
WELCOME Dr Chelsea Chew

Promoting positive
relationships for safer
school communities



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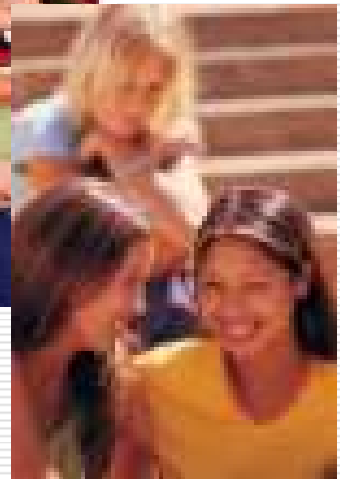
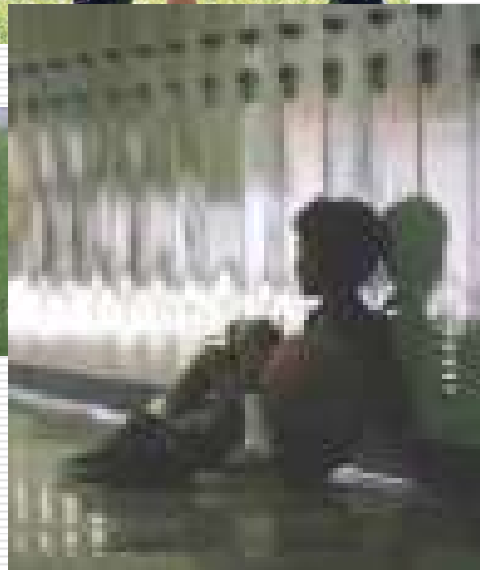
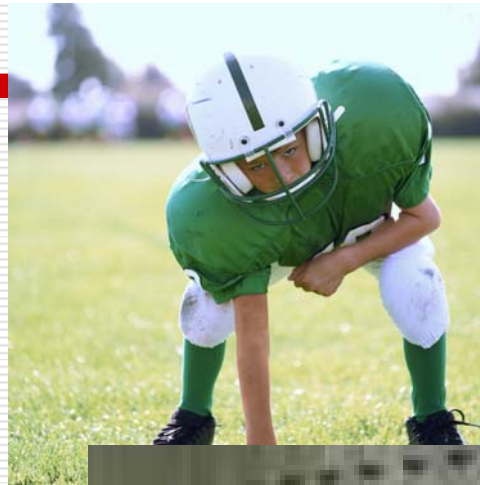
The “All-Against-Bullying!” (AAB) Tactic:

A Functional Behavioural Analysis Approach to Stopping Bullying

Asst Professor Chelsea Chew



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Singaporean Statistics

- ❑ Bullying problems exist with similar, albeit slightly, lower prevalence rates than in Western countries.
 - ❑ In a study conducted in 2006 of close to 4000 students from a mixture of primary, secondary, single-sex, and coeducational schools
 - ❑ 11.5% of students reported that they were bullied more than once a week.
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Typical Players in a Bullying Scenario

Victim

Bully



Key Players in Bullying

Consider the following possible scenario:

Danny experiences bullying in various forms in school. Some days, he is kicked from behind whilst he is in the school field during Physical Education classes by a bigger boy in class, Leonard or his lackey, Simon, to the mirth of other boys such as Tom and Andy who, though interested, have never taken part in the bullying. Other times, Leonard and his friends, Simon, Tony, and Ben, call him names such as "shortie", or "girl". Sometimes, they even damage his things. Once, they threw his new water bottle into the urinal. Another time, they placed dirt in his plate of rice when he left it unattended for a while. Such incidents do not escape the eyes of many of his classmates.

Julie, a girl with a rather sympathetic nature, usually looks on with disagreement but does not do anything about it. One day, after witnessing yet another humiliating bullying incident carried out by Leonard and his friends, she discussed the perpetual victimization of Danny with Ariel and Clarence. Ariel did not seem bothered at all, and said that it is not their problem and they should not get involved. Clarence, a tall, strapping boy, said that what Leonard and his friends were doing was certainly unacceptable and reported that he had tried to defend Danny on a few occasions, with some degree of success.

Reflection

- Who are the different groups of students?
- What roles do they play?
(at least six roles)

In a bullying incident

Henchmen *Simon, Tony, Ben*

Passive Supporters

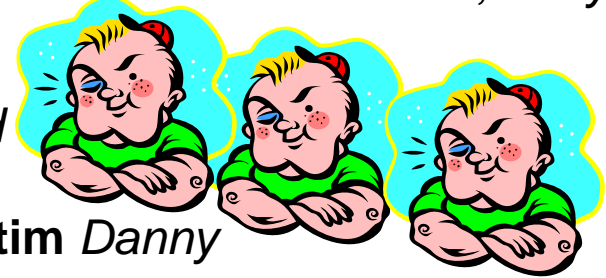
Tom, Andy



Bully *Leonard*



Victim *Danny*



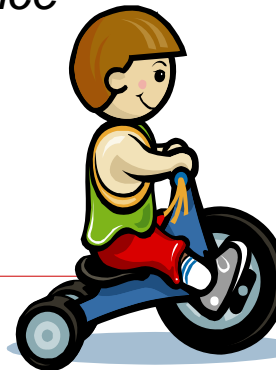
Disengaged Onlooker

Ariel



Active Defender

Clarence



Passive Defender

Julie



Bullying Prevention and Intervention

More has to be done

- Before bullying occurs
 - After bullying has been found to occur

 - All parties have to be involved**

 - New perspectives and new technologies from old perspectives/
other related fields**
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New Technologies to Counter Bullying

Functional Behaviour Analysis

Functional Behaviour Analysis (FBA)

- ❑ Used in the field of disabilities to reduce/ eliminate maladaptive behaviours
 - ❑ Teach the child appropriate, yet functionally equivalent ways of achieving the aims of the problem behaviour, thus eliminating it
 - ❑ For example, an autistic child who punches his caregiver when he wants to take a break from desk-work could be taught a functionally equivalent response, such as “I want break” to replace the punching behaviour
 - ❑ Recently used with success on students with emotional and behavioural disorders such as attentional issues in regular classroom settings
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FBA in practice

- As a first step, application of its principles would entail the consideration of the following questions:
 1. *What functions (motivations) encourage bullying?*
 2. *How can these functions be performed in more constructive ways?*
 - Associated with these questions is this:
 3. *What are other students in bullying situations doing to reinforce bullying behaviour?*
 - Before the functions that encourage bullying are listed, to obtain a more complete picture of reinforcement in bullying, all the different groups of students involved in bullying would have to be comprehensively identified.
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Application of FBA and Intervention to Bullying

Step 1: Assessment

- Assessment of the bullying behaviour to establish the reasons for the bullying.

Step 2: Intervention

1. First, bullies would obtain the reinforcers they receive from bullying in more appropriate ways.
 - Bullying for social reinforcers (such as control, attention and amusement) tangible reinforcers (e.g., lunch money).
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2. Reinforcement contingencies have to be changed.

- To ensure that the bullying behaviours are no longer maintained by the reinforcers, and would fade off

3. Knowledge/skill deficits are assumed.

- Thus, bullies would have to be taught prosocial behaviour explicitly with the expectation that it would be incorporated into their interpersonal repertoire.
- Victims would be taught assertiveness skills

The table describes the roles of the different players, and their assumed functions in a bullying situation

	<i>Role</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Functions of Bullying Behaviour</i>	<i>Provisions of Reinforcers for Bullying</i>
1	Victim	Recipient of bullying	-	Yes (to bully and follower)
2	Bully	Perpetrator of bullying	-Social reinforcement (control, attention) -Tangible benefits	Yes (to follower)
3	Henchman/ Follower	May carry out acts	-Social reinforcement (inclusion, attention) -Tangible benefits	Yes (to bully)
4	Passive Supporter	Seems to enjoy watching but does not take part	-	Yes (to bully and follower)
5	Disengaged Onlooker	Does not seem interested	-	-
6	Passive Defender	Dislikes the bullying but does not show it	-	-
7	Active Defender	Dislikes the bullying and tries to help the victim	-	-

“All-Against-Bullying” Intervention

- ❑ Few programmes have addressed the issue of reinforcement in bullying in a thorough manner, taking into account the roles of all students directly or indirectly involved.
 - ❑ Even fewer bullying intervention programmes enlist the support of all players in the bullying configuration in a systematic way.
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“All-Against-Bullying” Intervention

- ❑ School-based programme
 - ❑ Suitable for primary and secondary school students
 - ❑ Classroom and intervention group activities
 - ❑ Based on behavioural principles which emphasises the role all students can play in preventing bullying.
 - ❑ Five core components of the programme are delineated, and with the exception of the first component, which should ideally be carried out first, the rest can be carried out in no particular sequence.
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All-Against-Bullying!

School-based Programme

Session 1:

"Which one are you?"

Understand the Situation



- Students given a short questionnaire
 - (a) description of a bullying scenario
 - (b) short descriptions of each group of students, and
 - (c) checkboxes against which they can indicate the roles they typically play.

Rationale:

- generates awareness on the part of the students, and
- provides the teacher with invaluable information.

Session 2:

“Walk in my shoes”

Generate Empathy



- Students informed of consequences of bullying
 - (a) newspaper articles,
 - (b) videotaped material,
 - (c) read a story of a person who was bullied (either as an interview exchange, or as a narrative), and
 - (d) Rip-rip.
- Responses from class
 - (a) set up a 'all against bullying' corner on the class notice board, and agree to report bullying incidents (even anonymously) on the board, and
 - (b) Commitment to engage in behaviours that do not reinforce bullying.

Rationale:

- fosters a strong consensus, openly articulated, that bullying is not socially acceptable (especially as bullying is socially reinforcing for the perpetrators).

Session 3: "Act Cool"

Train the victims



- Victims taught to respond to bullying
 - a) case vignettes to understand the reinforcing properties of bullying
 - b) re-enactment of standard responses to bullying behaviour
 - c) learning of new behaviour or "acting cool"

Rationale:

- learning of new behaviours that are not reinforcing, and
- empowerment of victims.

Session 4: "I think you are swell"

Train the bullies/followers (henchmen)



- Students assessed for their bullying motivations
 - (a) Projective techniques (verbally, diagrammatically, written form)
- Taught prosocial ways of obtaining social reinforcers
 - (a) Take care of special needs student (control)
 - (b) Leader of a group (control)
 - (c) Reporting to the class their acts of kindness (attention)
- Reinforcement from teachers
 - (a) Have to believe that these students can be "swell"
 - (b) Reinforce their prosocial attempts

Rationale:

- Teaching and provision of appropriate outlets for social reinforcers

Session 5:

“I am watching (over) you”

Galvanise the defenders (passive and active)



- Students trained to defend victims
 - (a) leaders chosen (around 4 active defenders per class) (vigilant to high-risk situations and shadow victims)
 - (b) other defenders to operate with at least one partner
- Taught a protocol for addressing bullying
 - (a) say to perpetrators “this is so not cool” in a firm, emotionless, and matter-of-fact manner,
 - (b) follow it up with a threat to report it to the class on the ‘all-against-bullying’ board
 - (c) bring the victim to safety, and
 - (d) record the incident in their log book.

Rationale:

- defenders are effective in preventing bullying by virtue of their proximity, and
- protocol has to be learnt

Key advantages of AAB! Tactic



The only one which, in combination,

- ❑ (a) takes a functional analysis approach to bullying,
- ❑ (b) differentiates between the different bystander subtypes, and
- ❑ (c) takes into consideration the roles of all the students involved, including the different types of bystanders.

Other considerations

- *Optimal Policy Context*
 - *Technical Knowledge Base*
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