Another Look at Bullying

Helen M. Garinger, Ph.D.
hg@hmgaringer.com OR garingeh@stjohns.edu

Schools where everyone belongs Stan Davis with Julia Davis

What doesn’t work
  A. Rules inconsistently enforced

Acknowledging positive behavior
  1. See actions as part of a conscious effort to improve
     a. Describe observations of what will happen if they continue their positive behavior

Building staff-student connections
  A. Positive statements about the students’ behavior should outnumber negative statements

Effective discipline
  A. Create a discipline system that works, like natural consequences
  B. if you, then...

Discipline in a positive emotional context
  A. The least likeable need the most nurturing
  B. Changing behavior is a slow process

Discipline process
  A. Report aggressive behavior
     a. Key question to ask: WHAT DID YOU DO?
     b. Don’t try to find out who started it
     c. Interview 6 bystanders
     d. Students will tend to be honest about their behavior if they believe that the school will follow through
     e. Report to parents: I knew you’d want to know, make a positive connection. We are not blaming

Rubric-based disciplined system
  A. Uniform and clear expectations for behavior that apply school-wide
  B. Discipline code for aggression that outlines predictable, escalating consequences
  C. Positive staff-student interaction
  D. Acknowledgement of positive behavior
  E. Support for targets and for young people who need friends
  F. Classroom instruction in emotional literacy, problem solving, and conflict resolution
  G. Bystander training and empowerment
  1. All staff comply with actions regarding aggressive behavior
a. Staff decides importance of offense: lists and indicates
2. School forms needed
   a. Reporting form: informative, brief and easy to fill out, not
      sent home, kept internally
   b. A letter documenting the behavior and its consequences sent
      home by the administrator
   c. Needs a reflection form for student to use as they reflect on
      what they did and who they hurt

**Take responsibility for behaviors**
1. What’s the problem?
2. What happened when _?
3. How did you feel when that happened?
4. How do you think _____ felt when you hit him?
5. Can you think of another way to tell _____ what you want?
A. More popular disciplinary techniques suggest what to do
B. Problem-solving dialoguing makes the child an active participant
   instead of a passive recipient

**Strategies:**
1. Use concrete, open-ended questions, insist on specific details
2. Focus on the process of reflection as the goal, not right answers
3. Describing behaviors allows students to focus on their actions
4. You need to…. Is not a good statement
5. Give students open-ended questions to encourage reflective thinking and allows them to answer freely
6. Most aggressive kids are aware cognitively of the effects of their actions on others. Must have them experience empathy instead of just cognitive knowledge of their target’s reaction
7. What goal were you trying to reach?
   a. Respect?
   b. Control others?
   c. Relieve frustration?
   d. What problems were you trying to solve?
8. Build and develop empathy

**Questions to ask:**
What did you do?
What was wrong with that?
What problem were you trying to solve? What goal were you trying to reach?
Next time you encounter this difficulty, how will you solve it?

**Activating peer bystanders**
A. Youth watch TV and see aggressive confrontation, they have trouble understanding any other form of confrontation
B. Bystanders are afraid to stand up to a bully directly
a. Fear losing the friendship of popular peers
b. Supporting a victim carries considerable risk for loss of social status if the bully is both popular and powerful
C. Reach out in friendship to bullied and isolated: friendship team