Children and Bullying in the 21st Century

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Understanding Bullying

- Bullying is aggressive behaviour characterized by:
  - Repetition – not occasional acts of aggression
  - Imbalance of power – not fighting amongst equals
  - Intent to hurt – not accidental

- Traditional forms of bullying
  - Physical – e.g. hitting, pushing, spitting
  - Verbal – e.g. teasing or hurtful name calling
  - Social – e.g. social exclusion and rumour spreading
A New Breed of Bullying

- Our increasing dependence on communication technologies → opportunities for cyberbullying

- Cyberbullying is bullying using technology that is characterized by:
  - Repetition (e.g. multiple texts or multiple people can access a website)
  - Imbalance of power (possibly due to lack of control and perceived anonymity)
  - Intent to hurt

- Modes of cyberbullying:
  - Picture/video clip
  - Text messages
  - Phone calls
  - Chat room
  - Emails
  - Instant messaging
  - Website
The Relationship Between Cyberbullying and Traditional Bullying

- A rapidly growing area of research which currently suggests:
  - Roles in traditional forms of bullying (victim, bully, bully/victim), predict the same role in cyberbullying
  - Both generally occur in the presence of witnesses/bystanders

- Keep in mind: The divide between the real and virtual world is becoming increasingly blurred, especially for young people
Involvement in traditional bullying: Approx. **33%** (range = 10 – 54%)
- Victims = 10% - 40%
- Bullies = 10% - 35%

Involvement in cyberbullying: Approx. **15%** (range = 10% - 35%)
- Victims = 6% - 48%
- Bullies = 4% - 21%

Prevalence rates differ due to differences in:
- Methodology (e.g. how bullying is defined and measured)
- Culture
- Age and developmental stage of participants
Bullying Trends

Developmental trends
- Early childhood: inconsistent research which tends to look at aggression
- Primary school: more face-to-face bullying which decreases over time
- High school: more cyberbullying

Gender differences
- Generally boys have a higher prevalence of bullying perpetration than girls
- Traditional bullying involvement:
  - Boys = physical and verbal bullying (generally)
  - Girls = relational bullying (generally)
- Cyberbullying involvement:
  - Inconsistent findings (similar levels or boys = bullies; girls = victims)
## Consequences of Bullying

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bullies</th>
<th>Victims</th>
<th>Bully/Victim</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At increased risk of:</td>
<td>At increased risk of:</td>
<td>At increased risk of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✧ Psychiatric problems</td>
<td>✧ Suicidal ideation and suicide attempts</td>
<td>✧ Incarceration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✧ Relationship difficulties</td>
<td>✧ Dropping out of school</td>
<td>✧ Long-term psychological problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✧ Substance abuse problems</td>
<td>✧ Long-term psychological problems (e.g. depression)</td>
<td>✧ Continued violence toward others</td>
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<tr>
<td>✧ Involvement in crime</td>
<td>✧ Continued victimisation in the workplace as adults</td>
<td>GREATEST AT-RISK GROUP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Intervention

Key Components
1. Awareness Raising
2. Whole school policies and programs
3. Supervision

(Campbell, 2005)

Intervention Resources
- www.bullyingnoway.com.au
- www.hrmvideo.com/resources/using_your_wits1.pdf
- www.bewebaware.ca
Key References


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