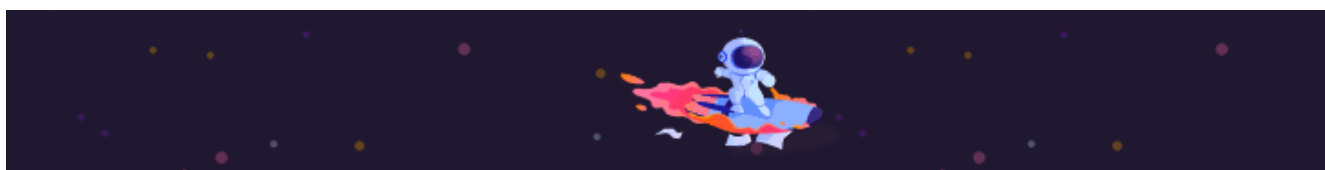


CRIMINAL JUSTICE



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Bullying in College

Bullying is the deliberate and repeated affliction of harm by one individual on another of less physical or social power. The harm often takes place over an extended period of time and can be inflicted physically, verbally, or emotionally. The victim of bullying is known as the target, while the perpetrator is called the bully. While bullying is often associated with early and middle adolescence, bullying may persist into college and the workplace. At colleges and universities, bullying usually occurs either between two students, between a student and a teacher, or between two teachers. More than 60% of college students report having witnessed a peer being bullied by another student, and more than 45% report having seen a student being bullied by a teacher.

The three major forms of bullying are physical bullying, verbal bullying, and emotional bullying. Physical bullying is an example of direct bullying, or bullying that outwardly harms the victim. Among college students, physical bullying most often involves shoving, paddling, and other forms of painful physical contact. Physical bullying is relatively common among college men, most often occurs in residence halls or other living quarters, and can be a component of hazing and initiations.

Verbal and emotional bullying are forms of indirect bullying, or bullying that does not visibly harm the victim and for which the effects are implicit and delayed. Common examples of verbal bullying among college students include name calling, making threatening remarks, verbal intimidation, use of sexist, homophobic language, gossiping, and other speech acts that cause fear or discomfort. Deliberate attempts to incite fear, intimidation or emotional distress are forms of emotional bullying. Emotional bullying can include intentional social isolation, exclusion from social groups and organizations, and defacing or stealing property.

Emotional bullying is often carried out electronically. Electronic bullying, also known as cyberbullying among college students often relies on college-oriented social networking Internet sites, such as Facebook, or on popular college gossip websites. A cyberbully might publicly share gossip or embarrassing information about another individual, post unflattering pictures or mean comments about the victim, or intentionally exclude others from web-based groups. Unwelcome and harassing emails, instant messages and text messages are other examples of cyberbullying.

Colleges and universities rarely collect bullying statistics. Postsecondary institutions are not required to report incidents of bullying, and no federal agency in the United States compiles data on such occurrences. Several nonrepresentative surveys measuring the frequency of college bullying have been administered, however. Nearly 25% of survey participants reported having been bullied by another student, 19% reported having been bullied by a teacher, and 18% revealed that they had bullied others. There is a strong association between being bullied in high school and being bullied in college. Likewise, there is a strong association between being a bully in high school and being a bully in college.

Hazing is a ritualistic method of initiating a person into a group or organization, often involving harassment, physical abuse, humiliation, or other forms of bullying characterized by an imbalance of power between the target and the initiator. In many cases, existing members of an organization possess power over potential members, who must submit to bullying to gain membership. Hazing rituals may include direct bullying, such as paddling or beating, and/or indirect bullying, such as the performance of degrading and embarrassing tasks. Fraternities, sororities, and athletic teams are examples of college organizations that often engage in hazing.

Sexual harassment, or all forms of unsolicited sexual attention, is a commonplace form of bullying among college students. Sexual harassment can be both direct, such as grabbing or groping of breasts or genitalia, and indirect, such as comments about body parts or the use of sexist or homophobic language. Sexual harassment or sexual violence that occurs within the context of a romantic relationship between students is called youth dating violence.

Bullying incidents based on race, ethnicity, color, sex, real or perceived gender identity, real or perceived sexual orientation, native language, national origin, religion, social class or disability are examples of bias-based bullying. Sexual minority students, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered students, and students from underrepresented racial groups are more likely to report being the victims of biased-based bullying on college campuses than are their peers.

Teacher bullying occurs when a teacher takes advantage of his or her position of authority and subjects a student to repeated public ridicule, degradation, or suggestions of incapability. Teacher bullying is often indirect, and the victim is generally powerless given that the teacher ultimately evaluates the victim's performance in the class. Teacher bullying—particularly bullying based on ideological differences between the student and the teacher—is being reported with increasing frequency at the university level. Bullying by tenured professors toward untenured assistant professors has also been reported.

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