What to do About Bullies
In Long Term Care Settings

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Definition

- Bullying is intentional repetitive aggressive behavior involving an imbalance of power or strength.
- Includes verbal, physical or antisocial behavior that occurs in the context of social relationships that cause emotional distress.
Verbal Bullying

- Name calling
- Teasing
- Insults
- Taunting
- Threats

- Being bossed
- Sarcastic remarks
- Pointed jokes
- Loud arguments
- Targeting
Non-Verbal Bullying

- Mimicking one’s walk or disability
- Making offensive gestures or facial expressions
- Turning one’s head away when the other person speaks
- Using threatening body language
- Encroaching on personal space
- Disrespectful
Cyber-Bullying

- E-mail
- Cell phone pictures
- Texting
- Facebook/Twitter
Antisocial Bullying

- Shunning, excluding or ignoring
- Gossiping
- Spreading rumors
- Negative non-verbal language
- Hounding people for money or cigarettes
Bully Dynamics in LTC Settings

- Resident ↔ Resident
- Resident ↔ Staff
- Resident ↔ Family
- Staff ↔ Staff
- Staff ↔ Resident
- Staff ↔ Family
- Family ↔ Resident
- Family ↔ Staff
- Family ↔ Family
You're fat.

That's very ...

HIPPO-CRITICAL
Why Does Bullying Occur in Long Term Care Settings?

- Resources are shared
- Closer quarters
- Childhood behavior problems continue into adulthood
- Vulnerabilities
- Fear
- Change
Characteristics of Those Who are Bullied

- Defenseless
- Powerless
- Passive
  - Emotional, anxious, insecure, shy...
- Provocative
  - Annoying, irritating, poor boundaries...
- Dementia, developmental or neurological disorder
- Social status
Intolerance of Social Status

- Dementia
- Mental Health or Disability
- Sexual Orientation
- Race or ethnicity
- Gender
- Economic Status
Characteristics of Bullies

- Low self esteem
- Need for power and control at the expense of others
- Difficulty tolerating individual differences
- Lack of empathy
- Few positive social relationships
- Loss (income, loved ones, independence, social status)
- Don’t fit in
Circumstances that contribute to Bullying Behavior

- Medications
- Dementia
- Anger
- Emotional pain
- Physical pain
- Loneliness and loss
- Fear
- Feeling entitled
- Lack of control

- Lost abilities and functions
- Resentment for life circumstances
- Jealousy
## The Impact of Bullying

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For Person Bullied</th>
<th>For Consumers &amp; Staff</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Reduced self esteem</td>
<td>• Creates culture of fear, disrespect and insecurity</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Feeling of rejection</td>
<td>• Threatens staff loyalty and retention</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Depression</td>
<td>• May contribute to retaliatory bullying</td>
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<tr>
<td>• More health problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Functional changes</td>
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<td>• Thoughts of suicide</td>
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<td>• Problems eating and sleeping</td>
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<td>• Isolation</td>
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Solutions for Individuals

- Research bullying to differentiate actual bullying or temporary moods
- Remember this is not your fault
- Confide in someone close
- Discuss with professionals, advocates or clergy
- Develop a support network
- Document incidents, times and dates to create record and verify pattern
- Use “I” statements and try to be kind, gentle and understanding with bully
- Be assertive in early stages
- Keep distance and walk away if necessary
- Enlist help from reliable source
The Cycle of Bullying

- The Bully
- The Victim
- Follower or Henchman
- Defender and Passive Defender who tries to help the Victim
- Supporters and Passive Supporters
- Disengaged Onlooker

Adapted from: msn.com
Systemic Solutions to Bullying

- Resident, tenant and family councils
- Rules and expectations for consumers and staff
- Partnerships between consumers, staff and community
- Education (tolerance, conflict resolution and bullying awareness)
To ensure A Bully Free Zone

- Clear policies, procedures and lease agreements with consequences for bullying that are enforced
- Training for staff, resident, tenant and family councils to identify bullying and act responsibly to protect oneself and others
- Identify Hot Spots and develop steps to create a community culture of respect, dignity and diversity
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