Модул 2. Развојни карактеристики на адолесцентите и препознавање на насилнички однесувања

Овој модул ги истражува сложените односи помеѓу развојот на адолесцентите и насилничкото однесување во средношколската средина. Насочен кон наставници, тој обезбедува увид во психолошкиот, емотивниот и социјалниот развој на тинејџерите и како овие фактори влијаат на динамиката на насилството. Документот ги опремува наставниците со практични вештини за препознавање на очигледни и суптилни знаци на насилство, разбирање на психолошките профили на жртвите и насилниците и спроведување на ефективни стратегии за интервенција.

Развојни карактеристики на адолесцентите и нивната врска со насилничкото однесување

Адолесценцијата претставува критичен период на развој, кој се карактеризира со значајни промени во развојот на мозокот, когнитивното функционирање и социјалната динамика. Овие трансформации длабоко влијаат на тоа како тинејџерите се перципираат себеси и другите, истовремено обликувајќи ги нивните однесувачки тенденции, вклучително и ранливоста кон насилство и склоноста кон малтретирање на другите. Разбирањето на овие развојни фактори им обезбедува на наставниците вредни увиди во причините и симптомите на насилството, овозможувајќи поефикасна интервенција..

Когнитивен развој

Адолесцентите искусуваат зголемени когнитивни способности, вклучувајќи подобрено критичко размислување, регулација на емоциите и вештини за решавање проблеми. Континуираниот развој на префронталниот кортекс, кој е одговорен за донесување одлуки и контрола на импулсите, придонесува за овие напредоци. Сепак, овие способности остануваат непотполни, што ги прави тинејџерите подложни на импулсивни однесувања, особено во средина со врсници (Crone & Dahl, 2012).

Како што адолесцентите настојуваат да ја изградат својата личност, влијанието на врсниците станува клучно во обликувањето на самоперцепцијата. Социјалната споредба и потребата за одобрување од врсниците можат да поттикнат агресивно однесување или чувства на недоволност, кои често претходат на насилничко однесување. Според теоријата на Ериксон, неуспехот во развивањето на сопствен идентитет може да доведе до конфузија на улогите, што потенцијално може да се манифестира како агресија кон другите (Erikson, 1968).

Развојни карактеристики на адолесцентите и нивната врска со насилничкото однесување (продолжение)
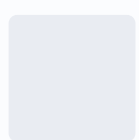
Емоционален развој и регулација

Адолесцентниот мозок доживува засилена емоционална реактивност поради промените во лимбичкиот систем. Истражувањата укажуваат дека слабата емоционална регулација е во корелација со зголемена веројатност за станување насилник или жртва (Garner, 2017). Тинејџерите кои се борат со контрола на своите емоции се посклони на импулсивни однесувања, вклучително и агресија и насилство (Murray-Close et al., 2007).

Овој период се одликува со зголемена чувствителност на позитивни и негативни стимули, што резултира со емоционална нестабилност. Додека адолесцентите се движат низ овој сложен емоционален пејзаж, тие стануваат поранливи на чувства на одбивање и социјално исклучување, што може да ги засили конфликтите со врсниците (Steinberg, 2014). Овие фактори помагаат да се објасни зошто жртвите на насилство во адолесценцијата често доживуваат повисоки стапки на анксиозност, депресија и социјално повлекување.
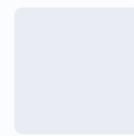
Социјален развој

За време на адолесценцијата, чувството на припадност станува од особена важност, при што врсничките групи имаат силно влијание врз однесувањето. Популарноста и социјалниот статус се појавуваат како извори на моќ, што може да доведе до насилничко однесување, бидејќи некои тинејџери настојуваат да воспоставаат доминација или да ја одржат својата позиција во социјалната хиерархија (Bukowski & Sippola, 2001; Crone & Steinbeis, 2017).

Адолесцентите често формираат групички, а оние кои се маргинализирани или перцепирани како поразлични можат да станат мета на насилство (Espelage & Swearer, 2003). Популарните ученици понекогаш користат насилство за да ја одржат својата социјална доминација, додека оние од маргинализираните групи се изложени на поголем ризик од виктимизација. Социјалната динамика како исклучување, ширење гласини и јавно понижување претставува вообичаени тактики на релациско насилство, кое често останува невидливо за возрасните поради тоа што функционира под неформални социјални кодови.

Разлики помеѓу вообичаени тинејџерски конфликти и врсничко насилство

Иако конфликтот претставува природна компонента на адолесцентските социјални интеракции, просветните работници мора да направат разлика меѓу вообичаени несогласувања и однесувања на малтретирање за да можат соодветно да реагираат.

Вообичаени конфликти

- Изедначена позиција меѓу страните со приближно еднаков социјален или емоционален авторитет
- Ненадејни инциденти, а не трајно вкоренети модели на однесување
- Без намерна цел за повредување; конфликтите произлегуваат од несогласувања или недоразбирања
- Решавањето е можно преку комуникација, преговори и компромис

Пример: Лиса и Марија се блиски пријателки кои не се согласуваат која активност по училиште да ја изберат. Тие расправаат за тоа која активност е подобра и привремено се налутат една на друга. Откако ќе се смрат, одлучуваат да ги следат своите лични интереси, при тоа продолжувајќи го нивното пријателство. Овој конфликт подразбира рамноправна моќ, ситуативно несогласување и може да се реши со комуникација без трајни последици.

Насилничко однесување

- Очигледна нерамнотежа на моќта (социјална, емоционална или физичка)
- Свесна намера за нанесување емоционална, физичка или социјална повреда
- Повторуван образец на однесување, наместо поединечни инциденти
- Жртвата се чувствува беспомошна да ја реши ситуацијата; насилникот не покажува интерес за разрешување.

Пример: Алекс повторно шири лажни гласини за Бен, дека препишува на тестовите. Ова предизвикува Бен да стане социјално изолиран, бидејќи соучениците одбиваат да соработуваат со него или да седат со него за време на одморот. И покрај обидите на Бен да ја разјасни ситуацијата, Алекс продолжува со ширење гласини, предизвикувајќи постојан стрес и исклучување. Ова претставува малтретирање поради намерното и повторувано дејствие со цел да се наштети. Јасната нерамнотежа на моќта и трајното однесување кое предизвикува емоционална штета.

Реакции на наставникот во различни ситуации
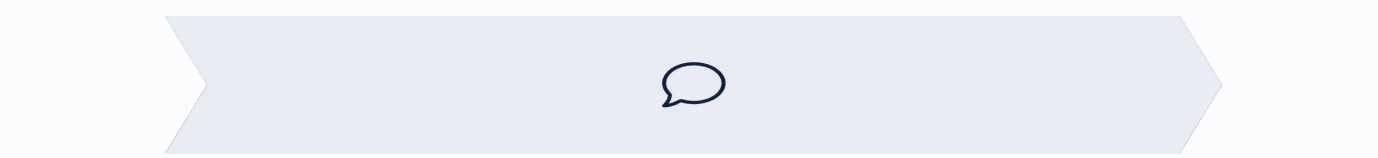
За вообичаени конфликти

- Поттикнување отворена комуникација и активно слушање меѓу учениците
- Подучување на техники за решавање конфликти, вклучувајќи преговори и постигнување компромис
- Медијација на дискусии за да се осигура дека и двете страни се слушнати
- Поттикнување емпатија преку помагање на учениците да ги разберат различните перспективи

Во ситуации на насилство

- Делување веднаш за прекин на насилството и одвојување на учесниците
- Справување со нерамнотежата на моќта преку поддршка на жртвите и спроведување на последици
- Следење на ситуацијата со тек на време за да се спречи повторување
- Вклучување родители, советници и администратори кога е потребно

Classroom Activity: Identifying Bullying Scenarios

The following scenarios provide practical examples to help educators distinguish between normal conflicts and bullying situations. For each scenario, consider the key characteristics that define the interaction and appropriate teacher responses.

Scenario 1: Normal Conflict

Emma and Jake both want the leadership role in a group project. They have different ideas about project structure and argue heatedly, with both raising their voices. The disagreement focuses on the task itself. When the teacher intervenes, they help the students find a compromise where Emma handles research while Jake coordinates the presentation. Afterward, both students return to collaborative work without lingering tension.

Key indicators: Equal power dynamic, task-centered disagreement, one-time incident, resolution achieved through compromise.

Teacher action: Mediate the discussion, help students find a compromise that leverages both students' strengths, and monitor to ensure the resolution holds.

Scenario 2: Bullying Situation

During recess, Sam repeatedly calls James derogatory names like "loser" and "weakling" in front of classmates. Sam mocks James's appearance and athletic abilities almost daily. James initially tries to ignore the comments but becomes increasingly withdrawn and eventually stops participating in recess activities. He begins avoiding recess entirely by staying in the classroom or feigning illness. Sam continues the harassment without remorse, leaving James feeling humiliated and powerless.

Key indicators: Power imbalance, intent to harm, repeated behavior, victim's increasing distress, no resolution.

Teacher action: Intervene immediately, separate the students, provide support to James, implement consequences for Sam, monitor the situation closely, and involve counselors and parents.

Scenario 3: Normal Conflict

During math class, Sarah and Lucas disagree on the solution to a problem. Both are confident in their methods and insist they're correct. The disagreement escalates into a brief shouting match that disrupts the lesson. After class, both students realize they overreacted, apologize to each other, and resolve the matter with no lingering resentment

Key indicators: Equal power between them. dynamic, academic disagreement, one-time incident, mutual recognition of overreaction, resolution through apology.

Teacher action: Address the classroom disruption, facilitate post-class reflection, acknowledge their maturity in resolving the conflict, and use the incident as a teaching moment about constructive disagreement.

The Role of Gender and Stereotypes in Bullying Behavior

Bullying behavior frequently reflects and reinforces societal gender norms and expectations. Boys and girls often engage in different forms of bullying based on cultural stereotypes about masculinity and femininity, which influences both the expression of bullying behaviors and how these behaviors are perceived and addressed by adults.

Boys and Physical Bullying

Boys are more likely to engage in physical bullying, such as hitting, pushing, or other forms of overt aggression. These behaviors align with traditional views of masculinity, which often emphasize physical strength and dominance. Boys may use bullying to assert power, prove toughness, or gain social status within their peer group (Olweus, 1993).

Example: A group of boys targets a smaller boy during recess, repeatedly pushing him into lockers and mocking his physical appearance. The aggressive behavior is meant to display dominance in front of peers.

Boys are often socialized to be tough and competitive, which can lead to more overt forms of aggression. Those who don't conform to masculine norms, such as boys perceived as weaker or more emotional, may face increased vulnerability to bullying (Espelage & Swearer, 2003).

Impact on victims: Boys who experience bullying may struggle to seek help due to fear of being perceived as weak or unmanly. This reluctance can lead to internalized emotional distress and elevated risk of depression.

Girls and Relational Bullying

Girls more frequently engage in relational bullying, which involves manipulating social relationships to harm others. This form of bullying includes spreading rumors, excluding others from social groups, or damaging reputations. Relational bullying aligns with societal expectations of girls being more socially oriented and emotionally driven (Crothers & Levinson, 2004).

Example: A group of girls spreads false rumors about another girl, leading to her social ostracism. The goal is to isolate the target without direct physical aggression.

Girls often participate in more covert forms of bullying, such as gossiping or exclusion, which align with societal expectations of girls being less physically aggressive. These behaviors can be equally damaging as physical bullying but are typically harder to detect (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995).

Impact on victims: Victims of relational bullying frequently experience long-term emotional distress, including anxiety and depression. Because relational bullying is less visible, victims often feel isolated and unsupported.

Gender stereotypes shape how boys and girls express aggression and respond to bullying. These stereotypes also influence how bullying is perceived by others, including teachers and parents. Physical bullying by boys may be viewed as more serious or concerning, while relational bullying by girls might be dismissed as typical "drama," despite its significant harmful effects.

Breaking Down Gender Stereotypes in Bullying – Strategies for Teachers

Encourage Empathy and Emotional Expression

Teaching both boys and girls to express their emotions in healthy ways can reduce aggressive behaviors caused by frustration or unmet emotional needs. By normalizing emotional expression across genders, teachers can help break down stereotypes that contribute to bullying.

Classroom Activity: Emotion Charades

Students act out various emotions (anger, sadness, excitement, frustration) in small groups without using words. After guessing the emotions, students discuss how emotions feel and how they can be expressed constructively. The activity emphasizes how empathy helps prevent conflict and bullying by understanding others' emotions.

Recognize All Forms of Bullying

Teach students to recognize that bullying takes many forms, including physical, verbal, relational aggression, and cyberbullying, emphasizing that all forms are harmful regardless of which gender typically engages in them.

Classroom Activity: The Bullying Reflection Exercise

Students anonymously write about bullying experiences they witnessed or experienced, focusing on feelings and bullying type. The teacher reads selected examples, categorizing them into physical, verbal, relational, and cyberbullying. Students reflect on how different forms can be equally hurtful and discuss strategies for addressing all types of bullying.

Challenge Gender Stereotypes

Actively challenge stereotypes that promote aggressive behaviors in boys or encourage passive-aggressive behaviors in girls. Help students recognize how these stereotypes limit their expression and can lead to harmful behaviors.

Classroom Activity: Role Reversals

Students brainstorm common gender stereotypes, then divide into groups to examine negative effects of stereotypes on boys (e.g., "Boys don't cry") and girls (e.g., "Girls should be quiet"). Students role-play scenarios breaking these stereotypes, such as boys expressing vulnerability or girls assertively standing up for themselves. Follow with discussion on how stereotypes influence bullying and how they can be challenged.

Promote Peer Support

Encourage students to act as proactive bystanders by standing up for peers who are being bullied, regardless of gender. Create systems where students feel empowered to support each other.

Classroom Activity: Stand Up, Speak Out

Create a peer support program where students learn to recognize bullying behaviors and safely intervene. Students role-play bullying scenarios and practice different intervention methods (confronting bullies, reporting incidents, supporting victims). Debrief with discussion on effective approaches and building a supportive school community. Encourage students to share experiences of standing up for others.

Socio-Cultural Aspects and Bullying

Cultural factors, including ethnic diversity, societal values, and historical context, significantly influence bullying behaviors.

Ethnic Diversity and Bullying

Ethnic diversity in schools influences bullying behavior in complex ways. In ethnically diverse classrooms, bullying may either increase due to intergroup conflict or decrease as students learn to interact with people from different backgrounds. Basilici et al. (2022) found that in North America, ethnic diversity often served as a protective factor against bullying by reducing power imbalances that fuel such behaviors. However, in Europe, where immigrant status more closely correlates with ethnicity, ethnic diversity more frequently emerged as a risk factor for bullying, especially among younger students. Ethnic bullying specifically targets individuals based on their ethnic or cultural background, potentially involving racial slurs, exclusion, or other discriminatory behaviors. This form of bullying profoundly impacts victims' mental health and sense of identity.

Educational Systems and Bullying

Differences in education systems contribute significantly to bullying prevalence. Countries with more hierarchical school structures or less supervision during breaks often report higher bullying rates. Akiba et al. (2002) discovered that education systems creating substantial achievement gaps between students frequently experience higher bullying incidence. These findings highlight how institutional structures can either mitigate or exacerbate bullying behaviors. Educational approaches that emphasize cooperation rather than competition, provide adequate supervision, and actively promote inclusive environments tend to experience lower bullying rates.

Strategies for Addressing Socio-Cultural Aspects Related to Bullying

Foster Inclusive Classroom Environments

Teachers can prevent ethnic bullying by creating classroom cultures that celebrate diversity. This includes encouraging students to learn about each other's cultural backgrounds and actively promoting respect for differences. Activities that facilitate cultural exchange and open discussions about diversity help reduce prejudice and build empathy among students.

Example Activity: Organize a "Cultural Day" where students present aspects of their cultural heritage, including food, music, traditions, and customs. This interactive experience helps students appreciate diversity and reduces the likelihood of bullying based on cultural differences. The event can include displays, performances, and opportunities for students to share personal stories about their cultural identities.

By normalizing cultural differences and highlighting the value of diverse perspectives, teachers create environments where ethnic bullying becomes less socially acceptable. This approach addresses the root causes of ethnic bullying by challenging stereotypes and building cross-cultural understanding.

Train Students to Recognize and Report Ethnic-Based Harassment

Effective anti-bullying programs must specifically address ethnic bullying by teaching students to recognize discriminatory behavior and establishing clear reporting mechanisms. When students understand what constitutes ethnic bullying and know how to report it, they become active participants in creating safer school environments.

Example Activity: United Against Hate

Objective: Help students understand ethnic bullying and empower them to recognize and report it safely

Process: Explain that ethnic bullying targets someone based on ethnicity, nationality, or cultural background

Activity: Groups analyze scenario cards depicting both ethnic and general bullying, identifying bullying types and appropriate responses

Discussion: Groups share their analyses, focusing on why addressing ethnic bullying matters and how to create inclusive environments

This activity helps students distinguish between different forms of bullying while emphasizing the particular harm caused by ethnic-based harassment. By practicing identification and response strategies, students develop the skills needed to intervene effectively when they witness ethnic bullying.

Connect Families with Socio-Economic Support Systems

Socio-economic factors often intersect with ethnic and cultural backgrounds to create additional vulnerabilities to bullying. Teachers can play a crucial role in identifying when families might benefit from local or national support programs and guiding them toward appropriate resources. This holistic approach recognizes that addressing bullying sometimes requires addressing underlying socio-economic challenges.

Identify Needs

Observe students for signs that may indicate socio-economic challenges, such as consistent hunger, inadequate clothing, or inability to participate in school activities due to financial constraints.

Research Available Resources

Maintain an updated database of community resources, including food assistance programs, healthcare services, housing support, and educational subsidies that families might qualify for.

Approach With Sensitivity

When connecting with families, communicate with empathy and respect, focusing on available resources rather than perceived deficiencies. Maintain confidentiality throughout the process.

Facilitate Connections

Help families navigate application processes, provide necessary documentation from the school when appropriate, and follow up to ensure they successfully accessed needed services.

Recognizing Signs of Bullying: Visible and Subtle Indicators

Emotional Signs in Victims

- Sudden mood changes or emotional volatility
- Increased anxiety, particularly before school or social events
- Expressions of sadness, hopelessness, or worthlessness
- Loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities
- Unexplained anger or irritability

Social Signs in Victims

- Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations
- Reluctance to participate in group activities
- Isolation during lunch or free periods
- Seeking adult company instead of peer interaction
- Being excluded or rejected by peers

Behavioral Signs in Aggressors

- Increased aggression or dominance toward peers
- Need for control in social situations
- Lack of empathy for others' feelings
- Blaming victims for provoking them
- History of disciplinary problems

Academic Signs in Victims

- Declining grades or academic performance
- Decreased participation in class discussions
- Difficulty concentrating during lessons
- Increased absenteeism or tardiness
- Avoidance of specific classes or activities

Physical and Material Signs

Physical Indicators

- Unexplained injuries, bruises, or scratches
- Torn, damaged, or missing belongings
- Frequent complaints of headaches, stomachaches, or other physical ailments
- Changes in eating habits (skipping meals or binge eating)
- Sleep disturbances, including nightmares or insomnia

Subtle Material Signs

- Missing or damaged personal items or school supplies
- "Lost" lunch money or possessions
- Sudden requests for extra money without reasonable explanation
- Belongings repeatedly "misplaced" or "forgotten"
- Reluctance to bring valuable items to school

Classroom Dynamics That May Indicate Bullying

Beyond individual signs, certain classroom dynamics can signal that bullying is occurring:

Power imbalances: Consistent dominance of certain students over others in social interactions

Laughter at inappropriate times: Students laughing when another student speaks or participates

Exclusionary behaviors: Students consistently left out of group activities or seated alone

Tension between specific students: Visible discomfort when certain students interact

Sudden changes in social groupings: Previously friendly students suddenly avoiding each other

Teachers should be particularly attentive to these signs in students who may be more vulnerable to bullying, including those who are perceived as different due to appearance, abilities, socioeconomic status, or cultural background. Early recognition of these indicators allows for timely intervention before the bullying escalates and causes more significant harm.

Implementing Effective Bullying Prevention and Intervention Strategies

1   **Individual Interventions**
Direct support for victims and targeted interventions for aggressors

2   **Classroom Strategies**
Creating supportive environments and teaching social-emotional skills

3   **School-Wide Approaches**
Consistent policies, staff training, and positive school climate initiatives

4   **Community Engagement**
Involving families, community resources, and broader social support systems

Evidence-Based Prevention Strategies

Develop Clear Anti-Bullying Policies

Establish comprehensive policies that clearly define all forms of bullying, outline reporting procedures, and specify consequences.
These policies should be developed with input from students, staff, and parents to ensure broad buy-in and should be regularly communicated to the entire school community.

Create Inclusive Environments

Actively promote respect for diversity by celebrating differences, challenging stereotypes, and ensuring all students feel valued.
Inclusive classrooms reduce the power imbalances that often fuel bullying and help students develop appreciation for diverse perspectives and experiences.

Build Social-Emotional Skills

Integrate social-emotional learning into the curriculum to help students develop empathy, emotional regulation, conflict resolution, and healthy relationship skills.
These foundational competencies reduce bullying by addressing the underlying social and emotional factors that contribute to aggressive behaviors.

Empower Bystanders

Train students to recognize bullying and intervene safely when they witness it.

Research shows that peer intervention is highly effective in stopping bullying episodes, so equipping students with specific strategies for supporting victims can significantly reduce bullying incidents.

Effective Intervention Approaches

3-5
Minutes
The critical window for effective intervention when bullying is observed. Immediate response prevents escalation and sends a clear message that bullying is unacceptable.

57%
Reduction
The average decrease in bullying incidents when schools implement comprehensive prevention programs that address multiple levels of the school environment.

2x
More Effective
Interventions that address both victims and aggressors are twice as effective as those focusing solely on punishing aggressors or protecting victims.