provided – not restricted to multiple choice.

- There are suggestion boxes located throughout the school – providing the option of anonymity.
- You do fishbowl discussions with students. A fishbowl discussion is a conversation that can be used when discussing topics with large groups. Four to five chairs are arranged in an inner circle; this is the “fishbowl.” The remaining chairs are arranged in concentric circles around the fishbowl. In some cases a chair can be left open for audience participation; in others, all chairs are filled. A moderator introduces the discussion topics, and individuals sitting in the center proceed to discuss while those on the outside listen and later reflect on what they heard.

[slide 65]

- **Student clubs and leadership**
  - Is it fully implemented? Students should be encouraged to form supportive clubs and/or run campaigns to promote a positive school climate.
  - To initiate and/or evaluate progress toward full implementation, ask these critical questions:
    - What student groups/clubs do you currently have?
    - What percent of students participate in these?
    - What are the demographics of the students who participate?
  - Examples of indicators that you have achieved this goal:
    - You have clear and detailed policies and procedures for the creation of student groups.
    - The school has a list of all student groups, the number of members in each, and demographic data.
    - There are detailed descriptions of student groups providing insight into bullying and harassment issues (ex: meeting minutes, feedback provided, meeting with staff and admin).
- **Strategies for the disengaged**
  - Is it fully implemented? A significant effort should be made to ensure all students are encouraged to actively participate in school activities.
  - To initiate and/or evaluate progress toward full implementation, ask these critical questions:
    - What obstacles are there for participation in student groups?
    - What’s your plan to overcome these obstacles?
  - Examples of indicators that you have achieved this goal:

- There is documentation of strategies to engage disengaged students, including through student groups.

[slide 66] **Family and community engagement**

**Family and community engagement**

Although school is the primary setting for youths’ interaction with peers, messages received at school must be reinforced by families and communities in order to be effective. Active family support and engagement also helps promote student engagement in school climate efforts.

[slide 67]

- **Communication with family and community**
  - Is it fully implemented? Information should actively be pushed out to parents and community members about ongoing initiatives.
  - To initiate and/or evaluate progress toward full implementation, ask these critical questions:
    - How are you pulling in families and members of the community?
    - How are you pushing out messages to families and members of the community?
    - How do parents/families/community members know the mechanisms and procedures for reporting bullying and harassment?
    - How and where is information regarding bullying concerns or complaints available for families and the communities?
    - How do you notify families and communities of successes?
  - Examples of indicators that you have achieved this goal:
    - Community and family newsletters
    - Press releases, news coverage, and social media about bullying prevention and school climate initiatives
- **Parent and community input**
  - Is it fully implemented? Parent and community input should be strongly valued, sought on a regular basis, and used in decision making about bullying prevention and school climate.
  - To initiate and/or evaluate progress toward full implementation, ask these critical questions:
    - How are you gathering family and community feedback about the school, students, and bullying? How are you using this feedback?
  - Examples of indicators that you have achieved this goal:
    - Family night/open house planning documents, agendas, or timelines include orientation to the bullying policy.

- You do surveys of parents and community members.
- There are related volunteer and training opportunities for parents and community members.
- You describe the process for parents, families and communities to report bullying and harassment incidents.

### [slide 68] Training

#### Training

Although the vast majority of school staff want to do something to respond to bullying and other school climate issues, most report that they have little to no training on how to do so. Providing training for all school staff (cafeteria workers, teachers, principals, etc.) on areas of need is critical in furthering school climate efforts.

### [slide 69]

- **Training offered to staff**
  - Is it fully implemented? Training should be provided for ALL staff.
    - Remember that ALL staff includes: administration, support staff, teachers, cafeteria workers, janitors, bus drivers, nurses, school social workers etc.
  - To initiate and/or evaluate progress toward full implementation, ask these critical questions:
    - When is the training offered? Is it convenient for ALL staff to attend?
  - Examples of indicators that you have achieved this goal:
    - There is a log of ongoing feedback from all different types of staff.
- **Training aligned to data**
  - Is it fully implemented? All training offered on bullying or school climate should be aligned with data, meaning that if data identify a need, training should address that need.
  - To initiate and/or evaluate progress toward full implementation, ask these critical questions:
    - What data are you using to inform your training sessions? How are you revising your trainings to incorporate the discoveries made during data collection and analysis?
    - What dilemmas to communicating training content effectively do you see? How do you overcome those dilemmas?
    - Who do you use to help analyze data, and what is their expertise?
  - Examples of indicators that you have achieved this goal:
    - There is a detailed professional development plan of annual training based on specific needs identified in school data.

### [slide 70]

- **Training aligned to policy**
  - Is it fully implemented? Training should be aligned with the Youth Bullying Prevention Act of 2012.
  - To initiate and/or evaluate progress toward full implementation, ask these critical questions:
    - What trainings are there for reporting bullying incidents, communication with families, and learning about the law?
    - Who is responsible for reporting to the Department of Education? How is that person/people trained?
    - What professional development takes place for bullying prevention and intervention— including “on the spot”?
    - What measures are taken to train new staff?
    - Who is the designated investigator? How has that person been trained? What’s the plan for ongoing training?
  - Examples of indicators that you have achieved this goal:
    - You offer training related to bullying definition, prevention, and intervention.
    - A school investigator is designated and continually trained.
    - You have facilitators’ outlines of staff training sessions.

### [slide 71] Programs and practices

#### Programs and practices

Once all other components are completed, schools should select the research-based programs most closely aligned with their identified needs.

### [slide 72]

Once you have evaluated the current state of bullying prevention and school climate at your school and understand the importance of data, engagement, training, leadership, and effective enforcement, it is time to understand how to choose the correct programs and practices for your unique situation. This information will help you understand what to look for in a good program or practice.

#### • Evidence base of programs

- Note that evidence-based programs are found on national registries such as the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP) and What Works Clearinghouse. These programs have at least some research showing they are effective at impacting selected outcomes.
- Is it fully implemented? All programs on bullying or school climate related issues or skills should be evidence-based.
- To initiate and/or evaluate progress toward full

implementation, ask these critical questions:

- What are your interventions specific to reducing bullying and harassment?
- Why did you select these interventions?
- To what extent are your whole-school interventions research- and/or evidence-based?
- Does research demonstrate that your strategy will reduce bullying?
- Examples of indicators that you have achieved this goal:
  - There is documentation of the research base of the program or initiative you are using.
- **Programs aligned to data**
  - Is it fully implemented? All programming offered on bullying prevention or school climate should be aligned with data.
  - To initiate and/or evaluate progress toward full implementation, ask these critical questions:
    - How did you choose the interventions?
    - How do the interventions you've chosen tie to your data and goals?
  - Examples of indicators that you have achieved this goal:
    - Artifacts from program implementation, such as lesson plans, videos, implementation checklists, etc.

#### [slide 73]

- **Multi-tiered programs**
  - Multi-tiered programs refer to programs that are three-pronged, providing three levels of differentiated support.
    - The first tier is “school-wide” and provides universal supports implemented with the entire student population.
    - The second tier is “targeted” and provides increased supports for subgroups of students who are at risk for problem behaviors.
    - The third tier is “indicated” and provides highly individualized and specialized supports for individual students whose behavior is not responsive to tier one or two programs.
    - Is it fully implemented? School-wide, targeted, and indicated programs and services should be provided.
  - To initiate and/or evaluate progress toward full implementation, ask these critical questions:
    - What are your whole-school, targeted, and indicated interventions specific to reducing bullying/harassment?

- Examples of indicators that you have achieved this goal:
  - There is a continuum map—an inventory of existing practices related to best practices on the three-tier basis.
  - You keep a record of differentiated implementation strategies that apply to each tier.

#### [slide 74] Resources

These websites have additional resources on addressing school climate and bullying prevention.

- National Center of Safe and Supportive Learning Environments (NCSSLE) <http://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/>
- StopBullying.gov <http://www.stopbullying.gov/>
- Evidence Based Program Directories
  - NREPP: <http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/>
  - What Works Clearinghouse: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>
  - Find Youth Info: <http://www.findyouthinfo.gov/program-directory>
- Penn State University Evidence-based Prevention and Intervention Support Center (EPIS) Center: <http://www.episcenter.psu.edu/>

### Current Climate Capacity Assessment (25 minutes)

#### [slide 75] Current climate capacity assessment

- 1) Instruct participants to take 10 minutes to independently work through the Current Climate Capacity worksheet for each of the eight elements, to identify areas of strengths and areas that need additional focus.
- 2) Have participants pair up and discuss the Current Climate Capacity assessment and see where they agreed and disagreed.
- 3) At the end of the session, collect all assessments and compare how various staff have rated the school's current efforts.



#### [slide 76] Questions and discussion

#### [slide 77] Final takeaways

Use this slide as a final opportunity for the participants to digest and reflect on the new content. Ask participants to take two to three minutes to write down their responses in a notebook. Take two additional minutes to have a few participants reflect with the people next to them; if it seems necessary or time permits, share with the entire group.





- 1) What did you learn about bullying intervention?
- 2) What did you learn about bullying prevention?
- 3) What new tools do you have to address bullying in your school?
- 4) What immediate action steps can you take?
- 5) Do you feel comfortable with the content?
- 6) Would you feel comfortable teaching someone else about the content you learned during these sessions?



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