

// Parent Ministry
The Bully Phenomenon
Breaking the Cycle
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REVIEW:

The Bully Phenomenon is a book written to elevate awareness about the growing trend of bullying among student of all ages. This book is written with an insightful eye on research and wise ear listening to our culture. It is created as a resource for teachers, parents, clergy, community leaders and beyond. This book is a challenge for anyone working with students about what continues to be going between young people, even during continued adult world media coverage and cultural conversations on the topic.

SNAPSHOT

Chapter 1: Background

While bullying in recent years has been investigated and covered, it continues to be a phenomenon that adults do not fully comprehend. Bullying continues to be a wide-spread, low-violence threat that nearly one-third of students have experienced. Research shows that even with adult intervention happening, it is still only being addressed in a small percentage of actual cases of bullying.

Chapter 2: The Nature of Bullying

"The act of bullying involves physical intimidation, humiliation, and/or verbal abuse marked by victimization..." At its core, bullying is a domination of another socially, emotionally, or physically. The nature of a bully is belittling another in order to feel superior to ease their own pain or insecurity. While the key roles in a bullying situation are the bully and the bullied, research suggest bullying happens in peer settings. Peers in these settings choose their own role to play when remaining neutral, joining in, or coming to the aid of the victim. Those children that become bullied, are often targeted because they are viewed as different in some way, whether based on weight, physical stature, disabilities, or other deficiencies.

Chapter 3: Types of Bullying

Bullying victimization can happen anywhere, that is why it is important to understand the character traits of a bully as wells as the types of bullying. The character traits of a person who bullies are: 1.) Victimizing others without justification. 2.) Becoming frequently violent. 3.) Anger management issues. 4.) Manipulating and controlling others. 5.) Never taking ownership and responsibility for actions. The types of bullying are: 1.) *Physical bullying*, activities that include hitting, pushing, punching, and may include other harassing behaviors. 2.) *Relational Bullying*, activities resulting in name calling, threats, teasing, and even exclusion from peer groupings. 3.) *Emotional Bullying*, negative activities where victims feel isolated or ridiculed mainly through verbal means. 4.) *Cyberbullying*, activities through technology including verbal insults, name calling, rumors, and sharing of pictures and information.



Chapter 4: Bullying Case Studies

The chapter includes case studies that were part of an ethnographic research project studying elementary, middle school, and high school bullying. These case studies highlight students', parents', and other adults' experiences, perceptions, and emotions related to the "shared essence" accounts of the bullying rituals. These students reveal the belief that the bullying phenomenon peaks in late childhood, into early adolescence years. Case study 1: *Global Bullying Phenomenon*, reveals that bullying is not just a national problem but a global one at epidemic proportions. Case study 2: *Perceptions of Bullying*, shows the difference existing between adult groups' view of perceived responsibility and safety of students. Case study 3: *Whole-School Approach*, exposes the fact that bullying prevention has not been successful in North America schools. Case study 4, *Bullying Occurrences*, uncovers that most incidents of bullying occur in isolated areas. Case study 5, *Cyberbullying*, studies the effects of electronics and social media in the lives of students.

Chapter 5: Effects of Bullying

The effect of bullying researched and documented reveals the developmental and academic consequences on young people. Further, the psychological harm that is caused to both the bullied and the bully is long term if not addressed. It is essential for parents and other adults to know the warning signs of peer victimization, including but not limited to: loss of valued possessions, unexplainable injury, change in eating and sleep habits, decline in grades, sudden shift of mood and behavior, self-abuse and the long list continues.

Chapter 6: Bullying Intervention

When bullying is addressed only through rules and consequences, without effective intervention, the core problem will remain. Adults and leaders must make a goal to identify and intervene in appropriate ways. There must exist the clear process of: 1.) *Anti-Bullying Legislation*. 2.) *Proactive Anti-Bullying Posture*. 3.) *Bullying Resolution Model*. 4.) *Developmental Training*. 5.) *Mediation*. 6.) *Conflict De-Escalation Strategies*.

Chapter 7: Summary

The danger of bullying has continued to grow beyond what adults completely know. While viewed as a rite of passage, it has instead grown to a serious global social epidemic. It continues to be an issue in schools along with other environments. Even the traditional perception of bullying is changing with an increase in sexual harassment and cyberbullying. Research shows also that beyond the bully and the bullied, there are the peer bystanders that play a role in various ways. Programs and plans need to exist that can involve parents, teachers, and other adults in the life of students preventing bullying at its social, emotional, and psychological core.

As always this "snapshot" is very quick overview of a long and in-depth book full of great parental advice and wisdom. It is provided to help you get a brief glimpse to see if this book would be a great fit for your family, ministry or church. We strongly encourage you to buy the full-length resource at your local bookstore or online. We hope you will, as bullying affects Christian homes and churches as well.

