

Cyberbullying: What Educators Need to Know to Keep Schools Safe

OSBA 2012 Annual Convention

Portland Marriott Downtown Waterfront Hotel

Date: November 9, 2012

Time: 10:00-11:15 am

Presenter: Moses W. Wambalaba, Ed.D.

Senior Program Advisor

Education Northwest, Equity Program

101 SW Main St., Suite 500 - Portland, Oregon 97204

503-275-9608 ☎ - 503-275-0452 📠

Moses.Wambalaba@educationnorthwest.org

Agenda

- Training Objectives
- Warm-up Activity
- Startling Data
- Presentation
- Group Activity
- Presentation
- Group Activity
- Concluding Remarks

Training Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- Define cyberbullying and its different forms.
- Compare cyberbullying and traditional bullying.
- Discuss the role of school boards in responding to cyberbullying.
- Share cyberbullying issues and experiences from their districts.

Cyberbullying

“Bitch, I know where you live. You’d better sleep each night with one eye open, on your knees. If you don’t . . . I’ll be there to be sure you do!” The Avenger.

Shariff, S. & Hoff, D. (2006). Cyberbullying: Clarifying legal boundaries for school supervision in cyberspace.

What is Cyberbullying?

- **Cyberbullying** is the use of electronic devices such as cell phones, cameras, computers, and tablets to send harassing messages and images to targeted victims.
- **Cyberbullies** use some of the following forms: E-mails, Instant Messaging (IM), Chat Rooms, Web Sites, Bash Boards, Small Text Messages, Sexting, and Telephone calls to bully their victims.

Cyberbullying Startling Statements

Instructions:

- Review the “*Cyberbullying Startling Statements*” handout.
- Select one statement that surprises you.
- Explain to the group why you believe the statement you picked is startling.

Warm-up Activity

Cyberbullying Terminology Activity

Cyberbullying	False reporting	Flaming
Cyberstalking	Impersonation	Exclusion
Sexting	Rumor spreading	Buddy list
"Going viral"	Monitoring	Cyberbully
E-crimes	Cyberbullycide	IM
Screen name	Identity theft	Photoshopping
Cyberthreats	Filtering	Digital footprint
Bashboard	Blocking	Happy slapping
Outing	Phishing	Hacking
ISP	SMS	Denigration

Warm-up Activity Instructions

- As a team or with a partner, you have 7 minutes to define as many as possible the cyberbullying terms on your handout.
- Be prepared to share some of your definitions in the large group when your team is called.
- The team that defines the most terms wins a big applause!

Cyberbullying vs. Traditional Bullying

Cyberbullying	Traditional bullying
Victims may not know the bully or why they are targeted.	Usually victims know or see the bullies and understand why they are targeted.
Bullies can remain anonymous by using screen names or impersonating other people.	Bullies directly or indirectly threaten, embarrass, humiliate, and harm their victims.
The bully's hurtful activities become viral; they spread rapidly and widely. Many people can gang up against the victim.	The victim may be confronted by one or a couple of bullies and only a few bystanders may become aware of the incident.

Cyberbullying vs. Traditional Bullying

Cyberbullying	Traditional Bullying
Victims are defenseless against bullies they do not know or see.	Victims have a chance to run away, defend themselves, or get help from witnesses.
Cyberbullying can be relentless, taking place anywhere—at home, on the bus, and at school.	Usually confined to the school environment. Victims usually feel secure at home.
Anybody can be a bully or victim. A child can bully an adult and girls can bully boys.	The bully must be bigger, stronger, and courageous to physically bully another child.
Hurtful comments posted online cannot be stopped or retracted.	Hurtful comments can be stopped. There is no permanent record.

Cyberbullying Victim Warning Signs

- Stops using the computer or phone.
- Nervous and anxious when an instant message or e-mail comes.
- Suddenly appears angry, depressed, and frustrated after using the computer or phone.
- Uneasy to go out of the house or to school.

Cyberbullying Victim Warning Signs

- Exhibits signs of low self-esteem, including sadness, depression, and fear.
- Exhibits poor eating and/or sleeping habits.
- Increased absenteeism and sudden drop in grades.
- Suicide attempts.
- Withdraws from friends and family members.

Cyberbullying Consequences

Victim	Bully
School grades drop	School detention, suspension, reassignment, or expulsion
Drops out of school	Likely to drop out of school
Uses extreme violence to retaliate against school personnel and peers	Inability to develop and maintain positive relationships
Commits suicide	Greater likelihood of future criminal behavior

Cyberbullying Prevention Challenges

- Generally adults do not see the harm associated with cyberbullying. It is easy to ignore what they don't see or hear.
- Lack of knowledge, technological skills, policies, and laws about cyberbullying make it harder for educators, parents, and law enforcement to prevent or to stop cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying Prevention Challenges

- Reluctance to be involved when cyberbullying originates off campus.
- Gathering cyberbullying evidence is complicated and time consuming.
- Investigation of cyberbullying requires technological and legal knowledge that are often insufficient or lacking.

Cyberbullying: Group Activity

- In your teams, take 10 minutes to discuss and answer the following questions:
- What steps can your district take to stop and prevent cyberbullying?
- What resources and technical assistance do you need to achieve your goals?
- How will you use your resources to accomplish your goals?

Preventing Cyberbullying

What a school board can do:

- Develop a comprehensive harassment, bullying/cyberbullying policy.
- Disseminate the policy and ensure its implementation throughout the district.
- Designate staff (Title IX Coordinator) to oversee compliance of the policy.

Preventing Cyberbullying

What a school board can do:

- Provide anti-harassment/bullying training to all district personnel.
- Update district bullying/harassment policy regularly to comply with new federal and state legal requirements.
- Provide technical staff to assist schools in monitoring the use of equipment such as computers.

Preventing Cyberbullying

What a school board can do:

- Collect, disaggregate, and analyze district wide data to determine cyberbullying levels and major problem schools.
- Address issues of disproportional discipline.
- Implement alternative and proactive educational intervention practices, e.g. *Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports* and *Safe School Ambassadors* to address bullying.

Preventing Cyberbullying

What a school board can do:

- Involve public and community groups in your cyberbullying prevention efforts.
- Provide more support to schools that need it most to counter cyberbullying.
- Respond immediately to all bullying reports and ensure the bullying stops.

Preventing Cyberbullying

Legal Facts for school boards to consider:

Freedom of Speech (First Amendment rights):

- Does the speech disrupt learning?
- Does speech undermine the school mission?

Student Privacy: (Fourth Amendment rights)

- *Search and seizure*: Protection from unreasonable searches v. school safety.

Federal Anti-discrimination Laws

- *Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964:* Prohibits discrimination in public schools on the basis of race, color, and national origin.
- *Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964:* Prohibits discrimination in the workplace on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, or sex.
- *Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972:* Prohibits discrimination in public schools on the basis of sex.

Federal Anti-discrimination Laws

OCR Dear Colleague Letters:

- *Anti-Bullying Guidance:* October 26, 2010
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201010.pdf>
- *Title IX and Sexual Violence:* April 4, 2011
http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/dear_colleague_sexual_violence.pdf
- *Disability Harassment Guidance:* January 19, 2012, July 2012
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201109.html>

Preventing Cyberbullying

- What cyberbullying cases or incidents has your SD experienced recently?
- How did the school board address the cyberbullying cases?
- How prepared or unprepared is your district to handle cyberbullying incidents?

Preventing Cyberbullying

Note that ...

- Information posted online can be retrieved even after it has been deleted.
- Any information posted online becomes a **permanent** and **public** record that could haunt cyberbullies in the future.
- District staff can be personally liable for damages if they fail to report or to stop bullying that results in an injury.

Cyberbullying Resources

- www.cyberbullying.us
- www.researchpress.com
- www.cyberbullying.us/research.php
- www.stopbullying.gov
- www.bullycide.org
- www.netsmartz.org
- www.cybertipline

Preventing Cyberbullying

Thank you for attending this session. Cyberbullying creates a hostile teaching and learning environment that affects student achievement. I hope you will use what you learned today and your position of influence to stop and prevent cyberbullying in your district.
