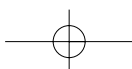
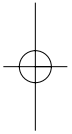
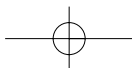
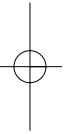
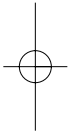
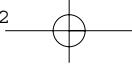


PART 1

DEFINING AND DESCRIBING BULLYING





CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

School bullying has been identified as a major problem in many countries around the world. Everybody I know has a story they can tell about it.

It is imperative that bullying is stopped within our schools. It can create a hell on earth for someone who is victimized, and can seriously threaten that person's opportunities in life. Equally important, the social climate of a school is a model of the world outside. It is where people develop a large part of their morality, their understanding of how the world works and their sense of responsibility towards the society they live in.

Bullying is devastating in any shape or form, and cyberbullying is its newest expression. A number of young people have committed suicide as a result of cyberbullying. Suicide is tragic and final. Suicide as a result of bullying is a startling and hard-hitting indictment on the schools and societies in which it occurs. But there are many more cases of bullying that do not reach this utterly hopeless and irretrievable point but must still be dealt with if we are to live in just, egalitarian and humane societies in which children are able to reach their potential academically, socially and psychically.

Newspaper reports tend to focus on the tragedies, and on the type of bullying epitomized in *Tom Brown's School Days*, where large rough boys beat up smaller and cleverer boys who somehow do not fit the mould. Although these cases have the most visible impacts, bullying is much more than this. It can be psychological. It can include acts of exclusion and isolation, humiliation, name-calling, spreading false rumours and teasing. It can involve the extortion of money and the theft of possessions. It can be sexual. It can be done by and against girls. Although cuts and bruises are the external signs of physical bullying, research shows that the internal hurts from psychological bullying can be just as painful. Recent research also shows

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that reported cases of bullying are only the tip of the iceberg: the bulk is below the surface and hard to detect.

School bullying is a major problem in many countries. Maxwell and Carroll-Lind's (1997) study of first- and second-form pupils in the North Island of New Zealand asked its respondents to identify the three worst things they had ever experienced. The death of somebody close to them was the most often mentioned, but being bullied by other children came second.

Although the greatest worry parents may have for the safety of their children is in relation to their getting to and from school, and random attacks of the stranger-danger type, Maxwell and Carroll-Lind state that '90% of the incidents of emotional abuse and most of the physical violence between children occur at schools' (1997: 5).

The purpose of this book

This book has been written to provide an up-to-date and improved resource to combat school bullying. Its specific intentions are:

- To summarize what we know about bullying. Since the first edition of *The Anti-Bullying Handbook*, we have learned much more about the nature of bullying. The revised edition discusses this new information and combines it with what is known to work well in the provision of excellent, practical and effective resources to prevent, address and deal with bullying.
- To provide a guide for schools for the development, implementation and evaluation of effective anti-bullying philosophies, policies and programmes. In order to combat bullying, schools need to tackle it wholly and concertedly. Guidelines for the creation and clarification of school policy and practice are outlined. This book is intended to be a useful resource for all schools, from those just starting to consider setting up an anti-bullying initiative, to those with well-established programmes that wish to consider anti-bullying best practice.
- To recommend anti-bullying programmes that deal effectively with bullying. Choosing from the growing amount of materials on bullying is a difficult task. I have selected the most useful approaches and programmes, and in response to unmet needs have also created some new ones.
- To support a culture of problem-solving that uses the scholarship and research information available but also taps into the knowledge and experience of those involved (including teaching and administrative staff, students and the wider community) in developing and implementing anti-bullying programmes.

Although it is clear that anti-bullying programmes are useful tools, every school contains knowledge that must also be harnessed. This consists of the years of experience and knowledge of the school's teachers and administrative and ancillary staff, and the experience and potential for involvement of the students and parents in the creation of solutions.

What is the viewpoint of this book?

I have chosen to write this book from a constructivist and social-ecological perspective. Many studies of bullying, while providing important information, also tend to generalize about the components of the bullying dynamic, to make judgments about the individuals involved, and to deal more with the components than with the whole system. There is a tendency to make causal links between individuals and events, and to lock people into roles. This is commonly called the deficit perspective. Constructivism seeks instead to develop positive alternatives for those taking part in or subjected to bullying and social ecology provides a safe and healthy school environment in which to nurture and grow these more humane solutions.

This humanistic perspective aims to work hard to find solutions that improve everybody's chances, both bully and bullied. In the first instance, it seeks solutions for individuals in the short term, but also argues that such approaches will benefit our society as a whole in the long term.

Who has this book been written for?

In the literature on effective anti-bullying strategies, one issue stands out as being most important – the adoption of a whole-school approach, that is, developing an anti-bullying programme that is taken up and implemented wholeheartedly by the entire school community.

Those involved are, within the school, the students, the teaching staff and the administrative staff, and, outside the school, parents, and social and community agencies.

If all these people understand the dynamics of bullying, and know that something can be done about it, then there is a chance that it can be halted. Once a school decides to deal with bullying, as many people as possible must be included so that they can develop a sense of 'ownership' of the processes and programmes that are adopted. I will address specifically the concerns of these groups and of those who prepare teachers for their profession.

The teaching staff

The teacher's main job is effective classroom management and teaching of a group of children with whom they spend all day (in the case of primary/junior school teachers), or across a range of classes and at various levels (in the case of secondary/high school teachers). Many teachers are ill equipped to deal with relationship problems and specific antisocial behaviour like bullying, simply because they have not been trained to do so, and because teaching is so demanding.

Nonetheless, teachers want to handle bullying effectively, and these are some of the questions they may wish to ask about it:

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- What counts as bullying? How do I detect it? What can I do about it?
- If I see what looks like bullying, when do I become involved? When should I let the children sort it out themselves? How do I know when things have gone too far?
- What resources are there to help me solve bullying problems effectively?
- Is it my job to handle bullying or should I go to somebody else?
- Who can I turn to for support when I do not seem to be handling things very well?
- How can I create a classroom that is safe for all of the children in my care?

Deputy or assistant principals are usually responsible for issues of crisis and discipline. They may ask:

- What do I need to do to make sure bullying is handled effectively?
- How will an anti-bullying strategy fit into our overall programme for dealing with disciplinary problems, such as disruptive behaviour, truancy and drugs at school?
- What programmes are available for dealing with bullying? How do I know what the best options are for our school?

The counsellor or pastoral staff may ask:

- What resources are available to inform me about the nature and dynamics of bullying?
- What anti-bullying strategies and programmes are available for dealing with bullying? How do I know which ones work best?
- If I am the person who will implement an anti-bullying policy, how can I best be prepared for this?
- With whom can I discuss how best to deal with the problem of bullying within the school community and/or the social services community?

The school administrators

Over and above their concerns to have a school that runs well and achieves in a variety of ways, the principal/head teacher, other administrators and governors of the school have a moral and legal responsibility to make their school a safe place. If a school has a reputation for being unsafe, parents may choose another school. Bullying is bad for any school. The concerns of administrators are therefore philosophical, legal and practical. Administrators may ask the following questions:

- What can I do to develop and support policies and programmes that will eliminate or reduce bullying in my school?
- What can I do to promote this school as a safe school?
- Providing an effective and proactive anti-bullying scheme is an excellent idea but can give the impression we have a major bullying problem. How can we adopt such schemes to show we are proactive and forward-looking rather than a 'bullying school'?

- What is our role as administrators in such developments – to provide support and structures, to implement or help implement the developments, to provide ongoing evaluations?
- What can best be done within the constraints of limited resources and competing demands?

The parents

Parents create the family environment of victims, bullies and onlookers to bullying. Their involvement in the adoption and implementation of any anti-bullying scheme is crucial. Parents may ask the following questions:

- Is my child involved in bullying in any way?
- What can I do to help?
- How do I know if my child is being bullied?
- How can I follow things up with the school? Who do I go to? What are the school's procedures?
- What should I do if I know bullying is taking place but I feel that the school is not doing enough about it?
- Who else can I go to for help?

Social and community agencies

Individuals in social and community agencies, such as counsellors, educational psychologists, police personnel, social workers and therapists, often work with the after-effects of bullying, school failure, and violent and disruptive behaviour. This may occur in the community; on other occasions, these people are brought into the school to share their expertise. The questions they may ask are:

- What can I find out about bullying in the school?
- How is it reflected in the family and society at large?
- How can I contribute my skills to help develop a school anti-bullying initiative that, if well implemented, will have beneficial effects in the community?

Teachers' college/university lecturers

Teachers' college and university lecturers who are helping to prepare future teachers also need to know about the bullying dynamic so that they can pass this knowledge on to their students. Teacher trainers may ask the following questions:

- What knowledge can I give my students so that they have a good understanding of peer group dynamics and how they work in relation to bullying?
- How can I help my students to develop skills to deal effectively with bullying?
- How can I best fit this understanding of bullying into the overall framework of classroom work?

The structure of the book

Part 1 defines and describes bullying in its many forms. Chapter 2 gives a definition of bullying and a general summary of what we know about it. Bullying can be complex in its development and its dynamic. Chapter 3 examines this. Chapter 4 looks at some specific and difficult types of bullying, namely, racist bullying, bullying of special educational needs children, homophobic bullying and sexual bullying. Chapter 5 examines the nature of cyberbullying and how to respond to it.

Part 2 provides the philosophical, developmental and concrete foundations needed to develop and implement an approach to bullying that works and is fair, humane and appropriately rigorous. Chapter 6, 'How to Create an Anti-Bullying Initiative', shows why schools need to be proactive in developing an anti-bullying initiative and provides a step-by-step plan for doing so. Chapter 7 argues that schools must be clear about their philosophical foundations before they can develop policies that have any chance of success. This includes looking inwards to determine the underlying values and beliefs of the school, and looking outwards to examine which anti-bullying strategies and programmes are consistent with the school's philosophy. Chapter 8, 'Planning and Information Gathering', describes two useful tools for gathering information about the school in general and about the extent of bullying in the school. First, a SWOTSS analysis process is outlined and illustrated with a case study. Second, a questionnaire has been designed to allow schools to gather and quantify information on bullying. Chapter 9, 'Creating a School Anti-Bullying Policy', discusses how to develop and establish an anti-bullying policy. It covers consultation, discussion, writing a policy document, implementation and monitoring, and maintenance.

Part 3 provides a variety of preventative strategies to help make schools safe places. Chapter 10, 'Strategies for Teachers: Practice, Pedagogy and Learning', discusses how teachers can help or stop a bullying culture by being reflective and authoritative in their practice. It also discusses cooperative learning as an effective strategy. Chapter 11 discusses what teachers can do to anticipate and better understand bullying through their use of puppet theatre, Circle Time and sociometry. Chapter 12 shows how interactive and experiential learning can be used to develop a deep understanding of bullying and to find solutions for it via 'On the Bus' (for younger students) and through social action drama (for adolescents). Chapter 13, 'Harnessing the Power of the Peer Group', outlines strategies to assist students to take some control and contribute towards making the school healthy and safe from bullying through the vehicles of a student leadership programme and peer partnering. In Chapter 14, there are suggestions for making the school a safer place aesthetically, environmentally and in terms of the use of space.

Part 4 offers information about interventionist anti-bullying programmes. Chapter 15, 'Peer Mentoring and Peer Mediation', describes two student-centred approaches to bullying that can be used to meet the needs of either bullies or victims. The Support Group Method has replaced what was known as the No Blame Approach, and is an excellent feelings-based programme designed to enlist onlookers and

those who have bullied to find solutions to bullying. It is described in Chapter 16. Chapter 17, 'A Circle of Friends', outlines a programme that endeavours to create a supportive group around a child who is experiencing difficulties (and may be considered a bully or victim), so that prosocial behaviour is encouraged. Anatol Pikas is one of the seminal researchers in school bullying, and his Method of Shared Concern is described in Chapter 18. Collaborative problem-solving and resolution (CPR) Chapter 19, is a method aimed at solving bullying that is complicated or entrenched and needs a longer, intensive but constructive approach to restore harmony. Chapter 20 gives a selection of follow-up strategies that can be used: assertiveness training, anger management, and self-defence and martial arts training. This chapter also brings the threads of the book together.

The appendices contain a template for creating an anti-bullying policy (1), a selection of useful bullying scenarios (2), an account of the issues of ethics and confidentiality (3) and a selection of ice breakers (4).

Reference

Maxwell, G. and Carroll-Lind, J. (1997) *The Impact of Bullying on Children*. Wellington: Office of the Commissioner for Children Occasional Paper No. 6.