
Analysis of Intimidation as a Problem to the Community and Ways to Stop It

Bullying has been around forever, and it starts at a very young age. It's a very real topic and sometimes I don't think society takes it as seriously as it should. Bullying causes psychological effects in children worldwide at an age where their minds are most vulnerable. It affects children in many different ways and often follows them into adulthood. It's a problem that needs fixing and I believe society, as a whole, owes it to themselves to help prevent and at the very least limit the amount of bullying cases around the world.

Bullying affects everyone differently, and 9 out of 10 times it's negatively. Yeah, there are hundreds of movies out there where a kid is getting picked on in the beginning of the film, and by the end the 'geek' always ends up sticking it to the bully somehow, somehow. But life isn't a movie, and most bullying cases do not end up like that. Bullying can cause problems that follow you into adulthood and hinder your performance in the real world. It has affects ranging from decreased academic performance, to depression and/or anxiety and, in some cases, even suicide. In 2010, The University of Central Los Angeles (UCLA) orchestrated a study involving 11 Los Angeles public middle schools, which included over 2,000 students and teachers. Researchers asked the children to rate how much they were bullied on a four-point scale and, which of their classmates were bullied the most (Wolpert, 2010). According to Wolpert (2010), "A high level of bullying was consistently associated with lower grades across the three years of middle school. The students who were rated as the most bullied performed substantially worse academically than their peers. Wolpert (2010) went on to say, "Projecting the findings on grade point average across all three years of middle school, a 1.5-point decrease in GPA for one academic subject (math, social studies etc.), a very large drop." As you can see, bullying cannot be ignored.

Bullying doesn't just hurt the victims; it also hurts the bully. Like the victims of bullying, the bullies themselves can also develop problems that will eventually follow them into adulthood. Kids who pick on others often carry those same traits with them their entire lives. According to StopBullying.org, "Bullies are more likely to engage in violent and other risky behaviors later on in life. Kids who bully are also more like to; Abuse alcohol and other drugs in adolescence and as adults, get into fights, vandalize property, and drop out of school." Being a bully also increases the chances of early sexual activity, committing felonies and abusing romantic partners, spouses and children as an adult. Most people don't think of the other side of the equation, but as you can see it's detrimental to both bullies and victims.

There are many different reasons why bullies pick on kids. Maybe they grew up in a dysfunctional family, they're trying to look cool in front of other students to gain popularity, they don't know how to control their emotions/feelings or maybe they just don't care how other kids feel. The reasons why bullies pick on others can help us learn how to prevent it in the first place. According to Bryner (2010), bullies tend to pick on unpopular kids. Though that's not really rocket science, it's important to understand what that means to younger children. When a kid is unpopular or 'weird', they are less likely to be stood up for by their classmates. Bullies are very strategic with the way they go about their business, they don't want to get in trouble, so they go after the easy targets. Studies show, Bryner (2010), that socially awkward children as well as

gays and lesbians are two of the largest targets of bullies. “The new finding that bullies are so strategic in their affairs means eradicating the behavior will take a savvy program, said lead researcher René Veenstra, professor of sociology at the University of Groningen. While the study was based in the Netherlands, Veenstra said there's no reason the results shouldn't apply to the United States and elsewhere” Bryner (2010).

After reading this research paper, I hope you can see the importance of putting an end to bullying. Children shouldn't fear going to school, it should be a place where they can go to have fun with their classmates; it should be a safe place. We are doing an injustice to the youth of the world by allowing this to happen. Children's minds are a vulnerable thing and it's an absolute travesty that some will never grow to their full potential as adults because their minds are scarred from bullying.

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