

Cyberbullying

Definitions

- An intentional, repeated, aggressive, hostile, or harmful act, and involves sending or posting harmful text or images using the internet or other digital communication devices

Occurrence & Statistics

- Approximately 2 in 5 children in Canada are victims
- Equally likely to be male or female, more likely to be older adolescent
- 1 in 5 teens in Canada have witnessed bullying online, and 51% of all teens have had a negative experience with social networking
- Many victims decline to report incidents; therefore, prevalence rate may be much higher

Consequences

- Academic issues, suicidal ideation, eating disorders, chronic illness, and depression
- Short and long-term mental and psychical health issues
- Negative impacts linked to bullying others: depression, substance abuse, aggression & anti-social behaviour, dating aggression, academic issues, delinquency and criminal behaviour
- Negative impacts linked to being bullied: depression, anxiety, mood disorders, substance abuse, low self-esteem, isolation, academic issues, suicidal tendencies, stomach aches, headaches
- Long-term effects: victims of bullying have significantly higher prevalence of panic disorders and generalized anxiety. Bullies had four times the risk of developing antisocial personality disorders. Individuals who identified as a bully and victim had 14 times the risk of panic disorder, 5 times the risk of depressive disorders, and 10 times the risk of suicidal thoughts and behaviour.

Solutions

- School psychologists - ``whole school`` approach. Tier 1: broadly educate staff, students, and parents. Tier 2: target at-risk students. Tier 3: intensive, individualized interventions for victims and/or perpetrators.

More Information

www.prevnet.ca Canada's Authority on research and resources for bullying prevention

<http://kidshealth.org> Kids Health - Cyberbullying

<https://www.getcybersafe.gc.ca> Government of Canada – Get Cyber Safe

<http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca> RCMP - Bullying & Cyber Bullying

<http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca> Alberta Human Services - Cyberbullying

<https://www.kidshelpphone.ca> Kids Help Phone – Cyberbullying

References

Bergman, K.N, & Barva, C.J. (2015). Getting Schooled. *Psymposium*, Vol 25 (1), 12 – 14.

Canadian Psychological Association (2016). "Psychology Works" Fact Sheet: Bullying Among Children and Youth. Online.

National Institute of Mental Health (2013, June 11). Bullying Exerts Psychiatric Effects into Adulthood. Online.