



Bullying and Bystander Intervention

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Objectives

- Learn to differentiate between bullying and other forms of inappropriate behavior.
- Recognize how bullying manifests itself among older adults in senior housing communities.
- Explore effective ways to teach residents and staff how to intervene when they experience or witness bullying.

Why are we discussing bullying today?





Video

<http://abcnews.go.com/US/video/87-year-old-georgia-woman-accused-of-bullying-neighbor-15972096>



120321_wsb_elderly_bully 01.wmv



What Do You Think?

What percentage of the time does bullying occur in front of other people?

- **10%**
- **30 %**
- **62%**
- **85%**



What is Bullying?

- Someone is trying to gain power over another person.
- Someone who yells and strikes out at everyone is not necessarily bullying.



Bonifas & Frankel, 2012 and Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996



Bullying behaviors can be:

- **physical**
- **verbal**
- **anti-social/relationship**
- **cyberbullying**



Is all “bad” behavior bullying?

Dementia

- Cognitive deficits can contribute to negative behavior, including aggression.
- The environment can increase the frustrations and challenges people with dementia experience.

Major Mental Illness

- Disordered thinking
- Distort reality
- May have hallucinations and/or delusions
- Limited range of emotional expression
- Poor social skills

Two Types of Bullying Targets

- Passive targets
- Provocative targets

Anyone can be a target of a bully!





Impact on Target

- Social withdrawal
- Feelings of rejection
- Desire to stop attending programs
- Increased physical complaints
- Functional changes
- Anxiety, depression, thoughts of suicide

Bonifas, & Frankel, 2012, Charpentier & Soulieres, 2013, Gini, et al., 2008 ,
Obermann, 2011, Salmivalli, et al., 2011



Impact on Others

- Creates an environment of fear and disrespect
- Reduces satisfaction and involvement
- Fosters insecurity
- Leads to feelings of guilt for not intervening
- Encourages increased bullying behavior



Impact on Staff

- Generates an environment of fear and disrespect
- Creates insecurity
- Decreases loyalty and commitment
- Increases the possibility of staff bullying and abuse
- Increases staff turnover

What Do You Think?

What percentage of the time has research shown bystanders can be effective in stopping a bullying episode?

•10%

•25%

•50%

•82%



What Do You Think?

How long does it take to stop bullying when a bystander speaks up?

- **10 seconds**
- **30 seconds**
- **60 seconds**
- **2 minutes**



What is Our Goal?



Interventions for Bullies

- Consistently set limits on bullying behavior.
- Offer an appropriate outlet to vent frustrations.
- Help them to:
 - Identify alternative methods to feel in control
 - Learn positive communication skills
 - Develop empathy
 - Expand their social network



Interventions for the Bullied

- Help individuals who are bullied to learn these skills.
 - Assertiveness training
 - Use of “I statements”
 - Foster self worth and dignity
 - Practice by role playing
- Encourage them to seek support and help



Role of the Bystander

- Recognize bullying
- Don't participate
- Intervene as appropriate
- Be direct; keep it simple





Bystander Interventions

- Defend the target
- Challenge the bully's behavior
- Divert/Redirect the bully

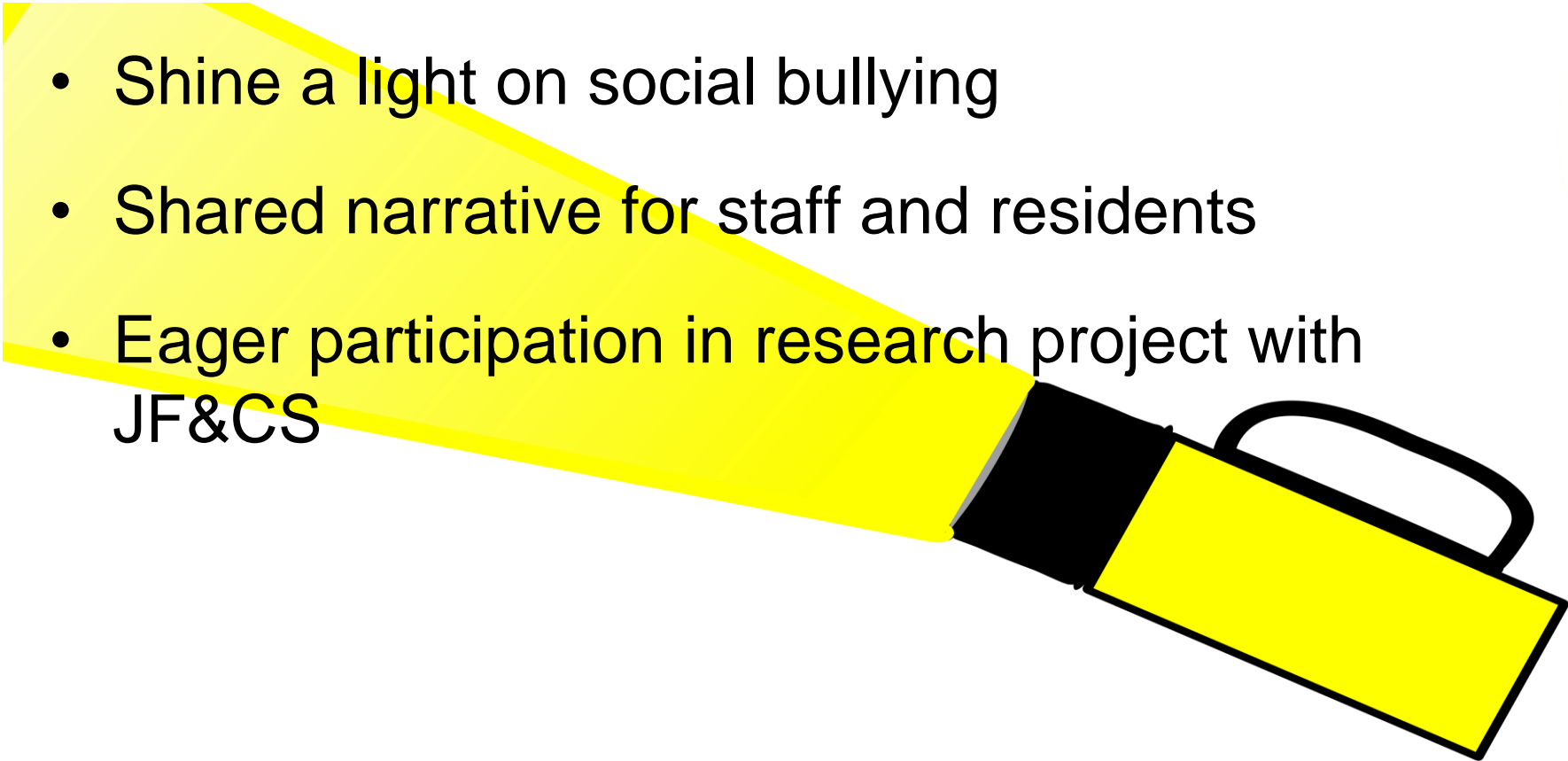
Having even one defender reduces the negative consequences of victimization!



ROLE PLAYS



JCHE's Response to Social Bullying

- 
- Shine a light on social bullying
 - Shared narrative for staff and residents
 - Eager participation in research project with JF&CS



Peaceful Enjoyment

- JCHE takes “peaceful enjoyment” to a whole new level
 - Partnered with Marsha and JF&CS on mental health training and guide (jche.org/guide)
 - Partnered with the Alzheimer’s Association of MA/NH on Memory Support Initiative (winner of LeadingAge MA Program Innovation of the Year Award (jche.org/guide))
 - Social bullying and bystander training for staff and residents



Buy-in

- Buy in from everyone
- Train staff and residents - what bullying is and isn't
- Staff must follow up if bullying is reported
- Make language clear in lease/house rules/employee handbook that bullying behavior will not be tolerated (JCHE's Guidelines for Community Living)
- Appropriate behavior expectations must be made a part of staff and new resident orientation



Behavior and Follow-up

- All behavior needs to be addressed
- Not a one time fix
- Show resident that s/he signed the house rules agreeing to abide by the Community Living Guidelines
- Bullying can escalate to violence
- Get clarification from police what they consider bullying vs a physical threat?
- If someone is threatening someone else (resident or staff) involve community police if necessary



Culture is Relevant

- Cultural misunderstanding
- Cultural norms (speech, touching, allowing questionable behavior)
- However, we are in the United States, and must live peacefully with everyone



Tips

- Involve residents in training staff
- Address things head on and not triangulate if possible
- Create a structure and procedure for events in the building or on a bus that reduces confusion and bullying. Seating - wheelchairs first, then walkers, then canes...



Questions?

Comments?

Examples?

THANK YOU!!!