




Anti-Bullying Strategies and Supports for Families

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!



Signs of Bullying

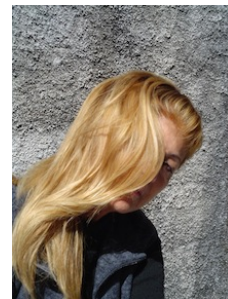
- Physical evidence: ripped clothing, bruises, injuries
- Hesitation about going to school
- Decreased appetite
- Nightmares
- Weight loss; complaints of stomach pain
- General depression; crying
- Anxiety
- Change in special interest: shift to focus on violence/ weapons/martial art



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What Are the 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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Where Might Bullying Be More Likely to Occur?

- Less Supervised/ Unstructured Areas:
 - Playground
 - Bus
 - Cafeteria
 - Hallways
 - Bathrooms
 - Neighborhood
 - Online/ Social Networking



What Makes a Child with a Disability a Target for Bullying?

Individuals with disabilities are 2 to 3 times more likely to be bullied.

- Low frustration tolerance
- Lack of social skills
- Motor difficulties
- Communication challenges
- Physical impairments
- Solitary play



<http://www.pacer.org/bullying/resources/students-with-disabilities/>



If You Suspect Bullying?

- Talk to your child
- Listen to them
- Be patient and supportive
- Be careful not to blame your child
- Don't ignore your feelings that something might be wrong



Some questions to start the conversation:

Has it happened more than once? Did the child know you were being hurt? Who did you sit by at lunch?

For more questions, go to:

http://specialneeds.thebullyproject.com/conversation_starters



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/>



What Can I Do to Help My Child or Family Member?

- Team approach: involve your child's educational team
- Teach confidence to your child
- Teach who your child can trust and help him/her develop relationships
- Teach calming strategies
- Explore role plays and practice scenarios
- Educate about cyber bullying



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Team Approach

- Contact the school to arrange a meeting
- Meet with educational team (teachers, principal, school counselor, psychologist, Special Ed. director)
- Legal obligation is protection
- Goals to consider for the IEP:
 - Social/ Emotional
 - Social Skills
 - Speech and Language
 - Self Advocacy and Self Awareness



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Teach Confidence

- Help develop talents or positive attributes your child possesses
- Suggest and facilitate sports, music, and art activities
- Help your child identify “friendly” peers
- Talk with school staff and/or other parents to identify “friendly” peers
- Meet new friends outside of school environment



Building Trust and Relationships

- Identify adults that your child can trust in each environment
- Teach your child how to seek help from an adult (i.e. I feel ___ when ___; emotion cards)
- Peer buddies and/or Circle of Friends



Building Trust and Relationships: 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



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



Building Trust and Relationships: 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

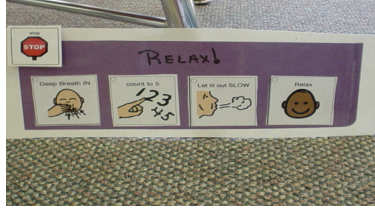


Calming Strategies

- Relaxation
 - Deep breathing techniques
 - Counting
 - Yoga
- Anxiety hierarchy scale



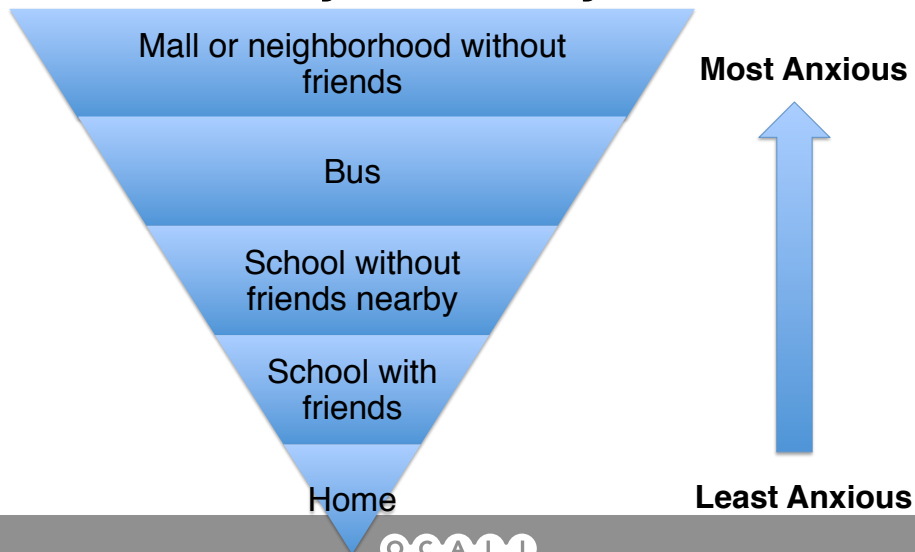
Calming Strategies: Relaxation



- Teach **deep breathing** as a coping mechanism to relax using a visual support if needed
- Practice how to **count backwards** silently using visual cuing such as your fingers or written numbers with your child/family member
- Explore **yoga techniques** with your child/family member using a DVD or book

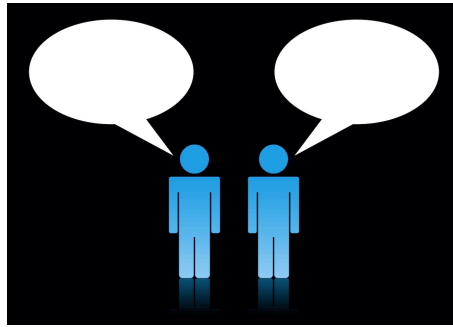
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Calming Strategies: Anxiety Hierarchy Scale



Role Play and Practice Scenarios

- Role Play
- Cartooning
- SOCCSS



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Role Play: 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



OCALI

Role Play: 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=C1zIxcfb3K8CFVGCtgodEjckAg>

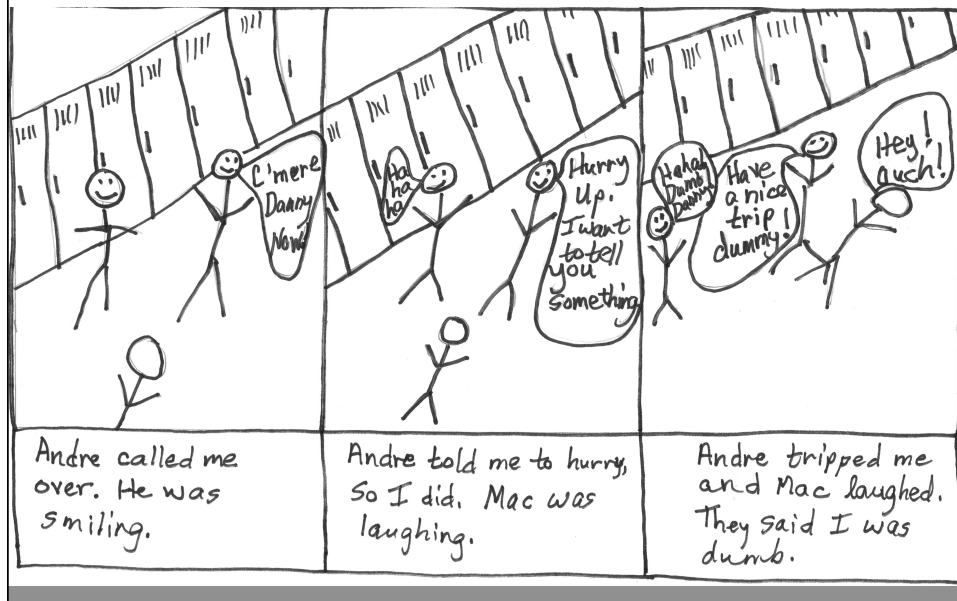


Cartooning

- Draw out 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



SOCSSS

Situation-Options-Consequences-Choices-Strategies-Simulation

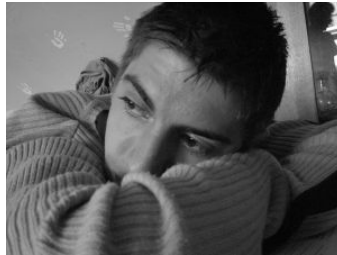
- **Situation:** Who, what, when, where, why
- **Options:** Brainstorm possible options to the situation
- **Consequences:** List a possible consequence to each brainstorm option
- **Choices:** Choose best option after prioritizing list
- **Strategies:** Develop a plan using the option in case the situation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

Texas Autism Resource Guide for Effective Teaching



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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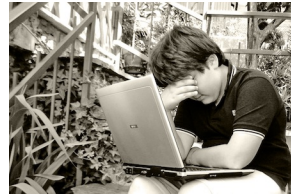
SOCSS continued

- **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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Cyber Bullying

- Teach child not to reveal personal information online
- Limit time online
- Role playing or social stories
- Keep copies of inappropriate messages
- Don't prohibit technology
- Research screening programs



linking research to real life.



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