



The 6 Methods of Intervention

The Method of **Shared Concern** (or Pikas method) is a non-punitive multi-stage strategy that addresses group bullying.

It facilitates the emergence of a solution to a bully/victim problem through the use of a series of interviews and discussions with the parties involved.

Rationale

The rationale behind using the Method of Shared Concern is as follows:

- Bullying behaviour is commonly (though not always) undertaken by, or with the support of, a peer group.
- Approached in a non-accusatory manner, individual members of such groups will typically acknowledge the distress of the victim and agree to act to reduce that distress.
- A minority of targeted children have in the past acted provocatively and need to recognise their part in the ensuing conflict.
- Once some individual members of the group have begun to act constructively, the group can be brought together to plan how they will finally resolve the matter with the person they have targeted.
- An agreed resolution involving all concerned is likely to be sustainable.

Application

The Method of Shared Concern can be appropriately and most successfully implemented as follows:

1. Cases are chosen in which a group of students are thought to be involved in bullying an individual student who as a consequence has become distressed.
2. Each of the suspected bullies is interviewed in turn, without any accusation, beginning with the student who seems most likely to fill the role of ringleader. The meeting takes place without other students present or able to observe the interaction. The interview begins with the practitioner sharing a concern about the plight of the victim. Once this is acknowledged, the suspected bully is required to say what he or she will do to improve the situation.
3. A further meeting is arranged several days later to assess progress with each of the suspected bullies individually.
4. The practitioner then meets with the target and offers support. The question may at some stage be raised as to whether the target could have provoked the bullying in some way. (Occasionally bullying is provoked).

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5. Once progress has been confirmed, a group meeting is held with the suspected bullies to plan how they will finally resolve the problem when they meet with the target at the next meeting convened by the practitioner.
6. A final meeting is held with the target present to bring about an agreed and sustainable solution.

Limitations

- The method cannot be employed in cases of criminal behaviour for which sanctions are legally required.
- Pressure in the form of threats and punishment is incompatible with this approach which seeks unforced cooperation.
- This method involves working with groups of suspected bullies and does not lend itself to dealing with one-on-one bullying.
- More so than most methods it requires the training of suitable practitioners.
- To implement this approach effectively and produce a sustainable solution requires the careful selection of cases and the allocation of sufficient time to progress through the necessary stages.



Conclusion

Implemented rigorously, this method has been shown in several studies to have a high success rate and has considerable educational value for those involved.

References

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