

75 Super Quick Strategies for VERY Difficult Students

1. Find a quiet space inside outside the classroom that is comfortable and safe
2. Remain non-judgemental
3. Have calm and friendly conversations
4. Be calm and fair but firm in conversations
5. Let them know you care and that they matter and you care about their progress
6. Praise and recognise positive behaviour matters
7. Keep everything in perspective
8. Make an external connection about something the student is interested in
9. Allow processing/take-up time
10. Teach social skills explicitly
11. Speak quietly to maintain calmness
12. When establishing expectations come up with a 'wheel of choice'
13. Provide curriculum "choices"
14. Have a growth mindset
15. Use "process praise"
16. Understand the student's strengths, skills and weaknesses
17. Use student interests or topics when planning
18. Model blue brain
19. Ask open questions and reflect back their feelings non-judgmentally
20. Build and use rapport as a way of breaking the ice so the issue can be discussed
21. Be calm and quiet
22. First question when you engage with a student
23. Allow wait time
24. Use visual gesture
25. Get good sleep and be prepared
26. Acknowledge production and achievement
27. Remind students of their strengths
28. Listen to what they have to say
29. Get them involved, hold them accountable
30. Know the student
31. Always search for something to like in every student
32. Remember names
33. Find motivation behind behaviours
34. Reaffirm the way they feel
35. Diffuse confrontation by seeking to understand
36. Follow through with consequences
37. Explain the problem behaviour
38. Use silence and wait
39. Teach students how to plan, how to ask questions, abstract processes, mental models
40. Ask don't tell
41. Allow students to save face
42. Maintain sense of humour
43. Understand the families' resources and dynamics to impact on interventions
44. Pick your battles
45. Stop, look and listen
46. Ask student how you can help them
47. Remember why you became a teacher
48. First seek to understand and not to be understood
49. Be FREDDO (friendly, reliable, enthusiastic, dedicated, determined, organized)
50. Teach the hidden rules of school
51. We are going to have an adult conversation.....
52. Find out about a hobby or a pet to start a conversation with the student
53. Find out what home life is like and show personal interest in what they do after school hours
54. Use a seating plan

55. Give them some responsibility (monitor, job to do)
56. Allocate percentages for work and play
57. Supercoach/Fantasy football/Board games/Video games/Footy tipping
58. Ensure they understand the content you're teaching
59. Make time for them, show they are worth the effort
60. Communication book to go from class to class and home – teachers writes in the book and parent signs, consequence if the book is lost between home and school
61. Keep in the blue zone
62. Listen without judgment
63. Encourage students to take up class roles
64. Postal station- students write positives about another student's behaviour and post it to them. (belonging and positive classroom climate)
65. Model appropriate behaviour
66. Praise when students do anything that is an expectation, no matter how small so they can achieve success
67. Praise for telling the truth regardless of the situation – honesty
68. Be willing to admit you don't know the answer sometimes
69. Start the year with students writing down 3 things that they would like you to know about them – develop the relationship
70. Fairness to avoid choosing particular students – use a cup with names on pop sticks so selection is random and keeps students on task
71. Peer tutoring
72. Forget past mistakes
73. Authoritative not authoritarian
74. Remind, Redirect, Relocate, Reflect – the 4 r's
75. Spend time with students out of the classroom
76. Don't Demand - expect respect!
77. With young children get down to their physical size
78. Have extra resources at hand – pen/paper/ruler/pencil

The *Ten Commandments* of defusing confrontation & conflict.

- 1. Remember that you are the adult in the classroom.** You do not have to win, or save face. Your students, however, are very sensitive about this, as peer opinion matters greatly to them. Avoid humiliating them, or putting them down publicly. You can easily follow up the issue later and the students will ultimately respect you more, understanding that you have dealt with the issue thoughtfully.
- 2. Be in touch with your own emotions/triggers and the seriousness of any situation.** Seek assistance when required. A potentially serious situation could be effectively diffused with more than one adult in the room. It is far better than placing others at risk. If in close proximity to the student, step back for your own safety. De-brief with colleagues regularly and ask for assistance whenever you feel the need, no matter how trivial the issue may seem.
- 3. Count to five before speaking.** Relax and remain calm. As adults who play an important role in our students' lives and the development of their social skills, it is important that we model effective conflict resolution strategies for our students, as they may not experience them elsewhere. To this end monitoring and controlling our own behaviour is essential.
- 4. De-personalise the situation.** This is not your problem. It is not about you. You are not responsible for the student's behaviour - we do not have that much power. Students bring the issues with them, unfortunately often disguising them by poor behaviour and attitude. Try to help them by not 'buying in' to their behaviour becoming angry, upset, or argumentative. Focus on their behaviour and do not get distracted. How to achieve this?

Ignore moans, grunts, arguments, low-level swearing, muttering, non-verbal gestures, smart comments, etc, these are all secondary behaviours not attempting as we once thought to annoy and to distract the teacher from the primary behaviour of concern, but to 'save face' and manage 'shame.' These behaviours are an adolescent's best attempt to mask shame and loss of status which are innate responses to a whole range of feelings and emotions including:

- *letting significant others down or after 'getting caught'*
- *masking a lack of social skills and dialogue or as Piaget called them Schemas*
- *maintaining peer status by opposing the imagined authority figure*
- *separating from the adult figure to self-actualise not matter how poor the decision making may be*
- *impulsive 'red zone' behaviour due to adolescent brain chemistry*

Calmly re-state your request and allow the student time to comply.

- 5. Find a 'safe and positive place' that you can go to.** Deep breathe slowly and relax. Practice positive strategies for personal mental health and allow time for yourself to de-stress and de-brief each day. Don't debrief with friends in the staff room as this may lead to re-traumatisation.

6. Use assertive strategies when speaking to your students.

Restate and redirect:

'I understand , but I'd like you to sit down please'

'I agree, but I need you to sit down'

'I can see that you're upset, but before I can deal with it, you need to sit down'

Choice:

'You can choose to stop talking, or move seats. Its your choice.'

Rule reminders:

'In this class, we have a rule about...'

Allow time for student to comply (save face)

7. Do not attempt to match the increasing volume of your student/class. It is actually more powerful to decrease your volume and speak more and more quietly. Your health and blood pressure will thank you later. Try it!!

8. Remove the student from the audience when possible, or deal with the issues later. Providing the opportunity to save face is vital for respectful communication to develop with teenagers.

9. Take time to establish a set of agreed and negotiated expectations and consequences for your classes. Display on the classroom walls where possible, or give all students a copy to paste in their diary. If your students own the rules and know clearly how things are going to be managed, they are more likely to comply with reasonable requests.

10. Teenagers appreciate and value their relationships with effective teachers. Find out about your students' interests and lives, and attempt to develop positive relationships with your students. In times of crisis it will be these relationships that will effect the outcome.

And finally...maintain and utilise your sense of humour. It will soon be the end of the day and your classes will be accepting of a fresh start each new day no matter how difficult your day has been.

10 Step Framework for Behavioural Interventions

Framework Rationale:

A framework is needed to manage challenging behaviours based on the following demands.

- Without explicit practice it is difficult to intervene objectively and within a reasonable time frame.
- We are usually working and collaborating with a range of specialists and support staff so communication and clarity around roles, responsibilities, and expectations is vital.

1. concern/analyse behaviours	<p>Pinpoint the behaviour/s Define objectively what is of</p> <p>Are the behaviours new or have become chronic? Collect baseline data about the frequency, intensity and setting. What resources can people bring to the table <i>(Student Behaviour Profile & ABC Social Skills Profile of Social Difficulty worksheets)</i></p>
2. Set objectives	<p>What levels or target behaviours do we want to reach? What settings and environments will provide the needed success? <i>(Use the IEP/IBP worksheets & Student Support Group Meeting)</i></p>
3. Plan a strategy	<p>How, what, where, who, when, & which need to be decided. <i>Curriculum and behaviour must be discussed in unison. Teacher skills and attitudes are critical to success (Use the Student Support Group worksheet & S.M.A.R.T strategy)</i></p>
4. Implement	Inform and involve all stakeholders, be explicit
5. Measure progress	Collect data and evidence of what is happening now
6. Evaluate	<p>Is the strategy working? How will we measure this? <i>(Use the Student Support Group worksheet)</i></p>
7. Modify	Change, adapt, consult, share and celebrate
8. Fade	Reduce support gradually to normal conditions
9. Follow up	<p>Check in to make sure the change has been maintained <i>(Use the Student Support Group worksheet & script)</i></p>
10. Reflect	Learn the lessons, adopt best practice and share

A.B.C Behavioural Analysis

To effectively assist VERY difficult students we must first examine the presenting behaviours in an objective way.

- What behaviours does the student need to have to be successful in class/playground/home?
- Does the student have the resources to develop those behaviours? (refer Social Skills Profile of Social Difficulty checklist)
- Will it be helpful to engage the parent/carer. Are resources available through them?
- What resources are available at school/cluster/regional level?
- How will the needed coping/learning behaviours be taught?
- What range of choices can the student make to be successful?
- What will help the student repeat the successful behaviours?
- Is the current school setting the best environment?

When these questions are completed, they provide answers to the strategies

The student needs to be engaged in this process as well. Use tools like a Restorative Think Sheet help explore the choices that they have been making and need to make.

A antecedents

When does the inappropriate behaviour start?

What are the triggers/situations/buttons being pushed?

Where does it occur – playground, classroom, low supervision times, certain teachers or subjects?

What influences and intensifies these behaviours – peers, home, skills, options, modelling etc.?

What is the frequency and intensity of these behaviours in each setting – classroom, home, free time, etc.?

What don't we know about the history and life span development of the student?

What are we doing as the teacher that triggers/reinforces/intensifies the negative behaviour?

B behaviour

What is the behaviour in objective terms? Describe it using as many adjectives as you can. Avoid subjective terms as non-compliant, defiant, immature, disrespectful etc.

What is the frequency of the behaviour? (what days, times, locations etc.)

What is the intensity of the behaviour?

What is said?/What is done?

Who to and with whom?

Are there any signs or symptoms that the negative behaviour is about to happen?

Are there any situations (teachers, times, classes, subjects that the behaviour doesn't happen?)

Have there been times when the student ceases the negative behaviours?

C consequences

What usually happens following the negative behaviours?

Is the recovery time increasing or decreasing?

Does the student understand the impact the behaviour has on others?

Is the student able to be engaged so that they listen to others who were affected?

Does the student express or show remorse, regret, guilt, shame or awareness that they have caused harm to others?

What strategies have had some success?

What would the student benefit from in the short term/longer term

NAME: _____ AGE: _____ DATE: _____

Recorder: _____ Relationship to child: _____

Here are some social skills that people sometimes have difficulty with. Please mark the column you think applies to this child at present.

	Very Difficult	Difficult	Somewhat difficult	Neither Difficult nor Easy	Somewhat easy	Easy	Very Easy
Fundamental Skills	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Eye Contact							
Correct Facial Expression							
Correct Voice Volume							
Correct Voice Tone							
Correct Timing							
Social Initiation Skills	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Using a person's name							
Using farewells							
Greeting							
Introducing self							
Asking for help							
Giving a compliment							
Starting a conversation							
Joining a conversation							
Ending a Conversation							
Exchanging a conversation							
Inviting someone to play							
Introducing others							
Joining in							
Talking about self							
Making a Complaint							

Reference: Coucouvanis, J. (2005). *Super Skills: A social skills group program*. Autism Asperger Publishing Co: Shawnee Mission. &[Page

Student Behaviour Profile

Aims of the behaviour profile:

- How often do the behaviours of concern (BOC) occur? (frequency & intensity)
- Where do the BOC occur? (location)
- With whom do the BOC occur? (peers, teachers, other adults)
- When do the BOC occur? (time)
- What triggers the BOC? (motivation, stimulation, causation etc)
- When is the BOC not an issue? (reality check)
- How do the BOC happen (other issues)

Behaviour Profile

Date: / /

Student: _____

Morning session

Afternoon session

Behaviour of concern	Before break		After break		After lunch		Before dismissal	
	Frequency (use ticks)	Intensity (1-10)	Frequency (use ticks)	Intensity (1-10)	Frequency (use ticks)	Intensity (1-10)	Frequency (use ticks)	Intensity (1-10)

1. Calling out

Location/Setting

2. Hitting/kicking others

Location/Setting

3. Refusal to follow teacher instructions

Location/Setting

4. Other

Location/Setting

Location/settings

- IC in class
- PG playground
- MC movement between classes

- GW group work
- TI teacher instruction

IW individual work

Individual Education Plan

Student Name:	Date of Birth:	Year Level:
School:	School Contact Person:	
Date of Plan:	Review Date:	

Student Support Group Membership:

Accommodation details:

Placement type: Kinship care Case Manager: Residential care Other	Protective Worker: Placement Agency: Case Manager Case manager contact no.
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Services/Agencies (Workers currently involved with the student):

Worker	Role	Agency/ Organisation	Phone	Length of involvement

Resources/programs (physical resources and programs currently offered to the student):

Program for Students with Disability Yes No

Resource/ program	Purpose	Funding source	Contact person & phone no.	Length of availability

Understanding the student – resources and riches.

Student name: _____

Date/...../.....

Student's skills, strengths, preferences, abilities and motivations:

Academic progress – general remarks re overall strengths and areas for development:

Social skills and relationships

Attendance and Engagement: (level of attendance – regular, irregular and non-attendance and level of engagement in school activities).

INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION ACTION PLAN

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

	Goals	Barriers to Achieving Goal	Strengths Related to Goal	Strategies to Achieve Goal	Actions & Time-Line
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

..... Review Date:

INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOUR PLAN

Student:

School:

Date of initial meeting:

Year level:

Class/Tutor/Teacher:

Date for review:

Big Picture Objective:

Strengths & interests & Talents:

Behaviours of concern:

Specific Behaviours for this plan: (no more than 2)

Triggers/Motivation/Antecedents:

STRATEGY FOR BEHAVIOUR CHANGE IN THE CLASSROOM – SHORT TERM/SPECIFIC

STRATEGY FOR BEHAVIOUR CHANGE IN THE CLASSROOM – LONGER TERM/BROAD

RELIEF VALVE & EMERGENCY PLAN:

COMMUNICATION & WHO NEEDS TO KNOW PLAN

SUPPORTERS & STAKEHOLDERS PRESENT AT THIS MEETING:

NAME:

SIGNATURE:

PRESENT/ABSENT:

S.M.A.R.T Support Plan

Name of child: Meredith

Age: 8

Class: 3B

Who is involved in the plan: Pam (Meredith's Teacher), Gina (Deputy Principal), Relief teachers, Sally (Meredith's mother)

From the following list, identify the most relevant goals that you will help this child achieve in relation to addressing the impact of their experiences of trauma.

Experiencing calm	Meredith will use a three step process to help her feel less distressed when she hears or sees conflict between other children
Emotional literacy & regulation	Meredith will more accurately describe how she is feeling
Memory	School personnel will be more aware of the triggers that evoke distress in Meredith and know how to respond to her positively
Relationships with peers	Meredith will develop assertive skills to manage conflict with peers
Relationships with adults	Meredith will seek out Gina when she is feeling uncomfortable or distressed
Messages about self identity	Meredith will believe that she can adapt to changes at school

Identify a SMART PRACTICE strategy that you will implement to help the child achieve these goals and who will be involved in the strategy.

Who will be involved	SMART PRACTICE Strategy
Pam, Gina	Prepare Meredith for changes to class room teacher as early as practicable
Pam, Gina, Sally	Develop three steps for feeling happier with Meredith. Rehearse the steps at school and home when Meredith is feeling relaxed and calm. Provide visual cue to help Meredith remember three steps. Re-affirm her using the steps whenever she does.
Pam, Gina, Sally	Keep a diary of the triggers that evoke feelings of distress for Meredith. Talk about these triggers with Meredith to see what they mean to her. Give Meredith extra support when a trigger occurs.

Date for reviewing the outcomes: Every two months **Who is the co-ordinator of the plan:** Gina

(From the Australian Childhood Foundation)

Trauma Informed Practice

When trying to understand the complex behaviours of VERY difficult students who have experienced abuse and neglect, we need to integrate the theories of trauma, attachment and life-span development.

Recovery from trauma needs the context of healing relationships and children feeling safe.

Because children rely so much on the adults around them, they are even more intensely affected when it is these adults who cause harm to them. Page 13

(from Making Space for Learning: Australian Childhood Foundation)

The Rules:

- The childhood experience of abuse and neglect results in trauma and dysfunctional attachment.
- Functional attachment is being loved and about feeling good and worthy of that love
- Trauma can result in impaired brain development leading to a limited understanding of the social world, the rules of relationships and how to behave proactively.
- Childhood development is mostly about play and exploration with an attachment figure that soothes and stimulates.
- We need to develop a self-regulating biological framework to manage stress and to learn about our emotional and physical states.
- Chronic childhood trauma interferes with the capacity to integrate cognitive, emotional and sensory information into a cohesive whole – the stage is set of irrelevant and illogical responses to stress.
- Our brains are hard wired to respond to threat first and foremost – we go on alert.

Simple trauma

Simple trauma is overwhelming and painful. It involves experiences of events that are life threatening and/or have the potential to cause serious injury. They are often single incidents. They are shorter in duration often involving a discrete crisis. They have less stigma associated with them. There is no societal blaming of the victims. There are also generally supportive and helpful community responses to the people who have experienced the trauma. Simple trauma includes the experience of being in car accidents, house fires, bushfires, earthquakes and cyclones.

Complex trauma

Complex trauma involves interpersonal threat, violence and violation. It generally includes multiple incidents and is therefore longer in duration. It is almost always associated with stigma and a sense of shame experienced by its victims. Community responses are often not helpful, further blaming and disempowering the targets of the violence. Individuals who experience complex trauma often feel disconnected from the support of others. They do not feel like they belong to a group with a shared connection. They experience isolation and sometimes a sense of betrayal. Examples of complex trauma include experiences of child abuse, bullying, domestic violence, rape, war and imprisonment.

Developmental trauma

Children and young people are very vulnerable to the effects of trauma because of their brain's developmental immaturity. Because a child's brain is so malleable, the impact of trauma is faster to manifest. It also leaves deeper tracks of damage. Children's development can slow down or be impaired following trauma. Trauma can often lead to children experiencing splintered development. Because children rely so much on the adults around them, they are even more intensely affected when it is these adults who cause harm to them. The trauma associated with experiences of interpersonal violence undermines the very resource that can help children recover – the stability and predictability of their connections with others. Developmental trauma includes children who are neglected, abused, forced to

live with family violence or experience high parental conflict in the context of separation or divorce.

For traumatised children and young people, the best option is to stay alert to danger and consider any change, even positive change, a possible threat.

Melissa's story

Melissa is an 18-month-old girl. Like all toddlers, she likes to explore her world. One day she toddles over to a plug and is just about to stick a fork into it. Her mother shouts at Melissa "No Melissa! That is naughty! Stop it!"

Melissa immediately bursts into tears and hangs her head in shame. She is not used to seeing her mother being angry with her. Melissa's mother picks her up and comforts her. She explains that she still loves her, but that it is very dangerous to play with power points and she must not do it again. Eventually Melissa calms down, jumps off her mother's lap and happily plays with her toys.

This pattern repeats itself, as Melissa gets older.

Jacob's story

Jacob is an 18-month-old boy. He too is beginning to explore his world. He reaches up to the table where there is a full cup of milk and pulls it down. It spills all over him and the floor. Jacob's mother immediately leaps up and starts screaming at him. "You are a clumsy child! That is very naughty of you. You are always causing a mess that I need to clean up."

Jacob immediately bursts into tears and hangs his head in shame. His mother leaves him to cry while she cleans up the milk. She does not comfort Jacob and Jacob is left on his own.

This pattern repeats itself, as Jacob gets older.

When he is older, Jacob is unlikely to own up to anything that he does wrong. He would not be able to empathise how someone else may have been hurt by his behaviours in the playground. Jacob would feel terrible. Disciplinary strategies like time out or being sent to the principal's office will probably only exacerbate his sense of shame.

3 Case Studies from the Australian Childhood Foundation Making Space for Learning.

Catherine, Justin and Cara are three children who have not experienced consistent and safe experiences of connection.

Catherine's story

As a child growing up, Catherine was not given the opportunity to be explorative. Because Catherine's mother experienced sexual abuse from her uncle from a very young age, she did not trust the world and limited Catherine's contact with others. Catherine's mother has given the message to Catherine that the world is unsafe. As a result, Catherine is a shy, clingy and introverted child.

Justin's story

Justin was placed in state care at age 6 months, because his parents were not fit to look after him. Justin was in and out of foster homes and different care arrangements until the age of 5. As an 8-year-old, Justin has extremely challenging behaviour. He will not listen to his teachers and does not follow the school rules. He has no real circle of friends, choosing to be by himself during recess and lunchtime.

Cara's story

Cara's mother suffered bi polar disorder and her father was an alcoholic and in and out of jail while she was growing up. When Cara's mother was in a depressive state, she did not have the energy or motivation to meet Cara's needs. When Cara went to her mother for help, she was told to 'go away'. She would spend a lot of time crying alone in her room. On the rare occasions Cara's mother was happier, she went out leaving Cara in the care of a range of baby sitters. At school, Cara is quiet but occasionally becomes very aggressive. She has explosive anger that appears to come from nowhere. Cara has been known to engage in cutting her arms with a razor blade. She does not want to be involved in any counseling.

Case Study 1 - Catherine

Catherine has internalised a working model of relationships that alert her to the constant possibility that others might harm her. Her threshold for danger is set very low. She is likely to react to even small challenges with fear. She will not have a sense of herself achieving or developing new skills. As a result, she will probably have low self-esteem. This will affect her motivation to learn and engage with school activities.

Case Study 2 - Justine

Justin has few or no positive working models about the world at all. He has not experienced people being in touch with his feelings. He has had only limited and inconsistent responses to his feelings. He has experienced little comfort. Relationships are not a resource for Justin – they are a source of distress and pain. He finds it difficult to internalise rules. He has no understanding or awareness of his own reactions. He has even less empathy for others.

Case Study 3 - Cara

Cara has had her needs ignored even though she has had her mother physically present with her throughout her life. She has internalised the message that relationships are conditional on the mood of others. She has not felt validated. She has experienced herself as the lowest priority in her parents' life, second to alcohol, crime and personal satisfaction. Cara does not feel much a lot of the time. When she does, she cannot manage those feelings. She does not know how to express her internal feelings of distress or how to seek relief or comfort. Catherine uses self harm as a way of externalising her internal pain. She will not attend counselling because she fears intimacy and making herself even more vulnerable in a relationship with an adult.

Relationships make all the difference to traumatised children and young people

The antidote for traumatised children who are suffering the consequences of poor connective experiences is to engage in relationships with them that are positive and sustaining. These compensatory relational experiences centre around the following key features:

- there is a consistent approach to communication;
- children have their feelings acknowledged and validated by adults;
- children experience adults as being protective towards them; and,
- children experience adults trying to take care of them even when their behaviour is challenging and complex.

The quality of relational experiences for traumatised children provides opportunities for different

working models to emerge. These working models hold the hope for children that not all adults are the same. As they experience different relational exchanges, children's brains begin to set down alternative neuronal pathways which integrate different kinds of feelings and memories. Over time, as these experiences are repeated, they become the working templates that children apply to social exchanges and new relationships. The experience of one significant relationship which has these qualities for children can make the world of difference to them.

Supporting children to re-experience relationships differently is the key to trauma recovery and change.

(adapted Australian Childhood Foundation S.M.A.R.T resource)

Working with S.M.A.R.T students

Four domains:

- Memory
- Emotion
- Connection
- Representation

These domains form the basis for understanding and for preparing the strategies to support traumatised students in their school and other learning environments.

Domain	Impact on learning	Impact on behaviour	Impact on social relationships
Emotional	Children may find it difficult to engage in feelings based activities. Traumatised students may have short term memory problems making it difficult to retain	Children may struggle to understand the impact of their behaviour on others. Strong templates which are unhelpful in school setting may be transferred to the school environment. If students experience a threat, their reaction may be at the intensity of the original traumatic experience.	Traumatised children may be upset by other children's emotional outbursts. Diminished language function makes it difficult for students to communicate with peers. Students may find social situations difficult because the social skills are not well developed.
Memory	information/instructions . Students may find it difficult to engage in narrative based learning.		
Connection	Students may not ask for help in a learning based situation because they have learned not to rely on adults. Due to being in a hyper aroused or hypo aroused state, students may not be in the present enough to learn.	Student's behaviour may be difficult and unrewarding for you to manage. Behaviours may include what are described as 'over-reactions' or emotional outbursts.	Peers may be frightened by traumatised student's extreme behaviour or lack of empathy. Students may be too exhausted to engage with peers – their focus in on survival.
Representation	Students may have negative perceptions of themselves as learners.	A state of chaos is more familiar and comfortable for traumatised students. The student may have negative beliefs about their capacity to learn and produce work i.e. my belief about myself is that "I am stupid", "I am dumb," "I can't do it", therefore we may see avoidant or disruptive behaviours in class.	The concept of friendship is mediated by adult relationship Traumatised student will often use inappropriate behaviour to make friends.

WHAT CAN SCHOOLS DO?

Transforming experiences of trauma can take time for children. It requires consistency and perseverance particularly from pivotal adults around them. It is important to recognise that the school environment provides critical opportunities for support and change for children. School personnel offer traumatised children the chance to put one more green leaf on their experience of recovery.

Student Support Group Meeting Record

Student: _____

School: _____

Date:/...../.....

Purpose of meeting:

Develop Individual Education Plan (IEP)

Review IEP/Progress

Requested meeting (please specify).....

Other (please specify).....

Program Support Group members

	Name	Present
Apology		
1. Student	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>		
2. Parent	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>		
3. Caregiver	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>		
4. Principal/nominee	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>		
5. Parent advocate	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>		
6. Case manager	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>		
7. Teacher	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>		

Student Engagement and Well-Being Policy

8. Guidance officer/SSSO _____
9. Support service worker _____
10. Other _____

Key Issues discussed at meeting

Current Individual Education Plan (please attach)



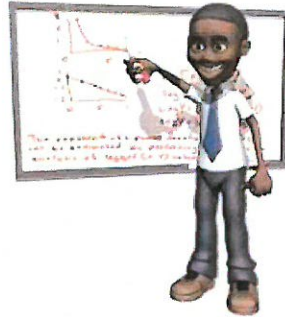
Working with parents

.....they send us the best kids that they have.

- Build relationships early – welcome, meet, affirm and inform
 - Establish expectations and the ground rules early – make no assumptions, advertise clearly, and know what the bottom line is.
 - Inform them of triumphs and trials – they are key stakeholders
 - Handle complaints professionally and courteously – even under fire
 - Use telephone, email and interview scripts – speak from a policy perspective
 - Keep the focus on outcomes and support – what needs to happen to repair and engage (use Restorative Practice dialogue)
 - What did you first think when you heard about what happened?
 - As a parent, what was the worst thing for you?
 - What needs to happen so that things improve?
 - What would be a good outcome for everybody?
 - Address problems when they are minor – no surprises
 - Support parents with skills and strategies - `we are all in this together`
 - Understand parents role and status and work from there
- When the inevitable happens:**
- Debrief with a trusted colleague – avoid re-victimisation and understand that there will be some PTSD
 - Although it is easy to say – it`s not personal
 - Review the process and do some tweaking if needed
-

Autism: Teaching Students with Aspergers (SWA): 32 Tips for Educators

(adapted from Eltham High School)



In the 1990s, specific diagnostic criteria for Aspergers were included in the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV). In general, DSM-IV bases diagnostic criteria for Aspergers on the following:

- Absence of a significant delay in cognitive development
- Absence of general delay in language development
- Impairment of social communication
- Impairment of social imagination, flexible thinking and imaginative play
- Impairment of social interaction

The most recent Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-V) has positioned Aspergers within the Autism spectrum as 'high functioning' Autism (HFA). This is a contentious issues due to alleged conflicts of interest between the DSM panel and international drug companies.

In the classroom, HFA may manifest in behaviours which include, but are not limited to:

- Average to excellent memorization skills
- Clumsy walk
- Conversations and activities only center around themselves
- Inability to usually socially appropriate tone and/or volume of speech
- Lack of common sense and/or "street smarts"
- Lack of empathy for others
- Lack of facial expressions
- May be teased, bullied or isolated by peers
- May excel in areas such as math or spelling
- Often very verbal
- Poor eye contact
- Talking about only one subject/topic and missing the cues that others are bored

Research reveals that the prevalence of HFA is approximately 1 in 300, affecting boys to girls with a ratio of 10:1. The general features exhibited by kids diagnosed with HFA are similar to the general features exhibited by kids who have been clinically diagnosed with Autism and are described as having "high functioning

autism".

Children with HFA exhibit difficulty in appropriately processing in-coming information. Their brain's ability to take in, store, and use information is significantly different than other developing children. HFA students can present a challenge for the most experienced teacher. But on a positive note, the HFA student can contribute significantly to the classroom because he/she is often extremely creative and provides a different perspective to the subject matter in question.

Here are some tips for teachers and parents to consider. Much of the following information is also relevant for consideration in working with children identified as having "high functioning autism":

1. Accommodate the HFA student's "visual learning" style. Much of the information presented in class is oral, but SWA's may have difficulty with processing oral language quickly, so presenting information visually may be more helpful. Use of visual methods of teaching, as well as visual support strategies, should always be incorporated to help the child with HFA better understand his environment.
 2. HFA students can "blurt out" their thoughts as statements of fact, resulting in an appearance of insensitivity and lack of tact. However, these kids typically do not understand that some thoughts and ideas can - and should - be represented internally, and thus should not be spoken out loud. Thus, encourage the SWA to whisper, rather than speak his thoughts out loud. Encourage him to "think it – don't say it". Role playing, audio/video taping and social scripting can be used to teach the student how to initially identify what thoughts should be represented internally, versus externally
 3. Avoid demanding that the HFA student maintain eye contact with you. The SWA experiences difficulty with eye contact. Limited eye contact is a part of the disability and should not be confused with "inattention."
 4. Don't require the HFA student to "show" his work. Many teachers require students to "show their work" (e.g., to illustrate how they got the answer to a math problem). Since SWA's are visual learners, they picture how to solve the problem in their heads. The requirement of "showing work" does not make sense to them, and as a result, is quite difficult because it involves language skills that the SWA may not have.
 5. Don't assume that when the HFA student "looks off into space" that he is not listening. What appears to the teacher to be "lack of attention" may not be that at all. In fact, the SWA who is doodling or staring off may actually be trying to focus and may be unaware that he is conveying to the teacher that he's not listening. Simply ask the HFA student a question related to the topic in question to check if he is actually listening.
 6. Due to physical coordination problems, ensure that the SWA is in an adaptive
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educational program rather than a general PE class.

7. Enforce bullying rules and minimize teasing.

8. Ensure the environment is safe and as predictable as possible.

9. For class lectures, peer buddies may be needed to take notes. NCR paper can be used or the buddy's notes could be copied on a copy machine.

10. Get permission to speak with any mental health practitioner who is involved with your HFA student. This professional can help you gain a better understanding of the disorder and work with you to develop effective classroom interventions. In turn, provide the mental health professional beneficial insight into how the student acts in an academic setting, which can help the professional treat the child in a more holistic manner.

11. Give the HFA student enough time to respond in order to allow for possible auditory processing difficulties before repeating or rephrasing the question or directive. The student can be taught appropriate phrases to indicate the need for additional processing time, (e.g., "Just a minute please").

12. Give the SWA an outlet for his "fixations" (e.g., allow him to turn-in work on his obsession/topic of interest for extra credit).

13. Help with transitions. SWA's have difficulty moving from one activity to the next. If a typical school day is loaded with many transitions, the student's anxiety level will likely increase. Thus, he may need to be coached through the transition. Use visual schedules and/or role-playing to help the child prepare for moving on to the next task. Keep transitions the same for as many activities as possible.

14. If the student becomes overwhelmed with frustration and experiences a "meltdown," remain calm and use a normal tone of voice to help him deal with his stress.

15. Limit obsessive behaviour about topics by setting a specific time in which the SWA can ask the focused questions. Do not allow him to keep asking questions or discussing a particular topic after the allotted time. Provide a written answer to repetitive questions asked by the student. When the child repeats the question, he can be referred to the written answer, which may assist in comprehension, and thus decrease the occurrence of the repetitive question asking.

16. Make allowances for sensory issues. HFA students are often distracted by things in the environment that limit their ability to focus (e.g., breeze from an open window feels like a gust of wind; bright sunshine pouring through the window is blinding; smell of food from the cafeteria makes them feel sick; ticking of a clock seems like the beating of a drum). This sensory overload can be overwhelming and often results in an inability to focus. The inability to focus can result in a level of frustration, and to cope with such frustration, the child may choose to engage in

some form of self-soothing behaviour (e.g., repeatedly tapping a pencil on the desk; tapping both feet on the floor like a drum). What appears disruptive to everyone else may actually be the student's way of trying to re-establish focus and concentration on the subject at hand. Take time to evaluate the classroom in terms of sensory stimulation and how the environment affects the SWA. Modify the classroom as needed. In addition, teach the SWA some self-soothing techniques that are not as disruptive to the classroom (e.g., squeezing a squishy ball; taking a time-out to get a drink of water).

17. Many HFA students are overwhelmed by even the smallest of changes and are highly sensitive to their environments and rituals. When these are thrown off, they can become very anxious and worry obsessively about changes in routine. Unpredictability may occur during less structured activities or times of the day (e.g., recess, lunch, free time, PE, bus rides, music class, art class, assemblies, field trips, substitute teachers, delayed start, early dismissal, etc.). Thus, develop a structured classroom with routines and write down the daily routine for the HFA student. A daily routine is critical.

18. Positive reinforcement works well for HFA students. When he accomplishes a desired behaviour, compliment then and praise him. Even simple social interactions should be praised.

19. Provide an escape route for the HFA student whenever he is beginning to "meltdown" (i.e., he is allowed to take a time-out in an unoccupied room or a quiet corner).

20. Simplify lessons to ensure the HFA student understands what is being said. It is common for an SWA to simply repeat what is being taught without any understanding of the concept.

21. Teach the HFA student relaxation techniques that he can use to decrease anxiety levels (e.g., "Take a big breath and count to ten"). These steps can be written down as visual "cue" cards for the SWA to carry with him and refer to as needed.

22. Teachers should receive training on the characteristics and educational needs of HFA students. It is critical to understand the unique features associated with this disorder. Understand that children with HFA have a developmental disability, which causes them to respond and behave in a way that is different from other students. The behaviours exhibited by SWA's should not be misinterpreted as purposeful or manipulative behaviours. Also, uncover the student's strengths and needs prior to actually working with him.

23. Teach social skills. The HFA student can exhibit the need to take control and direct social situations according to his own limited social rules and social understanding. Although he may be able to initiate interactions with other students, these interactions are typically considered to be "on his own terms" and appear to be very egocentric (i.e., they relate primarily to the child's specific wants,

needs, desires and interests and do not constitute a truly interactive, give-and-take social relation with his peer). Thus, teach appropriate social interactions. Show the SWA how his words and actions impact others. Many children with HFA do not understand some of the common social interactions and social contacts. It is important as a teacher to realize that the child may not understand some jokes and may be unable to interpret body language. Teach the child about social cues and help them to make friends. Most children with HFA do want to have friends, but do not know how to make them. Teachers can help by teaching the student what social cues mean. The use of "social stories" and "social scripts" can provide the HFA child with visual information and strategies that will improve his understanding of various social situations. Comic strip conversations can be used as a tool to visually clarify communicative social interactions and emotional relations through the use of simple line drawings. A buddy system can be helpful; in social situations, the buddy can help the HFA student handle certain situations.

24. Try to seat the SWA at the front of the class so you can instruct him directly and continuously. Since concentration is often a problem for HFA students, a system of "nonverbal reminders" to pay attention is important (e.g., a pat on the shoulder).

25. Use an assignment notebook consistently.

26. Use color-coded notebooks to match academic books.

27. Use of a "finish later" folder or box may be helpful. Even though the HFA student may be verbally reminded that he can finish his math worksheet after recess, this information will not be processed as readily as through the use of a visual strategy, such as a "finish later" folder or box.

28. Using a visual calendar will give the HFA student information regarding upcoming events. When the SWA asks when a particular event will occur, he can easily be referred to the visual calendar, which presents the information through the visual mode that the student can more readily understand (e.g., class field trip, swimming lessons, etc.).

29. Use of an "Assignments to be Completed" folder as well as a "Completed Assignments" folder is recommended.

30. Use the HFA student's "limited range of interest" to his advantage. Often times, SWA's focus all their attention on just one particular object or subject; therefore, they may fail to focus on what information the teacher is presenting. Thus, the teacher may want to try to establish some connection between the child's object/subject of interest and the area of study (e.g., if a child is interested in guns, he can learn reading and writing skills through researching and writing a report on weapons used during WWII). The possibilities for instruction are endless. Taking some time to devise a creative 'lesson plan' will go far in establishing and keeping the SWA's interest in new subject matter.

31. Work with the other students to develop an environment of tolerance and

acceptance for the HFA student. Some students can be educated about HFA and helped to understand what to expect from their SWA peer. Classmates of the HFA child should be told about the unique learning and behavioural mannerisms associated with HFA (parent permission must always be given prior to such peer training).

32. Work with the parents to learn the warning signs that the SWA is becoming frustrated and about to experience a "meltdown".

The HFA child, while on the higher end of the autism scale, has special needs that must be addressed. Although the condition is quite challenging, a curriculum designed to assist this student will go a long way to allowing him to cope with his various limitations.

Rules of Thumb for Autistic Students (source anon)

Children on the Autism Spectrum do not generally develop an innate conscience or what is sometimes called empathy. They have difficulty reading the social-emotional behaviour of other people.

Successful functioning in their community may depend on the rules and patterns of expected/needed behaviours being drilled and modelled from early age as a rote process in each setting with each person. (Applied Behaviour Analysis may be helpful). Children on the spectrum may develop patterns of unusual, sometimes bizarre and dangerous behaviour that is very challenging but not a reflection of deliberate anti social intent.

It's not that they don't care.....they cannot care. Their behaviour is utilitarian and functional.

Rules of Thumb:

- Do not give instructions in a conversational manner – the meaning may get lost.
 - Do not rush instructions – give processing time and don't expect an instant response, allow time to process.
 - Stand still and give the instruction – walking or being on the move makes processing too difficult
 - Use the KISS principle
 - Give instructions simply and without any body language.
 - Don't give instructions from afar, the background noise and movement may confuse.
 - Begin instructions with the student's name and then the command "stop and look at me", wait until the student responds and makes eye contact.
 - Give action based instructions that are bite sized.
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Resources and References:

Parenting for a Peaceful World

Robin Grille'

Framework for Understanding Poverty: 10 actions to educate students

Ruby Payne MD

Queen Bees and Wannabees

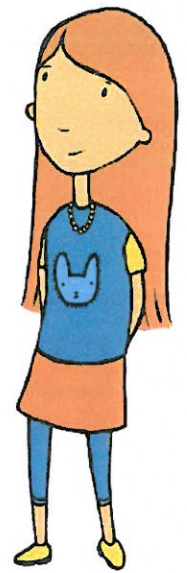
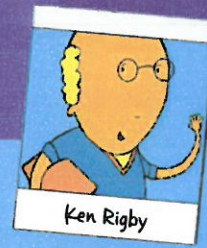
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Appendix B

Appendix C



The 6 Methods of Intervention

The traditional approach of dealing with bullying is to apply sanctions to students who have engaged in such behaviour.

This approach typically involves the development and communication of clear rules about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, and reasonable consequences for breaking the rules. These consequences generally involve punishment of the student who is considered responsible for the bullying behaviour.

Rationale

The rationale behind this approach is that applying sanctions or punishment will:

- Deter the student responsible for the bullying behaviour from continuing to behave in an unacceptable manner.
- Send a clear message to the rest of the student body that bullying is not acceptable and to deter them from bullying.
- Demonstrate to children who have bullied someone that they deserve to be punished (a traditional belief).



Application

The traditional approach can be appropriately and most successfully implemented as follows:

1. Clear standards of behaviour are developed and communicated, including the consequences or punishment of unacceptable behaviour. This may include verbal reprimands, loss of privileges, detention, internal/external suspension and referral to the police.
2. Classroom discussions are held at which students discuss or identify the rules that should govern how they relate to others.
3. Criteria are established to define the grounds for which sanctions are justified, for example in cases of severe or criminal bullying, and following repeated non-compliance or when non-punitive approaches have proved unsuccessful.
4. The entire school community, students, staff and parents, are aware of the criteria and the grounds for applying sanctions and these are applied consistently and not in an arbitrary or vindictive manner.
5. The disciplinary action is taken in relation to the unacceptable behaviour of the perpetrators rather than any personal or social characteristics.

The 6 Methods of Intervention

6. Serious talks are undertaken with the student—and where warranted with the parent(s) or guardian(s)—explaining why the disciplinary action was taken.
7. Careful monitoring of the student's future behaviour is needed to ensure that the bullying has really stopped and has not merely become more subtle or covert.
8. Opportunity is sought to praise and reward any subsequent pro-social behaviour.

Limitations

The traditional approach to addressing bullying has several limitations:

- The use of direct sanctions may produce compliance but not necessarily a change in an underlying attitude. In itself, it typically does not promote self-reflection or encourage a 'change of heart.'
- A high level of surveillance is required to ensure the target's safety and this can be difficult for a school to achieve.
- The threat of further punishment for non-compliance may not be as powerful as positive reinforcement provided by supporters of the bully or by the bully's own enjoyment in continuing to dominate a victim.
- Older children are less inclined to accept the authority of teachers and are less likely to be deterred by the threat of sanctions.
- If the punishment is perceived as vindictive or unfair the student may feel highly resentful and motivated to act antisocially.

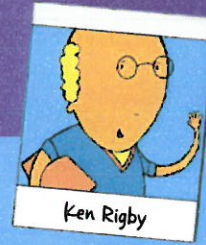
Conclusion

Despite the risks involved in applying sanctions in cases of bullying, this approach can be justified and effective. When sensible steps are taken to minimise the risk of unintended and counter-productive results. There is now clear evidence that this approach is still employed routinely in most cases of bullying in schools; however, it has **not** been reported as more effective in stopping bullying than the use of restorative practices and non-punitive strategies.

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- Rigby, K. (2010). *Bullying interventions in schools: Six basic methods* (See Chapter 4: 'The Traditional Disciplinary Approach'): Camberwell, ACER. Republished (2010): Boston/Wiley (American edition).
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The 6 Methods of Intervention

Restorative practice is a strategy that seeks to repair relationships that have been damaged, including those damaged through bullying.

It does this by bringing about a sense of remorse and restorative action on the part of the offender and forgiveness by the victim.

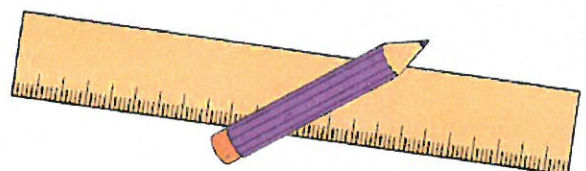
Rationale

The rationale behind this approach is that when offenders reflect upon their harm to victims:

- they become remorseful and act restoratively.
- practitioners can focus on the unacceptable behaviour of offenders rather than their moral character.
- this can lead to healthier interpersonal relations among members of the school community and more effective learning.

Application

1. Restorative practices can be undertaken in a variety of forums. It may be conducted with varying degrees of formality and may include just those students most directly involved in bullying or in some circumstances a whole class. 'Community Conferences' include supportive third parties such as friends, families and possibly a community figure such as a police community liaison officer. This forum is used to address concerns of both individuals and the wider community.
2. The work in schools with cases of bullying is commonly guided by flashcards or an agreed script which direct practitioners to ask the bully to describe what happened and to reflect on what harm it has done. The victim is asked to say how she or he has been affected and what needs to be done to put things right.
3. Feelings of shame that are elicited need to lead to re-integration into the community rather than a sense of being alienated and stigmatised.
4. In the spirit of personal responsibility, forgiveness and commitment to positive future behaviour, both the target and the bully express their acceptance of the proposed solution/s and discuss what can be done to prevent a recurrence.
5. The situation is then monitored by school staff and further intervention occurs if the situation does not improve.
6. In some cases considerable work is done behind the scenes to prepare the participants including bystanders and others to ensure a positive outcome.



The 6 Methods of Intervention

Limitations

- Inadequately trained practitioners or badly executed procedures may make matters worse. Any perceived personal hostility on the part of the practitioner can result in the offender feeling resentment rather than contrition and incline him or her to act anti-socially. This must be avoided.
- Strong support in the school community for this approach may sometimes be lacking.
- Some offenders may pretend to be remorseful and deceive the practitioner into thinking the matter has been resolved.
- Being integrated into the school community may have little appeal to some children who bully, especially when their own social network provides them with more attractive support.

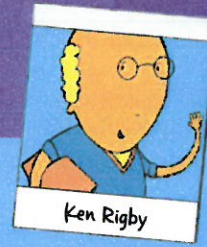
Conclusion

Used appropriately by trained practitioners, restorative practices can produce excellent results, especially if its use is supported by the entire school community. It is particularly effective when the offender can be induced, without undue pressure, to experience genuine remorse to the satisfaction of those offended. The most detailed evaluation of its effectiveness in schools in England indicates that it is successful in stopping cases of bullying from continuing in about two cases in three.

References

- Morrison, B. (2007). Restoring Safe School Communities: A Whole School Response to Bullying, Violence and Alienation. Sydney: Federation Press.
- Rigby, K. (2010.) Bullying interventions in schools: Six basic methods (See Chapter 7: 'Restorative Justice'): Camberwell, ACER. Republished (2012) : Boston/Wiley (American edition).
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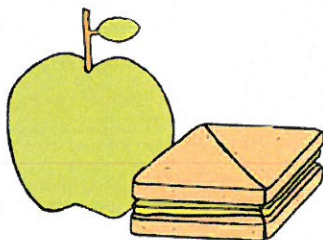
The 6 Methods of Intervention

The strategy of **strengthening the target** seeks to improve the capacity of the intended target to cope more effectively with bullying.

Rationale

The rationale behind this approach is that by improving the target's coping skills:

- The targeted person can be helped to acquire the capacity to deal effectively with the threat of being bullied by someone, without any external intervention.
- The power imbalance inherent in the bullying situation can be redressed.
- The school may not have to take action against the aggressor.
- The self-esteem of the targeted child improves and he or she is likely to be able to cope better with other potential aggressors.



Application

The strengthening the target approach can be appropriately and most successfully implemented as follows:

1. A case is chosen in which a child is being verbally bullied and may be helped by some advice or training in how to deal with the situation.
2. The child is approached and the situation carefully examined. Suggestions are made as to how he or she might act to improve matters by learning how to respond more effectively.
3. If the child is interested, advice and training are provided. This may include assertiveness training, friendship-making, rational emotive education (REE), the promotion of emotional intelligence and the use of a 'fogging' technique.
4. The situation is carefully monitored.

The 6 Methods of Intervention

Limitations

- This approach should not be used in cases where physical violence is threatened, or where the imbalance of power is great (as is the case when bullied by a group).
- Some targeted children may be unable (due to extreme vulnerability) or unwilling to learn techniques that could help them to resist being bullied.
- Helping some targeted children to acquire appropriate skills can be time-consuming and challenging to would-be trainers.
- Acquiring martial arts skills may exacerbate the problem, especially when the victim is inclined to use such skills in order to discourage verbal harassment.
- This approach may address only one side of the problem and ignore factors that may be contributing to the bullying, such as family dysfunction and discriminatory attitudes.
- Some teachers do not feel comfortable with assisting the target to stand up to the bully as they believe that targets are already doing their best and would resist if they could.

Conclusion

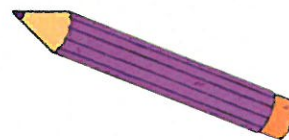
In selected cases and with appropriate training, this approach can be useful, especially as an adjunct to other approaches. However, at this stage there has been no reported evaluation of its general effectiveness.

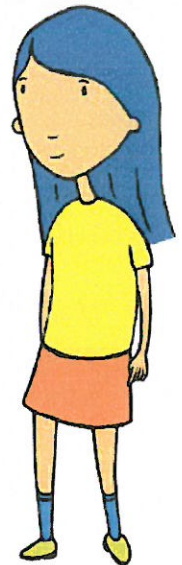
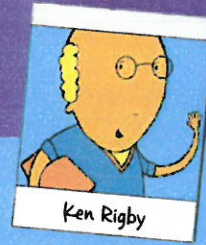
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The 6 Methods of Intervention

The **mediation** approach used by schools requires students to be voluntarily involved in the dispute resolution process.

Under some circumstances this method may be used to address conflict that may involve bullying.

Rationale

The rationale behind this approach is that by engaging a trained mediator, students can:

- Partake in a successful problem-solving activity to address cases of bullying.
- Take responsibility for their behaviour and explore the underlying reasons for the conflict or grievance.
- Be helped to reach agreement on solutions that are reasonable and fair, even if it has involved compromise on both sides.
- Devise solutions that are better and more sustainable than if they were coerced.
- Participate in a mediation session that is a valuable learning experience that can help one in resolving interpersonal problems later.

2. Suitably trained mediators (staff members and/or peers) meet with interested students who are seeking help over a dispute that could involve bullying. Mediation may occur on the spot where the conflict is taking place or may be scheduled for a later time. If the issue is more complicated or serious it should be in a private place where there will be no interruptions.
3. The purpose and ground rules of mediation are discussed.
4. Both sides are enabled to tell their story in turn and without interruption.
5. Concerns are clarified and an agenda is set by the mediator together with participants.
6. A solution is reached through discussion and agreed to by the parties, commonly through a process of compromise and without apportioning any blame for the dispute.
7. A shared agreement is confirmed and sometimes written down.
8. At any stage, students have the right to walk away from the mediation process if they feel it is not being constructive.
9. The situation is then carefully monitored. Techniques may be refined and improved when necessary.

Application

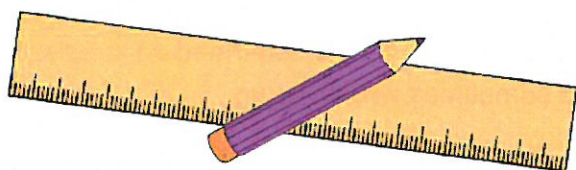
Mediation can be appropriately and most successfully implemented as follows:

1. Students are informed about the mediation service within a school and invited to seek its help if they so wish.

The 6 Methods of Intervention

Limitations

- Most importantly, bully/victim problems cannot be addressed using this method if either of the participants is not prepared to enter into the process. Quite commonly the 'bully' is not willing to participate.
- Peer mediation is not considered appropriate for cases of severe bullying or issues involving drugs, alcohol or sexual assault, for which schools should have alternative processes and procedures which may involve contacting the police.
- Peer mediation is difficult to conduct if there is an extreme power imbalance. This can greatly disadvantage the target when attempting to negotiate a position.
- The mediator may feel unable to be neutral when the bullying is very unfair and is causing great distress.
- Well-developed skills are needed as in active listening, facilitating constructive interactions and neutral reframing of information on the part of the mediator, and these may be unavailable in a school.



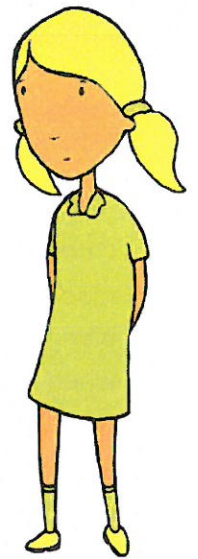
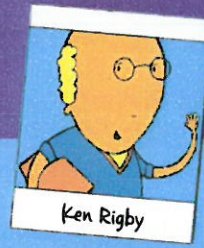
Conclusion

Mediation is an ideal way of ending a conflict which may include bullying or give rise to bullying. When expert mediators are available and the participants sincerely wish to resolve a dispute that is fuelling the conflict, there is good evidence that mediation can resolve such conflicts. However, the circumstances in which mediation can resolve serious cases of bullying in a school are thought to be severely limited.

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The 6 Methods of Intervention

The Method of Shared Concern (or Pikas method) is a non-punitive multi-stage strategy that addresses group bullying.

It facilitates the emergence of a solution to a bully/victim problem through the use of a series of interviews and discussions with the parties involved.

Rationale

The rationale behind using the Method of Shared Concern is as follows:

- Bullying behaviour is commonly (though not always) undertaken by, or with the support of, a peer group.
- Approached in a non-accusatory manner, individual members of such groups will typically acknowledge the distress of the victim and agree to act to reduce that distress.
- A minority of targeted children have in the past acted provocatively and need to recognise their part in the ensuing conflict.
- Once some individual members of the group have begun to act constructively, the group can be brought together to plan how they will finally resolve the matter with the person they have targeted.
- An agreed resolution involving all concerned is likely to be sustainable.

Application

The Method of Shared Concern can be appropriately and most successfully implemented as follows:

1. Cases are chosen in which a group of students are thought to be involved in bullying an individual student who as a consequence has become distressed.
2. Each of the suspected bullies is interviewed in turn, without any accusation, beginning with the student who seems most likely to fill the role of ringleader. The meeting takes place without other students present or able to observe the interaction. The interview begins with the practitioner sharing a concern about the plight of the victim. Once this is acknowledged, the suspected bully is required to say what he or she will do to improve the situation.
3. A further meeting is arranged several days later to assess progress with each of the suspected bullies individually.
4. The practitioner then meets with the target and offers support. The question may at some stage be raised as to whether the target could have provoked the bullying in some way. (Occasionally bullying is provoked).

The 6 Methods of Intervention

5. Once progress has been confirmed, a group meeting is held with the suspected bullies to plan how they will finally resolve the problem when they meet with the target at the next meeting convened by the practitioner.
6. A final meeting is held with the target present to bring about an agreed and sustainable solution.

Limitations

- The method cannot be employed in cases of criminal behaviour for which sanctions are legally required.
- Pressure in the form of threats and punishment is incompatible with this approach which seeks unforced cooperation.
- This method involves working with groups of suspected bullies and does not lend itself to dealing with one-on-one bullying.
- More so than most methods it requires the training of suitable practitioners.
- To implement this approach effectively and produce a sustainable solution requires the careful selection of cases and the allocation of sufficient time to progress through the necessary stages.

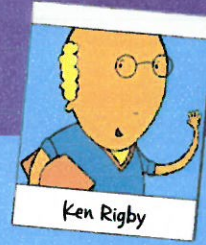


Conclusion

Implemented rigorously, this method has been shown in several studies to have a high success rate and has considerable educational value for those involved.

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The 6 Methods of Intervention

The **Support Group Method** is a non-punitive intervention strategy that gathers assistance for the victimised student.

It does this by sharing knowledge of his or her distress at a meeting with the perpetrators, together with peers who would offer support to the victim.

Rationale

The rationale behind using the Support Group Method is as follows:

- Victims of school bullying will describe to a practitioner the distress they have experienced by those who have bullied them, especially when they are convinced that the perpetrators will not be punished. They will also disclose the names of the perpetrators.
- Perpetrators will empathise with what has been happening to their victim when they are told about their distress especially if they attend a meeting convened by the practitioner in the company of some other students who are supportive of the victim.
- In these circumstances the perpetrators will accept responsibility for helping to alleviate the victim's distress and act accordingly.

Application

The Support Group Method can be appropriately and most successfully implemented as follows:

1. The target is approached by a teacher for a one-on-one meeting, and encouraged to talk about what has been happening and how he or she has been affected. The target may be asked to write about it or draw a picture describing their experience. After being told that no-one is to be punished the target is asked to name the bullies.
2. The named bullies are invited to a meeting with the practitioner, together with several other students whom the practitioner expects to be supportive of the victim, and the distress of the target is graphically described. It is made clear that no-one is to be punished. At the same time it is emphasised that everyone present has a responsibility to help.
3. Each group member is asked to state publicly what they are prepared to do to improve the situation.
4. Subsequently, the situation is monitored and further meetings may take place to assess progress.

The 6 Methods of Intervention

Limitations

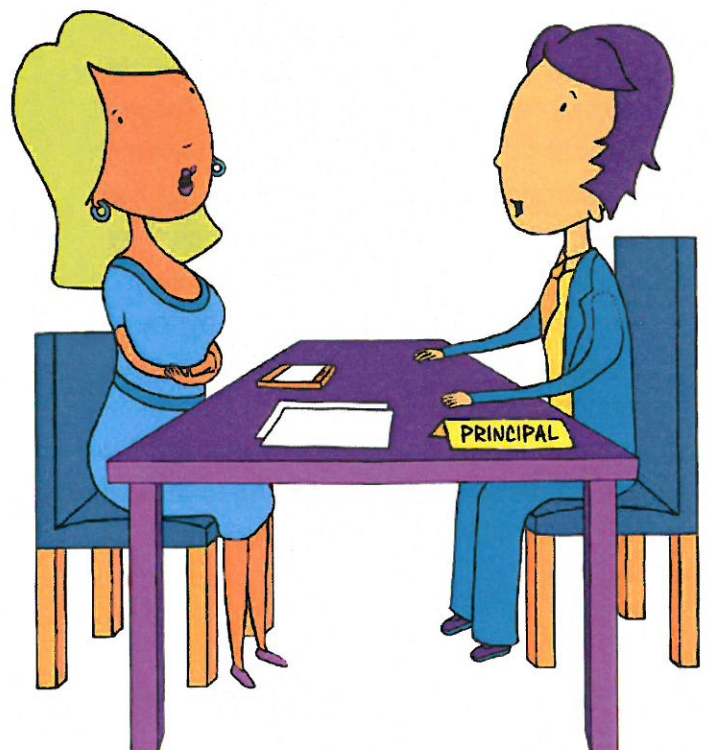
- It is generally thought to be unsuitable for extreme or criminal forms of bullying.
- Punishment or the threat of punishment cannot play a part in the process.
- The method was designed for use with bullying by groups rather than one-on-one bullying.
- Although members of the bullying group may experience remorse they are not required to apologise (and this is sometimes thought necessary) but rather to act helpfully.
- It requires that some students who are known to be sympathetic to the target are ready to become part of the support group.
- It presupposes a high level of skill in sympathetically interviewing the target and subsequently working with the group.
- Unlike Restorative Practice and The Method of Shared Concern, the bullies and the target do NOT meet together with the practitioner to resolve the issue. There is no opportunity therefore for both parties to work things out together.

Conclusion

Although this method does not seek to bring bullies and victims together to reach a mediated solution, it has proved to be highly effective in preventing bullying from continuing without the use of punishment and with the active cooperation of peers.

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Bullying is serious

- 27 per cent of young people report they are bullied every two weeks or more often.
- Cyberbullying happens to about 1 in 10 Australian young people every few weeks or more often.
- Many young people who bully online also bully face to face.
- Some young people who are bullied later go on to engage in bullying others.
- Bullying can seriously damage physical, social and emotional health.
- Bullying hurts the perpetrator as well. Young people who bully over time are more likely to engage in ongoing anti-social behaviour and criminality, have issues with substance abuse, demonstrate low academic achievement and be involved in future child and spouse abuse.



Who can help?

Kids' Helpline

1800 551 800
www.kidshelp.com.au

Cybersafety help

www.cybersmart.gov.au/report.aspx

Australian Federal Police

www.afp.gov.au

Reach Out

www.reachout.com.au

Beyondblue

www.beyondblue.org.au

Bullying. No way!

www.bullyingnoway.com.au

The Australian Psychological Society

www.psychology.org.au

To download an electronic version of this brochure, visit the National Centre Against Bullying (NCAB) website: www.ncab.org.au

Contact us

The Alannah and Madeline Foundation is a national charity keeping children safe from violence.

The Foundation was set up in memory of Alannah and Madeline Mikac, aged six and three, who along with their mother and 32 others were tragically killed at Port Arthur, Tasmania on 28 April 1996.

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The Alannah
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Keeping children safe from violence



The Alannah
and Madeline
Foundation

Keeping children safe from violence

Bullying hurts



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What is bullying?

Bullying is when someone or a group of people with more power repeatedly and intentionally causes hurt or harm to another person or group of people who feel helpless to respond. Bullying can continue over time, is often hidden from adults and will probably continue if no action is taken.

Bullying isn't:

- single episodes of social rejection or dislike
- single episode acts of nastiness or spite
- random acts of aggression or intimidation
- mutual arguments, disagreements or fights.

Types of bullying

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's *Building Respectful and Safe Schools* (2010) identifies four types of bullying:

- 1. Physical bullying** includes hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching and pushing or damaging property.
- 2. Verbal bullying** includes name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, homophobic or racist remarks, or verbal abuse.
- 3. Covert bullying** is often harder to recognise and can be carried out behind the bullied person's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation. Covert bullying includes:
 - lying and spreading rumours
 - negative facial or physical gestures, menacing or contemptuous looks
 - playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate
 - mimicking unkindly
 - encouraging others to socially exclude someone
 - damaging someone's social reputation or social acceptance.
- 4. Cyberbullying** is overt or covert bullying behaviours using digital technologies. Examples include harassment via a mobile phone, setting up a defamatory personal website or deliberately excluding someone from social networking spaces. Cyberbullying can happen at any time, it can be in public or in private, and sometimes only known to the target and the person bullying.



Signs that your child might be being bullied

It's not always easy to tell if a young person is being bullied, as sometimes they don't want to disclose what's happening to them.

If you notice a significant change in behaviour, this could be cause for concern. Other signs can include changes to mood or eating and sleep patterns; withdrawal from family, social groups or friends; decline in school performance or unwillingness to attend; lost, torn or broken belongings; scratches or bruises, or implausible excuses for any of the above.

What to do if your child is bullying others

- Stay calm. Remember, the behaviour is at fault, rather than the child.
- Make sure your child knows bullying behaviour is inappropriate and why.
- Try to understand the reasons why your child has behaved in this way and look for ways to address problems.
- Encourage your child to look at it from the other's perspective, for example, "how would you feel if..."
- Help your child think of alternative paths of action.
- Provide appropriate boundaries for their behaviour.

Things you can do if your child is being bullied

- 1. Listen** – Try to listen to the whole story without interrupting. Be empathic, calm and validate what is being said. Ask what your child would like to happen, before you make suggestions.
- 2. Talk** – Have a conversation about what happened. Try not to make the conversation intense or you might deter your child from talking to you. Remind your child it's normal to feel hurt, it's never OK to be bullied, and it's NOT their fault.
- 3. Find out what is happening** – Note what, when and where the bullying occurred, who was involved, how often and if anybody else witnessed it. Don't offer to confront the person yourself.
- 4. Contact the school** – Check your school's bullying policy. Find out if the school is aware of the bullying and whether anything has been done to address the situation. Make an appointment to speak to your child's teacher or coordinator. Try to make a follow-up appointment to ensure the situation is being addressed.
- 5. Give sensible advice** – Encourage your child not to fight back, but coach them to use neutral or, if appropriate, joking language in response. Help them explore other possible responses.
 - Tell them that the behaviour was intentional and it won't just go away.
 - Explain it's safer to avoid people, places or situations that could expose them to further bullying.
 - If your child asks to stay home from school, explain that it won't help – and may make things worse.
 - If possible, help to make opportunities for them to join other groups of young people – e.g. clubs at school or other groups outside of school time.

