

# Bullying Prevention Resource Guide

FOR SCHOOLS, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS

## TIPS AND TOPICS FOR BULLYING PREVENTION SUCCESS

### CULTURAL COMPETENCY - RELATING TO EACH OTHER

Cultural competency is an ongoing process and practice that builds the capacity of programs and individuals to develop a climate that understands, accepts, and respects the unique contributions of all people.

Becoming culturally competency should result in changes in standards, policies, and practices in order to effectively operate in different cultural contexts.

Being aware of cultural impact, and intentionally increasing cultural competency should be at the forefront of everything within the bullying prevention program. Below are three things you can do to increase your responsiveness to families, to youth, and to your community.

- 1) Recognize the role that culture plays when including parents and families in bullying prevention efforts.
  - Cultural norms often influence how people define and respond to bullying. Different cultures may deal with bullying differently, and the youth's home culture will impact how students view their own behavior.
  - The way one group chooses to deal with bullying issues may conflict with another group's tradition and the ways they have always done things. Be careful not to send an "us vs. them" message.
  - Language barriers and communication often get in the way of effectively conveying the bullying issue and the goals of the initiative. Keep to a simple message of keeping all kids safe.
  - Immigration status may affect whether some parents are willing to fill out paperwork and consent forms. Guaranteeing confidentiality may be very important to some families.
  - Be aware of how different groups are treated in the community. How can you best reach people where they are? Try to anticipate what barriers may exist in reaching them.
  - Become aware of religious and family traditions of the families you serve. Avoid scheduling important meetings and information sessions during these family times.
  
- 2) Be aware of the impact cultural differences have on your students.
  - Minority youth, low socio-economic youth, and GLBTQ youth are at a higher risk of being bullied than other youth.
  - Youth with language barriers or those from lower socioeconomic groups may lack access to the resources of other youth.
  - Youth tend to self-identify with their own cultural groups. Be aware of stereotypes and segregated atmospheres that may contribute to an overall atmosphere of bullying. Help bridge gaps in order to sustain climate change.
  - Cultural identity is very important to youth. Youth whose ethnic, socioeconomic, or religious backgrounds are different from the dominant culture often face difficulty in defining their self-concept due to their differing beliefs. Help youth recognize and honor their own and others' traditions, ethnicity, ideas, and perspectives.
  
- 3) It's important to understand your community in order to meet the needs of all groups.
  - In all of your bullying prevention efforts assess the population and cultural nuances of those you are trying to reach. Ask questions regarding cultural issues and get to know others' perspectives. Silence around cultural issues will lead to misunderstandings.

- Incorporate leaders and members from all cultures (ethnic, age, sexual orientation, ability and education level) that make up your community. Having all players involved in planning will promote buy-in from larger community and will result in developing material that is relevant to a larger audience.
- Be aware of the stereotypes and biases you bring to the community and help diffuse them in yourself and others over time. Cultural competency is a process not a destination.

**Resources:**

Guajardo Lucero, Maria Ph.D. 2000. *The Spirit of Culture: Applying Cultural Competency to Strength-based Youth Development.*

California Tomorrow.2003. *Pursuing the Promise: Addressing Equity, Access and Diversity in After School and Youth Programs.*

Lee, E., Menkhart, D., Okazawa-Rey, M. eds. 1998. *Beyond Heroes and Holidays: A Practical Guide to K-12 Anti-racist, Multicultural Education and Staff Development.*

**Bullying Prevention Initiative Common Elements:**

- Partnerships
- Positive Youth Development
- Interventions for Students (bully, bullied, and bystander)
- Cultural Competency
- Sustained Climate Change

This online guide was produced by the Colorado Foundation for Families and Children and the Colorado Springs Assets for Youth as part of their services to support The Colorado Trust's Bullying Prevention initiative.

