




# Anti-Bullying Strategies and Supports for Educators

Supporting Individuals with Special Needs



A division of the ESC of Central Ohio 

## Why it Matters...

*Every person has a right to live their life without the fear of being bullied for who they are.*

**BULLYING IS NOT ACCEPTABLE!**

**60% of students with disabilities report being bullied compared with 25% of students without disabilities**



## Forms of Bullying

- **Physical:** hitting, pushing, tripping, grabbing, destroying another's property or school work
- **Verbal:** teasing, making fun, threats, name-calling, or non-verbal communication
- **Social:** intent to isolate others through rumors, shunning, humiliation, use of social media
- **Educational:** adults from the school team who use their position and power to cause distress to students—can include sarcasm, humiliation, favoring certain students

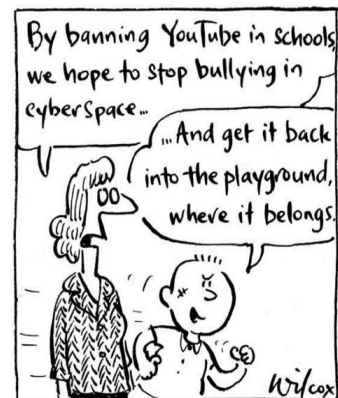
(Heinrichs & Myles, 2003)

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## Places Where Bullying May Occur

### Unstructured areas

- Playground
- Bus
- Neighborhood/Bus stop
- Cafeteria
- Hallways
- Bathrooms
- Online/Social networking



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## Signs of Bullying

Physical Signs	Social/Behavioral Signs	Psychological Signs
Ripped Clothing	Change in child's special interest- focus more on violence/weapons/martial arts	Nightmares
Bruises	Mimic behavior to younger siblings	General Depression
Injuries	Decrease in academic performance	Anxiety
Decreased Appetite	Hesitation about going to school or maybe just one class	Somatic complaints such as stomach pain
Weight Loss		Avoidance
Crying		Withdrawal

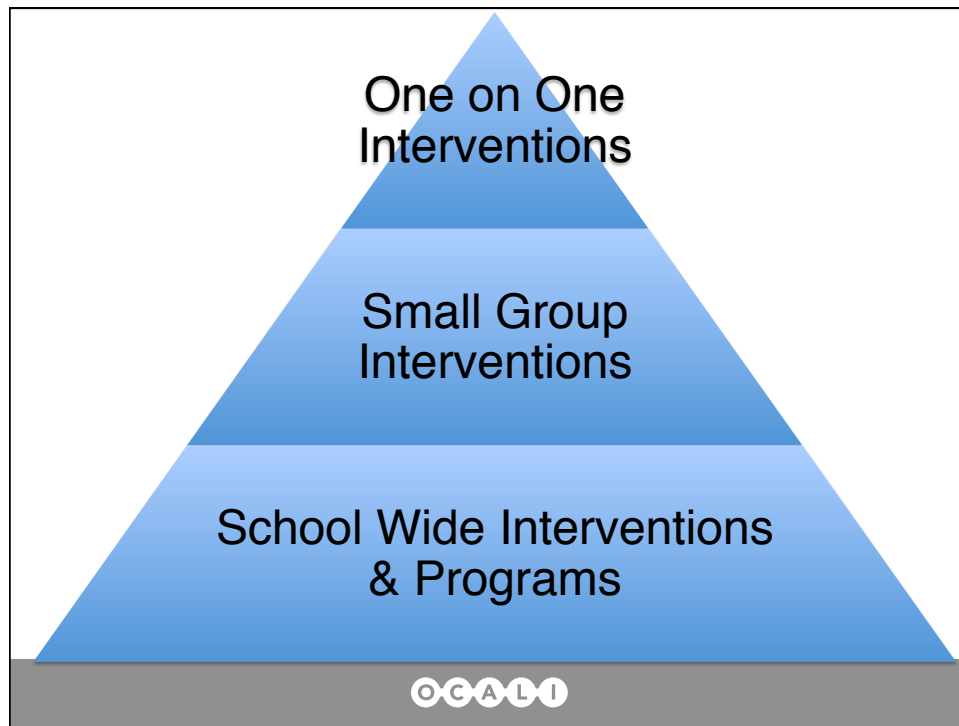
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## Effects of Bullying

- Low self esteem
- Increased levels of anxiety
- Depression
- Play becomes more like bullying, including teasing and physical discomfort
- General health issues
- Retaliation by hurting others



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## School Wide Interventions

- Teaching tolerance
  - Implementing Ability Awareness programs
  - Social and Emotional Learning Curriculums (SEL)
- Establish a Positive Behavior Support System
- Anti-Bullying programs
  - Anonymous bullying reporting forms
  - Consider conducting a bullying or safety survey



## School-Wide Intervention: Teaching Tolerance

- **Implementing Ability Awareness programs**
- **Social and Emotional Learning Curriculums (SEL)**
  - Social and emotional learning (SEL) assists children to develop fundamental skills to effectively handle school, relationships and personal development. Examples may include managing emotions, caring for others, decision making and handling situations ethically.

For more information, see the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) at [www.casel.org](http://www.casel.org)

AbilityPath.org



## School-Wide Intervention: Positive Behavior Support System

- Also referred to as Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
- Can be district wide or school wide and is comprised of three levels of support
  - Primary, secondary, and tertiary
- When a school implements PBIS, they focus on three to five behavioral expectations that are positively stated and easy to remember
  - Rather than telling students what not to do, the school focuses on the preferred behaviors
- Examples of behavioral expectations:
  - Respect Yourself, Respect Others, and Respect Property
  - Be Safe, Be Responsible, Be Respectful

[www.pbis.org](http://www.pbis.org)



## School-Wide Intervention: Anti-Bullying Programs



There are many resources for school-wide programs and information available:

- PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center  
<http://www.pacer.org/bullying/>
- Violence Prevention Works! OLWEUS Prevention Program  
<http://www.violencepreventionworks.org/public/bullying.page>
- Anti-Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Resources Ohio Department of Education  
<http://education.ohio.gov/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?page=3&TopicRelationID=431&ContentID=29364&Content=125773>
- Stop Bullying Federal Website  
<http://www.stopbullying.gov/>



## Small Group Interventions: Peer Mentoring Program

- Could be in a grade, class, or smaller group
- Helps to form a network around students with disabilities
- Set up a peer advocating program specific to bullying
  - Dynamics of bullying behavior
  - Characteristics, traits, and circumstances of students for whom they are advocating
  - Options of how to intervene
  - Details at:  
<http://www.pacer.org/bullying/resources/students-with-disabilities/peer-advocacy.asp>



## Small Group Interventions: Social Skills Groups

- Teach particular needed skills
- Practice skills in a non-threatening situation



[www.autisminternetmodules.org](http://www.autisminternetmodules.org)

### Social Skills Groups

Social skills groups (SSG) are used to teach individuals with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) ways to appropriately interact with typically developing peers. Most SSG meetings include instruction, role-playing or practice, and feedback to help learners with ASD acquire and practice skills to promote positive social interactions with peers. This module will provide information on social skills groups (SSG).

**Approximate time to complete module:** 1 1/2 hours

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**Contributor(s):** National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders



## Social Skills Group Strategy: Role Play with Older Individuals

- After being taught a skill, students practice by acting out the situation
- Can use developed scripts or develop own scripts given a story starter
- May role play the situation “gone wrong” and then show it again using social competence strategies
- Talk about the situation



## Social Skills Group Strategy: Role Play with Younger Children

- Can use puppets, figures, or dolls for younger children
- Act out bullying situations that might happen or have happened and how to respond



<http://www.pacer.org/bullying/resources/activities/stick-puppet.asp?qclid=C1z1xcbf3K8CFVGCtgodEjckAg>



## One on One Interventions

- Proactive strategies for all students with disabilities
- Reactive strategies for dealing with targets of bullying



## Proactive Strategies for SWD

- **PARTICIPATE IN A SOCIAL SKILLS GROUP**
  - Give the opportunity to practice social situations, role playing, social stories and other techniques, with school peers, under adult supervision
  - Learn to identify and understand bullying situations when they occur
  - Facilitate friendships and a sense of not being alone; build a network of support around the student



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## Social Skills Group Suggestion: Circle of Friends

- Develops a network of support around an individual with special needs
- Promotes peer understanding and building of friendships
- Requires a facilitator and group of 6-8 volunteer peers
- Information available at:  
<http://www.txautism.net/manual.html>
- Module with details available at:  
[http://cdd.unm.edu/swan/autism\\_course/modules/social/circle/index.htm](http://cdd.unm.edu/swan/autism_course/modules/social/circle/index.htm)

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## Proactive Strategies for SWD

- **INCREASE THE CHILD'S SELF-AWARENESS ABOUT THEIR DISABILITY**
  - Teach about their strengths and help them feel proud of who they are and of their accomplishments
  - Help them understand how their disability may impact them, particularly in social situations



## Proactive Strategies for SWD

- **HELP THE CHILD IDENTIFY BULLYING**
  - What is it
  - How and to whom to report it
  - Keep in mind that some children may have a difficult time determining that they are a target of bullying behavior
- **TEACH DIFFERENCE BETWEEN REPORTING AN INCIDENT AND RATting/TATTLING**
  - Role play the difference between tattling and reporting
  - Use real life situations to demonstrate the difference through video examples or literature



## Proactive Strategies for SWD

- **INCREASE SELF-ADVOCACY SKILLS**
  - Teach the student to say “stop that” or walk away
  - Role play how to interact with a bully and leave with dignity
  - Help the child develop and learn a brief/non-confrontational verbal response to the bully. Practice both direct and indirect ways to react to, handle or avoid bullying behavior
- **IMPROVE SOCIAL UNDERSTANDING BY HAVING GOALS FOCUSED AROUND SHARING**
  - Teach how to take turns and think before acting
  - Use concrete “real world” situations
  - The focus of this should not be to teach the child to be less “teaseable,” but should be interpersonal skill building



## Proactive Strategies for SWD

- **IDENTIFY AND FACILITATE A RELATIONSHIP WITH A SCHOOL STAFF PERSON**
  - Identify who can help the student make reports of incidents
  - Identify who will provide the child with additional intervention and support
  - Schedule time for regular meetings between the staff member and student



## How to Help Build a Relationship: Emotion Cards

- Teaching how to identify and share emotions can help a child communicate
- Using visuals, especially for an individual with communication challenges, allows them to share their feelings
- Knowing how to communicate successfully using vocalized words, pictures, or a device makes an individual less isolated and vulnerable

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## Emotion Card Examples



How Do I Feel Today?

	Happy	Mad	Nervous	Unsure	Sad
Sunday					
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					

I feel \_\_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_\_

[www.freeprintablebehaviorcharts.com](http://www.freeprintablebehaviorcharts.com)

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## Reactive Strategies for SWD

### Communication Techniques:

- Don't offer too much support in public
  - Kids are concerned about how their peers perceive them and too much public exposure may worsen the problems
- Provide as much **privacy** as possible
- **Listen**, be compassionate and use a calm voice
- Praise the student for **courage** to discuss the issue
- Ask the student what he or she needs to feel **safe**
- Discuss whether **other bullying** has occurred

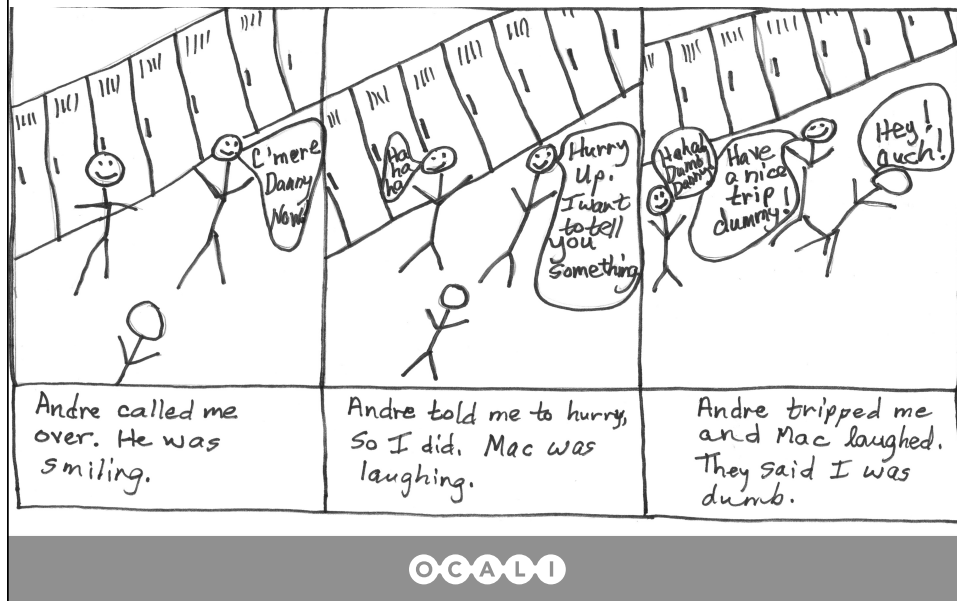


## Visual Communication Strategy: Cartooning

- Draw a cartoon of what happened, including speech bubbles of what people said
- Insert thought bubbles for the individual to fill in so you know how s/he is viewing the situation
- Use the cartoon to discuss what happened, to clarify what people might have been thinking, and to teach what to do differently



## Example of Cartooning



## Visual Communication Strategy: SOCCSS

Situation-Options-Consequences-Choices-Strategies-Simulation

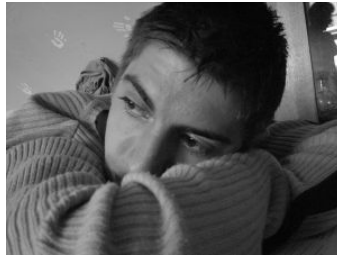
- **Situation:** Who, what, when, where, why
- **Options:** Brainstorm possible options to the situation
- **Consequences:** List a possible consequence to each brainstorm option
- **Choices:** Choose best option after prioritizing list
- **Strategies:** Develop a plan using the option in case the situation occurs again
- **Simulation:** Practice the plan

Texas Autism Resource Guide for Effective Teaching

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## SOCSS Bullying Example

- **Situation:** After telling him to stop, I shoved Mark when he kept poking me with a pencil during class.
- **Options:**
  - a) Shove Mark
  - b) Yell at Mark
  - c) Try to move away
  - d) Tell him to stop
  - e) Tell the teacher
- **Consequences:**
  - a) Detention and maybe a fight
  - b) Interrupt class and might get detention
  - c) Avoid being poked
  - d) Might stop, but not this time
  - e) Get the help I need before getting myself in trouble



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## SOCSS Continued

- **Choices:** c), e), b), a), d)
- **Strategies:** I will try to move far enough away from Mark and his pencil first, but if that doesn't work I'll tell the teacher. It's not tattling if I might get hurt, and Mark picks on me a lot. It needs to stop.
- **Simulation:** Role play getting poked at home and practice moving away. Then, practice telling the teacher by raising my hand or walking up to him.

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## Reactive Strategies for SWD

### Follow-Up Ideas:

- Communicate with other **relevant staff members** about the bullying incident
- Be **proactive** in manipulating the classroom **environment** for success (e.g., helpful peers)
- Continue to **monitor** behaviors and have a follow-up conversation with the student
- Take into consideration any exceptionalities and how they may impact bullying situations; **individualize** strategies accordingly
- **Don't force** a meeting between the student who is bullied and the bully that can potentially worsen the issue



## Summary

- Don't tolerate even low-level bullying behavior
- Specifically assign a staff member to mentor each student with a disability who will watch for bullying
- Consider implementing some of the proactive strategies
- Become familiar with the reactive strategies



The image shows a rectangular graphic with a white background and a central grey horizontal band. In the center of the grey band, the letters 'O', 'C', 'A', 'L', and 'I' are arranged horizontally, each enclosed in a white circle. Below this logo, the tagline 'linking research to real life.' is written in a small, white, sans-serif font. At the bottom of the graphic, there is a thin grey bar containing a smaller version of the 'OCALI' logo on the left and the text 'A division of the ESC of Central Ohio' followed by a small blue and red logo on the right.