BULLYING 101: WHAT EVERY TEACHER SHOULD KNOW

by:
Alicia S. Juan
Teacher III, Hermosa Elementary School

Bullying – An act that has been known to hinder studies, traumatize, and even cause fatalities to students. Indeed, bullying is a serious matter. This is why it is imperative that every educator be aware of its varying methods, how to confront it and who to turn to in case they encounter bullies and bullying in their classroom.

Though there are already many articles, discussions, and write ups for the issue as well as numerous organizations and laws to fight bullying, it would never hurt to be reminded or gain additional information regarding bullying. Here are some different answers and information about this sensitive topic.

Bullying as Defined

www.stopbullying.gov, an organization geared towards prevention of bullying, defines it as unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involve a real or perceived power imbalance. Meanwhile, Merriam-Webster describes the act as to frighten, hurt, or threaten (a smaller or weaker person). Though there may be hundreds of definitions existing, most of it can be summarized as an act of harassment, intimidation, and oppression upon someone who is of lesser power and ability by a person in a better disposition.

However, it should be remembered that bullying is not only physical. It can damage emotionally, religiously and spiritually. Bullying can not only bruise the victim, but lower his self-esteem and confidence as well.
More so, the conventional bullying has seen transformations as abuse can now be done verbally or through the use of social media and the internet. In fact, www.nobullying.com, another anti-bullying organization, has studied that in the UK, reports of cyber bullying has increased steadily. Meanwhile, the same organization has also reported that the Philippines is in the 4th place worldwide when it comes to citizens searching about cyber bullying.

It cannot be denied that bullying has many faces, and it falls upon the teachers and parents to identify them.

Preventing the Bullying

Once a victim is engulfed by the intimidation that surrounds him, it is when the harsh outcome of harassment show its ugly face. Therefore, a teacher should know how to prevent, detect, and stop cases of bullying in the students. The question now is how.

Many associations, movements, and organizations have listed down varying ways on how to properly handle bullying cases. National Education Association has even listed down steps on how to avoid bullying in a classroom. However, much like its definition, the prevention of bullying can be summarized easily. It all boils down to awareness and communication.

A teacher must impart his or her knowledge about frightening and threat to her knowledge. Educators must be able to explain meticulously the negative effects and consequences of being a bully and a victim. They must be able to make their students understand the concepts of being bullied and what to do to stop it.

Prevention is better than cure. If a child thoroughly understands that being a bully does not pay, then it is most likely that bullying will be lessened.
Who to Talk to

Both the government and the citizens have taken even further steps to prevent bullying. Republic Act no. 10627 otherwise known as the Anti-Bullying Act of 2013 seeks to explain bullying and has turned bullying into a crime punishable by law. Meanwhile, many organizations have formed to push the initiative. They have even enlisted famous celebrities and personalities that support their cause.

More so, educational institutions have been distributing information regarding bullying. Though guidance counselors in schools have been a staple for any academy, many are now attending seminars to further their skills.

All of the people who have gathered together to fight bullying only goes to show that the victims need not carry their burden alone as there are people who can assist them.

Bullying has become stronger in these changing times. However, those who oppose it are even more powerful. And for teachers, who serve as the first line of defense against bullying, understanding and awareness of the issue is becoming critical. Indeed, it can never hurt to be reminded or gain additional formation regarding the disease that is known as bullying.

References: