



## The Rising Risk of Bullying

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(This is an excerpt of the feature article)

Incidents similar to our In the News stories occur daily in youth-serving programs. What's the common denominator? Bullying. Experts define bullying as the intentional, repeated, unpleasant or negative behavior by one or more persons directed against a person who has difficulty defending himself or herself.

Unfortunately, bullying can occur in any youth-serving program, including schools, camps, athletics, and child care. Already familiar to many in the world of education, the following bullying statistics are now garnering attention at a national level:

- Every 7 minutes a child is bullied at school.
- 160,000 children miss school each day due to a fear of bullying.
- 70% of educational research is now devoted towards bullying.

45 states currently have laws addressing bullying.

As these statistics become better known and horrendous incidents of bullying continue to make headlines, organizations often ask us how to systematically prevent and respond to bullying. Praesidium has analyzed hundreds of bullying incidents and reviewed state statutes, case studies, and bullying literature to provide guidance on this hot topic.

Read on for four steps your organization should take when managing the risk of bullying.

### 1. Identify High-Risk Youths, Activities, and Locations

Bullying does not occur as an isolated incident.

### 2. Educate Employees, Volunteers, Youths, and Parents

The next step is proactively educating all employees, volunteers, youths, and parents about bullying.

To request more information on Praesidium's bullying prevention trainings, go to [www.praesidiuminc.com](http://www.praesidiuminc.com)

### 3. Supervise Youths and Monitor High-Risk Activities and Locations

The organization might consider the following:

- Are there too many youths in this physical location at the same time?
- Are we mixing age groups that should be separated during this time?
- Do we have enough adults supervising during this time?

### 4. Respond to Bullying

Responding to bullying behaviors can be a challenge. We've heard that youth workers often think:

- "Is this really bullying or is it kids being kids?"
- "The Facebook message wasn't sent from one of our program's computers, so it's not our problem."

"I heard about it from another child, but I didn't see the behavior myself. Can I really do anything about it?"

Responding procedures should emphasize that it is not the employee or volunteer's responsibility to determine whether these are normal peer-to-peer conflicts or bullying behaviors. Problematic behaviors should be reported to a supervisor who will help them make this determination.



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