



# Understanding & Responding to Bullying

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# Objectives

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- (1) Review different types & prevalence of bullying
- (2) Review warning signs of bullying
- (3) Identify ways to help

# Disclosure

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There is no conflict of interest or commercial support for this presentation.

# Acknowledgments

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**Kim Mazauskas**

Palm Beach County

Department of Safe Schools

**Sameer Hinduja, Ph.D.**

Florida Atlantic University Professor

Co-Director of the Cyberbullying Research Center

# What is Bullying?

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**No one  
knows for  
sure**

# What is Bullying?

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- Per the CDC & US Dept of Education:
  - **Unwanted** aggressive behavior
  - Not sibling or dating partner
  - Observed or perceived **power imbalance**
  - Likely to be **repeated**
  - **Inflicts harm** or distress (physical, psychological, social, or educational)



# What is Bullying?

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- Per the FL Dept of Education:
- **Systematic**
  - **Chronic**
  - Physical or psychological **distress**
  - Intimidating, hostile, or offensive; **or** interferes with school performance/participation



# Types of Bullying May Include:

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## ➤ Physical



# Types of Bullying May Include:

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- **Theft or  
Damage to  
Personal  
Property**

# Types of Bullying May Include:

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➤ **Gestures/  
Non-verbal**

# Types of Bullying May Include:

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➤ **Verbal/  
Written**



# Types of Bullying May Include:

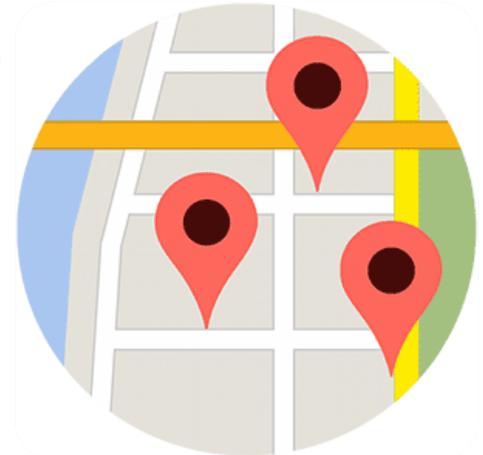
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## ➤ Social/ Relational

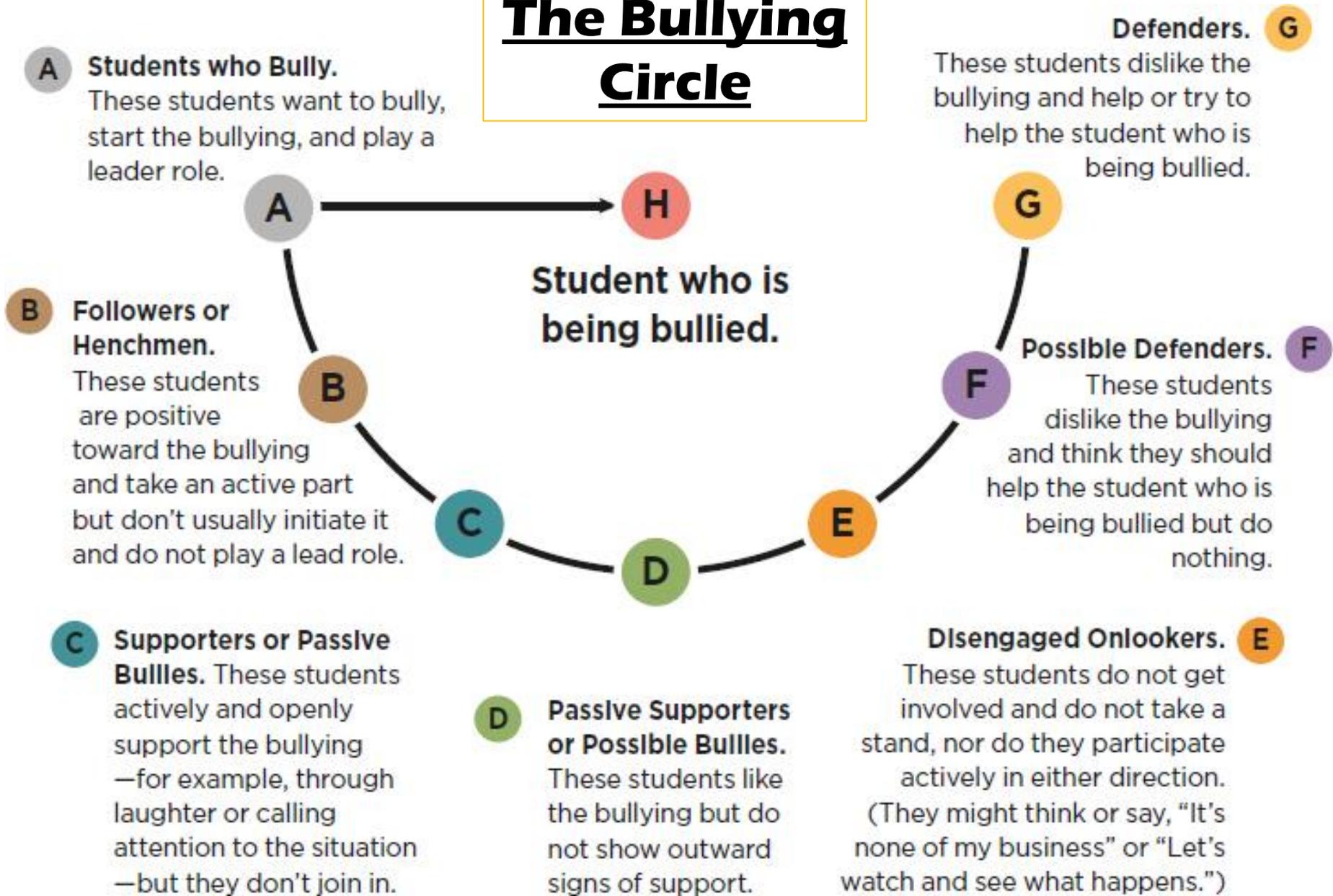


# Modes and Locations

- **Direct and Indirect**
- **School, after-school program, bus, neighborhood, gathering places, cyberbullying (cell phones, computer, videogames), etc.**



# The Bullying Circle



# Prevalence in US

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- Bullying is among the **most commonly reported discipline problems** in public schools. 12% of public schools report that bullying happens at least once a week
- More than **one out of every five** (20.8%) students report being bullied (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2016)
- **National rates have actually decreased** slightly in recent years

**Which type & location is  
most common?**

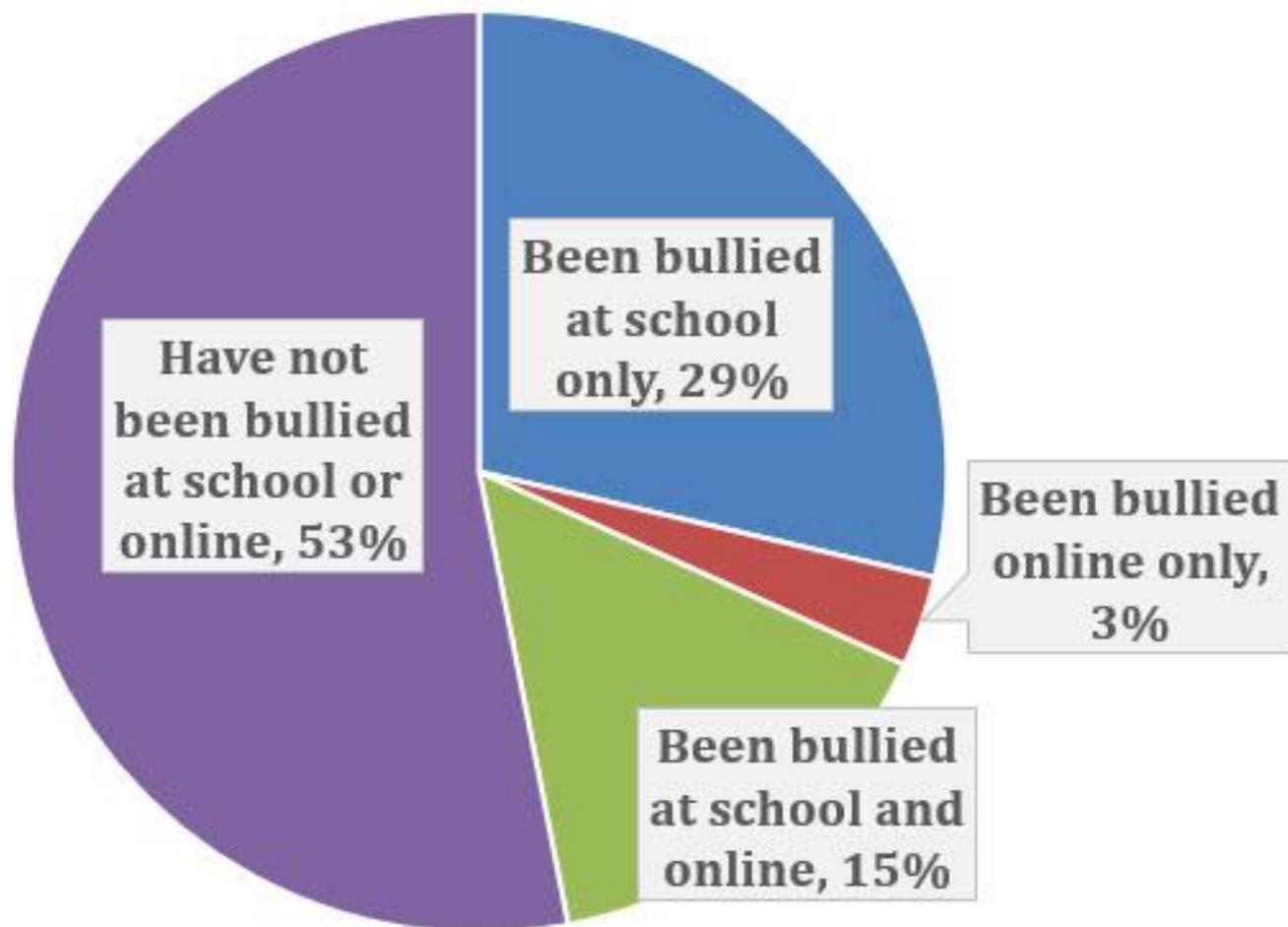


(National Center for Educational Statistics, 2016;

Modecki et al., 2014)

# Been Bullied at School and Online

(Nationally representative sample of 4,500 U.S. 12-17 year-olds)



# Age and Gender Prevalence

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- Rates are **highest for middle schools** (22%) compared to high schools (15%), combined schools (11%), and primary schools (8%)
- A slightly **higher portion of female** than of male students report being bullied at school (Hinduja & Patchin, 2016)
- A **higher percentage of male** students report being physically bullied, threatened with harm, and bullying others (Hinduja & Patchin, 2016; National Center for Educational Statistics, 2016)

# Racial/Ethnicity Prevalence

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- **No one ethnic group** has been identified as being more or less likely to be the target (Vitoroulis and Vaillancourt, 2015)
- **Numerical-minority groups** *are* targets (www.pacer.org)



# At Higher Risk When...

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- Perceived as different
  - overweight or underweight
  - wearing glasses
  - different clothing
  - different race/ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation
  - new to a school
- Perceived as weak or unable to defend themselves
- Unable to afford what is considered “cool”
- Depressed, anxious, or has low self-esteem
- Less popular and has few friends
- Seen as annoying or provoking
- Disabled

LOW



HIGH

# Bullying Increases Risk for...

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- Poor school performance, low self-esteem, isolation, experiencing physical symptoms (e.g., headaches, stomachaches, or problems sleeping), **anxiety, and depression** (Center for Disease Control, Bullying Surveillance Among Youths, 2014; Center for Disease Control, 2015)
- Both mental health and behavior problems when **bullied and bullying** (Center for Disease Control, 2015)
- **Observers** – they can feel helplessness and lack a sense of connectedness and support from responsible adults

**“Recent longitudinal studies have shown the effects of childhood bullying on adult mental health were stronger in magnitude than the effects of being maltreated by a caregiver in childhood”**

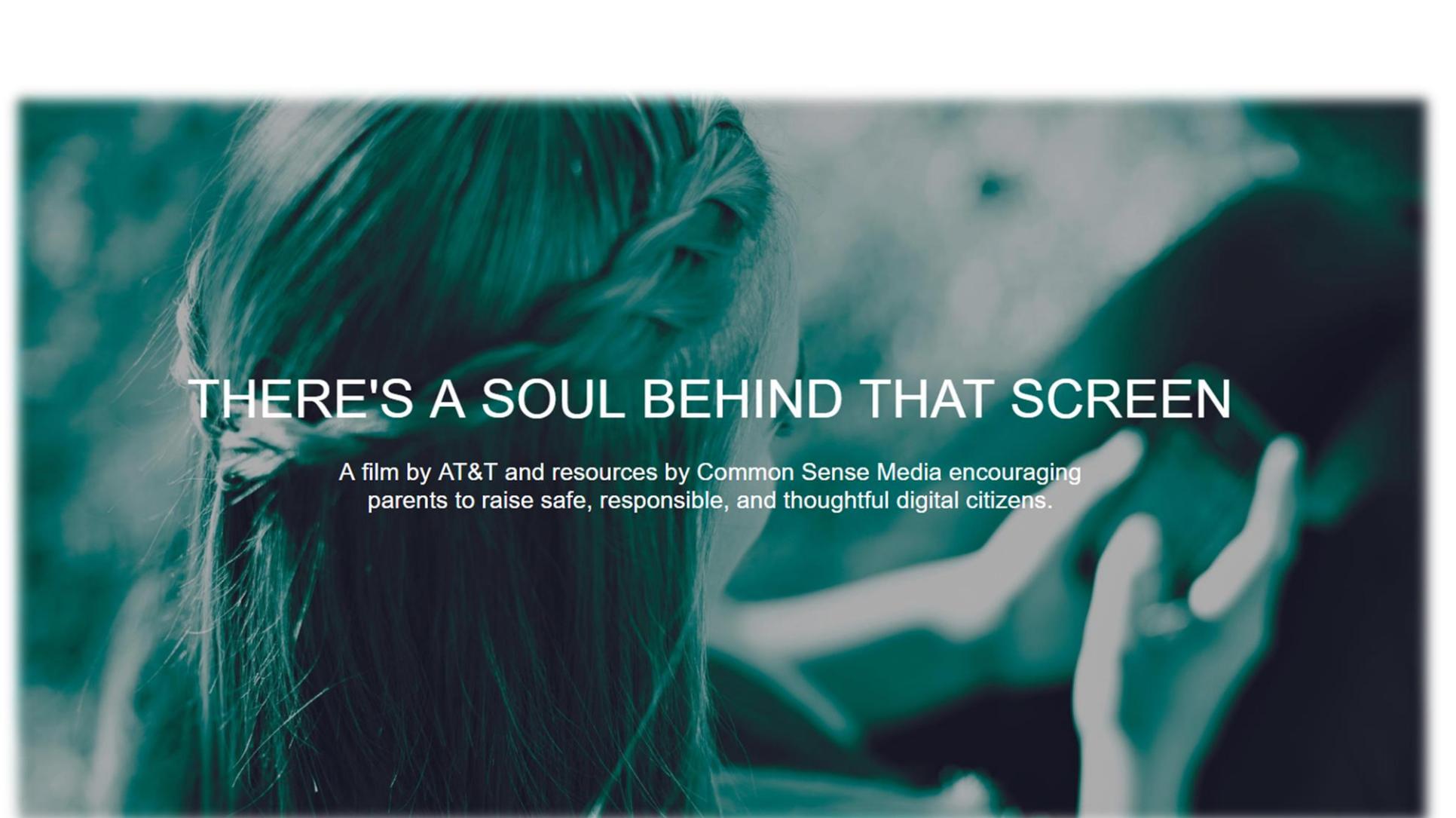
**(Lereya et al., 2015)**



# Suicide and Bullying

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- The majority of those bullied ***do not*** die by suicide
- Bullying, by itself, is usually not the cause
- The false belief could normalize the response and create copycat behavior (Center for Disease Control, 2014)
- Involvement in bullying, ***along with other risk factors, does*** increase the chance that youth will engage in suicide-related behaviors



# THERE'S A SOUL BEHIND THAT SCREEN

A film by AT&T and resources by Common Sense Media encouraging parents to raise safe, responsible, and thoughtful digital citizens.





# Possible Signs of Being Bullied

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- Unexplainable injuries
- Lost or destroyed belongings
- Frequent headaches or stomach aches
- Changes in eating habits
- Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares
- Declining grades, loss of interest in schoolwork, or not wanting to go to school
- Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations
- Feelings of helplessness or decreased self-esteem
- Self-destructive behaviors such as running away from home, harming themselves, or talking about suicide



# Possible Signs of Bullying Others

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- Physical or verbal altercations
- Having friends who bully others
- Frequently sent to the principal's office or detention
- Possessing extra money or new belongings
- Blaming others for problems
- Not accepting responsibility for actions
- Competitiveness
- Worrying about reputation or popularity



# Laws Against Bullying?

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- There is no federal anti-bullying law
- 49 states have anti-bullying legislation, but bullying is not illegal
- When bullying is also harassment (e.g., based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or religion), it **does** break federal law



# The Disconnect

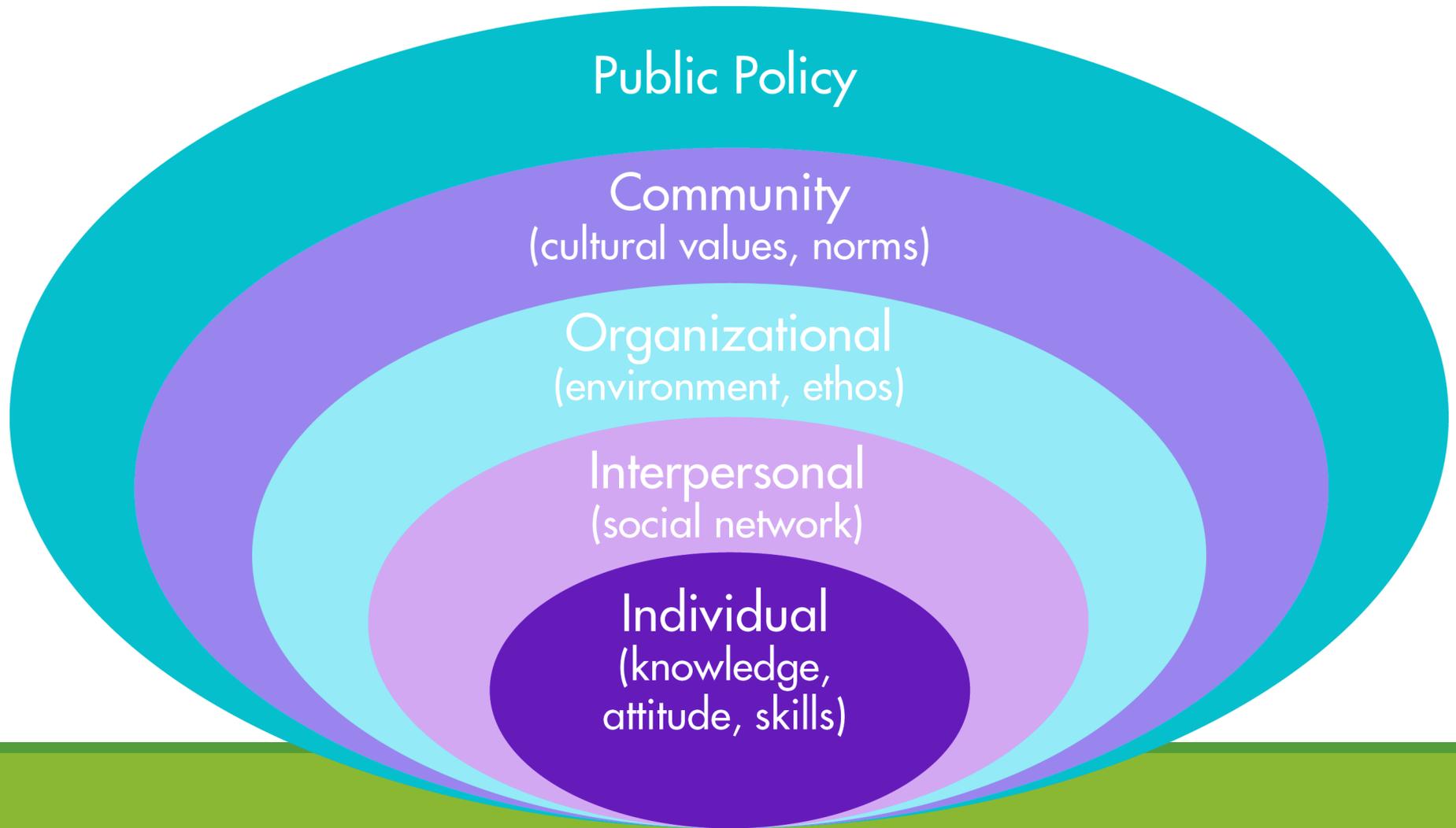
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- Between youth's experience of bullying and what the adults see, there is usually a disconnect
- Only **20 to 40%** of students who are bullied notify adults (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2016; Ttofi & Farrington, 2011)
- ...AND...adults often don't know how to respond when they **do** recognize bullying (Bradshaw & O'Brennan, 2007)



**SO WHAT SHOULD WE DO?**

# The Social-Ecological Model is most effective!



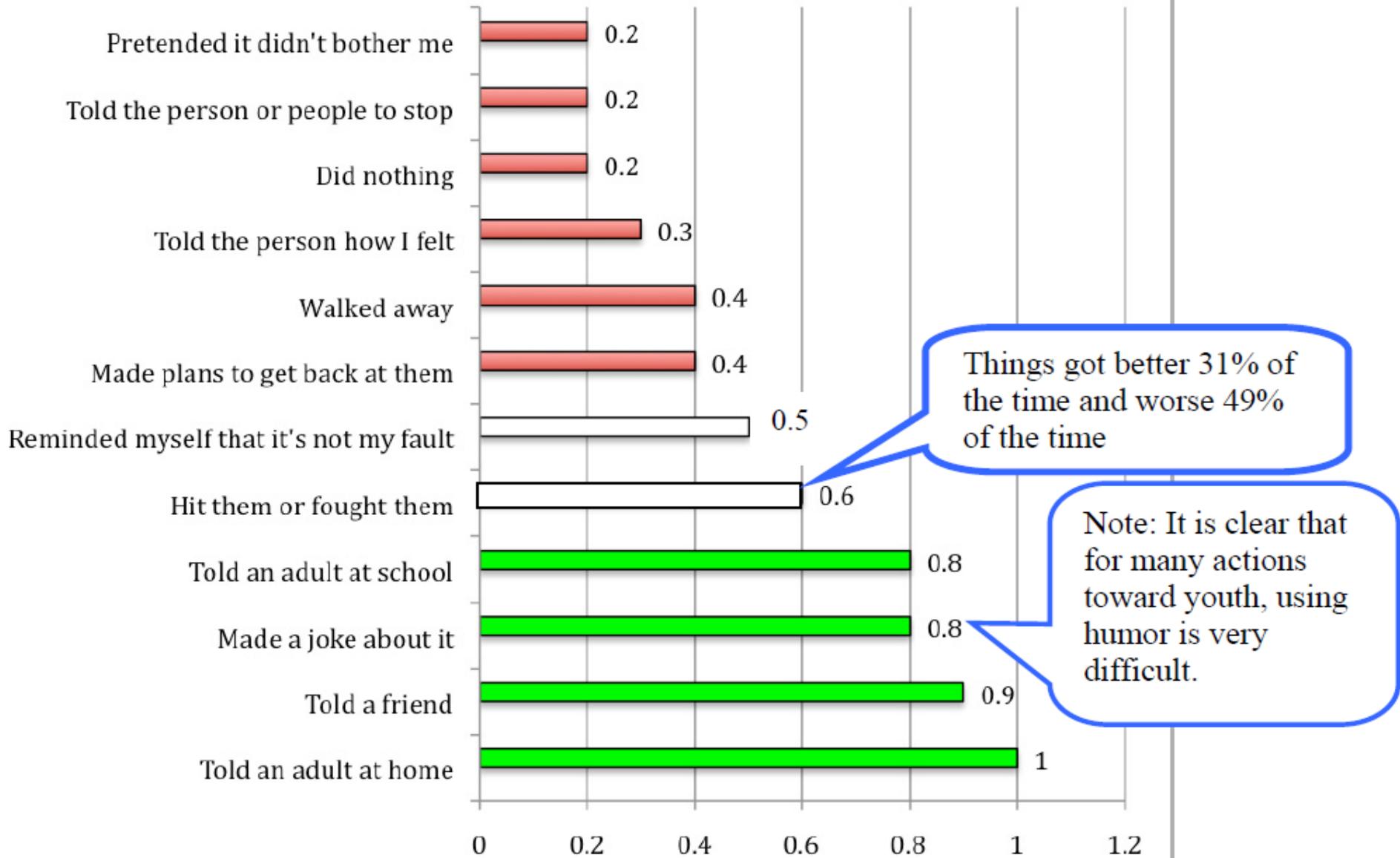
# Build their Resiliency

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- Empower youth to **choose** how they feel about themselves (rather than believe negative comments)
- Foster social problem solving skills and self-regulation skills **before** mistreatment happens
  - Teach **multiple** ways to respond to mistreatment



# Overall reported helpfulness



# Focus on the Relationships

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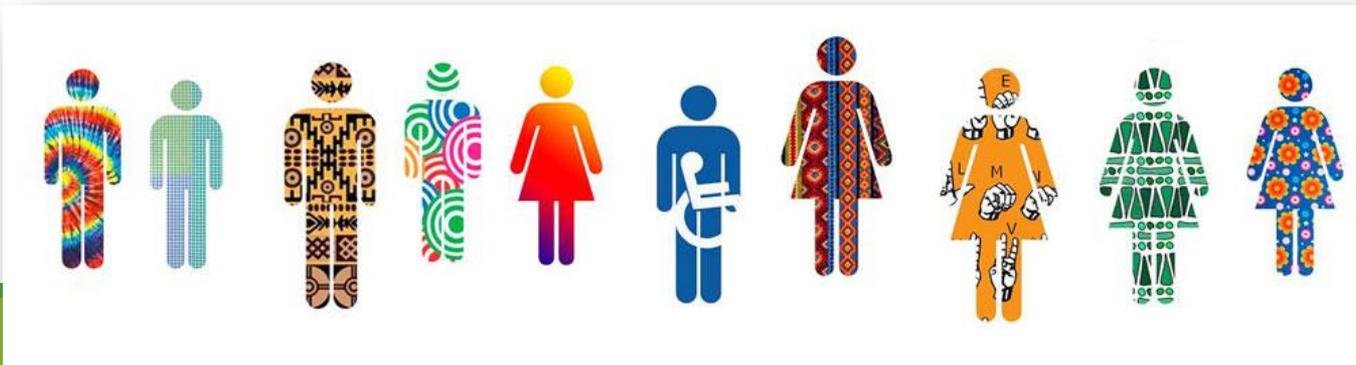
- Dinner together 4+ times a week (Elgar et al., 2014)
- Listen, listen, listen
  - Ask what they do online and at school
- Connect with them online
- Do not discourage “tattling”
- Unconditional positive regard
- Connect them with other youth & trusted adults



(Davis & Nixon, 2014)

# Model & Encourage Respect

- How often are you (yes **YOU**) showing kindness and inclusion of others?
- What is mistreatment? What are the rules?
  - Ask youth **and** yourself
- Improve the overall “climate”
- Help youth observe the effects of their actions (both helpful and hurtful)
  - Better than ignoring, rewarding, or praising



**MARK YOUR  
CALENDARS!**

### The Week of October 8th

**Make friends with someone you don't know at school**

If you've ever been isolated from others at school or you were new at school and it took time to make friends, you know what it feels like to be left out. Or even if you were never isolated, imagine how it would feel.

Make friends with someone at school who you don't know. You probably wish someone had done that for you.  
Be a leader. Take action and don't let anyone at school be in isolation.

#### **Challenge Others To Be Kind**

Make kindness go viral with an act of kindness and challenge friends and classmates to pay it forward with their acts of kindness.  
We encourage everyone to Tweet your acts of kindness.

### The Week of October 15th

#### **STAND UP for Others Week**

When you see someone being bullied, be brave and STAND UP for them. Bullies have been known to back off when others stand up for victims.

If you don't feel safe get the help of an adult immediately. Be part of the solution – not the problem!

Use the bullying form or bullying hotline to report any form of bullying!

[Bullying Form](#)

Bullying Hotline 561-982-0900

## World Day of Bullying Prevention

Wear Blue October 1, 2018

**#BlueUp**



### The Week of October 22nd

#### **Week of Inclusion**

- Don't let anyone at school eat alone in the cafeteria or on a school field trip. Make it the week of **#NOONEEATSALONE**
- Include other students in school activities
- Include other students in after school activities
- Invite someone you don't know that well to sit next to you on the bus. Learn

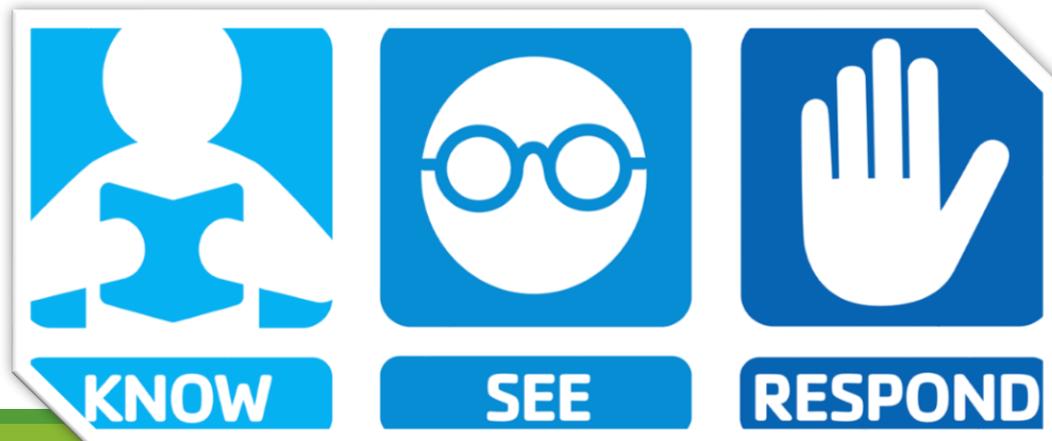
### The Week of October 29<sup>th</sup>

- Meet with fellow students and discuss how you can Change the Culture at your school.
- Hold a discussion in your classroom where you allow students to openly speak and discuss their experiences with bullying and cyberbullying, and how these experiences have affected them and how they dealt with these moments.

# Respond: See it, Say it....

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- Supervise, especially “hot spots”
- **CONSISTENTLY** interrupt and discourage hurtful speech and actions
  - Encourage kindness & inclusion
- Avoid public shaming
- Check in later
- Remember the importance of perceived trauma (how much does it bother the child?)



# Know How to Report

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- Know how to communicate bullying to the school
- Call 911 if there has been a crime or someone is in immediate risk of harm



**KEEP  
CALM  
AND  
REPORT  
IT**

# BURGER KING | Bullying Jr.



When in  
Doubt...



Refer Out!

# **FREE family therapy in Palm Beach County!**

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## **North County**

3188 PGA Blvd., Room 1436,  
Palm Beach Gardens, FL, 33410  
Phone= 561-242-5714

## **Central County (“Four Points”)**

50 S. Military Trail, Ste 203,  
West Palm Beach, FL, 33415  
Phone= 561-242-5714

## **West County (Belle Glade)**

2976 State Road 15,  
Belle Glade, FL, 33430  
Phone= 561-992-1233

## **Education and Training Center**

100 Australian Ave, Ste 210,  
West Palm Beach, FL, 33406  
Phone= 561-233-4460

## **South County (Delray)**

345 S Congress Ave.,  
Delray Beach, FL, 33445  
Phone= 561-276-1340

## **Highridge Family Center (Residential)**

4200 N. Australian Ave,  
West Palm Beach, FL, 33407  
Phone= 561-625-2540



**PALM BEACH COUNTY**  
*Discover the Palm Beaches...  
the Best of Everything*



# Helpful Websites

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[stopbullying.gov](http://stopbullying.gov)

[pacer.org/bullying](http://pacer.org/bullying)

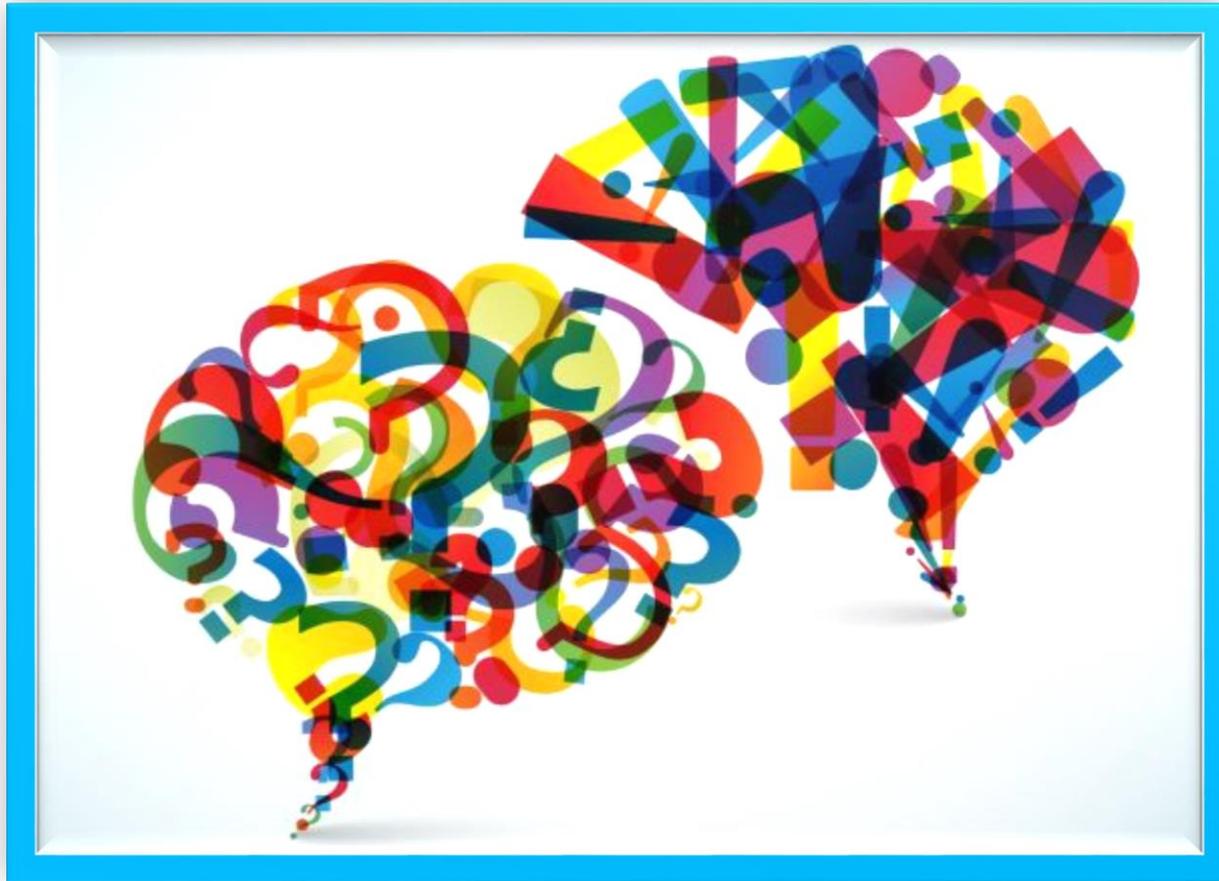
[cyberbullying.org](http://cyberbullying.org)

[nobully.org](http://nobully.org)

[palmbeachschools.org/safeschools/bullying](http://palmbeachschools.org/safeschools/bullying)

[community-matters.org](http://community-matters.org)

# Thank You!



\*Full Reference List  
Available Upon Request\*