

Bullying Prevention

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Abstract

The focus of the milestone project is to focus on bridging the gap of bullying and classroom instruction methods. There has to be a defined expectations and level of accountability that has to be defined when supporting and implementing a plan linked to bullying prevention. All individuals involved in the student's learning have to be aware of bullying and the disciplinary actions that are linked to bullying. The milestone project will consist of exploring the needs of the school as it relates to bullying. There will be a plan implemented to support the students and the stakeholders in effort to promote bullying prevention in the school system.

Introduction

The American Counseling Association (ACA) and Association of Counselor Education & Supervision (ACES) both support my professional development. One does feel that continued education and training is very helpful in the field. One does believe in networking and being able to obtain insight from other colleagues in the counseling field. When one was in the school system, we had monthly professional development opportunities within the district; and all of the school counselors were able to brainstorm and share ideas through collaborating on what has worked well and what has not worked well.

The impact of bullying and how it affects both the victim and the bully; to determine a system to target bullying across the board and effort to bridge the gap and decrease bullying in the school system. The targeted population will be the youth/school aged students in the school system.

The purpose of this assignment is to explore sources that support the topic of

bullying and strategies that will be discussed based upon the finding of the following discovery of four sources that are linked to the research topic bullying. The impact of bullying and how it affects both the victim and the bully; to determine a system to target bullying across the board and effort to bridge the gap and decrease bullying in the school system. The targeted population will be the youth/school aged students in the school system.

The interest level that one has is to promote a healthy mental capacity to the youth population. It is vital to provide support to the youth population because of the level and increase in bullying. One is a firm believer in ensuring that a positive learning environment is present to enhance the learning setting.

The importance of the topic is to ensure a positive learning environment; due to the recent affects of bullying that has lead to students committing suicide due to being a victim of bullying. It is important to put the right and appropriate support in place to reduce bullying acts.

What direct affect does being bullied have on the victim? It is vital to explore the affects of individuals who are being bullied. The key words in the research question is bullied and victim. Based upon experience, the main focal point is to decrease bullying there is a need for being able to support the individuals who are being bullied. The importance relies in being able to detect how long the individual have been bullied and to start to implement support to assist the individuals with healing from being bullied.

Section 1: The Issue of Concern

The school system that I have chosen to work with is Rockdale County School Systems. There are eleven elementary schools, four middle schools, three high schools,

and five nontraditional schools in Rockdale County School Systems.

The mission of the Rockdale County School System, the boundless learning community where students aspire to their dreams and success is expected of all, is to ensure that each student performs at his/her highest academic level and is a successful, participatory member of our global society, through a system distinguished by:

- fearless advocates for students;
- community alliance for students' success;
- empowering students to shape their own future;
- infinite learning opportunities for all; and
- customized measures of individual student success. (RCPS, 2012-2013)

The school system that I have chosen to complete the milestone project is within the school district in the metro area. I chose to work within one of the elementary school system within the local county school system near where I reside. I plan to work close with my mentor on the milestone project to hopefully implemented the bully prevention tools into the county's school system.. I plan to explore the issue of concern as it relates to bullying.

The data that I will access from the county online website is the bullying policy and protocol. With this topic of issue on bullying is the main importance, is how the school reports bullying in his/her school district. It cannot be addressed and improved, if all of the teachers are not coding the behaviors as bullying. And therefore, it is important to have professional development and education for the teachers, so that everyone is on

the same page and consistency is present as it relates to how the bullying behavior is documented. And to ensure that all forms of bullying, rather extreme or not is addressed and documented to continue to support the efforts of being consistent. I also plan to discuss my implementation and recommendations plan within the completion of the milestone project.

The issue of concern is related to bullying in the school systems. The reason that this subject was selected was to focus on the need of implementing and supporting prevention of bullying. Bullying has always been a topic of need in the school system across the board, due to inconsistency in the program. There has to be a level of accountability that is consistency regardless of whom and where the bullying is taking place in the school. Some teachers overlook the terms of bullying, but bullying should be clearly identified with the consequences of bullying. And bullying has a major affect on students; and it has to be addressed effectively and seriously. In general, there have been several of cases where bullying has lead the victims to commit suicide. And therefore, I feel that there is an urgency to ensure that the bullying policy and program is appropriate to decrease bullying acts within the school system.

Section 2: Literature Review

There are several of researches topics that I have explored and reviewed as it relates to bullying. The articles selected will support my plan of implementation of initiatives in the school along with support groups. "The quality of innovation is also an influential factor. If school administrators perceive the new guide to be of high quality, they will be more inclined to support its implementation. If teachers have the same perception, they are more likely to use it," (Glatthorn, 2004, pp. 60-61). Also it is vital to

explore the quality of the program being implemented. It is important to explore what other school systems have implemented as it relates to bullying. The research topics also supports the needs of addressing the underlying factor related to bullies who are bullying others have been linked to being victims of bullying as well. And it would be important to complete literature reviews on individuals who bully and why they bully. So that both the victim and the student doing the bullying can have separate individual or group sessions as it relates to bullying, so that root of the problem can be addressed. As it relates to bullying, there is a strong need to explain and educate the students who are bullying others that is not acceptable, because if they have been bullied or seen violent acts in their home; then, they may link that connection to bullying being acceptable and normal because that is all they know. Too often, we are too harsh on students who bully others, but not being open-minded to the fact that they may be or have been victims of bullying too.

The selected article entitled *Decreasing Bullying Behaviors through Discussing Young-Adult Literature, Role-Playing Activities, and Establishing a School-Wide Definition of Bullying in Accordance with a common set of Rules in Language Arts and Math*. It appears that the journal focused on the research project to implement interventions that enhanced the knowledge about bullying; while, implementing strategies that are applied to real life scenarios. The role-playing model gives specific hands on insight to the students and aides a visual learning experience to reinforce appropriate social behaviors in the school system setting. Overall, the article's goal is to decrease the bullying actions within the school system setting; and I felt that this was accomplished by giving a true definition of bullying that was implemented crossed the board regardless of

the setting. The journal outlines key approaches; for example, giving ownership to the expectations not displaying any bully actions. (Holmgren, Lamb, Miller, Werderitch, 2011)

The next journal focuses on the U.S. Department of Education analysis of laws related to state bullying policies. I do believe that educating the students, parents, and school officials on the state laws at it relates to bullying. I feel that linking state laws to school policies within the district will provide and outline the consequences of the choices of actions that are present with other students bully each other. (Stuart-Cassel, Bell, Springer, 2011)

This journal articles defines cyber-bullying; which in this generation of students have increase due to the usage of technology. Bullying is now more present in the area of cyber bullying due to the student utilizing the social media. And as a future educator it is important to stay abreast of the changes that occur from year to year and generational changes. (Devoe & Murphy, 2011)

This article also discusses cyberbullying as it relates to the rapid increase in web usage. The author also makes connections to the roles of the parents and the educators, by outlining what the adults can do in effort to decrease bullying (Koenig, 2012).

The article wrote by, Gregory, Cornell, Fan, Sheras, Shih, and Francis (2010), research purpose appears to be link to an authoritative school disciplinary approach to addressing bullying.

At the classroom level, research has shown that adolescents benefit from teachers who use an approach similar to authoritative parental guidance (Gregory & Weinstein, 2004; Walker, 2008; Wentzel, 2002). Recent studies found that the

combination of teacher structure and support predicted growth in achievement, especially for students experiencing the negative effects of low family income (Gregory & Weinstein, 2004). Moreover, Gregory and Weinstein (2008) showed that African American students with negative discipline trajectories had greater acceptance of the authority of teachers whom they perceived as caring and as maintaining high academic expectations. (Gregory, Cornell, Fan, Sheras, Shih, and Francis, 2010, pp. 484-85)

This article focuses on bullying in the middle schools. The focus of the article was on using data that computes questionnaire data and computation of percentage data. The article displays results that are evident of the student providing input on bullying. The author gives details through discussing the problem of bullying and the long-term affects of bullying (Harris & Petrie, 2011).

This selected article focuses on discussion the issues of bullying in society. The author also draws and illusion too the article by referencing a victim who took her life at the age of 16 due to being bullied and felt as though killing herself would be the way to set her free. The article captures all individuals who are exposed or involved in the bullying (Gourneau, 2012).

It is imperative to explore the above research questions in this study to support the findings.

Bullying is an important social problem that occurs within a bounded social setting. As such, it is best understood by analyzing the social dynamics that produce and sustain it. However, previous research has tended to view bullying as a manifestation of personal pathology or amorphous characteristics of contexts.

The present study addresses this gap in the literature by applying the construct of collective efficacy to account for variations in the frequency of bullying perpetration within schools. Just as collective efficacy provides a theoretical foundation for understanding the dynamics of bullying in schools, these settings also provide an ideal social context for testing collective efficacy theory.

(Williams & Guerra, 2011)

The key variables in this study will be the disciplinary and bullying policy, the study of the effects on the bully and the victim, and implementation of measuring tools to decrease bullying acts.

The selected article relevance was on the research topic because it gives an intervention plan that reflects childhood bullying triangle. The articles consist of description of bullying that occurs through technology. The authors gave insight upon the bystanders as well. The article gives the definition of bullying. This article would be considered qualitative because it is not statistically based. (McNamee & Mia, 2008)

The final article focal point is evaluating the effectiveness of school bullying intervention programs. Merrell, Gueldner, and Scott (2008), did a great job defining the terminology bullying and the affects on both the bullies and the victims. "A growing body of research evidence has demonstrated convincingly that bullying is associated with negative outcomes and troubling trajectories for both bullies and their victims," (Merrell, Gueldner, and Scott, 2008, p. 26).

Section 3: Critical Analysis

As reference in the article, "Like bullying in general, bullying of students with disabilities represents both a civil rights and public health challenge," (Young, Ne'eman,

& Gelsler, Sara, 2012). And therefore, I strongly believe that educators have to address the bullying issues with the students to ensure that the students are monitored to prevent bullying amongst the individuals with disability; and I also feel that a step further should also occur as it results to educating the students on the bullying individuals with disability. And too often, there is also a level of peer pressure that is associated with individuals with disabilities as it relates to pressuring the individuals with disabilities to misbehave or do things that will lead to them getting in trouble. "Furthermore, evidence suggests that existing legal and policy tools available to address bullying against students with disabilities remain significantly under-utilized. Additional focus is needed on bullying prevention efforts and as specific area of focus in policy and practice.

Effectively addressing bullying of students with disabilities will require undertaking action as part of both general and special education policy," (Young, Ne'eman, & Gelsler, Sara, 2012). And therefore, I believe that the policies that are implemented should be addressed and handled a crossed the board as it relates to keeping everything consistent in the school system.

The second article discusses and focuses on how teachers deal with bullying as a best practice. I feel that it is vital to educate and train the teachers on how to deal with bullying and harassing behaviors. "The research shows that bullying behaviors are more prevalent in the school but in new behaviors that teachers are ill equipped to manage. It is clear that bullying behavior is on the increase and more needs to be done to reach high school faculty and staff how to identify and deal with bullying behavior among students," (Gleason, 2011). And being that there is little involvement with dealing with bullying behaviors in the high school age groups, I feel that the bullying policy should be

implemented across the board as it relates to all level of students in the schools. And this way, it is familiar with the policy is and the students will be aware and know what's expected of them along with the consequences to the choice they may make as it relates to bullying.

The third and final article that I would like to share involves comparing the insights of a teacher perception on bullying to the administrator level. "The primary aim of this study was to explore the differences between teacher and administrator perceptions of bullying," (Kennedy, T., Russom, A., & Kevorkian, M., 2012). In the schools as it relates to bullying it has to be a clear understanding across the board of the expectations of bullying and how it will be address.

There were statistically significant differences between the perceptions of teachers and administrators regarding their role in bullying prevention.

Teachers felt more strongly that educators played an important role in bullying prevention; however, administrators felt more comfortable communicating with the parents of bullying victims. Interestingly, teachers were significantly more likely than administrators to perceive a need for increased bullying prevention training. Significant gender differences concerning the inclusion of bullying prevention in school curriculum were also found. (Kennedy, T., Russom, A., & Kevorkian, M., 2012)

There have to be an understanding and clear policy on bullying and it has to be a team effort as well. I do feel that the responsibilities should be divided into the area that the individuals feel most comfortable with approaching as it relates to bullying.

Section 4: Recommendations for School Improvement

As it relates to the school system, it is important to ensure quality of the school programs that are in place to support the learning environment. And it is important to ensure that all students have a positive learning environment. To continue to monitor and audit the bully policy and put appropriate support in place to ensure the safety of the students.

With all of the foregoing tasks completed, you may wish to conduct a curriculum audit to ensure quality. Curriculum auditing is a process of evaluating the management policies and procedures used to support the curriculum. Obviously, an audit can be conducted at any time the district finds convenient, but the timing recommended here is after the district has accomplished the major tasks of curriculum development. Thus the audit becomes a quality control mechanism, not a diagnosis of needs. (Glatthorn, 2004, p.109)

And when developing recommendations, you have to be direct and clear as to what changes needs to be implemented. There should also be proper and ongoing review and training support for the teachers and faculty. The following would be implemented for the bullying prevention plan:

Step 1: To organize the data to be present to the teachers and faculty.

Step 2: Share the findings based on the data collected from the bullying policy.

Step 3: Develop a system that is clear and consistent that outlines the consequences of bullying other students.

Step 4: Educate the students, parents, educators, and community on the policy and role of everyone involved in the student's learning.

- Step 5:** Provide resources and material that will be readily accessible as needed for refresher on the topic of bullying.
- Step 6:** Develop professional development session that support classroom management strategies
- Step 7:** Develop a support group facilitated by the school counselor for the students who have bullied
- Step 8:** Plan monthly group sessions facilitated by the school counselor to promote bullying awareness and link the bullying to laws on bullying; and have scheduled guest speakers from the community like an officer to educate the students on the bullying policy and the severe consequence depending the severity of the bullying acts.
- Step 9:** Create a process for a grievance bully box, where the students can complete survives related to any issues that is still present with bullying at their school and also an opportunity that the students can report bullying by filling out form that will report who is bullying them.
- Step 10:** Develop a peer mediation group
- Step 11:** Create a reward system that aligns non-bullying acts
- Step 12:** Implement the recommendations and review quarterly to evaluate the recommendations; and revise as needed during the quarterly review.
- It is important to consider and ensure that the recommendations are clear and concise. And to ensure that the recommendations is gong to support quality improvement.

Section 5: Milestone Reflection

The first component that must be established is your role and expectation of tasks. There also have to be a clear concise plan as it relates to the needs of the school that needs to be addressed. It is important to identify a team that you will be meeting with over the course of time to relate the findings and discuss the plan that will be implemented; as well, as collaborating with to identify the issues at the school system or district.

Each district should have both a general long-term plan for curriculum work and more detailed plans for each curriculum project. The long-term plan typically is developed by the Curriculum Planning Council and reviewed by district and school leaders; the detailed project plans are developed by the appropriate task forces and reviewed by the Council. (Glatthorn, 2004, p. 12)

I do feel that the subgroup of bullying within the county had accessible within the handbook, the policy of bullying for the county. Some of the strengths as a hold focuses on preventing bullying and equipping and educating the students on the different types of bullying aligned with disciplinary actions as it relates to bullying. The plan of recommendations should be direct, clear, and concise. The plan also spells out the roles and responsibilities of all individuals within the learning environment to ensure that it reflects the level of accountability that is warranted. There is improvement within the plan that can be implemented as it relates to data collection.

District leaders provide district wide professional development for school administrators and teachers, especially to assist them in the successful implementation of curriculum. The principal and teachers work together to bring about their individual and collective development. High-quality staff

development, delivered in quality time, is provided to support curriculum reform. Peers work together to give one another feedback and acquire the new skills and knowledge required by the new curriculum. Close supervision and evaluation by the principal are provided only to those needing it. (Glatthorn, 2004, pp. 6-7)

In addition, the students and stakeholders have to be open to the changes that are being implemented and be consistent with the changes as it relates to bullying.

Section 6: Conclusion

The interest level that one has is to promote a healthy mental capacity to the youth population by impacting intervention to support the prevention of bullying. The focal point was to explore the affects on the victim and support a positive learning environment. It is vital to provide support to the youth population because of the level and increase in bullying. One is a firm believer in ensuring that a positive learning environment is present to enhance the learning setting.

Overall, my role in the implementation of the leadership plan will mainly be focused around collaborating with all individuals involved in the students' learning efforts to include the students, parents, educators, and community members. I do strongly believe that the topic bullying can be addressed during monthly staff meetings or professional development sessions, during parent meetings, and etc.... I do believe that once the right support is in place there is so much that can be addressed and implemented as a whole to support the students and school system. And to ensure that the proper support is in place will include educating the students and stakeholder; as well as, organizing professional development and training opportunities.

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