Cyber bullying

A Prevention Curriculum for Grades 6–12

Scope and Sequence

Hazelden
Publishing

Cyberbullying: A Prevention Curriculum for Grades 6–12

What Is *Cyberbullying: A Prevention Curriculum for Grades 6–12?*

Cyberbullying: A Prevention Curriculum for Grades 6–12 is a program that deals with attitudes and behaviors associated with cyberbullying. It consists of an eight-session curriculum, with these additional resources on a CD-ROM:

- reproducible parent* resources

- program posters and student handouts

- resources to address cyberbullying schoolwide (establishing a school policy, addressing legal concerns, etc.)

- peer leader training materials

- a short training on cyberbullying for program facilitators

- a pre-test/post-test that can be conducted before and after implementation of the curriculum to measure student retention

Most materials needed to implement the program are included in the manual and CD-ROM. In addition, a website has been established that provides up-to-date information about cyberbullying. This website can be accessed at www.violencepreventionworks.org.

What Are the Program's Goals?

This program strives to achieve these goals:

- raise students' and parents' awareness of what cyberbullying is and why it is so harmful

- equip students with the skills and resources to treat each other respectfully when using cyber technologies

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* All references to parents in this text also include guardians.

- give students information about how to get help if they or others they know are being cyberbullied

- teach students how to use cyber technologies in positive ways

- help students become better digital citizens

For more information on the learner outcomes for each session, turn to the Curriculum Scope and Sequence in this document.

Who Is the Intended Audience?

Cyberbullying: A Prevention Curriculum for Grades 6–12 is designed for middle and high school students. This program would fit well within a health education, communications, technology, or general life skills curriculum (see Related National Academic Standards, beginning on page 9). Information on the Common Core Standards is available at www.violencepreventionworks.org. Teachers may use their discretion to adapt some activities to the ages and maturity levels of their students.

This curriculum involves trained student peer leaders who assist in teaching portions of the sessions. These leaders should be selected by their peers, two weeks prior to starting this curriculum. Encourage students to select fellow students whom they admire and respect. You will find more guidance on the peer leader selection process in the Peer Leader Packet on the CD-ROM. You may also want to consider having older teens teach the program to younger teens.

In addition, a school counselor could offer *Cyberbullying* as part of a counselor education program, or it could be used in after-school, community, youth-enrichment (such as YMCA or Scouts), or faith-based youth programs.

Is This a Research-Based Program?

Cyberbullying is not a research-based program, but it is based on the latest research in prevention and the topic of cyberbullying. Many of the session activities are patterned after prevention models that research has shown to be effective in decreasing negative student behaviors and increasing student attitudes toward refraining from negative behaviors.

These strategies include selecting and using peer leaders, providing parent-student activities, doing cooperative learning and project activities, and identifying the causes for the reasons students behave as they do.

The curriculum also recommends that schoolwide policies and procedures be established that can effectively address the issue of cyberbullying in a broad way, while establishing a climate conducive to positive interactions among students. Research-based programs, such as the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program*, have proven that schoolwide efforts are more effective in addressing bullying than classroom components alone.

Cyberbullying: A Prevention Curriculum for Grades 6-12 Main Components

The following is a brief description of each component of the cyberbullying program.

Eight-session Curriculum

Each session can be completed in fifty minutes and includes detailed instructions on presenting the information, activities to reinforce the key concepts, and reproducible student handouts.

Throughout the curriculum, some activities will be designated for students in middle school or students in high school. These activities include small group discussion situations, and a few other activities. Activities for each grade level will be designated by icons throughout the curriculum.

The first five sessions of *Cyberbullying* for students in middle school include journal entries from four fictional students who are learning about cyberbullying. Students will read the journal entries and discuss them in peer-led small groups. These journal entries engage students in the topic of the session and help them understand how to react to cyberbullying situations. The use of these fictional peers is an effective teaching tool in evidence-based programs, such as Hazelden's *Project Northland* alcohol use prevention curricula. It is important that you read through all of the journal entries

This curriculum utilizes trained student peer leaders who assist in teaching portions of the lessons.

before beginning the program in your classroom so that you are aware of the story line and each character's personality.

The first five sessions of *Cyberbullying* for students in high school consist of real life stories, one per session. These stories are based on actual news events; names and some minor details have been changed, and the characters' points of view are dramatized. The stories found in the curriculum will make cyberbullying real to students, and include discussion questions to help spark discussion.

In sessions six and seven, all students will work on small group projects to create a plan for their own social networking website. (Students will not actually design a website, but create a plan for one.) They will need to meet specific criteria to ensure that the website is safe for the users and creates positive interactions among teens. Each small group will present their website plan to the class during session eight.

This program also includes a pre- and post-test that can be used to assess your students' knowledge and attitudes before and after presenting the curriculum.

The curriculum utilizes peer leaders to lead a significant portion of each lesson, with the last three sessions serving as a cooperative learning- and project-based opportunity.

It is highly recommended that educators implement this program as part of an ongoing, comprehensive bullying prevention effort, such as the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program.*

Parent Materials

As in every strong prevention effort, it's important to actively involve students' parents when implementing this program. Provided in this curriculum is a parent letter that informs parents about *Cyberbullying: A Prevention Curriculum for Grades 6–12.* It is recommended that this letter be delivered to parents prior to implementing the program.

Each of the first five sessions has a take-home assignment for students to complete with a parent. Parents and students are asked to sign the assignment and return it after completion. If students are not able to have parent participation, they can complete the activity with another close adult such as a relative, neighbor, or if possible, a school staff person such as a school counselor.

All parent materials are provided in both English and Spanish.

Teacher Training Outline

An outline for a three-hour teacher training is provided with the curriculum.

Teacher Training Presentation

Included on the CD-ROM is a teacher training presentation that includes in-depth information and statistics on cyber bullying for teachers. This presentation can be used as either a self-led training, or as part of the Teacher Training Outline.

Why Is It Important to Teach about Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is bullying through email or instant messaging, in a chat room, on a website, or an online gaming site, or through digital messages or video images sent to a cell phone (Kowalski et al. 2012). Cyberbullying, like traditional bullying, involves a negative action that is often repeated and includes an imbalance of power.

In traditional forms of bullying, individuals may have more power over another by being bigger, stronger, or more popular. With cyberbullying, an individual may have more power just by being able to instantly share negative comments or photographs with a multitude of people via email, instant messaging, text messaging, or through social-networking site posts. Cyberbullying may also involve several individuals targeting one individual or a more popular student targeting a less popular classmate.

Traditional bullying is also defined by mean or negative actions being repeated and occurring over time. When someone is cyberbullied, this repetition of negative behavior can occur by sending one embarrassing photo or one degrading email message, which may in turn be forwarded to an entire class or grade level. The person doing traditional bullying is usually known, but he or she might go unidentified in the case of cyberbullying.

Traditional bullying usually occurs in a certain time and space, perhaps during school in the bathrooms or the hallways. Students who are bullied can usually find some relief at home or away from school. When a student is cyberbullied, the incident can happen whenever someone turns on his or her computer or accesses the Internet. This often happens at home at any time of the day or night.

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As in every strong prevention effort, it's important to actively involve students' parents when implementing this program.

Cyberbullying poses unique challenges because it frequently happens outside the school setting, and thus may be difficult for educators to observe. In addition, students may feel invisible or anonymous while online, which may lead to a greater willingness to engage in negative actions. Finally, without face-to-face interaction, students who cyberbully have no opportunity to witness the emotional distress their comments may be inflicting on a peer.
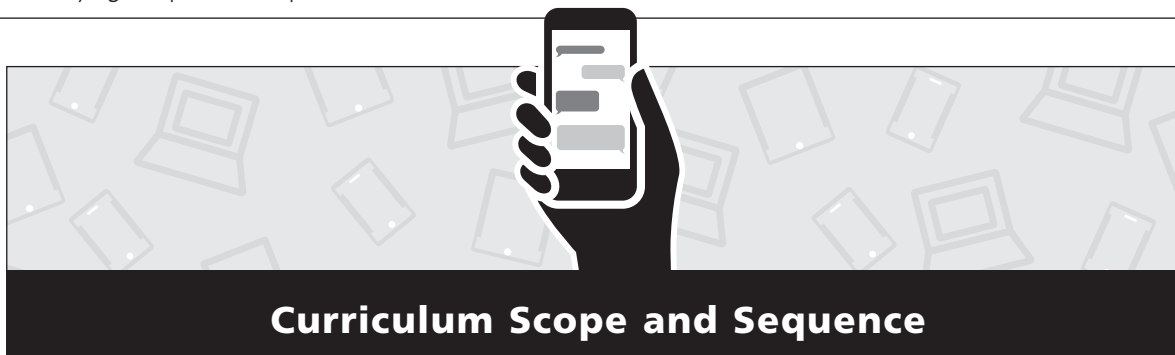
There is a bright spot, however. While direct evidence may be hard to obtain in many traditional forms of bullying, cyberbullying typically involves a form of communication that can be saved and printed from a computer or saved on a cell phone. Such obvious evidence can be helpful when intervening in cyberbullying incidences.

Why Should Schools Address the Issue of Cyberbullying?

Schools have rapidly embraced technology because of its ability to offer advanced learning opportunities and resources to students. Teachers use blogs, students post assignments online, and some schools issue laptops or tablets to students as instructional tools. By embracing technology and encouraging students to explore its various forms, educators also have a duty to teach students to use such technologies in a responsible manner.

In addition, many schools are already adopting comprehensive bullying prevention programs, such as the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program,* or are at least teaching classroom lessons that address bullying behaviors. Cyberbullying is one form of bullying that should be specifically addressed as part of these comprehensive efforts.

Research has shown that not all students perceive cyberbullying as a form of bullying behavior (Kowalski et al. 2012). Therefore, classroom lessons and discussions that focus directly on cyberbullying are critical to preventing it from flourishing.

Curriculum Scope and Sequence

Session 1: **What Is Bullying?**	Session 2: **What Is Cyberbullying?**	Session 3: **How Does Cyberbullying Affect People?**	Session 4: **Why Do People Cyberbully Others?**
By the end of this session, students will be able to do the following:			
• define *bullying* • identify examples of bullying • identify the roles students play in the Bullying Circle • identify rules against bullying	• define *cyberbullying* • identify the technologies used in cyberbullying • identify cyberbullying situations	• identify the effects of cyberbullying on the student who is bullied, on bystanders, and on the students who bully • identify how to use technology in a positive way	• identify reasons people think they can cyberbully others • state why they think cyberbullying is unacceptable

Session 5: **How Should You React to Cyberbullying?**	Session 6: **Creating a Positive Social-Networking Site or App, Part I**	Session 7: **Creating a Positive Social-Networking Site or App, Part II**	Session 8: **Creating a Positive Social-Networking Site or App, Part III**
By the end of this session, students will be able to do the following:			
• identify what steps to take if they are cyberbullied • identify what steps to take if they know someone else is being cyberbullied	• describe how some social-networking sites began • explain what social-networking sites do to curb abuse • describe the steps in planning a social-networking site or app • describe rules for belonging to some social-networking sites	• describe the components of an effective presentation • identify how they personally will commit themselves to stop or prevent cyberbullying	• make a public commitment to prevent cyberbullying • identify positive ways to use social-networking sites

For more information or to order, visit www.violencepreventionworks.org or call Hazelden toll-free at 1-800-328-9000.

Related National Academic Standards

Using *Cyberbullying: A Prevention Curriculum for Grades 6–12* will help you meet the following national academic standards. In addition, using *Cyberbullying* will help you meet several Common Core Standards; see www.violencepreventionworks.org for more information.

Health Education Standards*

Standard 2: Analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors.

    Students in grades 6–8 will

- describe how peers influence healthy and unhealthy behaviors.

- analyze how the school and community can affect personal health practices and behaviors.

- analyze how messages from media influence health behaviors.

- analyze the influence of technology on personal and family health.

Standard 4: Demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.

    Students in grades 6–8 will

- apply effective verbal and nonverbal communication skills to enhance health.

- demonstrate how to ask for assistance to enhance the health of self and others.

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* Joint Committee on National Health Education Standards. *National Health Education Standards, Second Edition, Achieving Excellence.* The American Cancer Society. 2007.

Standard 7: Demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.

Students in grades 6–8 will

- demonstrate behaviors that avoid or reduce health risks to self and others.

Standard 8: Demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

Students in grades 6–8 will

- work cooperatively to advocate for healthy individuals, families, and schools.

- identify ways in which health messages and communication techniques can be altered for different audiences.

Standard 2: Analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors.

Students in grades 9–12 will

- analyze how peers influence healthy and unhealthy behaviors.

- evaluate how the school and community can affect personal health practice and behaviors.

- evaluate the effect of media on personal and family health.

- evaluate the impact of technology on personal, family, and community health.

Standard 4: Demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.

Students in grades 6–8 will

- use skills for communicating effectively with family, peers, and others to enhance health.

- demonstrate how to ask for and offer assistance to enhance the health of self and others.

Standard 7: Demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.

Students in grades 9–12 will

- demonstrate a variety of behaviors that avoid or reduce health risks to self and others.

Standard 8: Demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

Students in grades 9–12 will

- work cooperatively as an advocate for improving personal, family, and community health.

- adapt health messages and communication techniques to a specific target audience.

Technology Education Standards*

Communication and Collaboration

Students in grades 6–12 will

- interact, collaborate, and publish with peers, experts, or others, employing a variety of digital environments and media.

- communicate information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences using a variety of media and formats.

- contribute to project teams to produce original works or solve problems.

Critical Thinking, Problem-Solving, and Decision-Making

Students in grades 6–12 will

- identify and define authentic problems and significant questions for investigation.

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Digital Citizenship

Students in grades 6–12 will

- advocate and practice safe, legal, and responsible use of information and technology.

- exhibit a positive attitude toward using technology that supports collaboration, learning, and productivity.

- demonstrate personal responsibility for lifelong learning.

- exhibit leadership for digital citizenship.

- plan and manage activities to develop a solution or complete a project.

- collect and analyze data to identify solutions and make informed decisions.

- use multiple processes and diverse perspectives to explore alternate solutions.