

Theerapat Ted Rungreang

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DASA Work Shop

Assignments 1:

1) I choose Wyoming, because the state legislation offers students very minimal protection outside of school and school related areas (bus stops and such). Other states, such as New York, offer their students protections off campus as well as clearly listing cyberbullying under the legislation as a reason for schools to intervene.

2) “Bullies don’t operate in a vacuum.” I interpreted this as there is always a reason as to why one student would bully another student. As someone who is responsible for the safety of their students, it’s imperative that a teacher investigate the reasons as to why a child is being bullied and why a child decides to bully another student. Potential causes for bullying could include social reasons and environmental influences.

3) My former school did well in advocating for a lot of group learning opportunities which allowed students of various levels and backgrounds a chance to familiarize themselves with each other and work together. Something that I would’ve liked to have seen more of would be the incorporation of avoidance strategies in our instruction. Involving the students in creating a safer and more inclusive environment might have helped in creating a sense of responsibility and morality within the school.

4) I believe cooperative group learning is one of the most important skills when it comes to generating an inclusive classroom setting for your students. By carefully pairing your students,

you could help students who struggle by pairing them with students who understand the material and could help their peers understand. Also, it allows for students to get to know each other and learn about people who might be different from them.

5) If I encountered a small group of kids excluding another child from sitting with them at lunch, I would ask the excluded child if they were ok and would like to find another group that they could sit with. I would then ask the other children who excluded the child why they decided to do that and how it would make them feel if they were on the other end.

6) After watching Rachel Simon's TED Talk, I learned that relationships play a major role in the development of young girls into womanhood. In our patriarchal society, young girls are taught, through relationships with other, that women must be passive and must strive to please those around them. Young girls may find themselves afraid of social status changes, standing out/being ostracized, and being viewed as unpleasant. As a result, women may find themselves struggling with conflict resolutions skills and self-advocacy in an attempt to not come off as too abrasive. It is important for younger girls to have strong female role models in their lives to show them that they are allowed to advocate for their own needs.

Assignment 2:

The article begins by explaining that bullying can be considered a public health concern because it can affect one's mental, emotional, or physical well-being. Often times when people are being bullied, there are usually others who witness the bullying; those people are considered bystanders and can play a significant role in the course of how the bullying is resolved.

Bystanders have the choice to intervene or not.

Bystanders can play different roles when they witness an act of bullying. They can choose not to get involved which would make them an example of an outsider according to the article. They can decide to act against the bully and address what's going on as a defender. Some may decide to cheer or encourage the behavior as an enforcer. While others may choose to participate and assist the bully as an assistant.

Bystanders play an important role and can feel pressured to act for or against the victim. According to Thornberg's model, some influences include emotional reactions and social evaluating. An example of an emotional reaction could be a child feeling compelled to help a victim because they know it's the right things to do and feel a moral obligation. On the other hand, a child might also feel distressed and deterred from helping out of fear of being bullied themselves. An example of social evaluating would be a child feeling more compelled to help because the victim is their friend or deterred because they don't know the victim.

Teachers and other adults can assist children in understanding what to do in these situations by incorporating it into their instruction and by leading through example as a positive role model. Some questions that I have after reading this article are how can teachers better incorporate social emotional learning and safety strategies into their instruction and how does a student's age group influence how a teacher/adult figure go about resolving acts of bullying?

Assignment 3:

A1) Megan is a thirteen-year-old girl. Interpersonal personal relationships play an important role at this age. Due to the falling out she had with the other party, it left Megan in a vulnerable position to be bullied.

A2) Did Megan have any other friends? Was she popular? How were her grades? How was her home life/ relationship with her parents?

A3) It was cyberbullying/ catfishing. They manipulated Megan emotionally.

A4) Megan might have been distracted by what was going on over social media which could lead to a decline in her grades. Megan was unable to finish school because of her experience.

A5) The adults in Megan's life could have checked in on Megan and looked for changes in behavior. If she were displaying signs of depression, they could recommend counseling and offered her a chance to vent about what was going on in her life.

A6) Megan might have experienced a sense of isolation preventing her from explaining what was going on in her life. Megan may also have experienced low-esteem and internalized the awful things that were said about her.

B1) Phoebe was an immigrant student. She had a history with getting bullied in the past. She was dating someone popular which lead to other girls being jealous.

B2) How was her relationship with her mother? Was there open communication? Was she experiencing any discrimination based on her status as an immigrant? How was her home life like? Was it difficult for her to make any friends at school?

B3) It was physical and emotional. She had experienced physical abuse, such as getting stuff thrown at her. She was abused emotionally by getting teased and having rumors spread about her. It affected Phoebe's mental state and socialization.

B4) Phoebe most likely did not enjoy being at school due to being victimized by her peers. She could have possibly felt isolated from the rest of the students due to her background/experience at the hands of bullying. Her grades might have declined as the bullying got worse.

B5) Her mother tried to advocate for her daughter at the school by informing them of her past experiences with bullying and what was going on currently. The school could have provided more support to Phoebe such as offered her a safe space to express her concerns, addressing her aggressors, and come up with a plan to keep Phoebe safe traveling between school and home.

B6) The school might not have done enough to address the bullying directly. The teachers and other school staff could have kept an eye on Phoebe and intercede when any bullying arises. The adults in Phoebe's life could have checked in on Phoebe's emotional/mental state to see if there were any noticeable changes or signs of depression.

C1) He had a history with bullying.

C2) Did he have any friends? Was the school that he went to small in size? What were his physical descriptions?

C3) Physical abuse. He was pushed and harassed in a violent manner. This affected Jon's mental and emotional well-being.

C4) I assume that Jon might have had a hard time being at school due to the physical violence he experienced. This would affect his grades negatively. Probably had a hard time focusing in class and with his schoolwork.

C5) Teachers/staff at the school could have interceded if they saw students behaving violently towards Jon. They could have addressed the students who were bullying Jon and condemned their behavior.

C6) Jon's bullies were not made aware that their actions were unjustified and immoral by adults at the school. It could have been that the school failed to keep open lines of communication with Jon's parents to ensure that Jon was doing ok and felt safe going to school.

Assignment 4:

1) Bullying: unwanted, aggressive, repetitive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.

Harassment: unwanted conduct based on a protected class

Perpetrator: someone who commits a negative action

Incident: a situation that is the result of influences both external and internal

Impartial: unbiased

Investigation: an examination conducted to search for facts and details.

2) Harassment is against a protected class as opposed to bullying which does not have to be against a protected class.

3) 1) Race, color, national origin

2) Sex

3) Religion

4) Disability

4) According to the video, it is to “establish and sustain an environment of tolerance and respect.”

Assignment 5:

1) The tragic spin in this case was that Josh, the boy that Megan was talking to over Myspace, was a catfish. He was a fake profile created by a fellow student and their mother that thought Megan was gossiping about her. They used the profile to emotionally manipulate Megan and exploit her vulnerability. They severely underestimated the power of their words and how they negatively affected Megan. Megan, who suffered from low self-esteem and depression, internalized their words and took her life without knowing that the person she was talking to was not a real person. This is an example of cyberbullying and how it is a public health concern because it can negatively impact one’s mental, emotional and physical well-being. They may not have intended for Megan to kill herself, but their words were internalized by Megan and influenced her decision.

2) I learned that although cyberbullying may not be as direct as conventional bullying, it is still a detriment to us as people. Over the internet, people have developed creative ways to bully each other, such as negative private messages, gossiping and creating fake profiles. Although these aren’t tangible things, they can cause negative repercussions in the way we navigate life and how we view ourselves. Words are powerful and can harm anyone, especially younger children who are intertwined with technology and social media now more than ever. Even though Megan’s mom was very involved in Megan’s life and social media presence, it still resulted in a fatal result very suddenly. We never know how our words will be perceived by others or what someone may be experiencing in their own lives. In order to prevent these things from

happening, we should refrain from performing malicious pranks such as catfishing and spread awareness of how these acts can negatively impact someone's life.

3) Megan's mother advocates that adults and parents should listen and validate children when they are being bullied. Instead of trying to fix the situation or interject their personal feelings, she insists that children wish to be heard over anything else. Often times, parents tend to have emotional responses when their children are being bullied and end up overreacting or acting out negatively to their children's situation. Megan's mom suggests just sitting down with your child and hearing what they have to say and what they need from you. Listening to your child and validating their feelings can show your child that there can be open communication in which they are safe to truly express how they feel. Once that is established, you can work together to come up with a way to resolve the situation together. This applies to teachers in the classroom as well since we should also be able to create a safe environment in our classrooms where students can speak to us about their concerns.

4) After watching the video, I was initially surprised by the relationship between Megan and her mother. At first, I believed that Megan's mother did the right thing to support her daughter to prevent bullying, by monitoring her internet presence and being present in her life. It surprised me how quickly that changed and how impactful the catfishing incident was on Megan's life. Although Megan had support from her mother and reassurance, Megan was still negatively affected by what was said about her and it proved fatal. I agree with Megan's mother's advice about listening and validating our children. It's hard not to feel compelled to solve problems for the children in our lives. As an educator, I would like to learn more about strategies I can use to make sure the students in my classroom feel comfortable enough to approach me with whatever issues they may be facing in their lives.

