**Bullying Among California Youth with Disabilities**

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**CALIFORNIA FOUNDATION FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTERS**

- Mission: to increase access and equal opportunity for people with disabilities by supporting California’s 28 Independent Living Centers which provide direct individual services.
- Non-profit corporation formally organized in 1982 to educate policy makers from a disability perspective, provide peer support, and offer accessible housing and personal assistance referrals.

**YOUTH ORGANIZING (YO)! DISABLED AND PROUD**

- YO! is a CFILC program that works with teens and young adults with disabilities ages 16-28 to build a community, develop a sense of leadership and positive disability identity, and mobilize each other to target personally relevant issues.
- In 2011, YO! began the Own My Power—Freedom From Bullying campaign with a 3-day summit for youth across CA.
- Data collected from the campaign’s 2012 survey are outdated, as cyberbullying is now on the rise and recent anti-bullying legislation (e.g. AB 9 Seth’s Law) has been passed.

**BULLYING BACKGROUND**

- CDC reported in 2018 that 1 in 5 high school students were bullied on school property and more than 15% reported being cyberbullied in the last year.
- Ruderman Family Foundation found that 20% of high school students have a disability, they are 1.8 times more likely to be cyberbullied, and have higher rates of depression and suicidality.
- California Health Kids Survey (CHKS) from 2015-17 reported a 30.8% bullying rate among students grades 7, 9, and 11 with 3.9% of harassment attributed to a physical or mental disability.

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**DISABILITY MEANS...**

- “Working differently than other people”
- “An obstacle to learn to work around”
- “You have to find creative ways to fully participate in events and activities”
- “Being yourself”

Any condition of the body or mind that makes it more difficult to do certain activities and interact with the world around them (CDC)

**What Makes a Bully?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Repetitive Behavior</th>
<th>Intent to Cause Harm</th>
<th>Imbalance of Power</th>
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</tbody>
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**QUALITY IMPROVEMENT**

Online surveys were designed and distributed to children and adolescents with disabilities, parents of youth with disabilities, and school faculty and administrators to determine the prevalence of bullying among California youth with disabilities and their awareness of the preventive resources available.

**Figure 1. Visit to Summer Youth Program in Fresno, California**

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**FURTHER DIRECTIONS**

- The survey will remain open until late-August to increase the sample size and obtain more data from school faculty and administration.
- An infographic will be created to present the issue during Unity Day of National Bullying Prevention Month and to improve school anti-bullying and diversity initiatives.

**RESOURCES**

If you or someone you know has experienced bullying due to a disability, please contact your state’s Disability Rights Network for support.

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