



Back to School and Bullying

Our Story

What to Look For

How to Help

Introduction:

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988 Mobile Advisory Councilmember
Board of Director – Peer and Family Committee – MACIT
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Jhulian, 8th Grade

ADHD, Major Depressive Disorder, and Dyslexia



Our Journey Through Tough Times

A Tiny Bit of Background

Jhulian was born two weeks early weighing 5 pounds 14 ounces. I am 4'11" and his dad is 5'6".

He consistently measures at fifth percentile or below for height and weight.

He's always the smallest in his class or on sports teams.

He struggles to read letters and words, comprehend sounds, and has poor focus and attention, which makes reading anything challenging.

Jhulian has struggled his whole life with kids making fun of him for being so small.

The What & The Who

Kids have called him a baby, "girl-sized", pick him up without being asked, and "jokingly" put him in trashcans or in higher places that he's had to jump down from.

He has had to listen to kids snickering in groups, pointing at him, and talking about him behind his back.

He's had two girlfriends since starting middle school and consistently gets picked on that they have been taller than him.

Even adults have made comments to him about how "teeny" he is, which causes him confusion and to be self-conscious about his size.

Outcomes and Future Results

Before:

- Self-Conscious
- Low Self-Esteem
- Feeling Alone
- Wishing to be Taller
- Overcompensating
- Isolation

After and Continuing:

- Confidence
- Creating Safe Spaces for Others
- Frequent Check-Ins
- Inclusion
- Self-Love
- Volunteer for Mental Health Organizations

What is Bullying?

Definition:

- Bullying is ***unwanted***, aggressive behavior that is repeated over time and involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is meant to cause harm, fear, or distress to a person physically, emotionally, or socially.

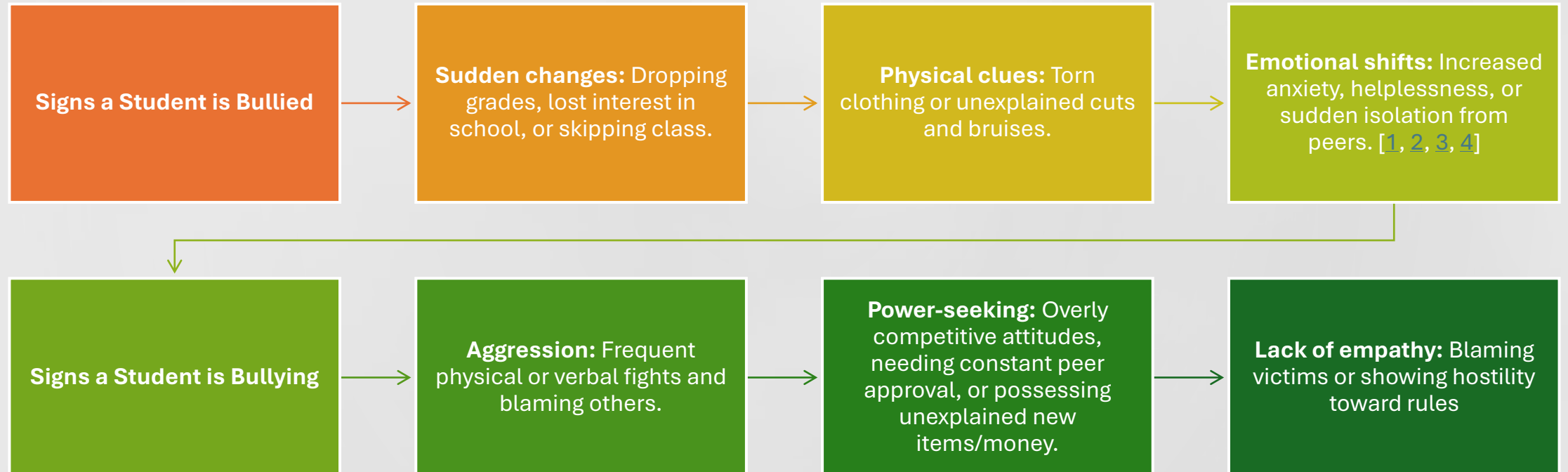
Key Elements:

- **Intentional:** The aggressive act is done on purpose to cause hurt.
- **Repetitive:** The behavior happens more than once or has the potential to happen repeatedly.
- **Power Imbalance:** The person doing the bullying uses their physical, social, or digital power to control or harm someone who has less power

Common Types of Bullying:

- **Physical:** Hitting, kicking, pushing, or breaking someone's personal property.
- **Verbal:** Name-calling, teasing, insulting, or making direct threats.
- **Social / Relational:** Leaving someone out on purpose, spreading rumors, or ruining a person's reputation.
- **Cyberbullying:** Using digital tools, text messages, or social media to harass, threaten, or humiliate someone online

Warning Signs



Best Practices for Educators

- Talk about it before, during, and after
- Drill in that you're a safe space and always remain calm
- Focus in on behaviors and facts
 - If you get the smallest feeling that something is different, it probably is
- Don't force it....too hard
- Be adaptable
- Use “kid language” when discussing boundaries and defining terms
- Role play and use figurines to re-enact
- Follow-up



Empowering Kids



Encourage hobbies, sports, and likes, as well as open communication

Practice confidence

Be firm, but calm. Yelling doesn't help the situation

Redirect or change the subject

Find trusted adults and ask for help. Be that trusted adult and ask if the student wants help or just to vent

Resources

- [NAMI Back-to-School Resources](#)
- [NAMI Basics](#)
- [Stop Bullying](#)
- [PACER](#)
- Bethany McClenahan – Call, text, or email for support
 - bjmcc3@yahoo.com
 - 816-352-9876