*"Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home - so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighborhood he lives in; the school or college she attends; the factory, farm, or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world."*Eleanor Roosevelt

Empowering bystandersWe empower bystanders to action when we:

* help them see that their silence makes aggressive students more powerful and contributes to the harm done to the target;
* model positive behavior for them through our own actions;
* protect them from retaliation;
* discourage them from confronting aggressive youth directly about their behavior in most situations, and instead, help them find a wide range of other interventions to use
* encourage them to tell adults about the cruel behavior they see;
* and help them find ways to reach out in friendship to targets of bullying and isolated peers.

We can do this in classroom meetings, in school assemblies, and in conversations with our own children.

Some middle school students wrote for advice about what they could do. Here is a [letter to them](http://stopbullyingnow.com/letter%20to%20middle%20school%20students.pdf)

[Bullying by teachers and other school staff](http://stopbullyingnow.com/bullying%20by%20teachers.htm).

[Links- learn more about bullying prevention](http://stopbullyingnow.com/links.htm)

[Stopbullyingnow training for your school.](http://stopbullyingnow.com/interven1.htm)

For more information about stopping bullying, see Stan's books [*Schools Where Everyone Belongs*](http://stopbullyingnow.com/book.htm)and [*Empowering Bystanders in Bullying Prevention*](http://www.researchpress.com/product/item/5349/)

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| Comprehensive interventionsWhat are the components of a successful comprehensive intervention?* Consensus-development among staff and community members so people enforce the same expectations consistently. What is your community's definition of bullying? What behaviors will you commit to changing no matter what it takes? These might include:
	+ physical bullying: hitting, kicking, pushing, choking, punching,….
	+ verbal bullying: threatening, taunting, teasing, hate speech
	+ And social exclusion.
* Development and consistent enforcement of effective consequences for verbal and physical aggression which are predictable, inevitable, immediate, and escalating and based on uniform expectations for all. Consistent use of consequences will reduce bullying and are a necessary component of effective prevention. Inconsistent enforcement makes the problem worse. Effective consequences are small (so they can be used consistently), escalate with repeated aggression, and typically involve loss of unstructured times like recess, lunch with peers, or extracurricular activities.
* Building positive connections between staff and students and positive feeling tone in staff-student interactions.
* Monitoring to make sure that consequences and education are effective.
* Effective counseling for bullies after enforcement of consequences has generated some anxiety.
* Effective support for targets, including protection from repeat victimization.
* Empowering bystanders to tell adults, support targets, and discourage bullying.

[Intervention with Bullies](http://stopbullyingnow.com/interven2.htm)[The Stop Bullying Now Intervention:](http://stopbullyingnow.com/interven1.htm)Training workshop for teachers at all levels.For more specific techniques to stop bullying, see information about the book [*Schools Where Everyone Belongs*](http://stopbullyingnow.com/book.htm)  |

####  Identifying Bullying

Craig and Pepler's playground observation research found:

* one incident of bullying every seven minutes.
* adult intervention in 4% of incidents
* peer intervention in 11% of incidents

What conclusions can bullies draw from this pattern?
What conclusions can targets draw from this pattern?

Children, after all, learn from what they see us do, rather than from what we say. When adults do not intervene, bullies may feel there is nothing wrong with their actions. Targets may feel they deserve the bullying.

Adults can intervene effectively to reduce bullying. The first step is to identify bullying. It includes:

* **Physical bullying:** hitting, kicking, pushing, choking, punching
* **Verbal bullying**: threatening, taunting, teasing, starting rumors, hate speech.
* **Exclusion from activities**: This does not mean that a child should not have the right to choose to play, or not to play, with another child; it does mean that children should not be allowed to systematically exclude others: "No one play with Mary;" "No one wants to play with him;" "Don't be her friend."

**Bullying is like spouse abuse or sexual harassment in that it:**

* Done by someone with  more power or social support to someone with less power or social support
* Often includes the abuser blaming the target for the abuse
* Often it leads to the target blaming him or herself for the abuse.

[What doesn't work?](http://stopbullyingnow.com/what.htm)For more information about stopping bullying, see information about the book [*Schools Where Everyone Belongs*](http://stopbullyingnow.com/book.htm)

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| **Help For youth who bully** Remember that youth who bully may come from homes where there is little warmth and parental attention, and where parents discipline inconsistently using physical punishment and emotional outbursts. They may have little empathy or trust and little ability to delay gratification. Structured counseling and education that stresses acknowledging actions, empathy development, and restitution is likely to be effective if it follows consistent negative consequences for the aggressive behavior.   Bullying youth often need to recognize that their behavior will continue to lead to consequences until they change it before using any counseling.Requests to apologize, self-esteem-building, asking why, pleading, and expressions of frustration are unlikely to help and may make things worse.**Useful questions to ask youth who bully:*** What did you do?
* Why was that a bad thing to do?
* Who did you hurt?
* What were you trying to accomplish?
* Next time you have that goal, how will you meet it without hurting anybody?

**Youth who bully often need to learn to:** * Acknowledge their own actions
* Acknowledge the results of their behavior on themselves
* Develop anxiety ("I broke a rule and got in trouble. I don't want to go through that again!")
* Change their actions to stay out of trouble
* Find other ways to get their needs met
* Acknowledge the results of their behavior on others
* Develop guilt ("I hurt someone")
* Learn to trust others and delay gratification
* Form relationships with helping adults

Many young people showing antisocial behavior will get stuck part-way through this sequence. Where they get stuck is where you need to focus with them to help them move on. Think of this sequence as being like a developmental sequence in learning to read. When children learn to sound out letters we know they are on the path to reading and we solidify those skills with them before moving on. We also appreciate their progress. Seeing signs of progress in the behavior of antisocial children is what keeps us going. More important than that, seeing signs of progress is what keeps us liking them. And they will only work with and for us if they know we like them. [Support for youth who are targeted](http://stopbullyingnow.com/support.htm) For more information about stopping bullying, see the book [*Schools Where Everyone Belongs*](http://stopbullyingnow.com/book.htm)

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| Support for TargetsWe support targets of bullying when we: * protect them from future bullying
* Help them develop an answer to the question: "why did he/she do that?" They need to find  alternatives to feeling guilty for being victimized.
* involve them in expressive education/therapy where they can act, write, draw, and talk about their experiences.
* help them get support from others with similar histories.
* and- most importantly- help them connect with a network of peer support and friendship.

We can draw on extensive work done in supporting the victims of sexual abuse, especially the work of **Linda Sanford.** See her excellent books:**The Silent Children** and **Strong At the Broken Places**  |

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