Module Structure

- Module series goal:
  - Provide information to schools that can lead to improvements in school climate and behavioral outcomes.

- Module narratives provide additional information to accompany PowerPoint Presentation.
- Endnotes throughout slides correspond to the references in the module narrative.
- Gold star = Resource on Delaware PBS website

What is Bullying Victimization?

- Bullying = type of aggression that aims to:
  - Harm the victim
  - Is repetitive over time
  - Involves an imbalance of power
    - The bully is more powerful than the victim
BULLYING IN DELAWARE

Delaware law defines bullying as:
- Intentional actions that occur in physical, verbal, written, or electronic form towards a student, school employee, or school volunteer that:
  - Cause reasonable fear or substantial harm to the victim’s physical or emotional well-being, or damage to property
  - Are pervasive/persistent or characterized by a power differential that creates a hostile educational environment
  - Interfere with a safe environment
  - Include coercing others to cause the above harmful actions

DELAWARE SCHOOL SURVEYS

Assesses four types of bullying victimization (verbal, physical, social/relational, and cyber)
- Delaware Bullying Victimization Scale
  - Assesses students’ reports of the extent to which they have personally experienced each of the four types of bullying during the current school year
- Bullying school-wide subscale on the Delaware School Climate Scale
  - Assesses bullying in general throughout the school
  - Items that ask if students bully one another, threaten and bully others, and worry about others bullying them

NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF BULLYING VICTIMIZATION

Greater internalizing problems
- E.g. depression, anxiety, and loneliness\(^{1-12}\)
- Increased risk of suicide ideation, suicide attempts, and self-injury\(^{13-16}\)
- Increased risk of participation in delinquent and problem behaviors
  - E.g. substance use, stealing, physical fighting, and vandalism\(^{17-20}\)
  - Greater difficulty making friends and greater risk for social rejection and isolation\(^{1,15,19,20}\)
- Lower social competence\(^{21}\)
- Lower self-esteem\(^{1,15,19}\) and increased levels of self-criticism\(^{12}\)
NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF BULLYING VICTIMIZATION

- Less attachment or connectedness to school\(^2,22\)
- E.g. greater fear, anxiety, and avoidance towards school\(^2,23-25\)

- Lower academic engagement, achievement, and classroom concentration\(^8,11,20,26-28\)

- At risk for psychosomatic problems
  - E.g. headaches, stomach pain, sleeping problems\(^4\)

NEGATIVE OUTCOMES FOR BULLIES

- Not only are victims of bullying at increased risk for a number of negative outcomes, but so too are students who bully others. Those risks include:
  - Involvement in crime, violence, drugs, alcohol, and delinquency\(^8,17,29-34\)
  - Greater internalizing problems\(^7\)
  - Psychosomatic symptoms such as feeling tired or tense\(^3\)
  - Suicide attempts and ideation\(^14\)
  - Less school bonding, or connectedness\(^22\)
  - Lower academic achievement\(^8,17\)

- Students who witness bullying and those who are both victims and perpetrators of bullying also are at risk for negative outcomes.\(^109-110\)
STUDENT & HOME CHARACTERISTICS

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

- The following characteristics have been shown to be associated with students who experience the least bullying:
  - General social and emotional competence. This includes:
    - Few, if any, behavior problems\(^{[22,23,24]}\)
    - Good social skills\(^{37}\)
    - Ability to regulate one’s emotions\(^{37,38}\)
    - Experiencing and expressing empathy\(^{39}\)
    - Viewing oneself favorably\(^{40}\)
      - Positive self-perceptions
      - High self-esteem
    - Absence of internalizing problems
    - Overall life satisfaction

- Although not malleable, other characteristics of students place them at increased risk of being bullied:
  - Students with disabilities, especially those with observable behavior problems\(^{56-59}\)
  - Students who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning\(^{51,60-61}\)
  - Mixed results for race\(^{7,53,62-66}\)
  - Males tend to experience more bullying (and bully others) more than females (verbal and physical bullying)\(^{1,11,19,38,40,44,53,63,67}\)
  - Females bully and are bullied with more verbal, relational and social forms of bullying\(^{9,11,19,53}\)
  - Mixed results for age and grade level\(^{7,9,23,42,69,70}\)
    - Within the same grade, younger children are bullied more\(^{36}\)
  - Mixed results for religion
    - Muslim & Jewish students more likely to be victims\(^{114-116}\)
CLASSROOMS, SCHOOLS, AND TEACHERS
CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

- **Less bullying** occurs in schools and classrooms characterized by the following:
  - Positive teacher-student relationships and teacher support\(^27,44,47,70-73\)
    - This includes students:
      - Viewing teachers as disapproving of bullying
      - Believing teachers will respond to bullying
      - Believing teachers are aware of peer group interactions
      - Willing to seek help from teachers for bullying
      - Believing that teachers encourage them to express points of view
  - Positive student-student relationships, especially peer support\(^11,77-78\)
    - Student self-determination in the classroom\(^80\)
    - Greater student respect for diversity and other differences\(^71\)
  - Students perceive behavioral expectations & rules to be clear, fair, and against bullying\(^81-83\)
  - Authoritative approach to classroom management and school discipline\(^38,70,75,85-86\)
  - Norms that do not support bullying\(^23,35,77\)

BULLYING PREVENTION CURRICULA & PROGRAMS

- Program features associated with more **positive** outcomes\(^90-92\)
  - Whole-school, multidisciplinary anti-bullying approach with high intensity
  - Programs inspired by Dan Olweus
  - Authoritative approach to classroom management and school discipline
  - Information/meetings for parents
  - Use of videos in lessons
  - Improved playground supervision in elementary school
  - Teacher training
  - Counseling for students who bully
  - Conflict resolution training
- When effectiveness of existing programs is found, it is more likely to be in elementary than middle and high school\(^106\)
I. Collect & Examine Data

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES: TIER 1

• Examine data, such as from Delaware School Climate Survey
  • Are school-wide bullying and individual bullying victimization perceived as occurring infrequently across students, teachers/staff, and parents?
  • Unfavorable responses would indicate the need for interventions and related staff development.
  • In addition to examining scale and subscale scores, look at student responses to specific survey items
  • Responses on the School-wide Bullying subscale (general and school-wide bullying) and Bullying Victimization Scale (individual bullying)
  • If an area of need:
  • Gather and examine more data to determine why these relationships are not viewed positively
    • Office Disciplinary Referrals
    • Other subscales
    • Share results of the additional data with focus groups

CONDUCTING FOCUS GROUPS

Focus group guide

• Information on:
  • Designing questions
  • Recruiting participants
  • Conducting the group
  • Analyzing data
  • Provides examples

from Duke University
(https://assessment.tiny.lib.duke.edu/documents/How_to_Conduct_a_Focus_Group.pdf)
ESTABLISH COMMON UNDERSTANDING OF BULLYING & ANTI-BULLYING EXPECTATIONS

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES: TIER 1

To do this, schools should...

• Have a clear definition & understanding of bullying
• Include cyberbullying & the responsibility of the school in such cases
• Have teachers & staff reflect upon their own attitudes towards bullying
  - Teachers, staff, students, and parents should recognize what acts do and do not constitute bullying
• Emphasize the consequences of bullying for those who bully and for the victim and school climate

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION ACTION PLAN

• Provides prompts to get staff, administrators, teachers, and other school personnel thinking about the aspects of bullying prevention and intervention that are in place at their school
• Includes suggestions about factors/steps to consider when completing the prompts

TEACH STUDENTS HOW TO RESPOND TO BULLYING

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES: TIER 1

• Teach students how they might best respond to bullying
• Develop an anonymous process by which students can report all forms of bullying, including cyberbullying
• Develop school-wide expectations that promote prosocial behavior and prevent bullying, aggression, and peer rejection
• Develop clear and consistent consequences for students who bully others
• Make families aware of procedures and policies
• Identify non-classroom areas where bullying is most likely to occur
• Encourage school staff to seek out victims of bullying so they receive help
CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND
SCHOOL-WIDE STRATEGIES
RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES: TIER 1

- Model prosocial behaviors
- Use praise and rewards strategically
- Ensure there are clear behavioral and academic expectations, routines, and procedures; fair rules & consequences, & monitoring of student behavior
- Apply the above to help prevent cyberbullying
- Highlight prosocial behavior & the absence of bullying in these expectations
- Communicate the importance of social acceptance, the consequences of bullying, and the role of bystanders
- Observe peer interactions
- Arrange students’ seating to promote opportunities for positive social interactions and social acceptance, and to avoid bullying

EFFECTIVE USE OF PRAISE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- Provides general strategies for how to effectively praise and reward students
- Gives specific script examples of what to do or say
- Activity for staff practice is available

STRATEGIES THAT PROMOTE POSITIVE TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS
RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES: TIER 1

- Spend time with and get to know every student
- Greet students when they come into school every day
- Notice when students are having difficulties and listen
- Treat students equally and do not indicate favorites
- Allow your students to get to know you better
- Have fun and use humor, when appropriate
- Attend sports/extracurricular activities
KNOWING YOUR STUDENTS ACTIVITY

- Teacher fills in three columns: 1 = students names in class, 2 = something each student likes or is interested in, 3 = note if the student is aware that the teacher knows this about him/her.
- Missing information may indicate that teacher needs to spend more time with child, engage in conversation more often, and/or connect with them more.

Adapted from Responsive Classroom (http://www.responsiveclassroom.org/blog/how-well-do-you-know-your-students)

USE APPROPRIATE CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES: TIER 1

When minor bullying behaviors are observed...

- Correct the behavior immediately
- Always combine correction with recognition of positive behaviors
- Use inductive discipline
  - Emphasize impact of the behavior on the victim and relations with others
- Communicate that it is the behavior you dislike, not the student
- Communicate that it is a shared responsibility to help improve the misbehavior
- Communicate optimism that the bullying behavior will not be repeated

REFLECTIVE ACTION PLAN

- Plan completed by students to help them:
  - Reflect on their behavior
  - Problem solve to prevent future behavior problems.

Courtesy of G. Bear – DE-PBS: Developing Self Discipline Workshop 2011-12
IMPLEMENT A UNIVERSAL BULLYING PREVENTION OR SEL CURRICULUM

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES: TIER 1

Packaged programs available for purchase/training that are supported by research showing they reduce bullying victimization in elementary schools:

- KiVa Bullying Prevention Program
- Olweus Bullying Prevention Program
- Steps to Respect
  - Focuses on social-emotional skills
- Other popular programs (e.g., SWPBIS, Restorative Justice, Bully Proofing Your School, and Second Step: A Violence Prevention Program) have been shown to lead to positive outcomes but not reduced bullying victimization.

KIVA BULLYING PREVENTION PROGRAM

- For students ages 6-12
- Includes training materials and lessons, videos, online games, and parents’ guide
- Greater focus on supports for the victims and bullies
- Supported by studies showing reduced bullying and victimization
  - Now being implemented throughout the U.S., including in DE

Recommended Strategies
Students at Tier 2 & 3
APPLY UNIVERSAL INTERVENTIONS

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES: TIERS 2 & 3

Interventions should be:
• Of greater frequency and intensity
• More comprehensive, including multiple components
• More individualized and guided by students’ needs and factors that might explain/contribute to bullying and victimization
  • Social skills deficits
  • Individual strengths
  • Social networks in classrooms and school
  • Classroom management practices
  • Systems of social support and resources in the school, home, and community

PROVIDE SOCIAL SKILLS/SEL TRAINING

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES: TIERS 2 & 3

• Target specific prosocial skills and antisocial behaviors related to social acceptance, friendships, and bullying victimization
• Use lessons from a Tier 1 bullying prevention or SEL curriculum
  • E.g. Steps to Respect or Second Step
• Use evidence-based curriculum lessons designed for use at Tiers 2 and 3
  • E.g. Incredible Years, Coping Power, and PEERS
  • Include training for targeted students and their parents
• Use caution in grouping students together (i.e. in Tier 2 interventions) who share similar antisocial behaviors. This may result in “deviancy training” with peers modeling and reinforcing antisocial behavior.

ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES: TIERS 2 & 3

• Ensure that targeted students have a close, supportive relationship with at least one other student in the school
• Individual counseling may be appropriate for bullying victims
• Work closely with students’ parents to target social-emotional skills at home
THANK YOU

• Based on areas of need identified by data, check out other resources provided through the School Climate and Student Success Module Series.
  • www.delawarepbs.org

• Questions can be directed to Sarah Hearn
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