Bullying Information Sheet

What is bullying?

Bullying is a type of aggressive behavior. It is not a new phenomenon - bullying behaviors were documented as early as the 18th century. Yet bullying was not considered a significant social problem until about 40 years ago.

It was not until the 1970s when Daniel Olweus, a Norwegian psychologist and pioneer researcher, undertook studies on bullying that the issue was acknowledged as a **serious problem.**

What are bullying behaviours?

Bullying behaviours can be differentiated into direct and indirect bullying; both involving cases in which children's rights are violated.

Direct bullying refers to the use of overt behaviours, which include physical aggression (hitting, kicking) and verbal aggression (insults, racial or sexual harassment, threats) and therefore is more easily identified.

Indirect bullying includes the manipulation of social relationships to hurt (gossiping, spreading rumours) or socially exclude the individual being victimized.

Boys are more likely to engage in physical aggression or direct bullying, while girls are more likely to engage in indirect bullying.

What are the main elements of bullying?

1. The bully intends to inflict harm or fear upon the victim.
2. Aggression toward the victim occurs repeatedly.
3. The victim does not provoke bullying behavior by using verbal or physical aggression.
4. Bullying occurs in familiar social groups.
5. The bully is more powerful (either actual or perceived power) than the victim.

What are some of the consequences of bullying?

For children who are bullied, there is increased risk of:

- Depression, anxiety
- Suicidal ideation and behaviours
- Social adjustment difficulties and loneliness
- Low self-esteem
- Impaired academic achievement, school disengagement, school absenteeism
- Psychosomatic problems: headaches, abdominal pains, sleep disorders, bedwetting, etc.

For children who bully, there is increased risk of:

- Risk of school failure
- Risk of running away from home
- Antisocial behaviours
- Delinquent behaviours
- Risks toward criminal behaviour as an adult

For children who are bystanders, there is increased risk of:

- Physical or psychological pain
- Develop feelings of helplessness and guilt

Discussion Questions

- What do you think of when you hear the word bullying?
- What does bullying mean to you? What is the difference with cyberbullying?
- Why is it important to try to prevent and eliminate bullying?
- Why do you think bullying occurs?
- How do you think children are affected?
- How can we help the bully? How can we help the person being bullied? How can we help the people watching the bullying happen?
- Do you think young people are desensitized by watching violent videos, television or movies?
- Do think that young people feel responsibility to get involved? Or do they think it's easier to pretend nothing happened and everything will be okay?
- Do you think that young people really believe they can hide behind their computers or a fake profile?
- Do young people think about the person receiving the bullied messages or are they just kind of playing along with what seems to be 'cool'?
- How do you think young people should express themselves, if they have something negative to say?
- What sort of tools can you suggest to prevent or stop bullying? More specifically, what tool would you like to develop for the ENABLE Hackathon ?
- Who would be the target audience for this tool? How could your tool be disseminated so that many people can use it to prevent or combat bullying ?

As with any project, you will need to build a roadmap for your Hackathon project. Remember, submission date is 27 Sept 2015 (23.00 CET)! Be sure to build in extra time for trouble-shooting!