School Safety and Climate Teams

Roles and Responsibilities
Intervention and Prevention Best Practices

Paterson Public Schools

Presented By:

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Purpose of Training

- Reconnect

- Identify role and responsibility of School and Climate Teams

- Target areas where more support is needed

- Student involvement in HIB

- Consequences of HIB

- Strategies for Prevention

The following positions facilitate the HIB process for reporting, compliance, investigations and overall school climate and culture:

**District Anti-Bullying Coordinator
Principal
Anti-Bullying Specialists
School Safety Teams**

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School Safety Teams

- Formed to develop, foster, and maintain a positive school climate, by focusing on the ongoing, systemic process and practices including HIB issues

- Meets at least 2 times per school year

- Consists of
    - **Principal/Or designee (preferably a senior administrator)**
    - **Teacher**
    - **Anti-bullying specialist (Chair)**
    - **Parent of a student in the school**
    - **Other members as determined by the Principal**

- Identifies and addresses patterns of HIB in the school

- Reviews and strengthens school climate and policies in order to prevent and address HIB

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School Safety Teams

- Review all HIB complaints, investigation reports and related data.
- Review the climate of the school.
- Review the board of education's HIB policies and procedures
- Make recommendations, based on the priority findings from the data analysis.
- Engage in a collaborative process to complete the School Self-Assessment for Determining Grades.

Source: Eyes On Bullying Toolkit

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School Safety Teams

- Make recommendations for improvements to school climate, the HIB policies and procedures and for educating the community

- Identify professional development needs and deliver professional development opportunities designed to address needs.

- Planning school climate activities, including related programming for students, were designed to address the findings.

- Improve HIB reporting procedures (if needed)

- Collaborate with the district anti-bullying coordinator in the collection of district-wide data and in the development of district policies to prevent and address HIB

School Safety Teams

- Use multiple data sources to identify patterns of HIB and multiple strategies to review school climate policies and practices.

- Provide written recommendations regarding the reduction of the identified HIB patterns and the improvement of school climate policies

- Implement multiple education programs planned with and provided to the school community (i.e., students, staff, administrators and parents) to prevent HIB.

  - The programs address both HIB and the social, emotional and character development of students.

School Safety Teams

A highly effective Team:

- Understands its' strengths and weaknesses

- Limitations

- Allies and Detractors

- Fulfill the mission of the school safety and climate team

- Students are to actively serve on or participate in the activities of the SST.

- Prevention activities are based on data-driven needs, and are outcome-oriented and proactive.

- Understands trends that are occurring in its school.

- Needs to be a part of the fabric of the school community, not separate, stand alone entity.

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Grade Level Bullying

- **In the preschool years,** children who bully often rely on verbal and physical bullying to control material objects or territory. Some children begin to use relational bullying to exclude others from their social groups.

- **Beginning in the preschool years, adults can teach children important bullying prevention skills and guide children as they practice using these skills.** Social skills that form an important foundation for bullying prevention include:
  - Showing empathy toward others
  - Interacting assertively
  - Solving social problems

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Grade Level Bullying

In the elementary school years, children who bully often use physical force and verbal bullying to force victims do things against their will.

They also engage in relational bullying to turn their friends against selected classmates.

At this age, some children also begin to use the Internet or cell phones to engage in cyberbullying.

Grade Level Bullying

In the middle and high school years, children who bully often use cyberbullying to embarrass, humiliate, or attack their peers.

Although both boys and girls use verbal bullying, boys tend to rely on physical bullying to enhance their physical dominance and girls tend to use relational bullying to enhance their social status.

- **In a follow-up study of boys in grades 6 through 9, bullies were found to be four times more likely than their non-bullying peers to be convicted of at least one crime by the age of 24.**

- **Surprisingly, 60% of these former bullies had committed at least one crime, and 35% had committed three or more crimes**

Source: Eyes On Bullying Toolkit

Consequences of Bullying

As they mature into adulthood, children who have bullied often show higher rates of:

Aggression

Difficulty controlling their emotions

Convictions for drunk driving

Traffic violations

Depression

Convictions for crime

Suicide

Dropping out of high school

Antisocial behavior

Carrying weapons to school

are likely to experience negative emotional, behavioral, and mental health outcomes

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Consequences of Bullying

Examining the Effects on The Victim

- While under the influence of a bully, victims may show many signs of physical, emotional, and social distress. They often feel tense, anxious, tired, listless, and sad.

- Some children lose their confidence, become socially isolated, do poorly in school, or refuse to go to school. They may also show high levels of:

Headaches	Bed-wetting
Skin-problems	Crying
Abdominal pain	Depression
Sleep Problems	

- Increased risk of subsequent mental, emotional, and behavioral problems, especially internalizing problems.

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Consequences of Bullying

In cases of extreme bullying, some tormented victims have resorted to violence toward themselves or others.

- **Suicide…** Some victims of bullying have committed suicide.
  - Children as young as nine years of age may think about suicide as a way to escape their bullies.

- **School Shooters…** Other victims of bullying have used guns to take violent revenge in schools against their bullies and others who they believe have failed to support them.
  - Many school shooters were bullied: In 37 incidents of targeted school violence between 1974 and 2000, almost three-quarters of the shooters reported being bullied, persecuted, threatened, attacked, or injured before the incident. Sometimes the experience of being bullied seemed to have influenced the shooter's decision to make an attack at the school

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Consequences of Bullying

Children and youth who are bullied

- subsequently experience a range of somatic disturbances.

- Social-cognitive factors (e.g., self-blame) and unsuccessful emotion regulation (i.e., emotion dysregulation) mediate relationships between bullying and adverse outcomes.

- Alter emotional brain circuits.
  - This potential outcome is critically in need of further investigation.

Source: Preventing Bullying Through Science, Policy and Practice

Consequences of Bullying

Individuals <u>**who both bully** and are **also bullied by others**</u>

- Experience a greater variety of both internalizing and externalizing symptoms than those who only bully or are only bullied.

- Appear to be at greatest risk for poor psychosocial outcomes, compared to those who only bully or are only bullied and to those who are not bullied.

- Existing evidence suggests that both social-cognitive and emotion regulation processes may mediate the relation between being bullied and adverse mental health outcomes.

Source: Preventing Bullying Through Science, Policy and Practice

Youth at Higher Risk of Being Bullied

- Learning Disabilities

- Mental or Physical needs (i.e. autism spectrum disorder)

- New to the Community

- Special health care needs or chronic diseases

- Overweight or underweight

- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender, questioning and do not conform to gender stereotypes

- Speak another language at home
  - *These factors do not positively determine that a student will be bullied*

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The Victim

Students can become victimized because they appear small, weak, insecure, sensitive, or "different" from their peers.

Victims tend to share these characteristics and tendencies:

Low self-confidence

Feelings of helplessness

Anxiety

Self-blame for problems

Fearfulness

Social withdrawal and isolation

Submissiveness

Poor social skills

Depression or sad appearances

Low popularity

Limited sense of humor

Few or no friends

Excessive dependence on adults

Below-average size, strength or coordination

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Tools for Victims

Potential victims can reduce their risk of being bullied by learning how to:

- **Exhibit** self-confidence

- **Avoid** the bully's tactics

- **Respond** with assertiveness

- **Obtain** support from others

Victims often respond to bullies' demands with either passive submission or retaliatory aggression—rather than with self-confidence and assertiveness.

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Assertiveness

ASSERTIVENESS means expressing one's feelings and defending one's rights while respecting the feelings and rights of others.

- Potential victims can protect themselves by learning to respond assertively.

- Neither provoke the bully nor reward him/her with submission.

- Provides a child with an air of self-confidence and a sense of control that can deter a bully's approach from the start.

- Role-playing exercises help children use body language, facial expressions, tone of voice, and words to respond

Tips for Standing Up

Help victims change their outlook:

From one of _helplessness-_

There is nothing that can be done to stop the bully

To one of _confidence-_

There are specific things that victims, bystanders, and adults _can do_ to stop the bully.

- Each time a child practices an assertive response, fearful and helpless thoughts are replaced by strong and confident ones.

- Each day, 160,000 children in the United States stay home from school for fear of being bullied.

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Tips for Standing Up

- Take a deep breath and let the air out slowly.

- Sit or stand tall, head up.

- Keep your hands at your sides rather than on your hips or folded across your chest.

- Have a relaxed and purposeful facial expression, not angry or laughing.

- Maintain eye contact.

- Speak with a calm voice, loud enough to be heard clearly.

- Use non-provocative words and a confident tone of voice.

- Avoid name-calling or making threats.

- Avoid finger pointing or other threatening gestures.

- Reply briefly and directly.

- Avoid bringing up past grudges or making generalizations

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The Bystander

Bullying situations also include Bystanders.

- **An important new strategy for bullying prevention focuses on the powerful role of the bystander.** Depending on how bystanders respond, they can either contribute to the problem or the solution. Bystanders rarely play a completely neutral role, although they may think they do

- **Bystanders' actions make a critical difference. Children and adults should think ahead about what they will do when they witness or hear about bullying.**

- **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=StPGbbBBrI0**

The Bystander

Hurtful Bystanders

- Type 1: Instigate the bullying by prodding the bully to begin.

- Type 2: Encourage the bullying by laughing, cheering, or making comments that further stimulate the bully.

- Type 3: Join in the bullying once it has begun.

- Type 4: Passively (85%) accept bullying by watching and doing nothing.

  - Passive bystanders provide the audience a bully craves and the silent acceptance that allows bullies to continue their hurtful behavior.

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The Bystander

Helpful Bystanders

- Bystanders also have the power to play a key role in preventing or stopping bullying.

- **Type 1:** directly intervene, by discouraging the bully, defending the victim, or redirecting the situation away from bullying.

- **Type 2:** get help, by rallying support from peers to stand up against bullying or by reporting the bullying to adults.

More than one-half the time, bullying stops within 10 seconds of a bystander stepping in to help.

In one report, 1/3 of children said they "could join in bullying someone they don't like."

The Bystander

Bystanders who don't intervene or don't report the bullying often suffer negative consequences themselves. They may experience:

- Pressure to participate in the bullying

- Anxiety about speaking to anyone about the bullying

- Powerlessness to stop bullying

- Vulnerability to becoming victimized

- Fear of associating with the victim, the bully, or the bully's pals

- Guilt for not having defended the victim

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The Bystander

Why don't more bystanders intervene?

- They think, "It's none of my business."

- They fear getting hurt or becoming another victim.

- They feel powerless to stop the bully.

- They don't like the victim or they believe the victim "deserves" it.

- They don't want to draw attention to themselves.

- They fear retribution.

- They think that telling adults won't help or it may make things worse.

- They don't know what to do

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In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends."

—Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

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The Bystander

- Although overall these programs were successful at increasing bystanders' intervention in bullying situations, Polanin and colleagues (2012) <u>did not find any improvement in bystander empathy for the victims</u>

- Bystander intervention effects were larger for older youth compared to younger children.
  - Specifically, the effects were typically stronger in high schools compared to students in younger grades

Preparing Children

ALL CHILDREN CAN BE EMPOWERED TO BECOME HELPFUL BYSTANDERS.

Adults can prepare children for this role by discussing with them the different ways bystanders can make a difference, and by letting them know that adults will support them, if and when they step forward.

Adults can also provide examples of how helpful bystanders have shown courage and made a difference in real-life situations and in their own experiences.

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What Adults Can Do

- Intervene when children are young.

- Teach bullying prevention strategies to all children.

- Take bullying seriously

- Encourage empathy

- Teach by Example

- Help children critically evaluate media violence.

- Provide opportunities for children to learn and practice the qualities and skills that can protect them from bullying.

- Encourage children to talk about and report bullying.

- Develop strong connections with the children in your care.

- Reexamine your own beliefs about bullying.

"If there is anything that we wish to change in the child, we should first examine it and see whether it is not something that could better be changed in ourselves."

—Carl Jung

Source: Eyes On Bullying Toolkit

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Non-Recommended Strategies

- Suspension and related exclusionary techniques do not appear to be effective and may actually result in increased academic and behavioral problems for youth.

- Encouraging youth to fight back when bullied is also not a recommended strategy, as it suggests that aggression is an effective means for responding to victimization and may perpetuate the cycle of violence.

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Non-Recommended Strategies

- Youth- or peer-facilitated programs, such as peer mediation, peer-led conflict resolution, forced apology, and peer mentoring <u>may not be appropriate or effective in bullying prevention</u>.

- Forced apology or the use of peer-mediated conflict resolution

  - within the context of bullying programs, face-to-face interactions between the youth who have been perpetrators and those who have been targeted

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Non-Recommended Strategies

- Conflict resolution approaches, even when facilitated by adults, <u>are not typically recommended in situations of bullying,</u> as they suggest a disagreement between two peers of equal status or power, rather than an instance of peer abuse
    - structured and well-supervised youth leadership activities can have a positive impact on bullying prevention;

- Little evidence that one-day awareness raising events or brief assemblies are effective at changing a climate of bullying or producing sustainable effects on bullying behavior (Farrington and Ttofi, 2009).

Non-Recommended Strategies

- At times, programs that were peer-led often produced null or even iatrogenic effects.

- Some programs appeared to increase attitudes supportive of bullying, whereas others showed an increase in incidents of targeting rather than a reduction in bullying-related behaviors

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Reflection

- Are we using some of these interventions in the best way? How do we utilize peer-led interventions?

- How do we organize conflict resolution?

- How effective are our assemblies and programs? How do we know?

- How do we sustain the messages in those assemblies to see impact over time?

- What are our alternatives to suspension? Are they effective? Is there a change in behavior?

- What is an effective intervention used in your school?

Prevention Strategies

- The use of multi-tiered approaches—those which leverage universal, selective, and indicated prevention programs and activities.

- Tier 1- approach might include lessons on social-emotional skill development for all students—thus making it a universal program.

- At Tier 2, selective interventions may include social skills training for small groups of children at risk for becoming involved in bullying. Finally, an indicated preventive intervention

- (Tier 3) may include more intensive supports and programs tailored to meet the needs of students identified as a perpetrator or a target of bullying and the needs of their families (Espelage and Swearer, 2008; Ross and Horner, 2009).

Source: Preventing Bullying Through Science, Policy and Practice

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Prevention Strategies

- Providing class time to discuss bullying (Olweus, 1993) and the use of lessons to foster skills and competencies, effective communication, and strategies for responding to bullying (Farrington and Ttofi, 2009); such strategies can also have a positive impact on academic and other behavioral outcomes

- School-wide prevention efforts that provide positive behavior support, establish a common set of expectations for positive behavior across all school contexts, and involve all school staff in prevention activities.

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Prevention Strategies

- Effective supervision, especially in bullying "hot spots," and clear anti-bullying policies are essential elements of a successful school-wide prevention effort.

- Collecting data on bullying via anonymous student surveys

- Use of data is critical for monitoring progress toward the goal of reducing bullying.

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Prevention Strategies

- Families also play a critical role in bullying prevention by providing emotional support to promote disclosure of bullying incidents and by fostering coping skills in their children.

- Awareness or social marketing campaigns that encourage all youth and adults—including doctors, police officers, and storekeepers—to intervene when they see bullying and to become actively involved in school- and community-based prevention activities

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Prevention Strategies

- Efforts to address multiple competencies and skills in order to prevent bullying, while helping students cope and respond appropriately when bullying does occur.

- Programs should include efforts to <u>enhance resilience and positive behaviors</u> and not just focus on reductions in bullying perpetration.

- The three-tiered public health model provides a framework for connecting bullying prevention with other programs to address bullying within the broader set of behavioral and academic concerns

Source: Preventing Bullying Through Science, Policy and Practice

Prevention Strategies

- Consider how schools can integrate prevention efforts with their other existing programs and supports.

- Schools are encouraged to integrate their prevention efforts so that there is a seamless system of support (Domitrovich et al., 2010), which is coordinated, monitored for high fidelity implementation, and includes all staff across all school context

- Schools can develop a consistent and long-term prevention plan that addresses multiple student concerns through a set of well-integrated programs and services.

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Prevention Strategies

Schools may want to consider implementing a multicomponent program that focuses on:

- School climate
- Positive behavior support
- Social and emotional learning
- Violence prevention

- Rather than implementing a bullying-specific preventive intervention, as these more inclusive programs may reach a broader set of outcomes for students and the school environment.
  - Tiered preventive interventions appear to be a promising model for schools

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Prevention Strategies

- Other potentially promising findings are in the area of gay-straight alliances as a preventive measure (Poteat et al., 2013, 2015).

- Such resources appear to be an important buffer for LGB youth and may contribute to a shift in the norms regarding stereotype-driven targeting of LGB youth.

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Prevention Strategies

- There is also growing interest in programming focused on issues related to equity in relation to both sexual and racial minorities (Bulanda et al., 2014; Polanin and Vera, 2013).

- Similarly, there is increasing interest in the use of restorative practice-based models with the goal of preventing bullying and providing more equitable disciplinary practices in response to other behavioral violations (Bradshaw, 2013)

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Prevention Strategies

Regardless of the prevention program or model selected be aware of:

- Issues related to implementation fidelity

- Spanning initial buy-in and adoption through taking programs to scale and sustainability

- Need careful consideration and an authentic investment

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Protective Factors for Bullying

Individual and Family Factors

- Secure, caring and self-confident children

- Supportive parenting and the modeling of positive relationships

- Consistent and affectionate parent-child interactions

- Close, positive friendships with peers

- Engaged and responsive teachers and school staff

- Inclusive, nurturing and safe schools

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Reflection

As the team meets review the Prevention Strategies listed and think of these guiding questions:

- Are we involved in any of these strategies? Do we implement with fidelity?

- How long have we been doing it?

- How do we measure effectiveness?

- Do we need additional resources to implement with fidelity? And if so, how can we obtain more?

- Can some of these be more seamless and integrated?

- Any new ideas based upon the information presented.

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Next Steps

- Provide dates for the next meetings of the School Safety and Climate teams
  - Recommend looking at Repot Card Parent Conferences (may be easier for parent to attend)
- As a part of the meeting, team members should review HIB data provided for the previous and create a [plan of actin based on that data
- Complete feedback/survey form
- Review Guidance Document when meeting as a team
  - Can complete or just use as final document.

Questions

HIB Department Contact Information

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