Bullying and Cyberbullying: Focusing on Native Youth with Disabilities

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Available online at: https://www.parentcenterhub.org/naptac-tier3-education-youth/
Objectives for Today’s Webinar

To assist Parent Centers in their outreach to Native parents by:

- **Increasing their awareness of bullying** in general and its impact on American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) youth, particularly those with disabilities

- Increasing their awareness of **cyberbullying and sexting**

- Learning **bullying prevention strategies** that Parent Centers can share with Native parents
Per the U.S. ED’s website stopbullying.gov, bullying is defined as:

“…unwanted, aggressive behavior among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.

The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time.”
National Definition of Bullying

- Bullying is an attack or intimidation intended to cause fear, distress, or harm—either physical, verbal, and/or psychological.

- Bullying involves a real or perceived power imbalance between the students involved.

- Bullying is repeated attacks or intimidation between the same students over time.

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, 2011
The youth who bullies enjoys seeing his or her target afraid and upset.

2. The youth who bullies selects a target who is smaller, younger, or less socially able to cope.

3. The youth who bullies picks on the target repeatedly.

Garrity et al. (2000)
Impact of Bullying

- Bullying increases absenteeism and decreases academic success.
- Bullying creates feelings of helplessness, anger, and frustration.
- Bullying can increase the possibility of suicidal thoughts.

Statistical Impacts:
- Bullied students are 5 times more likely to be depressed.
- Bullied boys are 4 times more likely to be suicidal.
- Bullied girls are 8 times more likely to be suicidal.
Activity: Assessing Personal Experience

Think back to your childhood/student days.

Were you ever a...

- Youth who bullied?
- Target?
- Bully-Target?
- Bystander?
Native Youth as Targets of Bullying

AI/AN youth are targeted for all forms of bullying:

- Due to their race
- Due to cultural and linguistic differences
- Because negative stereotypes and misconceptions exist, encouraging racist beliefs and behaviors
- For growing up in poverty and having low cultural self-esteem
- For excelling in school (going against a negative stereotype)
Youth with Disabilities—
2-3 Times More Likely to be Bullied

Youth with disabilities may start out with:

- Limited communication skills
- Difficulty interpreting youthful social cues
- Lower social standing among peers
- Academic difficulties
- Limited ability to participate in physical activities/sports
- Lower self-esteem

These “differences” make them vulnerable to verbal and physical bullying and even cyberbullying.
Definition of Cyberbullying

*Cyberbullying* includes sending or posting harmful material or engaging in other forms of social aggression using the Internet or other digital devices.

It can occur **on the Internet** when cyberbullies use email, chat rooms, discussion groups, social networking sites, instant messaging, or web pages to post harmful content.

Impact of Cyberbullying

- Can happen around the clock
- Can be anonymous
- May be more vicious than face-to-face encounters
- Is easier to get away with it, due to minimal adult oversight

- Spreads negative texts and images widely and immediately
- Is difficult to detect and prove without a paper trail

Targets feel betrayed, shamed, and powerless.

Depression and social withdrawal can result.
A term coined by the media, combining the words *sex* and *texting*.

Sending or forwarding *sexually explicit* photos, videos, or messages of oneself or others from a mobile phone or other digital device to others.

Sharing *unauthorized* photos of *partially nude* boys or girls in locker rooms or at sleep-overs.
Federal Law and Sexting

Federal laws treat all sexually explicit images of youth under age 18 as child pornography.

Youth could be convicted of producing, possessing, and/or disseminating child pornography, resulting in a criminal record and requiring registration as a sex offender.
Impact of Sexting on Youth

Unforeseen Consequences of Sexting

- Damage to one’s reputation
- Bullying and sexual harassment by peers
- Refused admission to the college of one’s choice
- Loss of future employment
Native Youth with Disabilities as Targets of Cyberbullying/Sexting

Cyberbullies can take advantage of unsuspecting Native youth with disabilities by manipulating them into:

- Cyberbullying another
- Becoming a victim of sexting
- Downloading pornography

The intensity and humiliation of being cyberbullied can increase Native youth’s high risk for:

- Dropping out of school
- Engaging in suicidal thoughts and/or actions
Strategies Parent Centers Can Suggest to **Youth** to Support Targets of Bullying

- **Reach out**
- **Band together**
- **Speak up!**
- **Don’t join in**
- **Ask adults for help**
- **Interrupt the bullying**
Strategies Parent Centers Can Suggest to *Parents* About Bullying and Cyberbullying

**Initiate conversations**

about all forms of bullying.

**Don’t expect** youth to solve things themselves.

**Express strong disapproval**

of bullying when you see it, even among siblings.

**Role play** with youth on diffusing a bullying situation and engaging those observing, the bystanders.
Further Strategies for Parents on Bullying and Cyberbullying

Develop **empathy** and **respect** among youth at home.

Encourage an improved **climate of respect** at local **schools**.

Write anti-bullying strategies into your child’s **IEP**.

Know your **federal rights** and file a complaint at **ocr@ed.gov**.
Strategies Parent Centers Can Suggest to Parents on Cyberbullying and Sexting

1. **Set rules** for using technology

2. **Know** what your children are doing online

3. **Save evidence** of cyberbullying and sexting

4. **File complaints**
Native Resources You Can Share

NAPTAC published 3 briefs to inform Native parents on bullying, cyberbullying, and sexting

**Bullying**: What American Indian and Alaska Native Parents Need to Know

**Cyberbullying**: What American Indian and Alaska Native Parents Need to Know

**Resources on Bullying and Cyberbullying of Native Youth**

All are available at the Center for Parent Information and Resources, at: https://www.parentcenterhub.org/naptac-tier3-education-youth/
Thanks for attending this webinar.

NAPTAC

All of NAPTAC’s products are available at the Center for Parent Information and Resources:

https://www.parentcenterhub.org/welcome-to-the-naptac-library/

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