



## Bullying Prevention Program

### *Why the Need for the Bullying Prevention Program?*

The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program is a research-based program, designed to reduce and prevent bully/victim problems at Elementary, Middle, and Junior High Schools. The program has been successfully implemented in a number of countries, including Norway, the United States, Canada, Germany and the United Kingdom.

The program is not a curriculum. It is a whole-school, systems-change program at four different levels.

The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program has been found to be very effective. As a result of the program, participating schools have seen:

- ♦ Substantial reductions in the frequency with which students report being bullied and bullying others
- ♦ Significant reductions in students' reports of general anti-social behavior, such as vandalism, fighting, theft, and truancy
- ♦ Significant improvements in the "social climate" of the class

### *What is Bullying?*

Bullying behavior is when one child, or a group of children, repeatedly and over time, hurts another child through their words or actions.

Bullying behaviors include direct bullying, which involves physical aggression — hitting, kicking, shoving and fighting; or bullying through verbal aggression — name calling, teasing, taunting, threatening, and making faces or inappropriate gestures.

Indirect bullying is more subtle, such as ignoring someone deliberately, excluding them from the group, using social isolation, or telling lies and spreading rumors.

Bullying can be distinguished from horseplay or rough and tumble play because bullying involves an imbalance of power. Bullying usually occurs between children who are not friends. The general atmosphere is one of intimidation. The child who is being bullied finds it difficult to defend himself.

### *Warning Signs of Children Who are being Bullied*

In addition to being painful and humiliating, **children** who experience being **bullied by others** may:

- ♦ Be unhappy, distressed, and confused
- ♦ Be quiet, sensitive, passive
- ♦ Seem sad, depressed or moody
- ♦ Appear anxious or have poor self-esteem
- ♦ Complain of headaches and stomach pains
- ♦ Seem afraid or reluctant to go to school
- ♦ Lose interest in school work
- ♦ Come home from school with torn, disarrayed or dirty clothing, damaged books
- ♦ Have cuts, bruises or scratches
- ♦ Not sleep well, have bad dreams or cry in sleep
- ♦ Seem irritable with sudden outbursts of temper
- ♦ Be socially isolated with few or no close friends

If a child shows several of these warning signs, it is possible that he or she may be bullied by other children. As a parent or teacher, you may want to talk with your child or student yourself to find out what is happening. Encourage him/her to express their emotions and provide support and encouragement.

### *Warning Signs of Bullying Others*

**Children who engage in bullying behaviors** often display significant characteristics and **tend to:**

- ♦ Have a need to feel powerful and in control
- ♦ Derive satisfaction from inflicting injury and suffering upon other children
- ♦ Tease, threaten, intimidate and physically hurt others
- ♦ Be hot-tempered, impulsive, have a difficult time following rules
- ♦ Exhibit defiant, oppositional or aggressive behavior toward adults, including teachers and parents
- ♦ Have little empathy for the children they bully
- ♦ Have a low tolerance to frustration
- ♦ Have a tough exterior
- ♦ Be involved in other anti-social or criminal behavior, such as stealing or vandalism

### *The Bullying Prevention Program*

*The Bullying Prevention Program* includes school-wide and classroom-level components, individual interventions with children who are bullied and children who exhibit bullying behavior, and community involvement. This violence prevention program combines the efforts of all school staff (including teachers, principals, guidance counselors, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, etc.), as well as students, parents, and other members of the community to reduce bullying and other violent behavior.

The school's effort includes:

- ♦ Training of all staff
- ♦ Establishing a Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee of teachers, staff and parents
- ♦ Directing a discussion to determine when and where bullying occurs at school and increasing supervision as needed
- ♦ Establishing school-wide rules and applying consistent sanctions against bullying
- ♦ Rewarding children for pro-social behaviors
- ♦ Holding regular classroom meetings to build group cohesion and to discuss bullying/other behavioral issues
- ♦ Making use of videos, books and other resources on bullying and violence prevention efforts
- ♦ Holding school-wide events to promote bullying prevention
- ♦ Identifying children who bully and children who are being bullied to address their individual needs

### *History of Bullying Prevention*

*The Bullying Prevention Program*, developed by Dr. Dan Olweus, was part of a nationwide campaign against bully/victim problems in Norway during the 1980's. In the 1990's, after examining more than 500 programs, The Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence at the University of Colorado responded to increased school violence and juvenile homicide in the United States by naming Olweus's model as one of the top eleven "Blueprint" violence prevention programs. They described it as "truly outstanding" and effective.

In 2003, Crossroads was approached by schools who identified a need for services focusing on bullying behavior. In response to the request, Crossroads offers The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program through an Olweus trainer.

Crossroads is a private, non-profit, community-based organization and is dedicated to providing the highest quality behavioral health services to children, adolescents and their families, which promote their health and well-being.

### *Why Focus on Bullying?*

**ALL** children have the right to a school environment where they feel safe and can learn to the best of their abilities.

Bullying can have lifelong consequences for both children who are bullied and children who exhibit bullying behavior. Bullying also affects the children who have witnessed repeated bullying behaviors by others. They may become fearful and feel that the adults are not in control, or are uncaring.

Children who are bullied may experience low self-esteem that remains into adulthood. While bullying is occurring, they may exhibit physical problems, school phobia and symptoms of depression. Their school performance may also decrease.

Children who bully very often become adults who continue to bully others. **One study found that 60% of chronic bullies had an arrest record in their early twenties.** Bullying behavior is also linked with other anti-social behaviors, such as fighting, vandalism, drug and alcohol abuse and developing gang alliances.





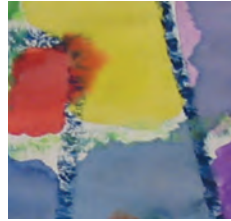
### *What Can Parents & Teachers Do?*

Talk frequently with your children or class about problems associated with bullying, your child's or student's experience with bullying (as a victim, bully or bystander) and the efforts of his/her school to reduce bullying.

Participate on or initiate your school's Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee. Ask questions and discuss ways of making your school and community safe and healthy places for children.

### **The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program A Blueprint for Violence Prevention Program**

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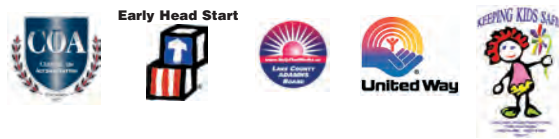
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**Making a Brighter, Happier  
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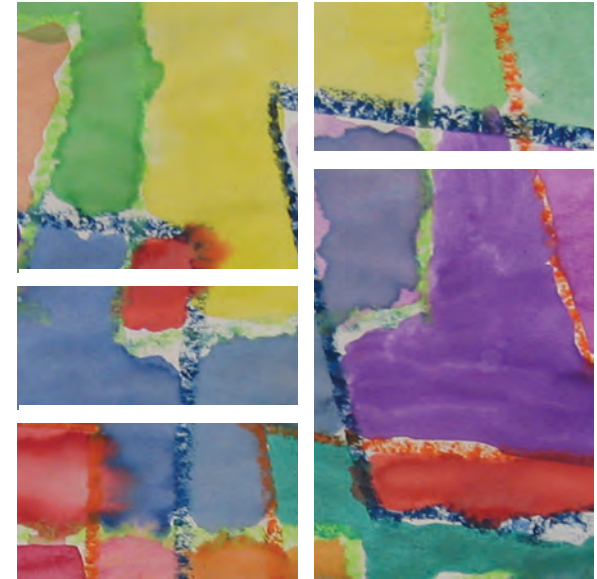
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*Crossroads Bullying Prevention  
and Intervention Center of Excellence*

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Art by Bobbi, age 14



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