

e bulletin



Issue no. 4

April 2007

The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) was founded by NSPCC and National Children's Bureau in 2002. It is hosted and supported by NCB. The Alliance brings together 65 organisations into one network with the aim of reducing bullying and creating safer environments in which children and young people can live, grow, play and learn. This bulletin aims to bring you an update of national news and information about bullying and anti-bullying practice.

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What's New?

The ABA has responded to the recent Commons Select Committee report on bullying and issued the following statement:

The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) welcomes today's report into bullying and the clarity it gives on the pressing need to provide adequate training and support for teachers and staff to help them deal more confidently and effectively with incidences of bullying. The ABA also welcomes the recognition the committee makes that support is needed for the child doing the bullying, as well as for the child that is bullied.

The ABA supports the call for a long-term research study into the various methods of tackling bullying in order to create the evidence base for effective practice. Such a research study will require substantial funding over a period of years but is an essential investment in the wellbeing and safety of children.

The ABA is very much in favour of an independent complaints panel for parents and children on bullying. The ABA will continue to work through its nine regional coordinators, placed throughout the country, to promote best practice locally, regionally, nationally including Anti-Bullying Week, which will take place this year from the 19th-23rd November.

Chris Cloke, Chair of the ABA said: 'As Chair of the ABA I welcome this report, it highlights the serious problem that is bullying and that bullying in any form is a totally unacceptable behaviour. At the ABA we believe that tackling bullying must be a major priority, and that a coordinated approach is needed that addresses both policy and practice on the ground.'

The report, including the formal minutes, oral and written evidence, is available to download at:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cm/meduski.htm>

Readers may be interested to know of one response to the ABA media statement about the report. An email from the 'Newham Recorder' asked, 'Was it deliberate that someone come up with the title ABA for an anti bullying campaign, a prefix which also happens to be the same for the Amateur Boxing Association?'

Coming soon.....The ABA Audit Toolkit for Schools and Local Authorities is being prepared for publication and will be launched in the early part of the summer term. It is part of a package of materials produced by ABA to support schools and local authorities in implementing effective anti-bullying strategies. Developed by Professor Peter K. Smith and the ABA Research Team at Goldsmith's with a panel of experts in the field, the ABA Audit Toolkit will provide a definitive surveying tool for use with children and young people, staff and parents/carers in primary and secondary phases to establish indicative levels of bullying as well as participant views on how effective existing responses and strategies really are. The resource will initially be available as a pdf for download from the ABA website.

Bullying Resources

Includes new resources about bullying that have been added to the NCB Library in the past month. NCB's Library can supply photocopies of journal articles upon receipt of a signed copyright declaration form for each item. Enquirers may order up a maximum of four articles at a cost of £4.00 per article. Whole books or pamphlets cannot be copied or loaned. To order photocopies, phone Sandra Fowler, Information Officer, Tel: 020 7843 1901 or Email: sfowler@ncb.org.uk

In print

BORUP, I., and HOLSTEIN, B. (2007)

Schoolchildren who are victims of bullying report benefit from health dialogues with the school nurse. *Health Education Journal*, vol.66, no.1 (Mar). pp58-67. Outlines a Scandinavian study that explored the role of school health services on bullying. In particular, it focused on the effects of discussing the situation with school nurses among school children aged 11, 13 and 15 years, who were bullied. Bullying was measured as recommended by Olweus. Outcome of the discussion with the school nurse was measured as self-reports of five responses: reflected on the discussion; discussed content with parents; followed advice from the school nurse; did what he [she] thought was best; visited the school nurse again. All outcome measures were more prevalent among children who were bullied, with the most significant association, the odds ratio for visiting the school nurse again among students who were bullied at least weekly. The study concludes that school children who are bullied benefit from discussing the situation with the school nurse.

FIGES, K. (2007)

The big fat bitch book. London: Virago. pp262. Why do girls and women excel at bitching? And are there ways to do it well? Kate Figes explores girtalk, the way bitching erupts amongst teenage girls, the tenacity of female stereotypes, as well as essential guidance on being the best kind of bitch - strong and self-assured, rather than the bitch that needs to put other girls and women down to feel stronger. Written in two parts, one for adolescent girls and one for women, the book also looks at what happens when bitching turns to bullying and what to do about it.

HOUSE OF COMMONS (2007)

Bullying: third report of session 2006-2007. London: TSO. pp243. (HC 85). The Select Committee report examines the progress that has been made to address the problem of bullying of children and young people and the effect it has on their educational and social achievements. It looks at the barriers to effective anti-bullying practice in schools, issues of prejudice-driven bullying including SEN-related, homophobic and faith-based bullying and cyberbullying. The report finds that defining bullying and identifying instances of bullying is the first potential barrier to successfully tackling the problem. It says that teachers and staff, pupils and parents, should all be aware of their school's definition of bullying and how this affects their behaviour. The attitude and engagement of head teachers is seen as crucial in efforts to tackle bullying. The focus of anti-bullying guidance should be on tackling anti-bullying behaviour and making it clear that such behaviour is not acceptable. The Department for Education and Skills should issue new guidance to local authorities and schools on when the use of exclusion is appropriate. A lack of accurate and reliable data on bullying is identified as another barrier to more effective anti-bullying work and the report recommends that the government should commission a long-term study of a number of schools, looking at both general trends in bullying and the effectiveness of different interventions. It also recommends that the government needs to foster a more open culture where schools are encouraged to be open about incidents of bullying, have effective ways of dealing with bullying, and provide support for victims of bullying, rather than fearing to report incidents of bullying in case it damages their reputation. The report looks at work carried out by the voluntary sector, including the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA), considers how it can better promote good practice, and says that if necessary, the DfES should provide additional resources to enable the ABA to spread good practice to schools and encourage robust discussion about the effectiveness of different anti-bullying programmes. The report, including the formal minutes, oral and written evidence, is available to download at: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmeduski.htm>

PARKS, M. (2007)

Bullying: what you can do to help. *Who Minds?*, (Spring). pp32-33. Offers advice on how to spot bullying in the early years. The article is aimed at childminders and nannies and looks at strategies to deal with different types of bullying. Provides a list of organisations and websites with information about bullying.

TURNBULL, J. (2006)

Promoting greater understanding in peers of children who stammer. *Emotional & Behavioural Difficulties*, vol.11, no.4 (Dec). pp237-247. Children who stammer are often vulnerable to teasing and bullying by their peers and this can affect their confidence and self esteem. This article describes a method of intervention in schools aimed at reducing negative responses to stammering by peers.

Audiovisual

Kidscape (2007)

It Shouldn't Happen!

New from Kidscape, this pack includes a DVD, guide and notes for teaching younger people how to stay safe from bullying. Based on Kidscape's ZAP course, it contains role plays, verbal assertiveness exercises and a range of techniques for keeping safe from bullies. Includes an interactive menu to simplify navigation and subtitles for those with hearing impairments. Aimed at children ages 7-11 years. Duration: 31 minutes. Price: £20. Orders and sample chapters available online from: www.kidscape.org.uk

Bullying in the News

From the media

The Commons Select Committee on Education and Skills has published its inquiry into the scale of bullying in schools. The Committee says schools should be forced to record all instances of bullying, including detailing those related to race, faith, disability or homophobia. MPs single out Catholic schools for refusing to follow government guidelines to tackle homophobic bullying and criticise the Catholic Church for not urging schools to set up specific policies against homophobic bullying. The Committee is demanding an end to the practice of excluding the victims of bullying. According to ACE, an organization that helps parents with school exclusions, five per cent of the exclusion cases it dealt with involved victims of bullying. MPs also reported concerns about the rise of cyber-bullying, where victims are threatened by text messages or emails. The report highlights a lack of reliable data on bullying which it says is a barrier to more effective anti-bullying work. The Committee was told that about 10 to 20 per cent of children had experienced general bullying, while that might rise to 30 to 50 per cent among secondary school pupils who were attracted to the same sex. MPs want the government to commission long-term research into trends and evidence of which approaches to tackling bullying have worked. Barry Sheerman, the Labour chair of the Committee, said any idea that bullying was 'character-building and simply part of childhood had to be challenged'. The report is available at:

www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cm200607/cm200607.htm

Guardian, 27 Mar 2007, p1; Independent, 27 Mar 2007, p13; Mail, 27 Mar 2007, p40; Mirror, 27 Mar 2007, p7; Telegraph, 27 Mar 2007, p15; Times, 27 Mar 2007, p26

The Commons Select Committee on Education and Skills will this week highlight a lack of reliable statistics on bullying and warn that teachers are not sufficiently trained to tackle the problem. While preparing the report, MPs heard from research that showed an increase in cyber-bullying and how bullies target children with special needs. The Committee's report follows Chancellor Gordon Brown's article in the News of the World yesterday, which stressed that tackling bullying 'was a responsibility we all share'. Independent, 26 Mar 2007, p8; Mirror, 26 Mar 2007, p9; Telegraph, 26 Mar 2007, p14

A study by York St John University on 'cyber-bullying' found that bullies are using video iPods and social networking sites, such as MySpace and Bebo, to bully their victims. A survey of 15,227 children aged 11 to 13, found 15 per cent had received threatening or nasty text messages and emails and that girls were twice as likely to be affected by cyber-bullying than boys - 20 per cent of girls reported being bullied in this way compared to ten per cent of boys. The research, led by Nathalie Noret, was presented at the British Psychological Society conference in York. She told the conference: 'What we have found is traditional bullying is moving out of the playground and off the school bus and being played out at home.....Parents need to be aware this is happening, and children need to know that if they are receiving these messages they should talk to people'. The most common form of text message bullying was appearance-related name-calling, followed by homophobic insults.

Independent, 22 Mar 2007, p20; Mail, 22 Mar 2007, p28; Sun, 22 Mar 2007, p37; Telegraph, 22 Mar 2007, p?; Times, 22 Mar 2007, p30

Nicola Stoneman killed herself, tormented by the fear that she had failed to protect her two teenage sons from school bullies. After repeatedly complaining to the school, she confronted the father of a boy believed to be one of the bullies, only to be allegedly attacked and beaten by him. The man, Robert Donaldson, was charged with actual bodily harm, but weeks before she was due to give evidence against him, Nicola Stoneman gassed herself in a friend's car and the charge was subsequently dropped. Nicola's mother said that her daughter's inability to stop the bullying had left her feeling helpless and guilty. She added 'I don't blame the teachers personally but this whole country lacks policies to tackle bullying'.

Mirror, 19 March 2007, p11.

In Parliament

28 March 2007

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether staff and volunteers from outside a school who run breakfast or after-school clubs are required to have undertaken training on how to tackle bullying.

also:

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether schools' anti-bullying policies are required to cover activities on school property which occur outside regular school hours.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200607/cm200607.htm#07032882000005>

19 March 2007

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children were excluded (a) temporarily and (b) permanently for bullying in schools in each year between 1997 and 2006.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200607/cm200607.htm#07032090000033>

15 March 2007

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what consideration was given to the issue of bullying when the policy of extended hours for schools was developed.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200607/cm200607.htm#07031554000033>

7 March 2007

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures have been taken in the last five years to help teachers to tackle homophobic bullying of (a) pupils and (b) teachers in schools.

also:

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, pursuant to the answer of 21 February 2007, *Official Report*, columns 1829-30W, on pupils: sexuality, what steps he is taking to combat bullying of transgendered children in schools.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200607/cmhansrd/cm070307/text/70307w0021.htm#070307139000021>

Readers may like to remind themselves of what was said on this subject in response to a question on the same subject from Lynne Jones, on 21 February 2007:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200607/cmhansrd/cm070221/text/70221w0011.htm#07022231000117>

Conferences, Events, Training

11-12 June 2007

That's So Gay – Challenging homophobic bullying in school and youth work settings and approaches to teaching on issues of sexual identity and homophobia

A two-day course for teachers and those working in youth settings. The course aims to raise awareness of issues for young gay, lesbian and bisexual people, explore current policy and guidance on responding to homophobic bullying and suggest practical approaches to use in and out of educational settings to combat and counter homophobia. Trainers: Tony Atkin & Dot Kesterton

Venue: Centre for HIV & Sexual Health, Sheffield

Cost: £200

Contact: Email: matt.harrison@chiv.nhs.uk or Tel: 0114 226 1902

Website: www.sexualhealthsheffield.nhs.uk/training

3rd November 2007

Bullying: Effective Tools and Hand-On Interventions

A training day covering interventions suitable for use with children and young people aged 4-16 years

The Centre for Child Mental Health.

Venue: London

For more information contact: Tel: 020 7354 2913; Email: info@childmentalhealthcentre.org

Contact Us

If you have a national conference, event or training course that you would like advertised in the next ABA e bulletin, please send details to Sandra Fowler (contact details below). Copy deadline: 26 April 2007.

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The NCB Library has a comprehensive and multidisciplinary collection of books, journals and grey literature on all aspects of children and young people's social welfare, health and education. It offers a wide range of subscription services and publications, including Highlights; Children in the News; ChildData; Childstats; ChildData Abstracts; Conferences & Events. For further information contact Tel: +44 (0)20 7843 6008 or Email: library@ncb.org.uk

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