

Bullying Prevention Task Force Report

PRESENTED
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DRAFT FOR REVIEW ONLY



1 IN 3

bullied students reported being bullied repeatedly.¹



1 IN 10

students who are bullied drop out of school.²



Supporting Bullying Prevention in Ohio

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Despite the growing awareness about bullying, the National Education Association reports that a child in the United States is bullied every seven minutes.³ And, approximately 160,000 children nationwide miss their classes every day because of bullying.⁴ Buckeye Health Plan is committed to helping change these startling statistics. In the fall of 2018, we convened more than 425 representatives from local organizations, school administrators and community leaders at statewide workshops to share best practices and generate ideas on ways to combat the bullying epidemic.

The result of this collaboration is a report that includes school, community and policy-based recommendations to advocate for change at both the state and local levels. Buckeye is sharing this report with government and community leaders to inspire further conversations and actions to stop bullying in our schools and communities.



THE TRAGIC CONNECTION BETWEEN BULLYING AND YOUTH

SUICIDE

2x

A victim of bullying is twice as likely to take his or her own life.⁵

Only about **20-30%** percent of students who are bullied notify adults.²



Bullying Prevention Task Force Recommendations

The Bullying Prevention Task Force calls upon Ohio's schools, communities and government leaders to take action against bullying to create a healthier, safer environment for Ohio's children. The following recommendations describe critical steps toward achieving that goal. Further considerations and specific action items for each recommendation are included in the full report, *Supporting Bullying Prevention in Ohio*, informed by the Bullying Prevention Task Force.

SCHOOL-BASED RECOMMENDATIONS

While significant progress has been made in Ohio schools, Task Force discussions centered on elevating the topic further by asking schools to build safe learning environments with positive, supportive cultures and anonymous reporting processes to encourage more students to speak up safely. More emphasis on peer-based efforts and programs that support those who bully can also encourage dialogue, engagement and prevention.



- 1 Create clear policies and reporting procedures.
- 2 Create more accessible reporting procedures.
- 3 Create cultures that promote safety and kindness.
- 4 Adopt or create programs or practices that support bullies.
- 5 Support more peer-to-peer efforts.

COMMUNITY-BASED RECOMMENDATIONS

Bullying doesn't stop at school. There is power in bringing community organizations together to support Ohio's youth. The Task Force discussed ways to build and strengthen more bridges between school, home and community by engaging parents and caregivers in school-based efforts, bringing more education to the community at large and establishing partnerships that increase reach and support in all aspects of a child's life. By coming together, communities can increase awareness and take effective action.



- 1 Engage children in conversation around bullying prevention; and model prosocial behavior.
- 2 Bring more education about bullying, including acceptance of "differences" and cultural competency, to the community.
- 3 Create formal coalitions and neighborhood response teams to increase community awareness and community action efforts.

GOVERNMENT-BASED RECOMMENDATIONS

We must involve the whole community, including local and state government leaders, in bullying prevention efforts to make the most impact. We must advocate for funding to support critical efforts like access to more counselors and training focused on trauma in our schools, along with promotion of existing organizations and agencies who support bullying prevention. These measures, along with consideration for a statewide bullying curriculum, can create consistent and frequent dialogue on this topic and help create safer, healthier environments for our youth.



- 1 Support increased state funding for more school guidance counselors and mandate all Ohio schools have access to a behavioral health expert.
- 2 Support funding for trauma-informed training and curriculum for Ohio schools.
- 3 Support funding to allow the Ohio Department of Education and all Ohio schools to implement bullying prevention curriculum for grades Pre-K through 12.
- 4 Support the work of community agencies and organizations that's already being done for bullying prevention.

Fighting Bullying Together



Buckeye and the Bullying Prevention Task Force are excited to bring these recommendations to the community and work together to enact change across Ohio. The results of this unique collaboration are presented within the *Supporting Bullying Prevention in Ohio* report and serve as a starting point for grassroots and statewide efforts to come. Together, we can help students improve their health and well-being and arm them with skills to positively impact those around them.

For more information on how Buckeye Health Plan is transforming the health of the community, one person at a time, visit buckeyehealthplan.com/stopbullying.

SOURCES

- 1 Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. (May 2017). Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2016. Retrieved November 2018 from <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2017/2017064.pdf>
- 2 National Education Association. Education Support Professionals: Meeting the Needs of the Whole Student. Bullying Prevention. Retrieved November 2018 from <https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/ESP-Bullying-Brochure.pdf>
- 3 National Education Association website. Identifying Bullying. Retrieved November 2018 from <http://www.nea.org/home/53359.htm>
- 4 Bullying Prevention Program. Facts About Bullying. Retrieved November 2018 from <http://bullyfree.com/free-resources/facts-about-bullying>
- 5 American Society for the Positive Care of Children website. Facts about Teen Suicide. Retrieved August 2018 from <https://americanspcc.org/teen-suicide-facts/>



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