Safe and Supportive Schools
Engagement | Safety | Environment

Bullying Prevention

WEBINAR QUESTION AND ANSWER SUMMARY

On March 16 and 17, 2011, the Safe and Supportive Schools Technical Assistance Center (Center) hosted a Webinar on bullying prevention, titled *Understanding and Responding to School Bullying*. During the session, the presenters, Dr. Brenda Morrison, a Co-Director of the Centre for Restorative Justice and an Assistant Professor in the School of Criminology at Simon Fraser University, and Dr. Roxana Marachi, an Associate Professor in the Connie L. Lurie College of Education at San José State University, received several questions from the audience. Since the presenters could not answer all of the questions during the event, the Center has prepared the following Webinar Question and Answer Summary with responses to each question. For additional information, please email or call the Center (sssta@air.org; 1-800-258-8413).

Please note the content of this summary was prepared under a contract from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools to the American Institutes for Research (AIR). This Q/A summary does not necessarily represent the policy or views of the U.S. Department of Education, nor do they imply endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education.

The presenters also wish to acknowledge that time constraints limited the extent to which each of the responses could be provided in full. At end of this document is a list of the references from the webinar powerpoint as well as additional resources/links that may provide additional support. Some questions with similar themes have been combined to reduce redundancy. Cases below where one of the respondents has not provided additional text indicates agreement with the response that has been provided.

Questions about Students

Q1.   Are females more likely to take part in relational bullying than males and what other gender differences do you see in the research?

Brenda Morrison: Generally speaking, yes. However, since physical bullying is more obvious, once schools start monitoring it, boys tend to stop the physical bullying and move onto relational bullying.

Roxana Marachi: I have also seen the same trends that Dr. Morrison refers to (in general, patterns indicate greater overall levels of physical aggression among males than females and that bullying in general tends to peak in the middle school years and tends to decrease throughout high school). It can, however, take years sometimes before data are released regarding the most current/accurate trends so one needs to be cautious in applying the findings from years old data

to current cohorts of youth.   Although I have heard anecdotally that there appears to be increasing concern about the frequency and severity of physical fights among females (with many videos of girl fights going viral on the internet), it remains to be seen if there *actual* increases in the rates of these fights through national data. For those who would like to see more detailed trends, the following are the findings from the 2009 Youth Risk Behavior Survey: http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/ss/ss5905.pdf.

Q2. What do you see in the research regarding age differences in bullying?

Brenda Morrison: Based on the research, it seems it is during structural transition moments in school (e.g., end of elementary school, end of middle school, beginning of high school; time between classrooms) that people are really using bullying behavior to figure out the pecking order of their social life. Bullying tends to peak in middle school.

It also happens developmentally. We find that when children are entering adolescence and becoming more aware of themselves in relation to others, some use power dynamics to improve their pecking order.

Roxana Marachi: Again, in agreement with Dr. Morrison and would just add that the patterns in high school tend to be that bullying incidences are typically highest in the 9th grade and gradually decrease as the students move further along in their high school years.

Q3. How would you recommend handling a situation when the student is not being truthful about their role as a bully and there are no witnesses?

Brenda Morrison: That's the hardest one, when they're not taking responsibility for their behaviors, and that does happen. What we find is the more that you do the - those first two levels, you know develop the social emotional skills at the base and a lot of classroom work, we - that that's actually over time reduces the problem. But, when it's in your face often it is the case that students don't take responsibility.

But, sometimes there's some type of lever, some relationship lever that pulls people to take responsibility for their behavior. And usually it's the person has the strongest relationship with the young person who's not taking responsibility for their behavior that can - has the most leverage to change the behavior.

So in my particular work in the field of restorative justice, we run something called the Restorative Justice Conference, and so we use the web of social relationships around a young person to leverage that change. And through careful intervention and really step-by-step moving up to this process, we develop a community of care around the young person who's bullying and the young person who's being victimized, and we get them to tell their stories.

And then eventually, if we feel that it's appropriate and there's a community of care there, that we get people coming together to tell their stories. And it's usually - it's a very enlightening moment for parents and other caregivers and the people involved in the behavior, because the

storytelling sort of opens the web of relationships and opens the story. Because usually the story that one person takes home, say the bully, is different than the story that the victim's taking home, and sometimes just the storytelling aspect shares a different light.

Roxana Marachi: I would echo much of what Brenda shared and would add that in order to fully address the denying of bullying behavior, we need to understand the role that the disciplinary environment may contribute to this dynamic. If the sole *consequences* for owning up are the typical policies of suspension/expulsion, it's understandable why some youth would consider it a 'high risk' action to admit to bullying. When adopting restorative approaches as an alternative to punitive measures, the process allows for the groundwork to be set for genuine communication and resolution of the situation. Dr. Morrison describes restorative practices in her book on restoring safe school communities. The following short report also provides a description of how two schools in West Oakland have implemented restorative approaches in their school communities http://www.law.berkeley.edu/files/11-2010_School-based_Restorative_Justice_As_an_Alternative_to_Zero-Tolerance_Policies.pdf

Q4. What are healthy ways for young people to gain a sense of power empowerment?

Roxana Marachi: The Search Institute has excellent resources for supporting youth resilience and empowerment. They have done research for the past 40 years on factors that relate to positive youth development and healthy outcomes - many of these include internal and external "developmental assets". They are described here in more detail with resources for support. http://www.search-institute.org/developmental-assets

Q5. a. What is the best thing to say when you observe bullying behavior- do you tell them to stop and say it isn't appropriate? b. What is the best thing to say or do for both the bully and the victim? c. Can you speak specifically to some of the "support strategies" that can be taught to students (and are shown to be effective)?

Roxana Marachi: I wish there were a good 'one-size fits all' answer that I could easily offer here – but the best response would likely depend on the context of the situation. One would not want intervening to inadvertently either escalate the situation or cause any additional harm – however, it is critical to intervene at the first sign of trouble to prevent it from continuing. As indicated in the webinar (slide 35), there are four recommended strategies (depending on situation/safety level). One would be to either intervene by assertively telling the youth/child who is bullying to stop. If a bystander doesn't intervene, the next best action would be to walk away and at the very least to not contribute to a forming crowd around the event (the larger the crowd, the more extensive the harm tends to be). The other two recommendations would be to support the youth who was being victimized and/or to report the bullying to a responsible adult. Support strategies include ensuring that the parents/close connections of the target of the bullying are aware of the recent events, to ensure mental health opportunities have been afforded and to encourage special care among the rest of the peer to protect the target and prevent any further escalation of incidences. The following tip sheet has general 'best practices' that are recommended for long term support and prevention: http://www.stopbullying.gov/community/tip_sheets/best_practices.pdf

Q6. I thought the literature supported the idea that bullies have relatively good self-esteem and little empathy with their victims, and were not depressed or engaged in suicidal ideation.

Roxana Marachi: Yes, there are research studies in the literature that do support the patterns/trends mentioned in this comment (and there are studies that reveal opposite trends as well). As we'd mentioned in slide 15, the literature shows *diversity* among characteristics of bullies and victims – we were hoping to dispel the popular myths that all bullies or victims are alike in defining characteristics. Research has found that bullying and victimization are related to various outcomes, however, these are not to be assumed to be causal nor present in all cases.

Q7. We're advised to not allow the "bully" and "victim" the opportunity for mediation due to the advantage of power that the bully has over the victim. Any advice on how to repair a relationship when we are advised not to let the students meet?

Roxana Marachi: It seems that a change in policy would be needed to get around this recommendation of not allowing the "bully" or "victim" to meet – while it may be a short term solution to separate the two, it would likely only serve to further exacerbate and continue the tensions and possibly may even confirm the power dynamic between the two. It may be a first step for those advocating for the restorative approaches to suggest a safe process for an initial meeting to take place. If at the very least, some benefit is gained from this meeting, it may pave the way for greater momentum/support for the future attempts at these kinds of connections. If the status quo of 'separation' is maintained (given that most roots of the issues are relationship-related) it would seem unlikely that a true/genuine or long term solution would be reached.

Q8. How do you select an "influence student" to train as a bystander, without bias and causing that child to be a target?

Roxana Marachi: This is an excellent question that would require more expertise in the specific area of best practices in bystander intervention training. My recommendation would be to contact organizations that engage youth in bystander intervention training to learn how best to engage in this process. There is a program that I am aware of in the SF Bay Area (non-profit, *Safe Schools Ambassadors*) – still in its early stages of research and evaluation, but with positive initial results and worth checking out for recommendations and resources regarding this question. The focus of this program is to empower influential students in the school to learn how to respond effectively to bullying instances on their school campus. More information may be found through their organization at http://www.community-matters.org/safe-school-ambassadors/

b. How can you hold students accountable in a non-punitive manner?

Roxana Marachi: As described above and in various resources below, restorative practice approaches are gaining ground in the research literature as effective non-punitive alternatives to holding students accountable for their actions. The benefit of the restorative approach is that it addresses the relationship root of the issue and yields a path that is more likely to lead to long term and meaningful change in the relationship interactions of those involved. Punitive approaches are short-term, tend to ignore the core relationship issues, and may even challenge

the bully to find more creative ways to resume the bullying without getting 'caught' the next time.

Q9. As we consider the four forms of bullying you alluded to in slide 11, is there typically a progression among them?

Brenda Morrison: As children grow, they generally move from physical to verbal to social bullying, which is developmentally the most sophisticated form of bullying. Cyberbullying is actually verbal or social bullying done electronically, and appears to be increasing in frequency, with the increase in children and youth's use of technology.

Q10. Can you explain more about the rationale for measuring bullying and victimization separately or provide more specific definitions for those terms?

Roxana Marachi: The defining features that set "bullying" apart from victimization are that in bullying, there is a power differential *and* the aggression is occurring in a repeated manner. Because of this narrow set of requirements in order to be defined as bullying (and the fact that it ignores single-event student aggression (or non-power-differentialized forms), there has been controversy in the research field as to the nature of how we measure and make conclusions about the rates, solutions, and prevention strategies. Victimization tends to be measured more specifically and is referred to based on the actual behaviors that have taken place, so the literature tends to be more focused and detailed in being able to determine specific reductions in the behaviors described.

Q11. Has any research been done on what students are doing to combat bullying within the schools?

Roxana Marachi: I am not aware of formal research studies that have investigated purely student-initiated projects, however am a strong advocate for student involvement in the prevention of bullying. The more active and engaged students are in their own schools' efforts to curb bullying, the more likely the culture will change in genuine ways to create safer environments. Dr. Morrison explained the Pink Shirt Day example in the webinar as a form of activism in Canada that was student organized and promoted. I am also aware of a program in the US called "Stories of Us" where students develop and produce videos to spark discussion in their school about the bullying that is taking place. More information on this program is at http://storiesofus.com/

Q12. How do you get children to talk when they don't want to be thought of as a "snitch"?

Roxana Marachi: One idea is to consider reframing the way students who report are considered by the school community. It may be helpful to have a discussion about the difference between what is considered to "snitching" or tattling as "trying to get someone in trouble" versus "reporting" which is considered to be an act that tries to get someone "out of trouble".

Q13. Regarding the "Pink Shirts" incident you recounted, why do you think the two boys chose to be "upstanders?" In your experience, what factors turn a kid from bystander to upstander?

Roxana Marachi: Excellent question - and one which I wish was more extensively addressed in the research literature. My best guess is that there would be several important factors that would prompt someone from being a bystander to becoming an "upstander". I think the first push towards action would be that the bystander would experience a strong sense of empathy with the target of the bullying – likely that this would spark a sense of injustice or unfairness about the situation, which would then motivate the bystander to protect the target or victim and/or prevent any future harm from the aggressot. It's at this point that action would be taken to step in and intervene in some way to stop the bullying. I would guess that an upstander would also need to feel "safe" in a way that their standing up to the bully wouldn't lead to any further problems for them personally (i.e. risk of retaliation). When a student-led effort would go to the next level by raising awareness, promoting connectedness, or trying to improve the school climate/culture in a more general or broad sense, it would likely further fuel confidence in others to join in a more widespread 'upstanding' movement. My guess is that the Pink Shirt day movement inspired this kind of solidarity in upstanding and strength in action to support the youth who were bullied.

Questions from Parent/Adult Audience Participants

Q14. What can parents do with their kids (elementary, middle, high school) to address bullying?

Roxana Marachi: Parents are key in instilling values and encouraging their children to respect all their peers and to stand up for anyone who is being mistreated. Unfortunately, in many cases, bullying that is occurring at the youth level is being emulated by what students see at home, in their communities, in the media, and in our greater general society. The best prevention adults can engage in is to model care and respect for others, to discuss media violence/aggression, and to advocate for creating and maintaining healthy interpersonal climates in their children's schools. Programs that support social and emotional learning for youth may also provide parent modules/programs that can engage extended opportunities for learning and support at home. The following document is part of the Facts for Families area on Bullying (from the Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry website) and has a factsheet with recommendations for parents: http://www.aacap.org/galleries/FactsForFamilies/80_bullying.pdf

Q15. How do you respond to adults who think all conflicts are bullying issues or those who don't think bullying issues are serious?

Roxana Marachi: For the first group (adults who think *all* conflicts are bullying issues), it may help to try to explain the differences between bullying and general conflict. However, I say this with a word of caution - if an adult is concerned about harm inflicted on their child (regardless of whether it fits in the definition of bullying or not), they have every right to inquire and ensure the safety of their child! I would be more concerned about addressing parents who dismiss or don't regard bullying issues as serious at all – by dismissing or minimizing, they are in essence either condoning or enabling the bullying (and sending that message to their children that it's ok to harm others). Parents are powerful in setting values, tone, connection, and encouragement for youth

to treat one another with dignity and respect. If the adults in question are the teachers, then there would need to be professional development around the effects of bullying on youth and strategies to curb it in classrooms and in the school setting. If the adults who minimize the bullying are the parents, then I would recommend teachers/administrators to firmly remind them that the school community is a place where *all* students need to be safe and respected and that they will do all that they can to uphold and maintain that safe environment.

Q16. How do you address adults who say kids just don't need to deal with this and not be coddled through dealing with conflict?

Brenda Morrison: That's a very common question and a good one, because a lot of people do hold that attitude towards bullying behavior. So, what - it's hard - on a one-on-one response, to argue with that and shift peoples' attitudes towards bullying.

So, a good - what's going to come up when we're looking at responding to school bullying is it's really important to hold assemblies and large gatherings around bullying, to maybe show some videos that expose the problematic behavior and the serious nature of bullying behavior, and get people to share their stories of harm, but also share their stories of how we've - we're shifting.

Once we tell our stories and share the harm caused by bullying that we can share some positive stories of how we intervene in positive ways that really shift the behavioral trajectories of both victims and those who bully. So, those large gatherings and forums of training and information sessions for both teachers and parents are very important.

Q17. Is it not healthy for youth and children to have conflicts? How do you respond to adults who think all conflicts are bullying issues?

Brenda Morrison: Well, that goes back to what I was saying, there is generally that problem. It's hard for people to understand the difference between normal conflict that's healthy and can build understanding, and a bullying incident.

A bullying incident has to be characterized by the three components. There has to be a systematic abuse of power so that someone's feeling that their voice is not heard and feeling silenced, and someone who is abusing it systematically, repeatedly over time, so that's the three indicators.

And there is - it - there's a gray line there. So, if people are having a hard time navigating that line between conflict and - it's - even if - so if it's conflict that's not necessary to bullying, you know, just having people's voices heard is an important part of addressing that problem and addressing the silencing issues around it.

So, it might not necessarily be a bullying behavior, but even if it's conflict, people's voices need to be heard and stories need to be told (sic). And sometimes that can happen face-to-face, but people often just want to hear - to be heard that there's a problem here and we need to respond to it.

Q18. We use the social emotional curriculum in our schools and I find that teachers ebb and flow when implementing the curriculum and spend the rest of the time complaining about student behaviors. What is the best solution for handling this type of attitude among teachers? How can we get them to consistently teach the curriculum?"

Brenda Morrison: That's a really important issue and it's very typical of school districts and implementation, because we - there's usually a continuum of early adopters and championships and those that like, you know, just want to carry on doing what they've done for, you know, their term as a teacher and they (poo-hoo) everything else.

So typically, I like to champion the ones that are the early adopters or champions. And typically what happens is that by showcasing what's happening for them and getting - creating conversations among staff to show - highlight their successes, that's what typically turns the tide.

And usually I find that when I work with a school that if don't get that continuum of responses to a different type of intervention, then it's the case that I think people are just giving me lip service; that they're really not engaging. Because, you know, the world - people come into teaching for a range of different reasons, a range of different skillsets.

And so, we need to start building that skillset at a university level while teachers are being trained. And then, we really need to champion and legitimate at every level the ones that are doing well and get them to tell their stories of change and excitement and empowerment for themselves and their classrooms.

And so, I think it's really wonderful what's happening in the United States right now, because it's being - addressing these - the behavior of bullying is - it's being legitimated and - at the White House, at the school district level, at the state level, and once we start legitimizing it it'll become more normative, and once it becomes more normative and we're championing and telling the stories of change for the good, then that will bring the others on board.

Roxana Marachi: I echo Brenda's key points and would just add that the principal plays a critical role in setting the leadership tone and providing genuine advocacy for any social/emotional program or process that the school is engaging in. Creating communication norms/agreements among colleagues would be an important first step to keep the tone in meetings to be positive and engaging (such agreements may include that faculty refrain from complaining about students or commit to engaging in solution-focused discussion around issues). The issue you raise about 'teaching the curriculum' is also a very important and strikes at the core of my concern that programs may be relying too heavily on their curriculum to carry the core message of the learning. In my view, the content of the curriculum has far less power than *the way teachers teach it* and the way the members of the community put it in practice and treat one another. Students will quickly dismiss the content of a bullying prevention curriculum if they observe their teachers behaving in bully-like ways with one another. This question strikes at the heart of how crucial the "Whole School" approach is in fostering healthy climates for learning.

Questions related to the Community

Q19. Legally, how can we intervene in bullying off campus (either cyber or walking home from school)? At which point do we refer the issue to local law enforcement? Our jurisdiction cannot be expected to stretch to the home.

> Roxana Marachi: My understanding is that if the bullying that is happening off campus ends up affecting the climate on campus (either through extended interactions, student difficulties, etc.), it is the schools' responsibility to address it and ensure that students' are emotionally and physically safe. This is new and unchartered territory so best to explore local and state laws related to legal requirements for intervention specific to your area. The following guide (esp. from pages 8-16) also has some useful resources with guidelines related specifically to this question: *Educators Guide to Cyberbullying and Cyberthreats:*
> *http://www.franklin.k12.nh.us/SAU/Ed%20Guide%20to%20Cyberbullying.pdf*

Q20. How can we change society's view of bullying when kids see it in so much of pop culture, i.e. "Glee"?

> Roxana Marachi: There is no easy answer to this question – in the same way that a few students' actions to stand up to bullying were supported on a wide scale (example of the Pink Shirt Day that went 'viral'), so too may our messages about treating one another with respect. The openness of the internet is contributing in powerful ways that allow more voices to be heard and be influential. Perhaps to address the key-turners in pop-culture, we should write letters to the producers of shows to encourage more respectful programming. Perhaps to address adult-bullying in politics and the media, we can communicate our concerns to those in power positions. Regardless of what we do on the macro-societal level, the most immediate action we can take as adults is to personally be mindful to *demonstrate* respect for one another. Pop culture can be influential, but the significant relationships that children have with adults in their lives is far more immediate and impactful. Perhaps it may also not be a matter of changing "society's view of bullying", rather changing society's view of youth… this TED talk (by the late Peter Benson of the Search Institute) is an excellent reminder of the power of adult relationships in healthy youth development. Definitely worth the time to view:
> http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TqzUHcW58Us&feature=youtube_gdata

Questions related to School-Based approaches/responses

Q21. From a liability standpoint, are schools protected if they do not defend those that are being bullied??

> Brenda Morrison: We have a duty to care for all our students. For kids who are being victimized, we do have a duty of care for them. At the same time, there is legal precedence for addressing bullying at an enforcement level at district, state and Federal levels. What's important is that we develop a community of care around all the individuals involved in a bullying incident, whether it be the victim or the bully.

Roxana Marachi: I echo Brenda's response again and wish I had more legal background to be able to answer more fully here as well. I do not believe schools are protected if they do not defend those that are being bullied, but every state differs and laws across the country vary and are changing rapidly... my best recommendation would be to check the state and federal laws related to school's legal responsibilities for student safety. The following is a document that I recently found with an analysis of state bullying laws: http://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/bullying/state-bullying-laws/state-bullying-laws.pdf. It may also be worth mentioning that not all states have laws in place to protect youth from *adult* bullying. Corporal punishment is still legal in 19 states and is considered by many to be a legally sanctioned form of bullying against youth – for those who are interested, here is some more information about pending legislation on this issue. http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=h112-3027

Q22a. Where can we find low/no cost resources for our classroom teachers as relates to bullying? b. Where can we find information that we can use in presenting the whole school approach?

Roxana Marachi: http://www.stopbullying.gov has resources in addition to several of the websites provided in the resources/references section attached. I have put together the following website as well with updates, information, and resources for selecting programs: http://www.scoop.it/t/safe-schools-communities

Q23. How much do you think well-implemented programs of social and emotional learning can prevent/reduce incidents of bullying?

Roxana Marachi: The "how much" of this question is difficult to answer as rates of reduction/prevention vary from program to program and school to school and depend largely on initial rates as well as implementation factors. The majority of evidence-based programs that have been found to be 'effective' or 'promising' for school violence prevention are based in social/emotional learning and have found considerable reductions in incidences of bullying as well as improvements to the general school climate. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (http://www.casel.org) has conducted a number of studies to examine the effects of social and emotional learning programs on improved student behavior and school climate. Again, as mentioned in the webinar, in order for programs to be effective, they would need to have genuine/strong advocacy from the school leadership as was as sustained and consistent application from the school staff/faculty. Without a context that would support a program, it would likely not be effective. *With* a context that aligns with the values of the social/emotional learning program, substantial gains can be made in improving the school climate (and reducing bullying).

Q24. I have received contradictory opinions about whether pre-schoolers can bully. What is your opinion?

Roxana Marachi: Pre-schoolers are learning social behaviors and testing their social environments. They learn from one another and may engage in interactions that would be described/defined by most definitions as "bullying" however they may be completely oblivious to the fact that they are

inflicting *harm* on another human being (one may argue the same for older children as well who have not yet realized the emotional effects of their behaviors on others). The HighScope Perry Preschool project has some fascinating research on how focused social-emotional learning at a young age can be powerful preventing problems later in development. Here is information about their programs/research: http://www.highscope.org/Content.asp?ContentId=219.

Q25. How to address the use of intimidation by adults (teachers/admin) when confronting students who have been identified as a bully or called into the office for bullying?

Roxana Marachi: In my view, although it may be challenging for some adults to keep their own emotions in check when they are in highly charged situations, they should not be using intimidation or bullying to address student bullying. Adult bystanders should do the same as youth bystanders in calling their colleagues out when they observe punitive communication or intimidation.   How do we address this issue? Unfortunately the structure of the power-dynamic relationship between adults and youth in schools (and the repeated interactions that they have) can make an environment ripe for that kind of bullying to occur. It takes strong leadership and a core of faculty committed to standing up for the respect and dignity of youth to call out adult bullies. I wish I had more resources to offer here. It's a critically important issue that deserves far more attention than I have heard in media discussions or in the research literature.

Q26. What if I can't get all Staff members to come onboard i.e. build the strong relationships with the students, use classroom management, be accountable for their area to monitor etc. If everyone is not willing to help, it doesn't work!

Roxana Marachi: This is a great question and perhaps describes one of the greatest challenges faced by administrators in making efforts to create positive, strong, empowering climates in their schools. I would recommend revisiting the mission and vision of the school as it relates to respect and care for all members of the community. There does tend to be power in numbers, so if the majority of the faculty *are* actively engaged in creating a united, connected, and welcoming environment for the resisting faculty to also contribute to, those efforts can go a long way. Team-building and connection-fostering activities may also support these efforts in addition to professional development that focuses on the importance of social-emotional learning for youth.

Q27. I am familiar with a bunch of the "canned" BP programs. I want to provide on-going supplemental work to the BP whole school program that I am choosing. Where can I find resources that will allow me to bring readings, activities, etc. into the classroom that will meld with the day to day curriculums that teachers are using to teach their required academic skills?

Roxana Marachi: Great question – the only program that I am aware of that aligns with academic standards, involves youth actively and in an ongoing basis, and is designed to prevent bullying, is the *Stories of Us* that I mentioned above (www.storiesofus.com). The CASEL website also has some resources for teachers as well with sample activities to support social/emotional learning http://casel.org/in-schools/selecting-programs/sample-sel-activities/

Q28. Is there a source you can recommend to find bullying amongst celebrities when they were younger. That always helps for the students to relate.

> Roxana Marachi: The following link includes videos from several celebrities who are taking a stand against bullying and sending the message to bullied youth that "It Gets Better" http://www.popeater.com/2010/10/06/tim-gunn-ellen-degeneres-bullying-psa/ The following website as well includes celebrities who are making efforts to bring about awareness about bullying – I do not know the extent to which these celebrities reveal personal experiences with bullying but the fact that they are standing up for the issue is a positive step for awareness and advocacy. http://www.looktothestars.org/news/5461-celebrities-stand-up-against-bullying.

Q29. What is the major reason WHY schools are not establishing bullying prevention programs in their schools?

> Roxana Marachi: Without any hard data exploring the specific reasons why administrators choose or choose not to implement bullying programs in their schools, my best guesses would be that an administrator may either be limited in funding to be able to implement the programs they would choose, may not perceive a serious problem in their school, and/or may feel that the school already has the necessary resources to handle the situations that arise. There are several laws being proposed to address the necessity of bullying prevention so my guess is that we will see an increase in the presence of programs in schools.

Q30. How do you retrain staff to be part of the solution rather than part of problem in ways including homophobic comments?

> Roxana Marachi: This is very important - there needs to be a collective culture and climate of care and respect in order for genuine reduction or elimination of problematic adult behaviors. Creating a vision and mission for the school whereby all faculty, staff, and community members are involved and hold each other accountable is a first step. Continually revisiting this mission and holding one another accountable is a process to maintain a positive climate and respectful culture. The majority of programs that are effective in reducing bullying are those that also address the whole school/adult interactions as well and focus on positive respectful school climates. Engaging in the difficult conversations among faculty would be a first step to paving the way for youth to be treated with respect.

Q31. What suggestions do you have if you're working with staff similar to the school staff you refer to who consider bullying prevention efforts as a joke?

> Brenda Morrison: If there's a program that's presented that the staff don't buy into, then I would not continue with that program. Without buy in, it is less likely that the program would be implemented effectively or have an impact. Sparking discussions about bullying in the classrooms, how we treat each other, etc. can help give school climate teams a sense of what staff think would work.

People who thoughtfully reflect on bullying tend to become the early adopters and the ones who see it as a joke are late adopters. Once those late adopters see that a program or practice is effective, the effectiveness of what's happening in a classroom or around a certain particular person or group of people at the school, then they start paying attention.

Q32. Can you speak to the link between bullying and targeted school violence?

Roxana Marachi: This is a difficult question to answer in such a limited format. From media reports, there tends to be a public perception that there is a clear causal link between bullying and targeted school violence (especially among the high-profile rampage shootings that were in the news in the late 1990s). Yet while bullying may have been a part of some of the shooters' pasts, it is not considered in the full scope of investigations to be the *root cause* of rampage school shootings. There are many other serious and complex factors in the mix. Among the many key findings presented in the *The Final Report and Findings of the Safe School Initiative: Implications for the Prevention of School Attacks in the United States,* one does connect to bullying,: "*Many attackers felt bullied, persecuted or injured by others prior to the attack. (pgs. 11/12)."* It is also worth noting however later in the report that "*In over half of the incidents (54 percent, n=22), the attacker had selected at least one school administrator, faculty member or staff member as a target…. Students were chosen as targets in fewer than half of the incidents (41 percent, n=15)." (p. 16)* http://www.secretservice.gov/ntac/ssi_final_report.pdf. Perhaps these patterns add further support to the notion that the *whole school community* is important to keep in mind when considering prevention efforts (for both normative types of aggression as well as the more rare, targeted forms of violence). Dave Cullen's book *Columbine* provides an excellent, detailed, and extremely thorough description of the complex developmental histories of Dylan Klebold and Eric Harris highlighting many *non*-bullying related issues that prompted their attacks. The book *School Violence: Fears vs. Facts* by Dr. Dewey Cornell also provides what I believe to the most accurate, thoughtful commentary on the disconnect between actual data on school violence and the mis-representation and reporting of data in media accounts.

These are complex, difficult issues to tackle and we collectively have a long way to go in creating truly safe environments for all youth. I do hope the responses and resources provided here will be helpful to those who are working to ensure safety in school settings. Thank you for allowing the opportunity to share.

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