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### Assignment # 1

- I chose Montana as one with weak bullying legislation based on a few I reviewed. Under their components of anti-bullying laws and regulations they do not cover protected groups, there is no communication of policy, no review and update of local policies. There is no education on prevention, nor do they provide staff training. Without proper education and guidance, there is no way to properly handle and avoid these situations.
- Dealing with perps- as an educator we must provide intervention with both parties. We can also try to have different staff members shadow the places both students might cross paths to avoid any issues arising. We can also speak with the parents and offer support and conjure ideas to hopefully empower the victim and diminish power from the bully. Try to find ways to deescalate the situation and educate the class.
- In the last school I conducted field hours, I observed cooperative learning and a positive environment for the students. I cannot say I witnessed any bullying or need for interventions during my time there, therefore I cannot say with certainty what challenges they face.
- I believe promoting equality in the classroom is very important as it allows and educates everyone in the classroom including the educator of the uniqueness of each and every person there. It will create an environment of respect, where everyone feels safe, welcomed and they can comfortably learn while being themselves.
- I overhear a small group of kids telling another student that they cannot sit with them. I would walk over to the group and inquire about what I just heard and firmly explain that

such behavior is not tolerated and that there are consequences for such behavior. I would ensure to have the student eat where they feel comfortable and set up a meeting after lunch with everyone involved to discuss what transpired and hopefully find resolution. I would also try to find a mentor or buddy the victim can associate with in the school.

- Rachel Simmons speaks of the inner resume development girls learn through relationship with friends, peers, adults and society. As girls grow up, they start to shy away from showing their skills and/or qualities to avoid seeming as a showoff or arrogant. But relationships with adults, peers, friends and family can teach them how to have a high self esteem and learn to ask for what they want and need when out in the real world. When the young girl, Claire developed the confidence to walk past her old friends in the new school year, she learned how to navigate through conflict, she developed resilience, a skill which she will carry on in her future years.

Being bullied is such a traumatic and hurtful experience which can take a toll on the person socially, developmentally and mentally but can sometimes be avoided if a bystander intervenes. The article states that bystanders are present 80 percent of the time when the act of bullying occurs and when they do intervene the bullying stops within 10 seconds 57 percent of the time. Then why do many hesitate to intervene and why do others incite the act?

There are four bystander roles we learn of in the article; the outsider (s), the defender(s), the reinforcer(s) and the assistant(s). The outsider observes the bullying but opts to stay out of it because they might not know the victim or feel their safety is compromised at the moment. The defender stands up for the victim at the moment because the victim might be their friend, they view this act as morally wrong and they feel safe to intervene. They might approach the victim after to offer support and might go to an adult to seek additional intervention. The reinforcer on the other hand will support and/or encourage the one doing the bullying to continue, and the assistant is that person who will stand in the way and not allow the victim to get away.

Sadly, bullying will affect the victim detrimentally to the point of suicide. Therefore, it is so important not only that everyone is educated about bullying but that the policies and laws be strict and enforced to avoid such tragedies. A strong support system should be in place for those who are victim and educational/mental programs. Are there programs which assist in finding and treating the bully into rehabilitation? How can we create an effective anti-bullying program which would reach students inside and outside of school?

Megan, Phoebe, Jon

1- Megan's fallout with her school friend made her a target for the bully. What made her vulnerable was interacting and carrying on conversations online with someone she didn't know. The idea that she had fallen in love with this boy online made her more vulnerable as well.

For Phoebe being an outsider, coming from Ireland to a new school and already being a victim of bullying made her more vulnerable. Because she caught the eye of one of the popular boys, that created tension with the other girls.

Jon seemed to be a quiet boy who could not stand up for himself. He was a victim of bullying at an early age and since it doesn't state he defended himself, people saw him as an easy target.

2- I would like to know for all three students what interests they had, maybe if they were part of any school clubs with other like-minded kids who might have been able to see what was happening and inform adults. I also would like to know if they had any adults they could confide in and/ reach out for help.

3- Megan was fooled into thinking the boy she was chatting with online was friendly and interested in her only to turn on her and cause emotional distress by cyberbullying her and saying the world was better off without her. All bullying is cowardly but to hide behind a screen and insult, pick on and hurt someone's feeling is atrocious. To make matters worse, the bullies were a mother and daughter who in the end served no time for the tragic event they caused.

Phoebe sadly endured cyber, emotional and physical bullying during her lifetime. She was picked on to and from school, rumors were created about her, she was excluded, racial slurs were written about her and someone suggested she should kill herself. How sad it is to read such acts.

Jon endured so much emotional and physical bullying from such an early age. He was physically abused by the kids in school, from being thrown to the ground on a daily basis, to having his head stuck down a toilet and flushed and the last abuse which drove him over the edge was stripping him naked, sticking him in a garbage can all while they recorded this with their cell phones.

4- I believe that for all three students, school was not the safe haven it should be. How can any student going through the tortures they were enduring focus on anything else but making it through another day? It is heartbreaking to imagine the pain they were going through emotionally, psychological and physically.

5- For Megan, her time online could have been monitored but it is hard to control and be fully informed of whom the child is interacting with, sometimes the child doesn't say or sometimes we don't know who is really behind the profile. I recently watched a similar episode and while the mother tried to monitor the daughter's activities, she found ways around it. Tragically, she like Megan ended her life.

For all kids, parents can try to be involved in their children's life by learning about their school days and activities, their friends, asking them how they are feeling. If they suspect anything is happening at school, they should reach out to the school personnel to work together on plans to protect the child. The school once aware of any situations, should

make it clear that the behavior is not acceptable and enforce the rules and consequences.  
If it a criminal matter, then law enforcement should be notified.

6- I wonder how much Megan confided in her parents/ teachers to allow them to know what she was going through. If they were not aware, it would be very difficult to protect her, especially when kids chat online and most of the time the parents are clueless.

Phoebe's mother advocated and was very clear about her previous experiences, but it seems that it all fell on deaf ears at the school which should be held responsible for the lack of action.

I am also sure that Jon's physical abuse could not have gone unnoticed at the school by a responsible adult, it just seems no one decided to step in and defend him and/or put a stop to it and report it.

All three cases are indeed very sad to read and even tougher to imagine all they endured in their short lives.

#### Assignment # 4

1- *Targeted* student refers to the student who is being bullied/harassed. *Offending* students refers to the student carrying out the bullying/harassment. *Perpetrator*- the student carrying out the act. *Anti-gay*- slurs used or written harassment based on sex. *Mocking*- making fun of someone – one form of harassment based on religion, i.e. being Muslim, Asian. *Ridicule*- harassment because someone doesn't conform to stereotypical behaviors.

2- In the video, bullying is defined as unwanted, aggressive repetitive behavior which involves a real or perceived power imbalance. While bullying can include conduct that is

not based on a particular status such as race or sex, harassment on the other hand is prohibited under federal law and protects classes/categories based on sex, religion, race, national origin and disability.

3- The protected classes or categories are based on (1) race- actual or perceived, color, national origin, (2) Sex which includes gender identity, gender expression and/or pregnancy, (3) religion and (4) disability.

4- The main goal for stopping harassment in schools is to establish and sustain an environment of tolerance and respect. To create a safe school and positive environment in which all students can learn.

#### Assignment # 5

1- Megan was a sweet girl planning her 14<sup>th</sup> birthday party, 24 hrs. later her mother was sadly planning her funeral. Megan had become friends and was chatting online with a boy, Josh for a few weeks. He started turning on her and hurting her feelings, telling her no one liked her and meaner words. Megan tragically hung herself due to all the negative comments she received. Five weeks later, it is discovered that “Josh” was not a boy at all but a mother and daughter who were cyberbullying her based on the girls falling out. I could not believe that these two people who led Megan to tragically end her life received no jail time for their actions.

2- Cyberbullying is more prevalent than what I assumed it to be and it is something anyone can fall victim to. I am amazed at how easy it is to create a fake account and carry on reaching out to people, hiding behind a fake person. She was so right when she stated that those who create these accounts, think it is a joke and that it is funny. That is so much further from the truth as she stated, we do not know what the other

person is going through, their mental and emotional state. People hide pain, suffering, depression very well behind a smile and one small unkind act or word can send them over the edge. Sadly, it is an act that seems to be growing, based on the statistics, hopefully there can be federal laws enacted to try to deter individuals from doing so.

<https://www.broadbandsearch.net/blog/cyber-bullying-statistics>

- 3- Mrs. Myer advises everyone to stop, listen and validate the emotions of the child/person. Many children feel that parents and adults do not listen to what they are saying or pacify what they are feeling. Do not simply say ignore it or try to be the “fixer” interjecting, the one who goes to address the issue, it might make it worse. When your child approaches, stop everything and listen, place all distractions on hold and do not speak; listen. Teachers/schools should create a climate of acceptance, one where the student feels comfortable about talking to you and sharing what they are going through, how they are feeling. Children feel intervention from their peers helps diffuse the situation, studies show within 10 seconds it diffuses. When they feel supported by their peers, they feel heard and validated. She advises the students that they have the power to make positive changes, to come together to stop bullying. They have the power to change a person life or better yet save it.