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**Repairing Peer Dynamics:
Effective School Responses
to Bullying Incidents**

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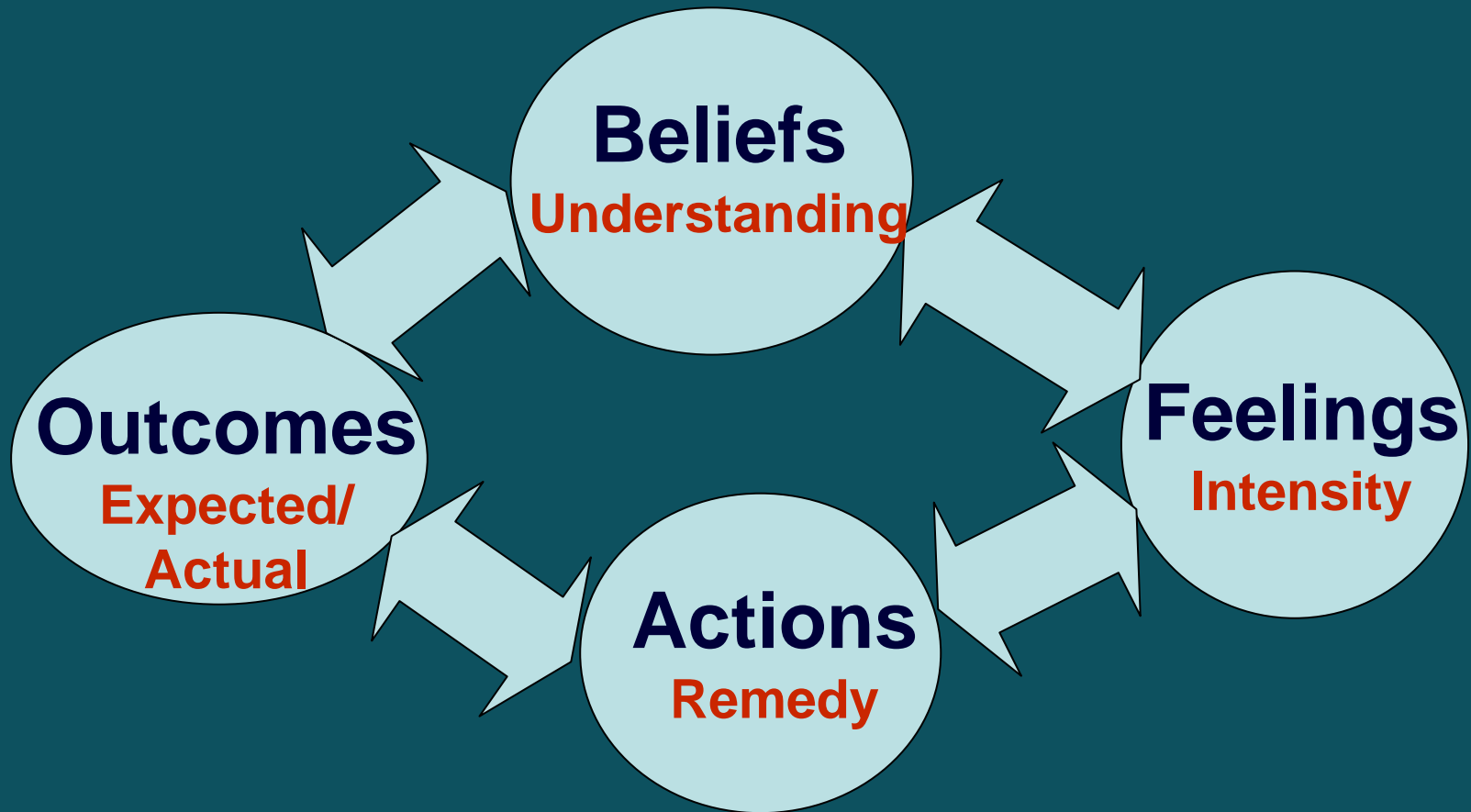
Norway: Prof Dan Olweus

Outcomes

- **Share critical understandings**
- **Challenge and reflect on current practice**
- **Identify effective practice**
- **Provide pathways to improve practice**

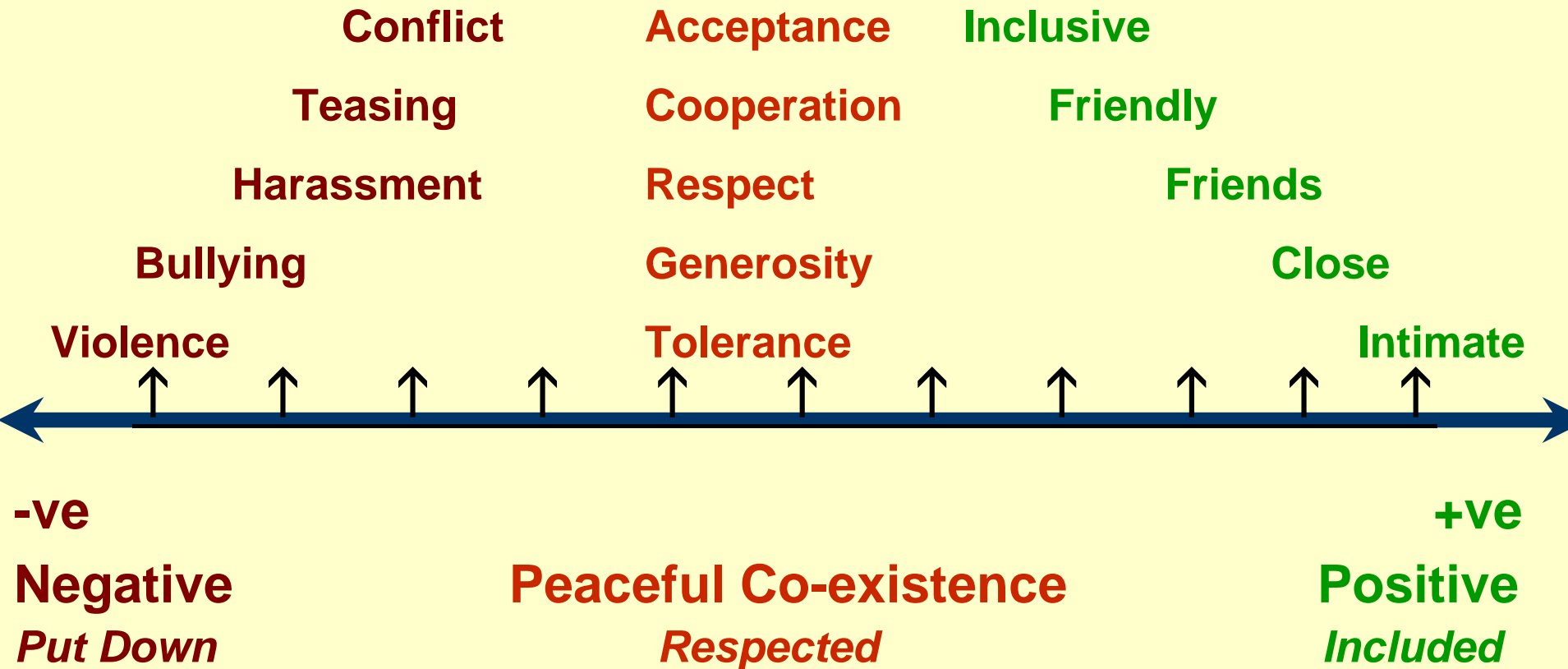
Key Understandings

Incident Response



Countering Bullying In Schools

RELATIONSHIP CONTINUUM



Shared Understandings

BULLYING

- Power imbalance
- Repeated
- Overt or covert
- Different forms

Verbal; Psychological;
Relational; Physical; Cyber

- Intent varied
- Social/ Relational

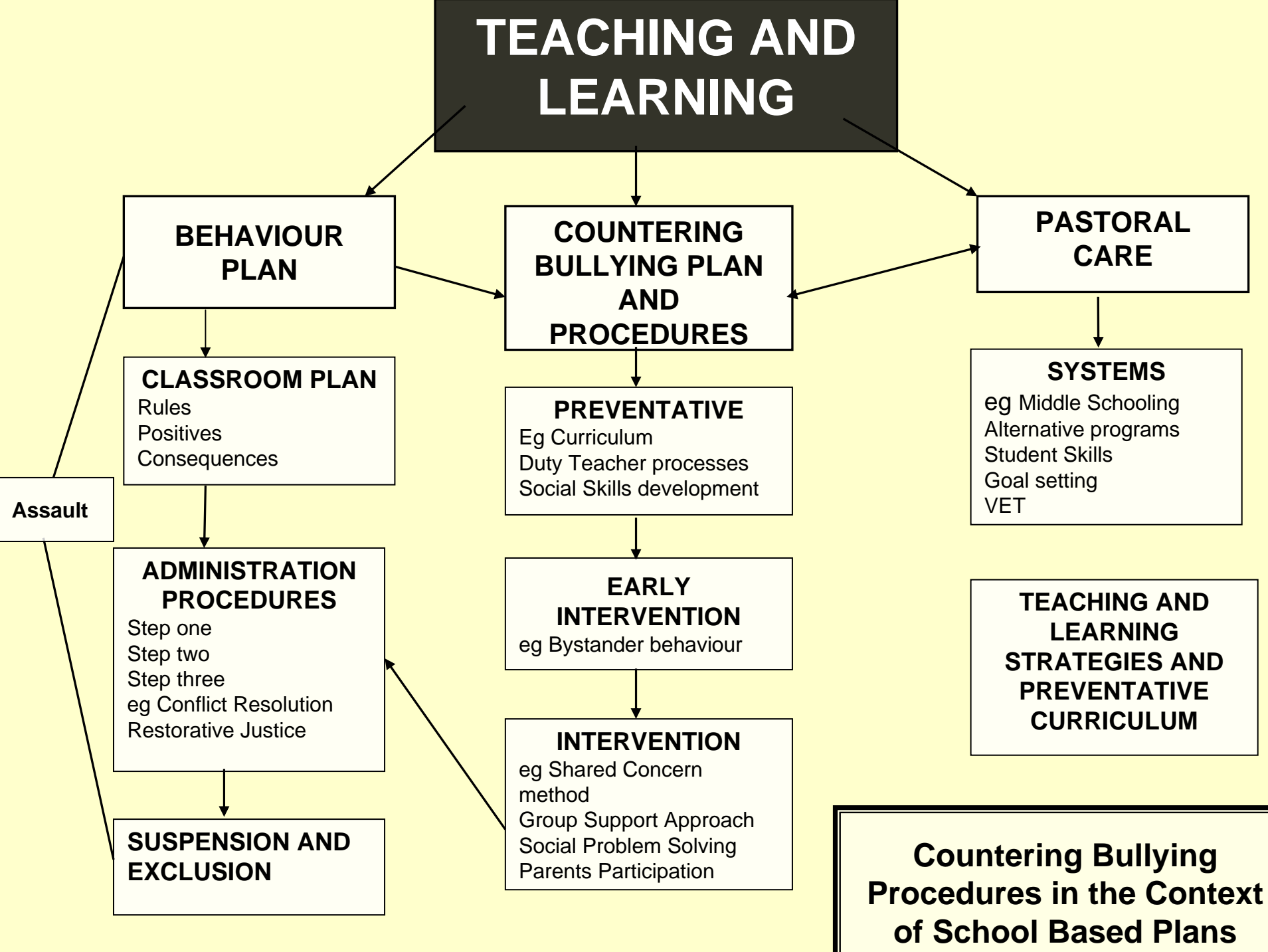
VIOLENCE

- Power misuse
- One - off
- Overt
- Physical or threats
- Intent to harm
- Behavioural

Strategies

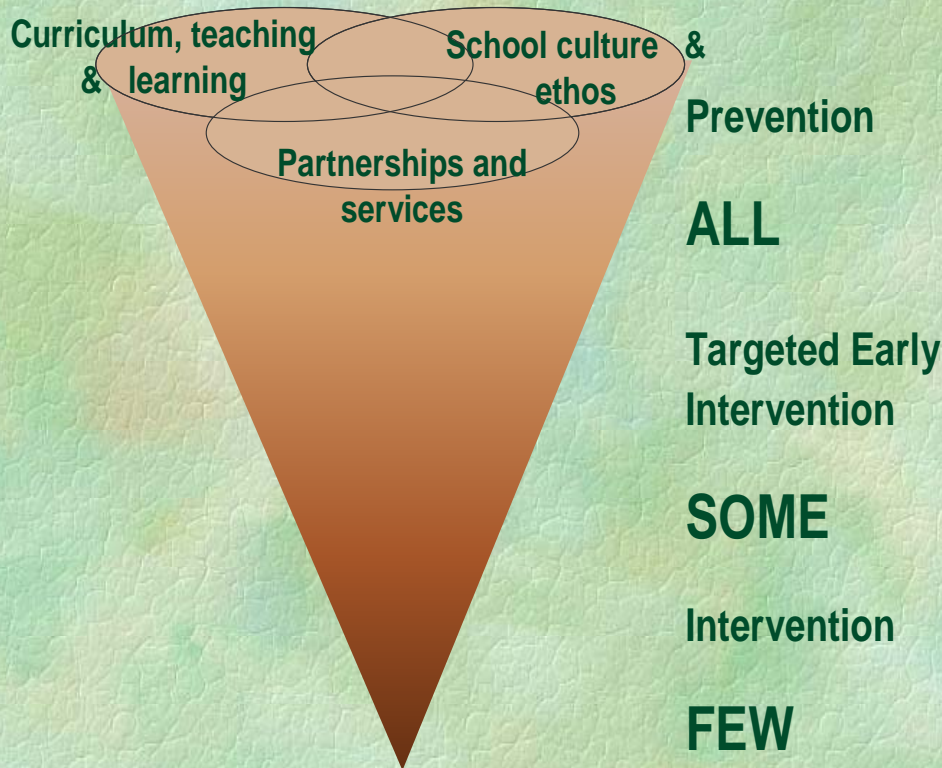
Conflict	Bullying	Violence
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mediation• Peer mediation• Conflict resolution• Problem-solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shared Concern method (SCm)• Group support approach• Social-problem solving• Restorative practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Behavioural• Consequences• Suspension• Restorative Justice• Criminal action

TEACHING AND LEARNING



The Health Promoting Schools Framework

Model for Effective Practice in Schools



- Programs developed in terms of the Health Promoting Schools Framework
- A promotion and prevention focus through to an incident response and intervention focus

Countering Bullying In Schools Strategy

What does the research tell us?



- 1. Practice-based evidence**
- 2. Practice based on evidence**
- 3. Evidence-based practice**

Principles of Effective Practice



Principles

1. People First Language
2. Student First Approach
3. Safety First Response
4. Solution - focused Strategies

1. People First Language

People First Language

- **Distinguish** between behaviours
- **Reflects** underlying **values & beliefs**
- **Label** **behaviour** not person
- **Solution-focused** not combative
- **Reflects** **restorative** vs. **punitive** action

2. Student First Approach

Student First Approach

- **Understand nature of bullying**
- **Group dynamics**
- **Involve students**
- **Involve parents**

3. Safety First Response

Safety First Response

- **Take bullying issues seriously- empower**
- **Following disclosure – peer support, safe places, transport, movement between classes, access to adult support**
- **Restore relationships**
- **A commitment to stopping the bullying, no matter what**
- **Be patient: it can take time**

4. Solution-focused Strategies

Solution-focused Strategies

Bystander Roles within Bullying

Ringleader
Assistant
Reinforcer
Defender
Outsider
Victimised student



Queen Bee
Wannabe/ Messenger
Torn Bystander
Floater
Onlooker
Target



Christina Salmivalli

Rosalind Wiseman

What works?

What Works

- Bystander Behaviour
- Shared Concern method
- Group Support Approach
- Restorative Practice
- Social problem-solving
- Match age, stage & context

Shared Concern method (SCm)

Shared Concern method

- The Sheffield Project in the UK was able to achieve 75% success rate
- Multiple strategies are needed for those students who persistently bully others
- SCM is a process of equalising power imbalances for reported group bullying
- Develops a sense of shared concern for the victimised student/s
- Improves group dynamics to reduce re-occurring bullying in the future

Shared Concern method

- Empowers the victimised student/s to be a party to solving the social problems affecting them.
- Not suitable for pathological or individuals unable to develop concern for others - use PCm (Persuasive Concern method or negative consequences).
- Not intended where serious violence has occurred.

Shared Concern method

Values/principles of:

- Developing a sense of shared concern for bullied person
- Inclusion vs. exclusion
- Restorative vs. blaming
- Solution-focused vs. problem-focused
- Group context vs. individual blame
- Shared Concern attitude
- Developing tolerance and peaceful co-existence

SCm Phases

PHASE 1

INDIVIDUAL TALKS WITH THE BULLYING STUDENTS

PHASE 2

INDIVIDUAL TALK WITH THE BULLIED STUDENT

PHASE 3

GROUP MEETING WITH THE FORMER BULLYING STUDENTS

PHASE 4

SUMMIT MEETING: FORMER BULLYING & BULLIED STUDENTS

PHASE 5

MONITORING AND RESOLUTION OF FUTURE CONFLICTS

Effectiveness

- **Have a framework/ process**
- **Supported by scripts**
- **Low risk of further harm**
- **More confident/ skills**
- **Efficient time wise**

Risks

- **Not part of a whole school approach**
- **Parent/ other staff want “justice done”**
- **Poor training/skills**
- **Using PCm (Persuasive Coercion method) not SCm**
- **Process/ follow up is not completed**

Sustaining Practice

- **Peer coaching**
- **Keeping records**
- **Ongoing research and reading**
- **Analysing outcomes**
- **Making adjustments**

Bystander Values and Skills

Bystander Behaviour

Significance of using bystanders

- **Peers are present in approx 85% of bullying incidents - adults rarely witness it.**
 - **Peers can be effective agents for resolving conflicts**
 - **Peers reinforce harmful group dynamics**
 - **Student networks can be involved in promoting pro-social behaviour.**
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Bystander Behaviour

Bystander Excuses

- They're [persons bullying] my friend.
- Bullied person isn't my friend.
- It's none of my business!
- S/he's a loser. Bullying will toughen him up.
- S/he deserved it/ asking for it/ had it coming.
- Code of silence, its dobbing.
- It's better to be in the in-group than to defend the outcasts and get bullied.
- It's too hard to decide what to do.

"The Bully, The Bullied and the Bystander", Barbara Coloroso and "Hidden Hurt" 2002, Murphy & Lewis

Recruiting the Bystander

Conditions that promote defender behaviour:

Bystanders will act if they. . .

- **are asked**
- **feel responsible**
- **know their action is the appropriate one (knowledge & skills)**
- **have empathy aroused**
- **Have a network of staff & peer support**
- **have a specifically assigned task**
- **know they will be told that they influenced the outcome**

"The Bully, The Bullied and the Bystander", Barbara Coloroso and "Hidden Hurt" 2002, Murphy & Lewis

Recruiting the Bystander

“Bullying is an expression of power, it thrives on an audience” – *“Hidden Hurt” 2002, Murphy and Lewis*

Goals of recruiting the bystanders:

- To make students aware of the behaviours which are bullying.**
- To create empathy for the victims of bullying.**
- To give the bystanders responsibility for acting against bullying.**
- To help the bystanders identify appropriate actions to take.**

Bystander Curriculum

Goals of bystander curriculum:

- **Dispel myths and reduce misconceptions about bullying behaviour, bullied students & collusion,**
- **Re- sensitize peers to bullying behaviour**
- identify it
- **Promote empathy and healthy guilt**
- **Reinforce helping behaviour**
- **Distinguish between reporting and “dobbing”**

Critical Understandings

Critical Understandings

1. Positive values and **relationships** are at the core of a safe, supportive and inclusive learning environment.
2. Bullying is a form of **relational abuse** and is recognised as having potentially long term consequences.
3. Bullying occurs within the **context of group dynamics**.
4. **All** individuals have the potential to bully others or be bullied.
5. **Avoid labelling** of individuals as “bullies” or “victims” as it limits the effectiveness of intervention.
6. Bullying needs to be **distinguished from conflict and violence** as the strategies required are different.

Critical Understandings

7. Bullying is effectively countered by practices that resolves conflicts, **restores relationships** and promotes peaceful co-existence.
8. A whole school approach which specifically **addresses bullying** is essential.
9. Schools need to **involve key stakeholders** from the school and wider community in developing common understandings and practices in countering bullying.
10. An effective whole school approach has procedures and programs for:
 - preventing bullying**
 - intervening early**
 - responding effectively to incidents**

Key Messages

Bullying and violence often start with verbal put downs. Put downs are a habit and a way of interacting for many young people and workplaces. Changing the culture of language is often the most powerful remedy for bullying, violence and harassment.

A Pledge

As part of my community and my school, I WILL:

- ✓ pledge to be a part of the solution
- ✓ eliminate taunting from my own behaviour and encourage others to do the same
- ✓ do my part to make my community a safe place by being
- ✓ more sensitive to others
- ✓ set the example of a caring individual
- ✓ eliminate profanity towards others from my language
- ✓ not let my words or actions hurt others . . .

. . . and if others won't become a part of the solution, I WILL.

-From www.iwillpledge.nashville.com in response to the Columbine H.S. shooting

Specific Issues

- ❖ **Cyber-bullying**
- ❖ **Homophobia**
- ❖ **Racism: indirect, direct**
- ❖ **Students with disabilities**
- ❖ **Gender differences**
- ❖ **Workplace bullying**



Vehicles for Bullying

- **The various specific behaviours are the delivery vehicles for bullying behaviour – they do not cause bullying**
- **They can be used as an excuse for bullying or can add anonymity or reduce sense of responsibility**
- **Easier to harm if you can not see the side effect of what you have done**

Conclusion

Countering Bullying In Schools

“The most effective approach to counter bullying is based on an integrated set of understandings and values that permeates the whole school approach, where the developmental and situational needs of children are addressed. The best antidote for bullying is building significant relationships between staff and students.”

Coosje Griffiths

Countering Bullying In Schools

It is the sum of many small strategies.

“Most of bullying issues are prevented before they happen. In middle schooling we have one staff assigned to groups of students whose role is to make connections with them. It’s the daily friendly chats and the development of trusting relationships that mean that relationship issues between students is solved early.” School Psychologist