



# The SUPER Model

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SBCUSD Youth Services  
Department

## Some Facts About Bullying

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### Definitions

- **Bullying:** the purposeful use of intimidation, humiliation, injury, or social ostracization, toward a person of lesser strength to gain control of that person or to increase one's own social status
- **Cyber-bullying:** bullying by means of an electronic device such as a mobile phone or posting information on an internet social networking site such as *MySpace* or *Facebook*

### Forms of Bullying:

- Physical
- Verbal
- Social
- Cyber
- Sexual harassment

### The Societal Cost of Bullying

The long-term social/emotional impact of bullying is far bigger than many educators realize.

- Victims and bullies are at risk for behavioral, emotional, and academic problems (Espelage & Swearer, 2003; Schwartz & Gorman, 2003).
- Victims and bullies are at increased risk for depression, anxiety, loneliness, low self-esteem, and suicide (Balsdry & Farrington, 1998).
- Over time, victims and bullies are more likely to skip and/or drop out of school (Berthold & Hoover, 2000; Neary & Joseph, 1994).
- Victims and bullies suffer from underachievement and sub-potential performance in employment settings (Carney & Merrell, 2001; NSSC, 1995).

- Bullies in particular are more likely to acquire increased numbers of criminal convictions and traffic violations than their less-aggressive peers (Roberts, 2000).



### Victim Warning Signs

Both educators and parents must be aware of the indications a child is being bullied. Changes may occur in:

- **Mood** — sullen, withdrawn, depressed
- **Motivation** — drop in grades, avoids school (15% of school absenteeism is directly related to fears of being bullied)
- **Health** — decreased appetite, difficulty getting to sleep
- **Behavior patterns** — refuses to use the restroom, avoids the playground, asks for extra lunch money/allowance, wants to carry a weapon or means of protection
- **Appearance** — returns from school disheveled, with torn clothes, or unexplained bruises

**"It is easier to build strong children than repair broken men."**

—Frederick Douglass

## Bullying Myths

- **MYTH: Bullying and conflicts are the same thing.**

**FACT:** Conflicts are disagreements or fights which arise between students. Bullying, however, involves an imbalance in power — a stronger person using their strength to intimidate, harass or threaten a weaker person. It is not appropriate to send a bully and victim to conflict resolution which implies both children are “partly right and partly wrong” but just need to work it out. Bullying must be addressed as an unacceptable behavior which the system does not allow.

- **MYTH: Bullies have low self-esteem and are insecure.**

**FACT:** Most bullies have average to above self esteem and tend, in fact, to view themselves in a positive light. This high self-esteem may even encourage them to rationalize their aggressive, anti-social behavior. Bullying is more a result of temperament, lack of empathy, and poor socialization, than poor self-esteem.

- **Bullies are rejected by peers and have no friends.**

**FACT:** Many bullies enjoy a high social status and have a lot of friends. This is particularly true during the middle school years where bullies are often admired for their “toughness” and emulated by others.

- **MYTH: Bullies are looking for attention. If their behavior is ignored, the bullying will stop.**

**FACT:** Bullies typically seek control rather than attention. When bullying is ignored it tends to increase rather than decrease.

- **MYTH: Kids will be kids...Boys will be boys.**

**FACT:** According to the research, bullying is seldom outgrown. Aggressive tendencies which manifest in childhood remain but become redirected in adulthood. Approximately 60% of boys identified as bullies in middle school commit at least one crime by the age of 24.

- **MYTH: Bullying does not occur at my school.**

**FACT:** Research indicates that between 15-25% of children in the United States report they are bullied while 15-20% admit they have bullied others. Research also indicates adults tend to greatly underestimate the amount of bullying occurring on campus. The best way to determine the frequency and types of bullying occurring is to conduct an anonymous survey. Typical locations where bullying occurs include: the playground/quad, the cafeteria, restrooms, hallways, and the classroom.

- **MYTH: Kids are bullied due to physical differences.**

**FACT:** Although some children are picked on due to physical differences, most victims are chosen because they are perceived as anxious, sensitive, and unable to retaliate.

- **MYTH: Kids who are being bullied need to learn how to stick up for themselves.**

**FACT:** Most work places have stringent policies in place to protect adults from being harassed or assaulted by co-workers. Children, however, are often expected to use their own wits and resources to deal with harassment. The danger of ignoring or downplaying bullying is that victims tend to suffer lifelong ill effects with higher rates of depression, suicide, and other mental health problems.

Taken from:

- **Ten Myths About Bullying** (Education World)  
[http://www.wecdsb.on.ca/pdf/cyberbullying/ten\\_myths.pdf](http://www.wecdsb.on.ca/pdf/cyberbullying/ten_myths.pdf)
- **Some Myths and Facts About Bullies and Victims** by Sandra Graham  
by <http://www.education.com/reference/article/bullying-myths-facts>
- **Myths About Bullying** (US Dept of Health and Human Services)  
[http://www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/HHS\\_PSA/pdfs/Fact\\_sheet\\_Myths\\_32.pdf](http://www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/HHS_PSA/pdfs/Fact_sheet_Myths_32.pdf)



# PBS and Bully Prevention

## A Proactive & Responsive System

Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) is a systems-level approach to intentionally reduce problem behaviors within the context of a positive school climate. PBS integrates research-based practices gleaned from the field of behavioral science with data-based decision-making for the purpose of producing socially valuable outcomes (Horner, Sugai, Todd, & Lewis-Palmer, 2005). Through a three tiered prevention model (Walker et al., 1996), PBS utilizes effective strategies to create environments that support and encourage success for both teacher and student behavior (Lewis, Sugai, & Colvin, 1998; Sugai et al., 2000).

The primary tier (**Tier One**) of PBS strives to create positive, predictable environments for all students at all times of the day. On-going review of data informs and evaluates systems-level practices and procedures. Modifications to Tier One include the revamping of procedures and behavioral instruction schedules as well as the introduction and maintenance of school-wide initiatives.

The secondary tier (**Tier Two**) of PBS identifies and provides additional behavioral support to students deemed, through the review of data, as “at risk.” Tier Two support typically includes targeted behavioral instruction with increased monitoring and feedback. Secondary supports generally take place in a small group setting where specific behaviors are explicitly taught in order to rule out a skill deficit as the cause for the misbehavior.

The tertiary tier (**Tier Three**) of PBS identifies and supports high-risk individual students who, despite the presence of Tier One and Two supports, continue to demonstrate a pattern of misbehavior. At this level of service, behavior support is long-term, intensive and focuses on individual student needs. Functional behavioral assessments are conducted which result in highly sophisticated behavior support plans.

PBS, therefore, refers to the entire behavioral support structure in place at a school from prevention (Tier One) through the remediation of chronic mild offenses (Tier Two) to severe misbehaviors (Tiers Three).

## Integrating Bully Prevention into PBS

The values and processes embodied in PBS — staff-wide commitment to a safe and welcoming culture, explicit instruction of behavioral expectations, data-based decision making — complement an anti-bullying initiative. Because PBS Teams and staffs are familiar with the systematic review of data, it is a natural step for them to collect data

regarding the frequency and types of bullying occurring on campus. This may be accomplished through the review of Office Referral data as well as anonymous surveys. Staffs who have already made a commitment to the teaching and enforcing of cultural expectations will generally view anti-bullying policies as an extension of the PBS values of respect, responsibility, and safety. Problem-solving teams already familiar with identifying functional and environmental factors will be able to identify and address the dynamics driving the bullying found on campus as well as monitor the effectiveness of the initiative itself.

“To see what is right and not do it, is want of courage or principle”

—Confucius

## Student Support

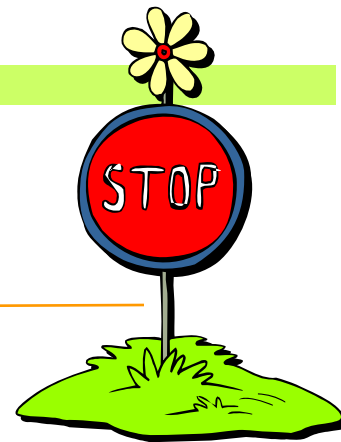
Research suggests that bullying is frequently and powerfully reinforced through peer attention (Salmivalli, 2002; Soutter & McKenzie, 2000). One of the fundamental cultural processes that will need to be put in place, therefore, is the practice of peers being empowered to reject bullying in all forms. One means to accomplish this is the teaching of a Universal Stop Signal where students are explicitly taught how to identify and proactively respond to bullying. The more students refuse to participate or passively watch cases of bullying on campus, the less reinforced bullies are to continue this behavior. In fact, just the opposite occurs: the cultural norm becomes one of respect and safety rather than aggression and victimization.

## Staff Support

In a study of behavioral procedures in schools, one major limitation of many discipline programs is a lack of clear procedural implementation guidelines (Chard, Smith, & Sugai, 1992). Therefore, creating consistent staff procedures for dealing with reported incidents of bullying can lead to a decreased likelihood of bullying in specific locations. As staff begin to realize that safety and respect are deeply held values on campus and that procedures to address bullying are clear, it will become more common for staff to enforce these cultural expectations in all settings with all students. ■

“It takes a great deal of courage to stand up to your enemies, but even more to stand up to your friends.”

—JK Rowling



## Bully Prevention: Online Resources

The following manuals are available to assist PBS schools in the building of an anti-bullying culture.

### ***Bully Prevention In Positive Behavior Support:***

*Giving students the tools to reduce bullying behavior through the blending of school-wide positive behavior support, explicit instruction, and a redefinition of the bullying construct.*

### **Authors:**

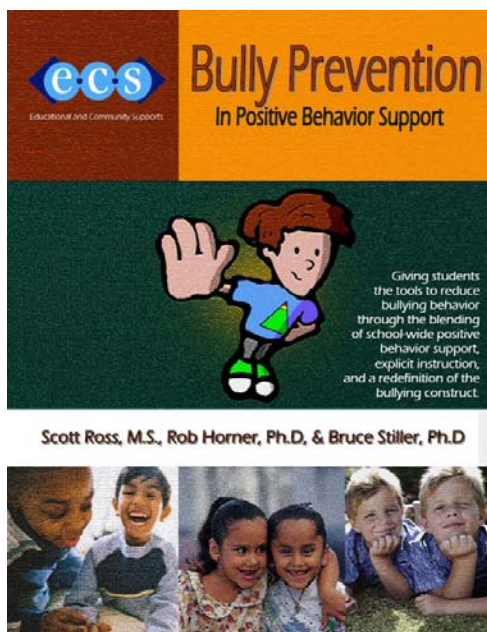
Scott Ross, M.S., Rob Horner, Ph.D., & Bruce Still, Ph.D

### **Elementary Version:**

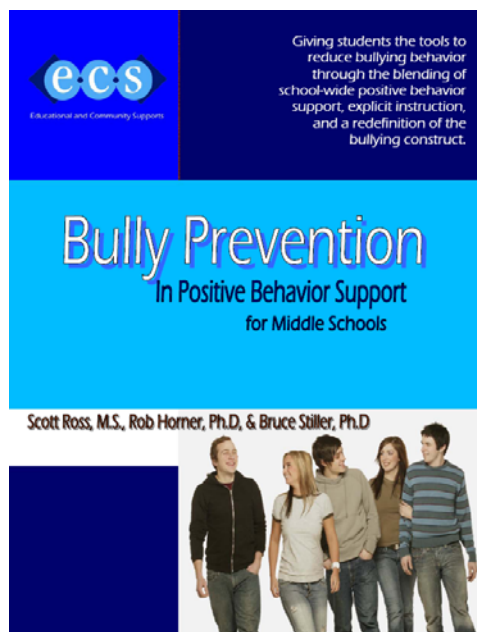
[http://www.pbis.org/common/pbisresources/publications/bullyprevention\\_ES.pdf](http://www.pbis.org/common/pbisresources/publications/bullyprevention_ES.pdf)

### **Middle School Version:**

[http://www.pbis.org/common/pbisresources/publications/BullyPrevention\\_PBS\\_MS.pdf](http://www.pbis.org/common/pbisresources/publications/BullyPrevention_PBS_MS.pdf)



Elementary



Middle School

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