

THE BIG KID



Misdirections in Bullying Prevention and Intervention¹

Although there are proven and promising bullying prevention and intervention strategies, some common methods do not work or can even make matters worse.

Zero Tolerance Policies

Many schools and school districts have “zero tolerance” or “three strikes and you’re out” bullying policies. These policies suspend or expel children who bully others.

- *The threat of suspension or expulsion discourages children and adults from reporting bullying.*

Conflict Resolution and Peer Mediation

Conflict resolution and peer mediation are common strategies for dealing with issues between students. Because of this, schools may use these methods to address bullying problems.

- *Bullying is not a conflict; it is a form of victimization.*
- *Sends the wrong message to students - “you are both partly right and partly wrong,” or “we need to work out this conflict between you.”*

¹ Source: Stopbullying.gov

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- *There is no evidence that conflict resolution or peer mediation stops bullying.*

Group Treatment for Children

Group members tend to serve as role models for each other, which *typically reinforces antisocial or bullying behavior.*

Simple, Short-Term Solutions

Schools often adopt short-term bullying prevention and intervention approaches that don't address the entire issue.

To reduce the prevalence of bullying, the school's climate and its expectations for student behavior must change.

Evidence-based Successful Approach

The research-based anti-bullying program, called KiVa, includes role-playing exercises to increase the empathy of bystanders and computer simulations that encourage students to think about how they would intervene to reduce bullying. ("Kiusaamista vastaan" means "against bullying," in Finnish, while the word "kiva" means "nice.")

KiVa is one of the world's most effective anti-bullying programs, said Jaana Juvonen, lead author of the study and professor of psychology at UCLA.