Critical Characteristics of Effective Bullying Prevention Programs

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Abstract

Effective bullying prevention and intervention programs are primarily determined by orderly implementation of three critical program themes and five program stages. This chapter describes the concepts and implementation of the three themes: (a) a social-ecological perspective involving everyone in their unique environment, (b) reducing isolation of people and ideas, and (c) empathic involvement of all parties, including bystanders as well as bullies and victims. A program is not simply a group of actions to be taken, it also requires sequential implementation of critical stages. Initial awareness building is an important first step, to energize individuals and groups. This foundation and energy is preparation for effective policy development and then skill development. The final stages emphasize long-term success through continuing involvement in conjunction with regular assessment and program adjustment to recognize and reflect changing circumstances.

Prevention programs and published materials designed to reduce problems of bullying and school violence have become numerous, while they were virtually nonexistent in the United States prior to 1990 (Hazler & Hoover, 1996). Programs designed in the 1990s began focusing on strategies such as teaching interpersonal skills and involving students in prevention efforts. These models augmented or replaced the more traditional emphases on simplistic discipline enforcement and school assemblies that had previously been primary tactics to address bullying and school violence (Scheckner & Rollin, 2003).

Schools continue to be among the safest places for children to be, but that doesn’t reflect the anxiety and tension experienced by students because of bullying and school climates that tolerate these abuses (Carney, Hazler, Oh, Hibel, & Granger, 2010). Whether it is a bully, victim, or bystander, everyone is affected by situations that have them focus attention on self-protection rather than the knowledge and skills schools are designed to provide. Students cannot focus on learning mathematics when they are anxiously thinking about being bullied (victims), how to avoid it (victims and bystanders), or how to maintain their domination of someone (bullies). Schools and funding agencies appear to understand the interplay of social, emotional, and academic learning at school, and now provide substantial funding to develop programs for
interventions and prevention. The question for school personnel is no longer whether programs are available, but instead, what differentiates the best program(s) for a given school or school district from ones that will be less effective or less likely to be appropriately implemented?

Students are not the only ones to suffer from school bullying. When faculty must intervene in bullying situations, valuable time and energy are lost from the primary process of academic learning. The emotional toll taken on them can hinder educational interactions long after the event itself ends. Pressures of time, limited budgets, and increasing academic performance demands require schools to make sound choices in terms of time required and available, costs, commitment of school personnel, and program quality. This chapter provides those selecting and implementing bullying prevention programs with the critical characteristics that drive effectiveness and efficiency.

Conceptual Basis

Programs designed to reverse the trend of increasing youth violence like bullying have greatly increased (Furlong, Morrison, & Greif, 2003), however, only a small number of programs have actually documented success through published research such as Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum (Dell Fitzgerald & Van Schoiack Edstrom, 2006) and Promoting Alternative THInking Skills Curriculum (PATHS; Greenberg, & Kusche, 2006). See Orpinas & Horne, 2006, for a review of additional evidenced-based programs. Thoughtful studies with quality research designs have provided credibility to such programs’ claims of initial outcome and sustained effectiveness in reducing bullying (Orpinas & Horne, 2006).

There are two distinct conceptual approaches to prevention programming, targeted and universal. Targeted programs are ones that focus on select groups of students who have demonstrated a high risk of perpetuating inappropriately aggressive behaviors and/or those who have a high probability of becoming victims of such aggressive behaviors. Such programs are generally limited to select staff and often parents who plan and implement organized behavior change and social skill development for specific students without widespread involvement of others in the school system. Targeted programs can be very useful for individual students, but they are not intended to impact the overall prevention of bullying in a school or community. This type of program may target at-risk groups such as those with developmental disabilities (Leisman, 2009), racial, ethnic, or immigration status (Scherr & Larson, 2010), and anti-gay bullying (GLAD, 2010).

Universal bullying programs are the most common variety developed in the 1990s. Bully/Victim Prevention (Olweus, 1993), Second Step (Dell Fitzgerald & Van Schoiack Edstrom, 2006) and PATHS (Greenberg & Kusche, 2006) are examples of universal programs that impact a wide variety of issues and people in an attempt to reduce bullying. Virtually all youth will be exposed to peer abuse either as bullies, victims, bystanders, or combinations of the three. This widespread exposure to bullying promotes a less-than-safe climate that impacts everyone in the school community, reduces the ability of the system to effectively carry out its educational function, and therefore calls for a comprehensive approach to promote systemic change. Universal anti-bullying programs are given primary attention in this chapter because they are designed to produce the greatest amount of overall change for the most students, they are the vast majority of ones in use today, and they take the most human resources to effectively implement.

There are many differences in quality programs including age groups; placing more emphasis on student, teacher, staff, or parent involvement; and requirements of more or less commitment from a school or district. The differences do not change the fact that effective programs apply a consistent set of themes and an orderly process that consisting of early, middle, and later stages
Bully Program Characteristics

Successful Bullying Program Characteristics

Program descriptions tend to focus on the specific techniques used to help change cognitions, behaviors, and overall school climate. Schools and individuals who attempt to utilize these techniques will be effective over time only when they attend to the full compliment of quality bullying program characteristics applied in an appropriate local context. These key characteristics include the program themes of a social-ecological perspective model, empathic involvement, and reducing isolation of people and ideas. They also include sequential program stages of awareness building, policy development, skill development, continuing involvement, assessment, adjustment, and recycling (see Figure 26.1).

Individually, these characteristics will have more appeal to some people than to others. Administrators, for example, tend to be attracted to policy development, counselors and teachers to skill development, boards of education to assessment of outcomes, and students will want quick action where their feelings and situations are fully taken into account. These understandable preferences point to the need for involvement of representatives of all parties in selection and implementation of programs. The characteristics become effective only when they are all considered collectively and where specific aspects are presented in a progression that builds one step upon the other.

![Figure 26.1 Social-ecological perspective model of bullying prevention programs](image-url)
Program Themes

Social-Ecological Perspective

Quality programs recognize the critical nature of interactions between individual characteristics and ecological contexts (Orpinas & Horne, 2006). Peers, schools, families, and communities all interact with individual student characteristics to create the variety of individual behavioral, emotional, and cognitive reactions as well as the dynamics between individuals. No one individual or pair of individuals alone creates a bullying situation. It is the combination of individuals plus the ecological situation that will foster or discourage bullying over time (Espelage & Swearer, 2010).

Prevention efforts must develop an understanding of and focus actions on the complexities of the ecological system. The larger the group that is successfully integrated into prevention efforts, the better. Communities and school systems that can organize and coordinate prevention efforts provide the most valued models. Smaller and more manageable working groups (e.g., peer groups, classrooms, select grade levels, or individual schools) are often needed to set the process in motion and are critical to maintaining lasting effects.

This social-ecological perspective and universal approach can be found in prevention programs that have the most support from researchers (Espelage & Swearer, 2003). One or two committed individuals can and normally do initiate efforts, but degree of success over time will be related to how many individuals and groups become invested as active participants in a coordinated program.

Reducing Isolation of People and Ideas

Successful prevention programs all emphasize reducing the social and conceptual isolation of people. Bullying occurs most often during unstructured times (Craig, Pepler, & Atlas, 2000), because social support is a key factor in determining the frequency and severity of bullying (Rigby, 2008). Bullies are not seeking a fair fight, but instead an interaction in which they can dominate an individual or group (Pepler, Craig, O’Connell, 2010). When victims and bystanders increase their numbers or gain new constructive ideas regarding possible actions, the bully’s potential to dominate is diminished and the likelihood of bullying decreases. Prevention programs therefore give on-going emphasis to increasing positive social connections between people.

The Columbine, Colorado, shootings demonstrate one well-known, extreme example of the dangers of isolation. Over time, the perpetrators became ostracized from peer groups and dropped out of extra-curricular activities. The more they became physically, cognitively, and psychologically cut off from others and the less they received a diversity of ideas from others, the more their irrational ideas began to appear rational. Prevention programs fight this isolation process by emphasizing the expansion of connections between people and groups that broaden understanding, change false beliefs, encourage creative social thinking, and promote a greater sense of trust in the environment.

Victims of extended bullying begin losing hope as a lack of obvious supporters, and absence of fresh ideas to end the torment can lead to homicidal and suicidal thoughts and sometimes actions (Janson, Carney, Hazler, & Oh, 2009; Hazler & Carney, 2000). Most victims do not turn their worst thoughts into such catastrophic actions, but they will drop out of relationships and make other poor decisions because of the limiting of perceptions and ideas caused by isolation from quality interpersonal interactions.

Bullying can only continue when adults or peers who could make a difference are not present or when they choose not to become involved in support of victims. Choosing to reduce victim and situation isolation, by becoming involved, makes adult and peer bystanders critical to the eventual discouragement or encouragement of bullying and harassment (Rigby, 2010).
Reducing isolation of people and ideas throughout a social-ecological environment begins with awareness building to infuse new ideas, understandings, and personal connections across people and systems. Program aspects like policy development, skill acquisition, collaborative activities, and program assessment are all designed to expand thinking and relationships. The reason these aspects of programs can cause distress among individuals and groups is precisely because they encourage people to move beyond those beliefs and actions with which they have become comfortable.

The best program designs directly address the stressful issue of change by continually encouraging open discussion of ideas, beliefs, and feelings. These programs integrate presentations of positive practices with the encouragement to use creative thinking to identify ways that these and other practices might be implemented in the specific environmental context of those involved. Weaker programs generally provide less direction and encouragement to explore alternative practices, use of creative thinking, and revision of concepts to fit local contexts.

Empathic Involvement

Quality programs recognize that it takes more than knowledge-level awareness to stir people's affective involvement in difficult situations like bullying, so empathy becomes a major theme in how people view and react to bullying (Hymel, Schonert-Reichl, Bonanno, Vaillancourt, & Henderson, 2010). People are more likely to give up valuable time, energy, and even money to help one person or a group if they can personally identify with them. An empathic sense for someone also decreases the likelihood of choosing to abuse that person so that it plays a key role in limiting bullying actions. Raising empathic feelings through emotional-awareness activities is therefore a critical first step.

Videos, speakers, and discussion formats that prove valuable at the awareness stage focus attention on the emotions and feelings of all participants in bullying situations and not just victims. This is not the aspect of the program that identifies things to do or spells out right versus wrong. The attempt is to have people experience the emotions and complexities of the problem from the eyes of victims, bullies, and bystanders making it more likely to feel the problems and become motivated to work towards finding solutions.

Two video examples can serve to demonstrate the difference between creating empathic awareness versus informational awareness. One set of videos (Brown, 1993, 1997, 2004) has few words spoken in them, no direct teaching of lessons, no moderator, lots of time for thinking and feeling, and little time for trying to remember what is said. Designed specifically for students, these videos can stir strong emotions as students identify with the experiences of those in the films. Don’t Laugh at Me (Operation Respect, 2010) is a video that taps similar emotions in students and even more effectively in adults through musical and visual experiences. These are not the typical videos or activities generally used in schools where there is a direct lesson plan and specific information identified for learning. Videos and other activities like these are instead designed to raise an emotional awareness that promotes creative thinking, discussion, and a desire to take action.

First-hand experiences and current events are other effective empathy building techniques. Newspaper stories of school violence that receive widespread attention or a suicide in a school, while horrific, are teachable current events that can draw people's attention to the feelings and needs of others. Traumatic circumstances such as these increase emotional investment in a way that cannot be duplicated through any other medium.

Knowledge and skills alone can be used for negative as well as positive purposes, but a sense of empathy towards others can move people to take actions designed to stop bullying situations (Hymel et al., 2010). Consequently, a significant portion of effective prevention programs is time spent gaining understanding of other people's experiences and feelings in relation to one's own experiences and feelings.
Sequential Program Stages

Initial Awareness Building

Motivating people to take action by creating awareness of the dangers is the essential first step in a bullying prevention program. Surveys and associated meetings are informational ways of raising awareness that often work well for adults in particular (e.g., parents, teachers, school boards, etc.). Such information can also be useful for youth, although it probably carries less motivational weight with them. Students are bombarded with information as a part of their daily work in school, so additional information does not provide the uniqueness of presentation that could more effectively spur motivation. Personalized discussions of this information are necessary for both students and adults to turn the general data into personally motivating concepts that demand their immediate attention.

Speakers, videos, books, and other awareness development vehicles can present information in ways that personally connect to adults and youth and promote a more empathic awareness. The effectiveness depends on helping the audiences see and feel the problem’s impact. It is the motivational quality and original accounts that make information more impactful to students in particular who, because they live with the situation daily, can identify with those feelings in ways that raise the credibility of the presentation.

The focus of these initial awareness building activities is to encourage involvement in program development, to give direction as to what can be done, and to offer confidence that some initial steps are available to start a successful program. It is from this initial push that other activities follow.

Policy Development

Policies regarding rules of behavior are the written statements of a community’s social standards and the manner in which those standards are to be enforced. Any good bullying prevention program requires the examination and revision of current policy to clearly demonstrate the official significance given to the problem and how that importance will translate into practical application (Limber & Small, 2003). The importance of these policies demands that they be worked on at the early stages of a prevention program in order for other aspects of the program to build upon them.

Changing social norms around bullying have created pressure for inclusion of bullying in disciplinary policies where such a need was not seen in the past (Limber & Small, 2003). Policy revisions are necessary to more clearly define unacceptable physical, verbal, sexual, social, and cyber bullying along with the consequences for those who would violate such policies.

Most quality programs will only initially provide general outlines or examples of policy needs and place more emphasis on the process for developing locally appropriate policies. The first of two major reasons for this emphasis on the development aspect is that policies need to reflect the local context of participants that cannot be provided in a program created by a state, national, or international organization (Limber & Small, 2003).

The second major reason to focus attention on the policy development is the importance of bringing groups of people together (e.g., teachers, counselors, administrators, parents, community members, and students; Limber & Small, 2003) to work through their diverse views, and come to joint agreement on a set of important issues, values, and the ways to support them in a prevention program.

The developmental aspect of policy is normally one that involves more struggle and time than people and organizations prefer to invest. People invited to participate, who truly do have different views of the issues, must each be heard and their differences worked through if they are to provide effective follow through in support of final policies. Only then can policies offer both
the locally appropriate guidelines in combination with the strong backing of critical interest groups necessary for prevention program success.

**Skill Development**

A general movement of anti-bullying programs has been away from punishment of bullying as the primary focus to skill development for everyone in a selected environment. The change is related to letting go of old assumptions that bullies were a handful of problem children for whom punishment was the only way to influence them. New views recognize bullying as a problem experienced by many children, and related to developmental changes (Smith & Monks, 2008), personal characteristics (Sawyer, Bradshaw, & O’Brennan, 2008), and social skills (Orpinas & Horne, 2010). This change in viewpoint made it possible to begin conceptualizing bullying as a developmental issue where teaching and learning can directly lead to improvement, for everyone in the environment.

None of the skills are exclusive to dealing with bullying situations since they promote healthy functioning of individuals who contribute to maintaining a personally caring and supportive society. Some skills help people focus on and deal with their internal struggles that influence how they relate to others. Attending to internal feelings and learning productive ways of dealing with them show up early in most programs, because how much one understands oneself influences the ability to understand and react to others. Then there are a range of other interpersonal skills that relate to reading other people’s reactions, exploring their thoughts and feelings, and responding to them in ways that will promote understanding and continuing positive interactions. These abilities to recognize the emotions and reactions of oneself and others are essential for making good choices around reacting to potential bullying situations.

Social skills are also essential portions of conflict resolution models that are consistently included in comprehensive bullying prevention programs. The skills needed for reacting in a variety of conflict situations and those that help avoid such situations are important parts of teaching students how to productively intervene in bullying situations.

The personal, social, and conflict resolution skills taught within a program also serve the function of promoting program initiation and continuation. As people develop and practice more effective ways of overcoming their differences, they gain confidence in the skills and a sense of closeness and common purpose with others. These ingredients are essential to gaining and maintaining student and adult investment in bullying prevention.

**Continuing Involvement**

Early prevention efforts for dealing with issues like drugs, alcohol, smoking, and bullying tended to be locally designed and often took the form of a schoolwide assembly or set aside a week or month to focus on a significant issue. Such efforts can catch people’s attention and provide motivation, but without continuing attention, motivation fades, information is no longer used, and skills diminish.

Quality prevention programs set up a system for continuing actions that maintain the involvement of participants in anti-bullying and associated relationship and climate issues (Hazler, 1998). This adds strength by connecting bullying to broader issues of climate, safety, and personal relationships. Continuing to deal with only bullying as a focus would become old to students and adults alike and the better they became at dealing with the specific problem, the less attention it would seem that problems deserve. Such a lessening of attention creates the opportunity for bullying to again become a more significant problem. Commitment and continuity of effort over time therefore provides the mechanism for follow-up actions that call repeated attention to how the desired skills and actions improve the general climate as well as reduce bullying.
One common format for implementing continuing involvement is to set aside a short time, preferably daily, for students to talk about problematic peer relationships and other climate concerns. Most often this model is set up within the school, but it can be copied in the family, youth organizations, and organized recreation activities. Similar models can be set up for teachers, parent groups, or community meetings. The essential aspect is that the format serves to offer a regular opportunity to understand changing situation dynamics and to reinforce the use of skills and understandings taught in more concentrated portions of the program.

Some programs like Steps to Respect, Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, and Bully Busters among others are designed to provide separate activities and goals for different grade levels so that what was learned one year can be built upon in the following year (Espelage & Horne, 2008).

Another common ongoing action format utilizes the essential school and community values and behaviors that transcend bullying prevention. Posters, awards, and recognition at extracurricular activities can provide continuing emphases to the important influence such core values and behaviors have on growth, development, quality performance, citizenship, and sportsmanship. The broader and more consistently these core values can be interlaced with school and community activities, the greater are their influence both in bullying prevention success and the associated safer and healthier social climate.

**Assessment, Adjustment, and Recycling**

The formal assessment of program activities and outcomes on a planned regular basis is what allows programs to identify their progress, recognize change, adjust the focus of attention, and revise programmatic efforts for the future. Quality programs emphasize both process and product assessment to make useful decisions about progress and adjustments needing attention (Benkofske & Heppner, 2008). The process form of assessment evaluates how well people are effectively fulfilling responsibilities to implement the plan in a timely and effective manner as well as identifying what areas need to be redesigned or techniques revised. This gives direction to identification of those needing motivation, training, or other forms of support. It also helps to understand where the system may have accurately predicted, underestimated, or overestimated the ability to implement a given program design within a specific community’s unique social-ecological environment. Improvement comes not so much from doing things right the first time, but more so from identifying what worked, what is not working, and revising efforts based on a solid assessment system.

Product evaluation is an assessment of what outcomes the process produced and is the type of evaluation that funding agencies, school boards, administrators, parents, and others most desire. These are the kinds of data that hopefully show less bullying occurring, children feeling safer, discipline referrals dropping, and absenteeism lowering. Even grades and standardized test scores can show expected improvement in a safer-feeling environment with more sense of community where students can better concentrate on learning and less on anxiety over abusive situations (Hymel, Schonert-Reichl, & Miller, 2006; Konishi, Hymel, Zumbo, & Li, 2010).

Surveys for students and adults are often utilized to identify perceived progress on bullying and general climate issues. School indices such as office referrals, suspensions and expulsions can be key indicators (Lassiter & Perry, 2009) and can validate information from the more opinion focused surveys. Often interviews and small and large focus group meetings are encouraged for qualitative assessments through discussion rather than other less personal measures (Benkofske & Heppner, 2008). The emphasis is to provide general means and flexible instrumentation for evaluation, while leaving the final design of instrumentation up to the local implementation team that best reflects the ideas and culture of a community (Benkofske & Heppner, 2008).

One example of how assessment is used in a program can be found in *Blueprints for Violence*...
Prevention Book Nine: Bullying Prevention Program (Olweus, Limber, & Mihalic, 1999). This low-income primarily minority school was understandably wary of being measured by instruments developed on schools made up of mostly White middle-class students, faculty, and parents. Another issue was the desire for the data gathering instruments and process in general to be a positive experience for all concerned rather than emphasizing the negatives that were the focus of so much outside attention.

Instead of beginning with traditional measures that seek information on what is wrong, this process explored with students, staff, and parents what behaviors they would expect to see from all concerned at a school with an ideal social/emotional climate for learning. Focus groups from each constituency provided ideas that were later translated into survey instruments reflecting quite traditional expectations of social and academic behaviors as well as the local culture and wording from a positive frame of reference. Each of the constituent groups accepted and supported the use of the survey as their own as opposed to the questioning, resenting, and resisting they often did with mandated evaluations.

Local investment in development and use of the survey instrument lead to interest in the program and the study itself. This interest created its own form of enthusiasm around the program and a desire to make it successful by more people and groups than had previously been involved. It also increased investment by outside groups in the form of volunteer work as well as funding. On the assessment side, other more traditional forms of data were made more readily available to the researchers. Information such as test scores, grades, attendance, and discipline reports can be very threatening and they become more easily shared when it is clear those outsiders are as understanding of and invested in the welfare of the school as they are in their own agendas.

Assessment, adjustment, and recycling of information are essential for growth and continuing success of prevention program efforts. It is local interest and investment in the assessment process that encourages the pride of successes, the identification of potentially valuable changes, and the continuing evolution of a prevention program that keeps it viable in an ever-changing social-ecological environment.

Critique and Limitations

Implementation of the major program themes throughout sequential program stages as described in this chapter and summarized in Table 26.1 are the keys to how successful prevention programs turn good intentions into ongoing realities. But no matter the source or quality of a program, eventual success is dependent upon the extent and quality of local implementation in their unique social-ecological environment (Kallestad & Olweus, 2003; Shinn, 2003). How effectively a program and the community’s uniqueness can be combined will make the critical difference.

Each program theme and stage requires people to expand personal and professional boundaries in significant ways (Hazler, 1998). People do not take such steps out of their comfort zones quickly or easily, so that program implementation and eventual success depends upon the degree of and speed with which constituents are willing to change. Many programs are dropped quickly, not because people refuse to change, but because those who want immediate change are not willing to work with and wait for those who require a slower pace. In the rush to do “something,” the power of the larger group support can be lost or even turned into opposition. Conversely, moving too slowly can lose the investment of those who desire more rapid actions. Negotiating the local balance is the key to success.

Prevention programs have greater success when formal changes match informal ones. Adults and students may follow one set of non-bullying and victim-supportive guidelines during closely supervised activities, but act very differently at social occasions or during competitive events. These
inconsistencies diminish the sense that the lessons of the program are truly universal and promote the idea that they only apply to certain people in selected settings. One of the most difficult yet valuable changes successful programs promote is transferring application of the skills and knowledge developed in a classroom to less organized and unsupervised situations.

Timing is a key factor in the implementation of awareness building, policy creation, skill development, and continuing involvement. School personnel and other adults are naturally attracted to the quick implementation of knowledge acquisition and skill building activities so that youth can have them at their disposal. This often results in a rush through program stages so that students and adults do not gain the motivation and systemic follow-up necessary to turn good ideas into consistent positive actions. Assessment in the early stages of a program is another example of an important timing issue (Benkofske & Heppner, 2008) that is often overlooked until late in the process when people begin wishing they had started collecting information earlier. Both examples reflect the preparation and patience that are essential for successful follow through with a prevention program.

All successful programs involve students, but not all in the same ways. Students may be involved in more passive roles (e.g., gaining awareness, knowledge, or policy follower), supportive roles (e.g., support seeker, caring encourager, mentor, or educator), or more assertive roles (e.g., mediator, policy maker, policy enforcer, or peer counselor; Hazler & Carney, 2002). Communities and individuals are not equally comfortable with students in each of these roles.

Many states provide funding for programs, and a common string attached is the need for the program to be supported by research and for program outcomes to be evaluated locally. The “supported by research” issue is where programs that have invested in research over time gain a major advantage over programs that have funded marketing, but not research. No programs have proven fully successful in all situations, but the more a local program builds upon the research of previous efforts, the greater is the likelihood of choosing or building a successful one.

The selected or designed program needs to match the funds, time, and energy available to

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<th>Program Themes</th>
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<td>Social-Ecological Perspective</td>
<td>Integrate the greatest possible diversity of people and groups into community planning and implementation efforts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reducing Isolation of People and Ideas</td>
<td>Reduce physical isolation opportunities and increase social, information, emotional, and ideological inclusion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Empathic Involvement</td>
<td>Create and maintain connections between people on the emotional level in addition to knowledge/information level</td>
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<td>Sequential Program Stages</td>
<td>Implementation</td>
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<td>Initial Awareness Building</td>
<td>Create both knowledge and emotional awareness that promotes understanding, a desire to help, and a press for timely action</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy Development</td>
<td>Create agreed upon values, related rules of behavior, supportive activities, and enforcement procedures involving the greatest possible diversity of school/community participants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skill Development</td>
<td>Teach a wide variety of social skills that encourage abusers, victims, and bystanders to assertively implement social/behavioral values and policies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Continuing Involvement</td>
<td>Provide regular time for discussions on the school’s evolving climate, positive changes, problems, necessary actions, and how to use previously learned skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment and Adjustment</td>
<td>Evaluate progress, identify changing needs, and direct adjustment of efforts</td>
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Table 26.1 Implications for Practice: Characteristics of Effective Bullying Preventions Programs
make the program work successfully in the local school/community culture. Ignoring these steps or the program themes and stages can lead to half-hearted efforts or discontinuation. Attending to them produces a program that can effectively integrate quickly into a school system and remain there as an integral part of the development of youth, schools, and community.

References
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