

Enhancing Positive School Climate Through Effective Bullying Prevention

Sally Canazaro

Leah Galkowski

Center for Safe Schools

scanazaro@csc.csiu.org

lgalkowski@csc.csiu.org

Certified Trainer for the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program

Center for Safe Schools



The mission of the Center for Safe Schools is to provide schools with resources, training and technical assistance to create and maintain safe, productive learning environments.

Essential Questions



- What is bullying?
- How big of a problem can bullying be? Isn't it just something everyone lives through?
- How does bullying affect relationships?
- Why is bullying prevention important?
- What can be done?

Activity



- Ice Breaker – 5 minutes

Bullying



A student is being bullied when he or she is targeted, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more students.

Three components of bullying



- It involves an intentional negative behavior.
- It typically involves a pattern of behavior repeated over time.
- It involves an imbalance of power or strength, which can be real or perceived.



What is/isn't bullying?



Myth

Bullying is the same thing as conflict.

Reality

Conflict involves antagonism among 2+ people. *Any* two people can have a conflict. Bullying only occurs where there is a *power imbalance*.

© The Olweus Bullying Prevention Group, 2004



BULLYING = PEER ABUSE

Rough Play	Real Fighting	Bullying
Usually friends; often repeated (same players)	Usually not friends; typically not repeated	Typically not friends; generally repeated
Balance of power	Power relatively equal	Unequal power
No intent to harm	Intentional harm doing	Intentional harm doing
Affect is friendly; positive, mutual	Affect negative; aggressive, tense, hostile affect	Affect negative; aggressive and differs for victim and aggressor

Key findings about bullying

#1



Many children are involved in bullying situations, and most are quite concerned about it.



There are similarities and differences among boys and girls in their experiences of bullying.

Key findings about bullying (cont.)



Similarities

- Boys and girls engage in frequent verbal bullying.
- Boys and girls engage in relational bullying.

Differences

- Most studies: boys bully more than girls.
- Boys are more likely to be physically bullied.
- Girls are more likely to be bullied through social exclusion, rumor-spreading, cyberbullying and sexual comments.
- Boys are bullied primarily by boys; girls are bullied by boys and girls.

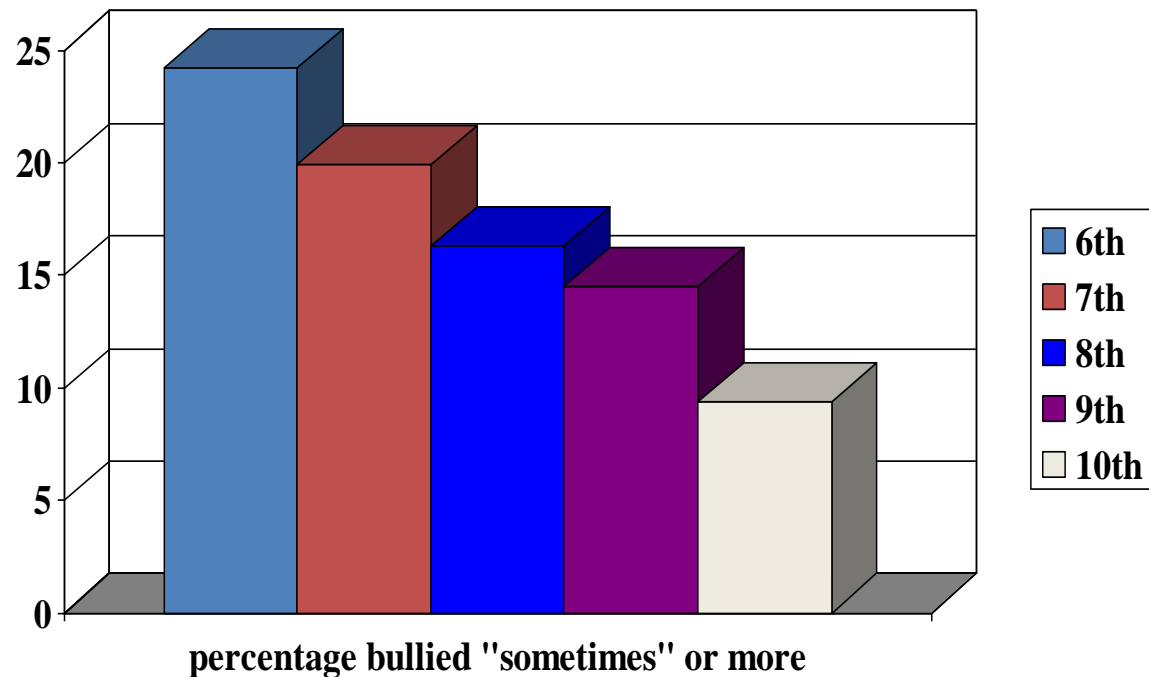
Key findings about bullying

#3



Bullying is more common among elementary and middle school children than high school youth.

Victimization Rates
Nansel et al. (2001)





Cyberbullying is another modality for bullying that has some unique characteristics.

Key findings about bullying

#5



Bullying can seriously affect children who are targeted.

Bullying, school engagement and academic achievement



Children who are bullied are more likely to:

- Want to avoid going to school.
- Have higher absenteeism rates.
- Say they dislike school; receive lower grades.
- Have health consequences, e.g. headache, sleep disturbances, depression, tense, anxiety, feeling unhappy.

Health consequences of bullying

Fekkes et al.(2003) Pediatrics, 144, 17-22



	Bullied	Not bullied
Headache	16%	6%
Sleep problems	42%	23%
Abdominal pain	17%	9%
Feeling tense	20%	9%
Anxiety	28%	10%

Depression scale

moderate indication	49%	16%
strong indication	16%	2%

Bullying and Suicide



There is no causal link between bullying and suicide.

However. . .

There are direct links between:

- bullying and depression;
- depression and suicide



Children who bully are more likely to be engaged in other antisocial, violent or troubling behavior.

Longitudinal study of children who bullied others



- 60% of boys who were bullies in middle school had 1+ conviction by age 24
- 40% had 3+ convictions
- “Bullies” were 4 times as likely as peers to have multiple convictions

Key findings about bullying

#7



There is no single “profile” of a child who bullies or a child who is bullied ... they share some common characteristics.

“Passive victims” tend to:



- Be quiet, cautious and sensitive
- Lack confidence
- Be physically weaker than peers (boys)
- Physically mature earlier (girls)
- Be afraid of getting hurt
- Find it easier to associate with adults than with peers

Common characteristics of bully/victims:



- Hyperactive, have difficulty concentrating
- Quick-tempered, try to fight back if provoked
- May be bullied by many children
- May be disliked by the adults in their environment
- Try to bully younger, weaker children

Children who bully tend to:



- Have more positive attitudes toward violence than peers
- Have quick tempers, be easily frustrated
- Have difficulty conforming to rules
- Be stronger than peers (boys)
- Show little compassion for victims
- Be aggressive to adults

Children who bully



Myth

Children who bully are outcasts or loners with few social skills.

Reality

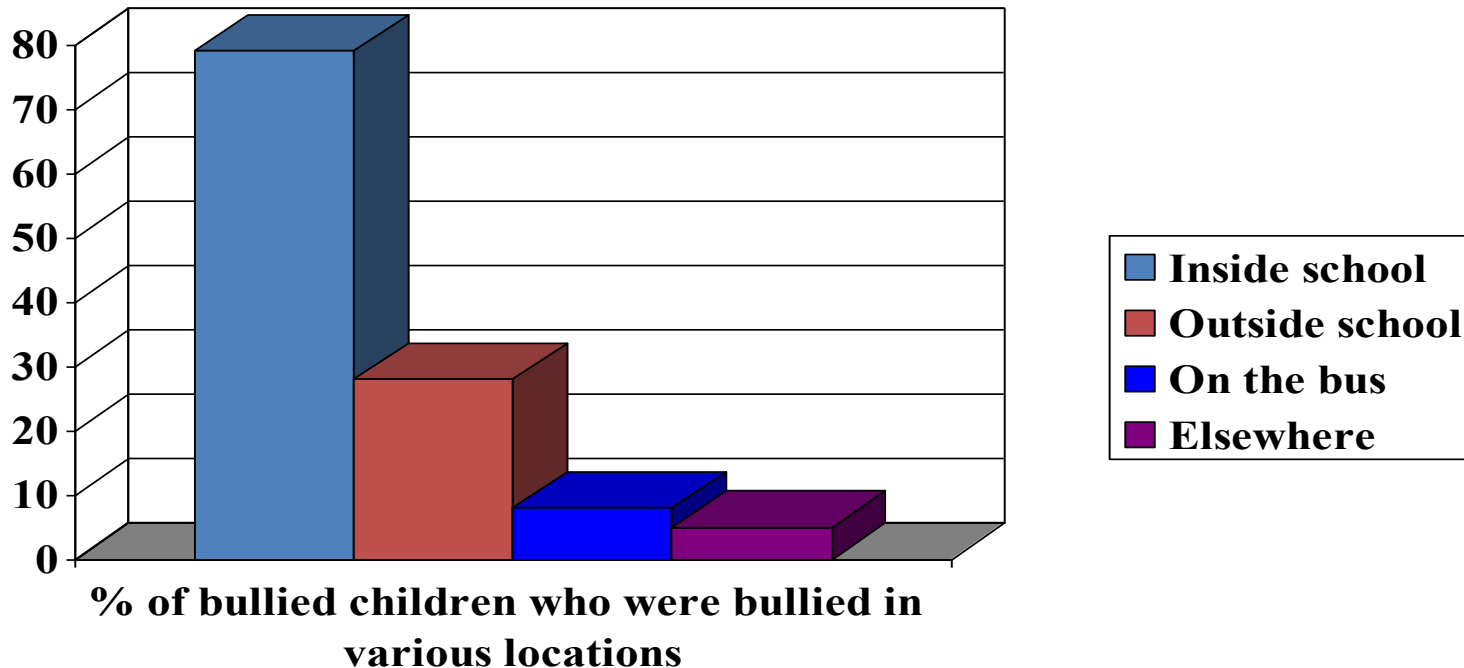
Children who bully are not socially isolated. Usually they have peers who support them.

Key findings about bullying

#8



Bullying can occur anywhere — even where adults are present.





Many children don't report bullying experiences to adults.



Adults are not as responsive to bullying as we think we are, and as children want us to be.

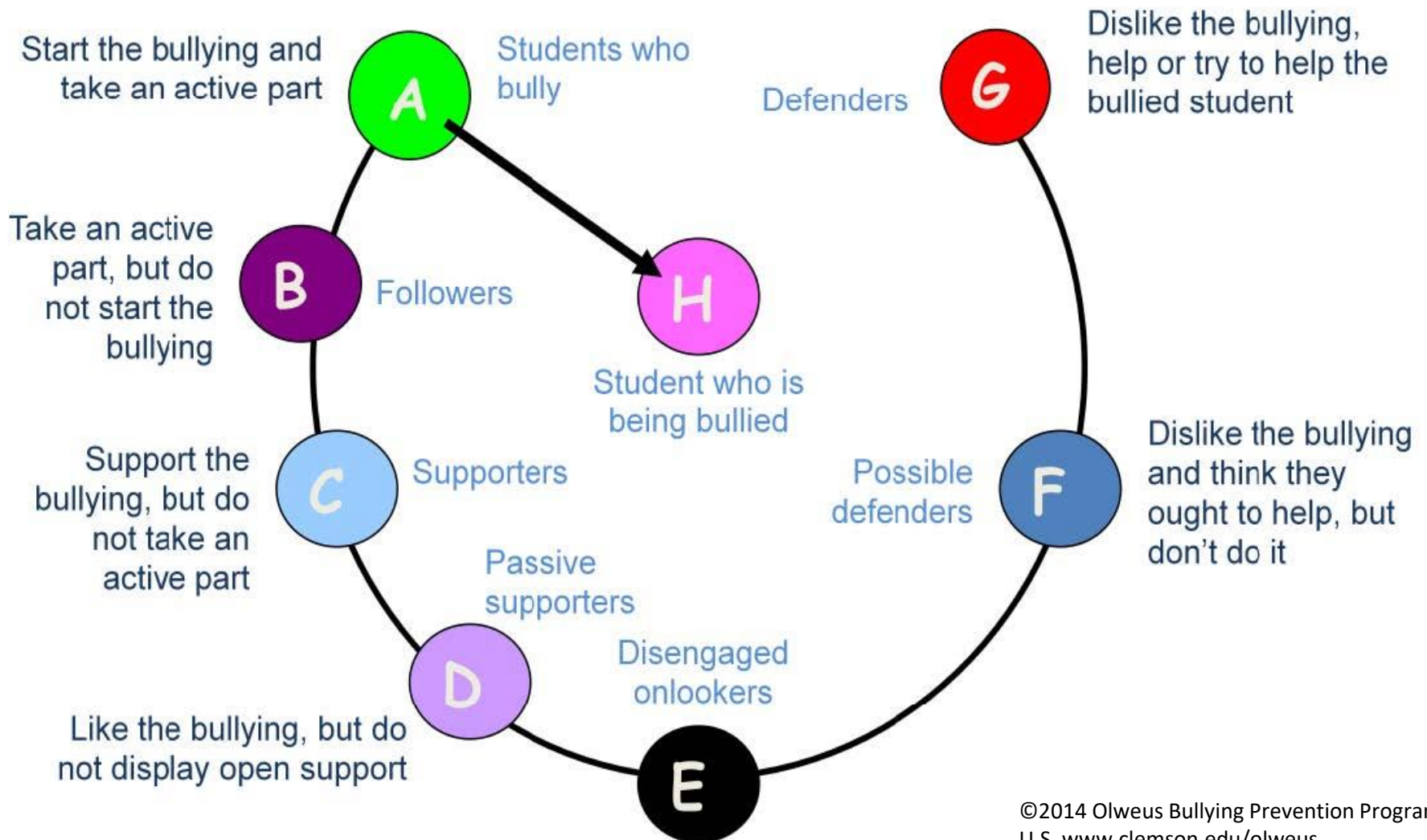
Adults overestimate their effectiveness in identifying bullying and intervening.

- 70% of teachers believed that adults intervene almost all the time
- 25% of students agreed (Charach et al., 1995)



Bullying is best understood as a group phenomenon in which children may play a variety of roles.

What roles do students play in bullying situations?



Peer attitudes toward bullying



- Most children have sympathy for bullied children.
 - 80% of middle school students “felt sorry” for victims of bullying (Unnever & Cornell, 2003)
- But, sympathy does not always translate into action.
 - 64% said that other students try to prevent bullying only “once in a while” or “never”

Effects on bystanders



- Feel afraid
- Feel powerless to change things
- Feel guilty
- Feel diminished empathy for victims

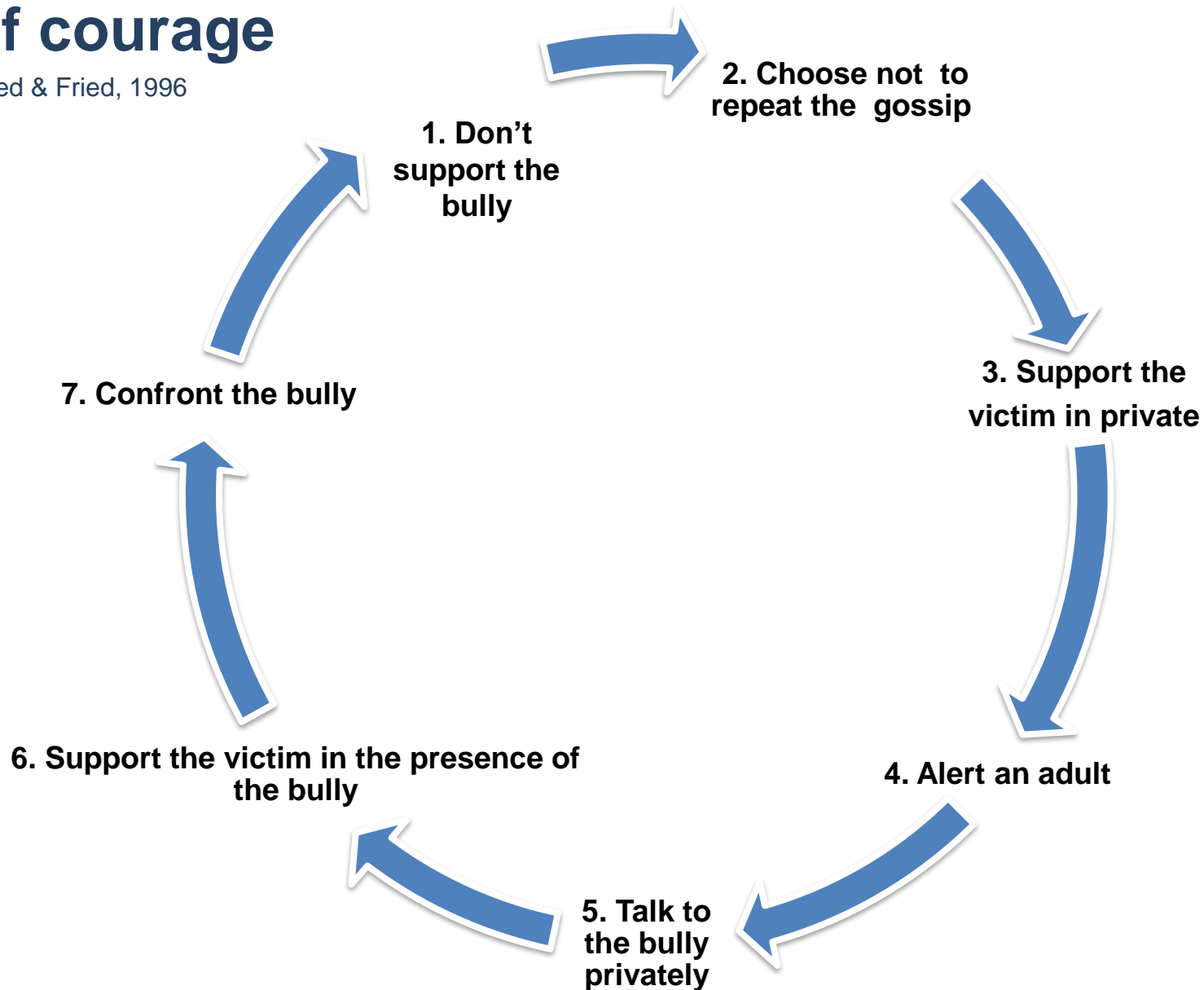
Bystanders can make a difference



- Brainstorm a range of helpful bystander responses.
- Discuss potential outcomes to different responses and identify a positive action you are willing to try.

What to do: Address fear bystander continuum of courage

Fried & Fried, 1996





I swore never to be silent
whenever and wherever
human beings endure
suffering and humiliation.

We must always take sides.

Neutrality helps the
oppressor, never the victim.
Silence encourages the
tormentor, never the
tormented.

Elie Wiesel

Bottom line



- If bullying was something that children could handle their own, the behavior wouldn't occur.
- Children need adults to help them with bullying if they are the bully, the target, or the bystander.
- Bystander behavior change is the strongest impetus for change in school climate, so help your students become change agents in their school.

Activity



LEFT OUT – 10 minutes

What are the basic needs we have as human beings?



- Acceptance
- Belonging
- Control
- Meaningful Existence

Factors that impact connectedness



- academic engagement
- belonging
- discipline/fairness
- extracurricular activities
- likes school
- student voice
- peer relations
- safety and teacher/caregiver support

How do we provide positive ways for our children to fulfill their needs?



- Provide a safe environment and reinforce what is okay.
- Help our children build positive relationships with peers and adults.
- Give them creative and expressive opportunities such as music, art, and sports.
- Foster positive youth development and engage them in building a climate of support: bystander responses, perspective taking, empathy and solutions oriented.
- Parents and schools proactively and responsively communicating information.
- Being a role model for our children.

What adult responses do children find most helpful?



Findings from the Youth Voice Project:

- Listen to me
- Give advice – TALK to me
- Check in with me
- Increase supervision
- Meet with students involved separately

Adults are important



- Research indicates that when a child feels a bond with a supportive adult network, they are more likely to be more resilient, engage in school or activities, feel that they matter and feel safe.

Create a climate that supports



- Make expectations clear.
- Monitor the environment and document all incidents.
- Identify child and parent concerns.
- Train staff to prevent, intervene and address inappropriate behaviors.
- Develop methods and activities that are supportive and build positive relationships.

To Prevent Youth Violence



Begin Here



Not Here



PA Bullying Prevention Online Toolkit



Pennsylvania Bullying Prevention Toolkit



Resources for parents,
educators and professionals
serving children, youth and
families

BPtoolkit.safeschools.info

BPtoolkit.safeschools.info



What is
Bullying?



Why do Kids
Bully?



The Role
of Adults



The Role of
Schools and
Communities

Websites for information



PA Bullying Prevention Online Toolkit at:

<https://bptoolkit.safeschools.info/>

Bullying and Youth with Special Needs at:

www.stopbullying.gov

Youth Voice Project – Stan Davis at:

www.youthvoiceproject.com

PDE/Office of Safe Schools – Consultline

1-866-716-0424

For more information:

Sally Canazaro

scanazaro@csc.csiu.org

Leah Galkowski

lgalkowski@csc.csiu.org

Center for Safe Schools

www.SafeSchool.info

(717) 763-1661