

Title of Session: School Counselors - From Bullying to Crisis Management

Moderator: BJ Berquist

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JanePH: Do any of you find that bullying has got worse over the past few years?

BjB chuckles...you already know so much that I'm sure we can come up with lots of great stuff to share

JanePH: I used to work in "the hood"

MarthaBR: I think it has always been a problem, but it was never addressed.

BjB: Jane, it's gotten worse in that it's spread to the internet

JanePH: I am thinking, and have read articles on, that it has got worse with kids using the internet so much

BjB: and you're right, Martha, that it's always been a problem.

JanePH: I also notice that kids speak to each other very negatively

CherylWi: yes they do

KatieBo: I think that, it has always been a problem, but is spreading more in today's kids

BjB: gosh, why do you think they do that?

MarthaBR: they see it more often in movies, tv,

KatieBo: like you said internet, and video games

JanePH: The tv programs that they watch (some are not appropriate for kids, in my opinion) have so much negativity

JanePH: The way people speak to each other in the shows - even the Simpsons - is just plain disrespectful and rude

BjB agrees...where else do they hear that type of talk?

KatieBo: sometimes I don't even think they are appropriate for people my age

MarthaBR: parents, maybe.

JanePH: Some of them also hear it at home

BjB nods

JanePH: Some kids are treated like crap at home, for sure. Not to be confused with having discipline and expectations

KatieBo: kids that are raised in violence only know violence

BjB: let's make this discussion official

MarthaBR: sometimes parents, very busy parents might not have time to discipline or teach values.

JanePH: Yes, Katie, I agree.

BjB: and everyone please tell us where you are and what you teach

CherylWi: I am a preservice teacher in Houston TX

BjB: I'm an art teacher in a juvenile correctional facility in Pennsylvania

MarthaBR: I am a pre-service teacher at the Univ. of Houston.

JanePH: Ok - I'm from Calgary, Alberta, Canada. I teach gr. 7 humanities and multi media

GeneKe: preservice, middle school science/math, Akron, Ohio

KatieBo: I am at Akron, pre-service middle level teacher history/science

JanePH: What is preservice (for this Canadian!)?

CherylWi: student teaching

JanePH: oh, ok. thanks.

JanePH: We call it practicum

CherylWi: same thing

JanePH: gotcha

JanePH: sometimes we get thinking that problems are specific to our area. It looks like it is pretty much the same internationally

MarthaBR: yes.

BjB nods to Jane. That is one of the most important aspects about Tapped In discussions...

BjB: you have the opportunity to meet with peers and see lots of different points of view

BjB: and we can draw on our strengths

JanePH: I read a great article tonight on parents who overindulge their kids - that being one of the causes of problems that we see,

BjB: we know that there are lots of negative influences that cause these problems...

BjB: but, we can't change parents and we can't monitor internet behavior outside of school...

BjB: so, what CAN we do?

JanePH: I am doing research in grad school on how computers are utilized in lower income schools - most of the info is from the US - and anyway, that's where I came upon this article

BjB: do you have a link to the article, Jane?

MarthaBR: talk about it and not tolerate it in the classroom.

KatieBo: I think that we can make parents more aware of what is going on in the school

JanePH: I try to role model appropriate behaviour in the classroom and pick up on when the kids are speaking negatively to others - I'll check the link, BjB

GeneKe: I think you're excluding an important option! Parents

BjB nods to Martha. Good idea, Katie...more communication with parents

JanePH: I don't tolerate it in the classroom for sure. Our school also had an assembly about bullying a couple of weeks ago for the whole school -

CherylWi: we should teach children what they should and should not say, even if it is said at home. That's not how we talk at school

JanePH: Some of our parents actually want parenting advice from the teachers!

GeneKe: They need incentive to be involved, a more tangible vested interest

JanePH: I get really annoyed at having to teach kids values and stuff that they should be learning at home. I guess I need to get my head around that I will have to do that

BjB: yes, Sarah. We're trying to come up with ideas we can implement in our classrooms to eliminate bullying

CherylWi: they have to get it from somewhere

GeneKe: Perhaps tax breaks

KatieBo: I don't think just not tolerating it in the class is a fix, I think that we need to get to the bottom of what is making it happen

MarthaBR: though, I am not a parent, I think parenting is hard, especially if your young and haven't had any good role models.

SarahBod: well, I am a student at the University of Akron, so I am just learning about different classroom management techniques

BjB: Barbara had an excellent discussion on values. The transcript is archived at www.tappedin.org/transcripts

SarahBod: I think bullying is the result of a child seeking attention

KatieBo: I agree

BjB: what advice can we give Sarah?

JanePH: you are right, Cheryl. They do have to get it from somewhere - but sometimes it is very difficult to manage 30 kids, half of whom are being disrespectful!

SarahBod: so I think that we need to not think of ways to end bullying; however, think of ways to give children positive attention so that they do not go seeking attention in negative ways

JanePH: I am a parent of 4 boys, and I guess I have felt strongly about disciplining my OWN kids, not having a teacher have to teach them values

MarthaBR: I think that as teachers we should model the correct behaviors

CherylWi: talk to them about it in a group and have them talk about what else they could say

JanePH: I agree Martha

JanePH: That's one of those "teachable moments", Cheryl

CherylWi: not all parents care that much

KatieBo: even though it might not be your job to teach them values if you don't then who will

KatieBo: sometimes they don't have a family that will so you are their only hope

JanePH: that is true - they like to blame the teachers when things go wrong with their kids

BjB: I also think it's important to provide a safe and secure classroom for our children. That is related to what Sarah suggested

JanePH: Yes, Katie, I agree!

MarthaBR: right, if we don't who will?

KatieBo: exactly

JanePH: You are all helping me look at this from a different perspective again! Thanks

BjB: . o O (same thing with feeding and clothing...schools are asked to do more and more.)

SarahBod: I realize parenting is a big part of a child's life...but we as teachers will be the ones seeing them 8 hours of the day

SarahBod: we are a very big influence in their lives

KatieBo: yep

SarahBod: and in the case of bullies...sometimes the only influence

CherylWi: sometimes more than their parents

JanePH: Yes, I think that's so important with teacher burnout - too much raising other people's kids and not enough actual teaching

GeneKe: I believe that many parents try extremely hard to instill discipline in their children, however, when the children get to school they don't have the same incentives to behave

MarthaBR: we might be the only one that cares about a particular child. Think about that.

GeneKe: the schools need to be able to enforce discipline

BjB: take a look at <http://cyberbully.org/>

BjB: . o O (click on the url to open a new window)

JanePH: Yes, I think that schools have been rendered impotent as far as discipline is concerned.

GeneKe: then why would they obey

GeneKe: they have few boundaries

GeneKe: most they have to find on their own

JanePH: The link to that article is <http://ed.stanford.edu/suse/news-bureau>

GeneKe: where ever it may be

GeneKe: they're kids and they cross the line

JanePH: the title is "Damon says overindulgence of kids can lead to future anxiety"

SarahBod: is anyone here a guidance counselor?

GeneKe: without being able to control it themselves

BjB: thanks, Jane

BjB: Sarah, the person who usually leads this discussion is a counselor

BjB: . o O (but she is having tech problems and isn't with us tonight)

SarahBod: oh ok

SarahBod: thanks

MarthaBR: **BjB,** was I supposed to click on those hyperlinks?

GeneKe: are you going to facilitate

KatieBo: that website cyberbully is interesting

BjB: you can, Martha

KatieBo: ***interesting

CherylWi: yes i liked it

BjB: Nancy Willard leads a discussion here tomorrow. She's the creator of the cyberbully site

JanePH: here's the direct link (I can't cut and paste it on here)

<http://ed.stanford.edu/suse/news-0bureau/displayRecord.php?tablename-notify1&id=237>

KatieBo: cool

BjB: thanks, Jane. I wondered which topic to go to

JanePH: crap - <http://ed.stanford.edu/suse/news-bureau/displayRecord.php?tablename-notify1&id=237>

JanePH: Ok - something's not working here

BjB grins...and knows Jane doesn't use such language in her classroom

JanePH: of course not!!!

BjB: if we go back to the directory at <http://ed.stanford.edu/suse/news-bureau/>

BjB: what topic should we go to, Jane?

JanePH: The address was on the bottom of the article that I printed. the title is "Damon says overindulgence of kid can lead to future anxiety"

JanePH: I'm just double checking it.

JanePH: ok. this should work

JanePH: <http://ed.stanford.edu/suse/news-bureau/mediaArchive.php>

JanePH: sorry about that

JanePH: it's the 7th article down

JanePH: the other address works too, I guess you have to go to Media Archive

BjB: the title is hyperlinked to the article

JanePH: Yes, on the latest address, it is. There are lots of interesting articles on there
BjB agrees...so much to read, so little time!

JanePH: Yah, for sure!!!! I have been doing nothing but reading "stuff" for my grad course!

BjB: ok...did we reach any conclusions? Who can support us in school? Does the guidance office offer any programs?

MarthaBR: counselors?

JanePH: We have very few programs here that we can access since the special ed programs have been cut to shreds

BjB nods to Martha. And we can keep the lines of communication open to the parents and guardians

GeneKe: it's an amalgamation of many

MarthaBR: yes, include parents always.

JanePH: Our Assistant Principal is very good - he has zero tolerance for bullying and has no problem suspending kids.

BjB: can NCLB be a resource?

GeneKe: parents, counselors, teachers, principals...

JanePH: We have had a HUGE problem with bullying among our grade 7s this year.

SarahBod: I like the idea of peer guidance if u can get the right people

BjB: how is it being addressed, Jane?

KatieBo: I agree with Sarah that the students need just as much info as everyone else

SarahBod: I'm not sure how it would work for bullies but for other discipline problems i think it would be great

JanePH: We had a Health Day all about bullying, with a guest speaker. The guidance counselor is looking into having a group for boys and one for girls to address bullying

KatieBo: that could be a good idea

BjB: did we ever discuss exactly what bullying is?

JanePH: And, it is getting down to the reason that kids bully. Low self-esteem, lack of confidence - they aren't good in school, so they might as well be bullies

SarahBod: I was at a school where there was a discipline problem and a student was the only one that was able to calm the child down.....after 3 assistant principals and the principal had already tried

KatieBo: if kids hear it from peers it makes more of an impression

CherylWi: no

GeneKe: what about pairing bullies with a needy child? Like handicapped or retarded.

MarthaBR: how do we help the bullies, they need help too.

JanePH: I think that peer counseling is good too. We have an "Access" class in our school - handicapped kids - physically and mentally - and some of the kids were even bullying those kids!

KatieBo: I think that we need to first understand why they are a bully

SarahBod: good point Katie

KatieBo: something is going on that makes the problem

JanePH: One kid who was a pain in the butt last year, I made him into my "right hand man" - he did any errands that I needed him to do during class time

CherylWi: did it work?

JanePH: The bullies don't feel good about themselves

JanePH: Yes, Cheryl, it worked not too badly

KatieBo: that helps sometimes they just want attention but don't get it so they lash out

JanePH: They want to empower themselves, so put others down

GeneKe: the whole class gets an award if at the end of the week the bully has behaved

SarahBod: so why don't we give them a role with positive power

KatieBo: cool idea

GeneKe: surely he/she likes somebody in the room that they don't want to offend

CherylWi: so everyone knows who the bully is and his behavior is pointed out?

JanePH: Yes, positive power, like being "class monitor" or something

SarahBod: no

SarahBod: not point out the behavior

SarahBod: indirectly

JanePH: give them a job to do

SarahBod: exactly

SarahBod: allow them to pass out papers

SarahBod: run errands

MarthaBR: I like your idea, Jane

KatieBo: make them be aware of their own behavior, not those around them

JanePH: For sure - take the attendance to the office, and anything that needs doing

SarahBod: that way they have some power

KatieBo: but don't have power over others

JanePH: One kid this year who is a bit of a bully - I pull him aside at the end of class if he has a good day, and I tell him

CherylWi: how do you reward good students/

SarahBod: but like Katie said earlier we have to find out the source of the problem

JanePH: Another thing is maybe phone the parents for the GOOD behaviour, not the bad - like if the kid has done something really good that day, phone the parents

CherylWi: same way?

SarahBod: if its power they seek then that will work

SarahBod: but if it's something else that might not work

JanePH: I know it's time consuming - but also let the parents know that the kid has a good sense of humour, for example, or has been helpful in class by taking attendance to the office or something

KatieBo: but what if the problem is at home?

SarahBod: hmmm

JanePH: Maybe the kid will get praised for a change for positives from school

KatieBo: yea

GeneKe: worth a try

JanePH: Dr. Bill Jensen has some great stuff on "Tough Kids".

JanePH: He's from Oregon, I think

GeneKe: bottom line is they need affirmation

JanePH: Kids are always surprised when the parents get a phone call from the teacher for something GOOD that they've done

KatieBo: right

JanePH: The parents are surprised too - they have spent years getting negative phone calls from teachers. Pick anything that is good with the kid - I know it's hard sometimes to find anything, but -

JanePH: If they are getting praised for anything, they will gradually try to please, perhaps

KatieBo: I think that when you are frustrated with a student you should find one thing that that student did right that day

KatieBo: never end the day on a bad note that will just make tomorrow start off bad

JanePH: You are right, Katie, and I know it's hard to find something to like about a kid sometimes

BjB: Time to wrap for this session. Although we missed our discussion leader, I think you all had some excellent suggestions

SarahBod: yea

JanePH: I feel better about tomorrow!! Thanks gang

SarahBod: thanks everyone

MarthaBR: yes, I really like some of the suggestions.

KatieBo: thanks

GeneKe: l8r

MarthaBR: Thank you. Bye everybody

CherylWi: bye everyone

JanePH: I think I will have to log on here more often now! I sure feel a sense of collegiality (sp??)

BjB: the greatest strength in Tapped In is the community members...YOU!

JanePH: colleague- ness

BjB smiles

BjB: that's great, Jane.

JanePH: Goodnight all - I hope to talk to you again