



C O N N E C T I C U T

4-H



NEWSLETTER

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For MEMBERS, VOLUNTEERS, LEADERS and FRIENDS of 4-H

## Bullying – Bad Business for Everyone!

Maureen T. Mulroy, Ph.D.

Associate Professor,  
School of Family Studies  
Human Development Specialist,  
Cooperative Extension System

**B**ullying is a serious and growing problem. The National Center for Victims of Crime (1995, 1996) estimates that: 10% of elementary school children and 4% of those in secondary school are bullied every week; 1.3 million children a year are involved in bullying either as victims, perpetrators, or witnesses; and sadly, 12 children a year commit suicide as a result of bullying. Research suggests that bullying is becoming more prevalent and the patterns of abuse are becoming more vicious (Olweus, 1993). For these reasons, it is important for 4-H Leaders to become knowledgeable about bullying and what they can do to address it among club members.

### Bullying Defined

Bullying is a pattern of victimization where one child or small group of children is repeatedly exposed to negative actions by one or more other children (Olweus, 1993; Stein, 1997). These negative actions can be verbal or non-verbal, physical or non-physical, and direct or indirect in nature. For example, direct bullying might include threatening, taunting, teasing, name calling, hitting, pushing, kicking, pinching, and restraining. Indirect bullying could entail gossip-

ing, secret telling, refusing to be friends, making faces or dirty gestures, intentionally excluding someone from a group, or playing tricks on someone (Olweus, 1993; Stein, 1997). Although typically viewed as a school-based event, bullying can and does occur at home, in the neighborhood, on sports teams and, yes, even within 4-H.

### Different Forms of Bullying Behavior

**Physical bullying** is a direct, physical assault on another person. It is the method of bullying most often chosen by boys; however, girls can and do employ physical forms of bullying. In addition to the behaviors listed above, physical bullying may also include “punching, poking, strangling, suffocating, bending fingers back, burning, poisoning, hair pulling, excessive tickling, biting, stabbing, and shooting” (Fried & Fried, 1996).

**Verbal bullying** is another direct method of bullying where words are used to harm a person’s “physical, moral, or mental well-being” (Fried & Fried, 1996). It is the most common form of bullying and is used by girls, boys, women, and men. It is also the form of bullying that is most often ignored, goes unreported, and becomes a chronic source of pain and hurt for many children (Froschl, Sprung, & Mullin-Rindler, 1998).

**Psychological bullying**, which can be direct or indirect in its expression, is characterized by a systematic course of action designed to reduce a person’s level of self worth. The pattern of abuse is such that the victim comes to consider him or herself to be unworthy – of respect, friendship, love and protection (Gabarino, Guttman, & Seeley, 1986; Vachss, 1994; Fried & Fried, 1996). This form of bullying can take five forms of expression:

- Rejecting – excluding another person, smirking, name-calling, snickering, whispering and giggling;
- Isolating – depriving a person of normal occasions and opportunities for social interaction via blackballing, shunning, or intentionally relaying wrong time, date, or place for meetings and events;
- Terrorizing – threatening to reveal intensely embarrassing characteristics about a person or exposing a person to public humiliation;
- Ignoring – not recognizing another person or his or her ideas, contributions;
- Corrupting – encouraging a person to act unsuitably, whether sexually, aggressively, or by using alcohol or illegal substances (Gabarino, Guttman, & Seeley, 1986; Fried & Fried).

### Impact of Bullying

Research clearly indicates that bullying has serious consequences for children whether they are the perpetrators, recipients, or witnesses. Each of these roles brings a legacy of pain and hurt. For example, it has been found that:

- *Perpetrators* have oftentimes been abused themselves, view the world through a lens of anger and hostility, see threats where none exist, are highly emotional, and perceive others to “be out to get them”;



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- *Recipients* often feel anxious and insecure, become inattentive, irritable, tense, and depressed, become isolated or alienated from the people, places, and events that were once a source of enjoyment, experience a drop in grades and academic performance, and in extreme situations attempt to end their victimization by taking their own lives or the lives of their attackers;
- *Witnesses/Bystanders* to bullying also suffer harmful effects, experiencing symptoms of emotional distress similar to those reported for recipients, additionally they experience a pervasive sense of guilt because of their lack of response, and are at risk of becoming accomplices or co-perpetrators to future bullying events (Fried & Fried, 1996; Slaby, Roedell, Arezzo & Hendrix, 1995).

Given the heavy toll for all involved, it is incumbent upon all youth-serving organizations to focus time, money, and resources to address the issue of bullying.

### Some Proven Strategies for Addressing the Issue

Agencies and organizations interested in reducing existing bullying problems and preventing the development of future problems can take a number of actions:

- conduct a survey to determine the extent of the problem;
- sponsor training for staff, volunteers, participants, and their parents about bullying, including response strategies, and available resources;
- develop an organizational policy and class/club rules against bullying that

- contain clear, non-retaliatory sanctions for the perpetrator(s);
- discuss bullying issues regularly during staff or club meetings;
- increase adult supervision in all areas of the school, center, or meeting site to reduce the opportunity for a bullying incident;
- recognize and reward acts of kindness, compassion, cooperation, and inclusion; and
- make the school, center, or club site a safe environment for all children.

Youth-serving agencies and organizations may also wish to access one or more of the following resources:

- *Bullying at School: What We Know and What We Can Do* – By Dan Olweus. This book provides information about the results of Olweus' bullying surveys, as well as a detailed description of his school-based bullying prevention program. To obtain a copy, contact Blackwell Publishers, c/o AIDC, P.O. Box 20, Williston, VT 05495 or <http://www.blackwell.com>.
- *Bully Proofing Your School* – for elementary schools. Focus is on shifting power away from bullies, not on punishing them. Contact: Carla Gerrity, The Bully Project, 5290 East Yale Circle, Suite 207, Denver, CO 80222, (303) 649-8496.
- *The Bully Prevention Project* – for elementary and middle schools. Includes help for school staff and parents, classroom activities, and school-wide anti-bullying activities. Contact: Susan P. Limber, Bullying Prevention Project,

Institute for Families in Society.  
University of South Carolina, Carolina Plaza, Columbia, SC 29208, (803) 737-3186.

### References

- Fried, D. & Fried, P. (1996). *Bullies & Victims*. New York, NY: M. Evans and Company, Inc.
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- National Center for Victims of Crime (1995). *School-Based Services*, INFOLINK.
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- Stein, N. (1997). *Bullying and sexual harassment in elementary schools: It's not just kids kissing kids*. Working Paper Series No. 284. Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College.



## Teen Connection Conference – Come and See What It's All About!

The Teen Connection Conference is coming soon. This fun, activity-packed event will be held on the UConn campus in Storrs on July 11-13. Participants will

have the opportunity to attend interesting workshops, see a performance by a teen theatre group called "Looking In Theatre", participate in a walk-a-thon, a dance and many other fun activities.

This year two opportunities will be made available to interested youth to come and see a portion of the conference without participating as a full-time conference participant. By viewing part of the conference, youth will have a better idea of what the conference is all about and may decide to become full-time conference participants in the future.

The two opportunities include:

1. "4-H Is On the Move" Walk-a-Thon – Everyone is invited to attend the



walk-a-thon. Conference participants, families and local community members are invited to bring donations from sponsors and to join the walk. Funds raised will benefit two great

organizations: Connecticut 4-H Centennial Fund and Heifer Project International.

The Walk-a-Thon will be held on Sunday, July 11th from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

2. Looking In Theatre: All conference participants will attend this workshop session on Tuesday, July 13th, 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. Looking In Theatre is an interactive, social issue theatre. The teen-aged actors, trained in the issues, create the scripts. A performance consists of a series of short dramatic

scenes followed by discussion with the audience in which the actors answer questions about their parts. Any teens aged 14 or older may attend this performance, even if not registered as a conference participant.

If you have youth who are interested in one or both of these conference activities, please contact Nancy Wilhelm at 1-888-FOUR-H-CT or [nancy.wilhelm@uconn.edu](mailto:nancy.wilhelm@uconn.edu) to pre-register.



The *Connecticut 4-H Newsletter* is a publication of the Cooperative Extension System, 4-H Youth Development Program which provides educational and current information to 4-H members and volunteers.

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Participants in the State 4-H Public Speaking Finals held on April 3rd at the UConn West Hartford Campus (from left to right) Leah Toler, Windham County; Nathan Sandoval, New Haven County; Amy Wesoly, Litchfield County; Katlin Wilson, Tolland County; Talia Stigliano, Hartford County; Amanda Henne, New London County, and Amy Czaja, Middlesex County



4-H members (from left to right) Stacy Perrone, Liz Lahner and Emily Osga discussed the 4-H Program with Senator Kevin Sullivan at State 4-H Citizenship Day at the Capitol in Hartford on April 14th.

## Middlesex County 4-H Shooting Sports

*Emily McCabe Alger*  
Program Coordinator  
Middlesex County 4-H Program

Middlesex County is proud to be offering the first club in Connecticut that is working in conjunction with the National 4-H Shooting Sports Program. Our club 4-H Archers Unlimited of Middlesex County is open to youth ages

12-18 in the state, and there are learning and volunteer opportunities for interested adults as well.

The National 4-H Shooting Sports Program and Curriculum was developed, drafted and tested by the National 4-H Shooting Sports Committee over a period of years and has been offered to states since the mid 1980's. The curriculum is scrutinized continually with revisions being made when appropriate. The program relies on National and State 4-H trained and certified instructors to conduct classes/programs in the various disciplines using the National 4-H Shooting Sports Curriculum. The program requires 4-H trained and certified instructors to adhere to the safety rules and regulations

as dictated by the program.

Why 4-H Shooting Sports? The 4-H Youth Development Shooting Sports Program involves kids who have an interest in firearms/guns/archery, etc. and welcomes them into an accepting, caring group. The first thing they learn is safety. Next they learn discipline and then respect (respect for equipment as well as respect for people). They are not permitted to use the equipment until they prove they can handle those three prerequisites. 4-H Shooting Sports members learn what it means to be a good citizen, and to help others. They develop the skills necessary for success in the workplace as well as other life skills. 4-H Adult Volunteer Leaders are positive role models and mentors for the members. 4-H Shooting Sports programs offer interested youth the chance to develop into competent, caring and concerned citizens!

The other goals of the group are:

To enhance development of participant's self concept, character and personal growth through safe educational and socially acceptable involvement in shooting activities.

To strengthen families through lifelong recreational activities.

To develop leadership qualities in youth and adult participants.

To expand 4-H membership and involve additional 4-H adult volunteers.

To encourage understanding of natural resource concepts through participants' interest in shooting sports.

To expose participants to the broad array of vocation and lifelong vocational activities related to shooting sports.

To promote the highest standards of safety, sportsmanship, and ethical behavior.

To complement and enhance the impact of existing shooting sports safety education programs.

Our program in Middlesex County hopes to soon have enough volunteers to offer 4-H certification training, with more instructors and program growth being an important focus at this time. In its initial stages the program has been very popular, and we will be discussing ways to expand the program after this initial pilot year. New youth members must go through safety training before they begin shooting so we will offer safety meetings periodically. If you are interested in becoming part of the Middlesex County 4-H Shooting Sports program, please contact Emily McCabe Alger or Linda Mosig at the Middlesex County Extension Center, 860-345-4511 or email [ecalger@canr.uconn.edu](mailto:ecalger@canr.uconn.edu). ♣ ♣ ♣

## 2004 Connecticut 4-H Fairs

### **New London County 4-H Exposition**

– July 23, 24 & 25, Grange Grounds, North Stonington

### **Windham County 4-H Fair**

– July 30, 31 & August 1, Brooklyn Fairgrounds

### **Middlesex & New Haven County 4-H Fair**

– August 6, 7 & 8, Durham Fairgrounds

### **Tolland County 4-H Fair**

– August 13, 14 & 15, Tolland Agricultural Center, Vernon

### **Litchfield County 4-H Fair**

– August 14 & 15, Goshen Fairgrounds

### **Hartford County 4-H Fair**

– August 20, 21 & 22, Fourtown Fairgrounds, Somers



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Visit the new 4-H website at: [www.canr.uconn.edu/fourh](http://www.canr.uconn.edu/fourh)