

Bullying Prevention Resource Guide

FOR SCHOOLS, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Tips and Topics For Bullying Prevention Success

STAKEHOLDER BUY-IN: TIPS TO GAIN AND MAINTAIN SUPPORT

What is a stakeholder?

Stakeholders are individuals or organizations that stand to gain or lose from the success or failure of a system.

Stakeholders may or may not be partners in your bullying prevention program. However, even stakeholders who are not partners can negatively or positively impact the outcome of your work.

An effective and sustainable bullying prevention program needs buy-in from stakeholders at all levels, including teachers, parents, administrators, funders, cafeteria workers, bus drivers, community members, and others.

Reflect on your program and prioritize your stakeholders

What are your program gaps? Recruit stakeholders that can help fill those gaps to be partners in your bullying prevention efforts. Follow the chart below (scale from 1—10) to recruit stakeholders with high interest and high influence followed by those with high interest and low influence. In this example, you would want to focus the majority of your efforts on recruiting Mrs. Anderson and John Doe, due to their high level of interest.

STAKEHOLDER	POSITION	INFLUENCE	INTEREST IN PROJECT	GOALS	OBJECTIONS TO PROJECT
Johnny B. Good	Good student, no trouble	5	3	Get good grades	“This is dumb!”
Suzy Q.	Cries a lot, always hurt	0	4	Not get bullied	None – hopes it helps, but has doubts
Mr. Long	Principal	8	4	Higher scores, fewer discipline referrals	Cost, time, trouble
Mrs. Anderson	Teacher	5	9	More teaching time	Skeptical, wants it to work, willing to try
John Doe	Parent, vocal school board member	10	10	Higher test scores, fewer discipline referrals, Suzy doesn't cry every night	None

Ultimately, stakeholder level of interest is more important than level of influence. Projects succeed or fail primarily based on the actions of people who care enough to defend or oppose them.

Plan your recruitment

Now that you know which stakeholders whom you are targeting to develop partnerships, you need to plan your recruitment strategy. Keep the following tips in mind:

- Be mindful of the level of readiness of each of your stakeholders, and the community in general. How much do your stakeholders know about bullying and your efforts to curtail it? Adapt your strategies to recruit a partnership team, or to refine your existing team's efforts of building the skills of youth and adults to prevent bullying.
- Establish a sense of urgency. Bullying is a problem! Convince your stakeholders of this by supplying them with national statistics, local statistics from the BPI evaluation, as well as information about the long-term consequences of bullying behaviors on the youth doing the bullying, being bullied, as well as those who witness bullying.
- Answer the question, "what's in it for me?" for each of your potential partners. It is important to tell your stakeholders what they stand to gain if your bullying prevention program succeeds, and what they will lose if the program disintegrates when the Bullying Prevention Initiative ends.
- Practice recruitment, including your response to stakeholders who decline joining the partnership team. It's important to find some way for those stakeholders who do not choose to join the partnership team to stay connected to your bullying prevention efforts.

Develop a partnership team

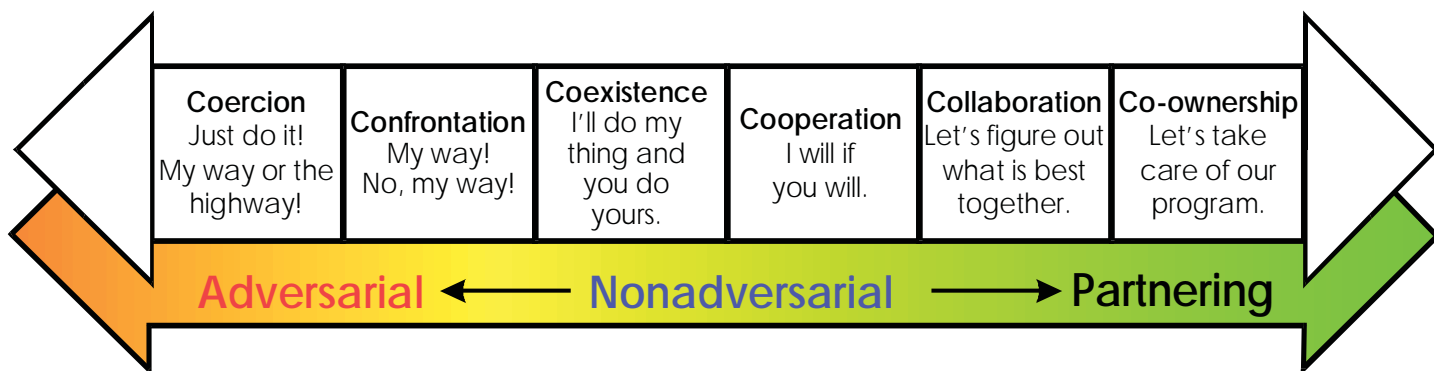
Groups are usually better at strategic decision-making than individuals. So, you need to recruit a team of stakeholders to be partners in your bullying prevention efforts. Together, these high-interest stakeholders now have higher influence than they had on their own.

Relationships with stakeholders are not linear, starting at one end of the continuum and progressing to another. Relationships on your team may bounce around in reaction to new personalities or tasks. The goal is to continue to keep nurturing those relationships toward collaboration and co-ownership.

Refer to the partnership continuum below. Where do your relationships with partners fall on the continuum? Where do you want those relationships to be?

Tips for Success

- **Make sure the bullying prevention partnership group is made up of a *cross-section* of your community stakeholders, and include all types of stakeholders (bus drivers, recess monitors, cafeteria workers, as well as parents and teachers).**
- **Start by recruiting stakeholders that you know are influential within their peer group.**
- **Make sustainability of bullying prevention programming their primary responsibility.**
- **In addition, the partnership team should continually ask, "who's missing?" to ensure that the team has a diversity of perspectives.**



Define, as a team, the task of the partnership group

The partnership team should be addressing the five common elements of the Bullying Prevention Initiative when defining their task. Have the partnership team answer the following questions:

- How are interventions for bullying, target, and bystander behavior working?
- How are partnerships with parents and community members being developed and maintained?
- How is cultural competency being integrated and incorporated into your BPI efforts?
- How are youth involved? What positive youth development components are evident in your program?
- Is the climate of your school changing? How can you ensure climate change is sustainable?

Also consider how the partnership team itself will address maintaining a safe climate for all youth through a *community-wide* social marketing campaign, as well as the level of *community readiness* for sustaining bullying prevention after the Initiative.

Establish team structure and expectations

Bullying prevention programming endorses inclusion, cooperation, and sharing of power/decision-making. Make sure that your committee is following the same principles. To be inclusive, avoid logistical barriers by:

- Feeding partners if meetings are during evening hours
- Providing trustworthy and respected child care
- Picking a meeting time that works for as many partners as possible

Nurture team buy-in

Make sure to measure and acknowledge partnership team progress, success, and challenges!

- Keep a log of what the team has done so that lessons learned aren't lost
- Publicize partners' dedication by giving them credit for their work and thanking them publicly
- And celebrate successes! Organize an event to celebrate kids and adults who are helping to reduce bullying in your community.

Institutionalize changes

Prevent the work the partnership has done from disintegrating after the Initiative by:

- Creating and maintaining bullying policies and procedures. Have these expectations in student handbooks, employee manuals, and have an abbreviated version of these expectations posted so that everyone knows what the expectations are.
- Reminding your stakeholders continuously of the importance of bullying prevention, your community's efforts to reduce bullying, and ways that stakeholders can help. Do this through your social marketing campaign, making sure to adapt that campaign to the level of community readiness.
- Don't forget to continually train new staff, teachers, and students about bullying policies and interventions.
- Keep all stakeholders engaged by sending out newsletters featuring kids' thoughts and ideas regarding the bullying problem, as well as current research on bullying prevention and bullying data from their school or community.

NOTES

Resources

Alexander, Ian. 2003. Stakeholders – *Who is Your System For?*

Brewster, Cori and Railsback, Jennifer. “Schoolwide Prevention of Bullying” *By Request...Series*. Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 2001.

“Indicator: Stakeholder Commitment. What does it look like?” enGauge. North Central Regional Education Laboratory, www.ncrel.org/engauge/framework/vis/stake/visstapr.

Miyamoto, Craig. 2003. *5 Simple Steps to Ensuring Stakeholder Buy-in*. <http://www.geocities.com/WallStreet/8925/buyin.htm>.

“Note on Enhancing Stakeholder Participation in Aid Activities.” Overseas Development Administration, Social Development Department, 1995. www.euforic.org/gb/stake2.

“Spotlight on Success: A Practical Look at After School Programs,” Facilitators Guide. Colorado Springs Assets for Youth, 2002.

“The Road to Sustainability.” Sustainability Workbook, Strategic Communications Kit. The National Center for Community Education in collaboration with the Afterschool Alliance.

Bullying Prevention Initiative Common Elements:

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

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