

BULLYING PREVENTION CONSULTING NEWSLETTER

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Lately

we are

hearing so many stories of children in grades K-12 who have been bullied and who unfortunately have committed suicide thereafter. These are such tragic stories. Clearly such stories affect the family, the community and the school. Mostly these stories affect our society and we need to do something about it.

We know that bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior that deals with a perceived or real power imbalance. When bullying behavior is repeated it has serious lasting effects on

mental conditions, possibly on physical conditions and on the future of everyone affected. Even children who have observed such behavior but did not participate directly in this bullying interaction, are left feeling helpless not knowing what to do, and are afraid to stand up to the bully for fear of being ostracized by 'the crowd.'

Suicide-related behavior

is very complicated and can result in death, when it is the result of some very destructive behavior aimed at the

person who is being bullied-- or can be non-fatal, self-directed destructive behavior, with an intent to die or it can mean suicidal ideation where a child thinks about suicide or plans for suicide.

People who engage in suicide related behavior often feels overwhelming - feelings of helplessness and hopelessness.

What we know is that bullying behavior and suicide-related behavior are closely related in the sense that any youth who reports any participation with bullying behavior are more likely to report

high levels of suicide-related behavior than youth who are not involved with bullying behaviors (CDC, 2014). What we don't know for sure is if there is a causal relationship between bullying behavior and engagement in suicide-related behavior. Some articles suggest (Espelage & Holt, 2013) that perhaps bullying alone may not yield to suicidal behaviors, but the combination of risk factors like delinquency and depression may contribute to a more elevated risk of suicide-related behaviors.

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