OBJECTIVES:

- Define bullying
- Discuss risk factors
- Identify warning signs
- Discuss effects
- Bully prevention
- Responding to bullying
- Ways to get help
- Helpful resources
True or False. Bullies are always bigger and stronger than those they bully.

True or False. Kids frequently don’t report bullying incidents.

True or False. Bullying only occurs during the school day.

True or False. There are only bullies and those who are bullied.

True or False. Bullying is linked to suicide.
Bullies are bigger
- False: power imbalance can be from popularity, strength, or cognitive ability.

Kids don’t report bullying
- True: kids worry about retaliation, being seen as “weak,” feel that others don’t care, or fear rejection

Bullying only occurs during the school day.
- False. With increasing technology, cyberbullying can result in kids being harassed 24/7

There are only bullies and those who are bullied.
- False. Bystanders witness bullying and can experience negative effects as well. They can prevent bullying by speaking up.

Bullying is linked to suicide.
- False. Most kids who are bullied don’t have suicidal thoughts or behaviors. Kids who are bullied are at risk of suicide, but bullying alone is not the cause. Other risk factors include depression, problems at home, and trauma history.
Bullying is unwanted aggressive behavior that involves an imbalance of power and is repeated over time.

Different types of bullying: verbal, social or relational, and physical.

- Verbal includes teasing, name calling, taunting, threatening to cause harm.
- Social or relational is hurting someone’s reputation or relationships such as leaving someone out on purpose, telling others to not be friends with a child, spreading rumors, embarrassing someone in public.
- Physical includes hurting a person’s body or possessions such as hitting, pushing, spitting, taking someone’s things.
BULLYING STATISTICS

- **When:** during and after school hours
- **Where:** on school property including playground or bus; in neighborhood; on Internet
- **Frequency**
  - Nationwide 28% of students in grades 6-12 experienced bullying (2010-2011 School Crime Supplement)
  - Howard County: 103 reported incidents in 2008-2009; 224 reported incidents in 2009-2010 (Bullying, harassment, or intimidation in MD Public Schools: A report to the MD General Assembly on incidents reported under the Safe School Reporting Act of 2005; Presented March 2011 by MSDE)
  - These numbers likely underestimate incidents as many go unreported.
Gender Differences

- Boys are more likely to bully others.
- Girls and boys bully differently.
- Both boys and girls engage in frequent verbal bullying.
- Girls are more likely to bully by exclusion (social/relational bullying).
- Boys are more likely to use physical actions.
Bullying that takes place using electronic technology such as cell phones, computer, and tablets as well as communication tools such as social media sites, text messages, chats, and websites

Differences from bullying
- Can happen 24/7
- Messages can be posted anonymously
- Can be distributed quickly and to a wide audience
- Can be difficult to delete messages, texts, pictures or posts

15% of high school students (grades 9-12) were electronically bullied in past year (2013 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey)
Children at risk of being bullied

- Perceived as different: weight, race, dress, etc.
- Viewed as weak or unable to defend themselves
- Depressed, anxious, or have low self-esteem
- Less popular or have few friends
- Do not get along with others: annoying, attention-seeking
Two types of kids
- Well-connected and have social power; are concerned about popularity and like to dominate others
- Isolated from peers: have low self-esteem, less involved in school, easily pressured by peers, or do not identify with others’ feelings

Other characteristics
- Aggressive or easily frustrated
- Less parental involvement or issues at home
- Think badly of others
- Have difficulty following rules
- View violence in a positive way
- Have friends who bully others
Unexplained injuries
Lost or destroyed clothing or possessions
Frequent headaches or stomachaches
Feeling sick or faking illnesses
Changes in eating habits: skipping meals or binge eating
Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares
Declining grades, loss of interest in school work, not wanting to attend school
Sudden loss of friends or avoids social situations
Feelings of helplessness or decreased self-esteem
Self-destructive behaviors such as running away, harming themselves, or talking about suicide
Get into physical or verbal fights
Have friends who bully others
Are increasingly aggressive
Get in trouble a lot at school
Have unexplained money or new belongings
Blame others for their problems
Don’t accept responsibility for their actions
Are competitive and worry about popularity and their reputation
Depression and anxiety, increased feelings of sadness and loneliness, changes in sleep and eating habits, loss of interest in activities they used to enjoy

Health complaints

Decreased academic achievement and participation: more likely to miss, skip, or drop out of school
Abuse drugs and alcohol during adolescence and adulthood
Get into fights, vandalize property, and drop out of school
Engage in early sexual activity
Have criminal convictions as adults
Are abusive to their romantic partners, spouses, or children as adults
Feel afraid
Feel powerless to change things
Feel guilty
Feel diminished empathy for victims
Increased use of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs
Increased mental health problems such as depression and anxiety
Miss or skip school
Parents, teachers, and school need to be involved

Help kids understand bullying
- Talk about what is it
- Discuss how kids can safely stand up
  - Talk to trusted adult
  - Report it
  - Discuss ways to respond: humor, ask to “stop,” walk away
  - Stay near adults or groups of other kids
- Help kids who are bullied by showing kindness or getting help
BULLY PREVENTION: DAILY CHECK IN

- Parent should check in with kids daily
  - What was something good that happened today? Anything bad?
  - Who do you sit with at lunch? What do you talk about?
  - What are you good at and what do you like best about yourself?
BULLY PREVENTION: TALK ABOUT BULLYING

- Start conversations about bullying
  - What does “bullying” mean to you?
  - Describe what kids are like who bully. Why do you think people bully?
  - Who are the adults you trust most when it comes to issues like bullying?
  - Do you ever see kids at your school being bullied? How does it make you feel?
  - Have you ever tried to help someone being bullied? What happened? What would you do if it happens again?
  - What would you do if someone bullied you?
Stay up to date with kids’ lives

- Read class newsletters and flyers, talk about them at home
- Go to school events
- Meet teachers and school counselors or reach out via email or phone
Encourage kids to do what they love
- Get them involved in activities, interests, or hobbies they like
- Allows them to meet others with similar interests
- Helps them feel confident
- Helps them to develop friendships that protect against bullying
Model how to treat others with respect and kindness

- Set a good example
- Model healthy strategies for managing conflict and stress
- Treat friends, colleagues, and family with respect
Support kids who are bullied

- Listen and focus on child
- Assure child that bullying is not their fault
- Consider referring to a school counselor
- Practice role plays and how to respond if bullying happens again
- Work together to help resolve the situation and help the child feel safe
- Be persistent: continue to work together to stop bullying
RESPONDING TO BULLYING: UNHELPFUL STRATEGIES

- Tell child to ignore bullying
- Blame the child for being bullied
- Tell child to physically fight back: could cause child to get hurt, suspended, or expelled
- Resist urge to contact other parent. Allow school personnel to serve as mediators between parents.
Involves parents, school staff, and organizations

- Make sure child knows what the problem behavior is
- Show kids that bullying is taken seriously
- Work with child to understand some of reasons he/she bullied
- Use consequences that involve learning or building empathy
  - Lead class discussion about being a good friend
  - Role play scenarios about cooperating with others
- Have child who bullied involved in repairing the situation
  - Write apology letter to student who was bullied
  - Do a good deed for student who was bullied
Encourage bystanders to speak up
  - Tell a trusted adult
  - Be their friend
  - Don’t give bullying an audience
  - Set a good example
  - Help them get away

Kids who witness bullying often want to help but may not be sure how to

Be More than a Bystander video
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YVKLPtm5XMY
Recognize the warning signs that your child is involved in bullying, especially if you notice emotional or behavioral changes

Learn what bullying is

Learn about cyberbullying: how to prevent and how to respond

Talk openly to your child about bullying; work with school to prevent bullying

If bullying has occurred, work with school and community officials to support your child.

If bullying occurred at school, learn what your school is required to do based on your State’s anti-bullying law.
PROBLEM & TYPE OF RESPONSE

- If your child is bullied at school
  - Contact the teacher, school counselor, school principal, school superintendent, or State Department of Education

- If the school is not adequately addressing harassment based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or religion
  - Contact school superintendent; State Department of Education; U.S. Dept. of Education, Office for Civil Rights; U.S. Dept. of Justice, Civil Rights Division
HELPFUL RESOURCES

- [www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov)
  - Educational website about bullying and ways for parents and schools to intervene
  - En Espanol: [http://espanol.stopbullying.gov](http://espanol.stopbullying.gov)

  - Prevent cyberbullying with KnowBullying App by SAMHSA
  - Free app that can help parents start a conversation with children about school, work, relationships, life, and bullying

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) Provides 24-hour crisis counseling and mental health referrals.
MD State Dept. of Education: Bullying Prevention

  - Includes directions and reporting forms for students and their families to document bullying incidents that occur at school
  - Parent and student resources and information
  - Has a presentation on bullying prevention in schools
  - Has important contact information