



RELIAS | LEARNING



## Relias Spotlight Series

October 2021

Hello Providers,

Welcome to the Optum Idaho **October Relias Spotlight Series** — a series devoted to offering you access to **free, accessible and continuing education unit-eligible** online education about topics that are important to behavioral health providers.

We appreciate all your work serving members in Idaho. As we head into fall, and the pandemic continues, it looks like virtual platforms for school, jobs and services are becoming the norm. While technology has allowed us access in many positive ways, it can also lend itself to negative and traumatic experiences.

One of those experiences may be bullying. What is bullying?  
The definition states it as unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance with that behavior happening more than once.

Bullying represents a public health problem and can impact everyone — not just children. Bullying can happen to college-aged students and adults as well. It is a violation of our safety and dignity in shared spaces like schools, colleges and workplaces.



There are several types of bullying:

**Physical:** physical force like shoving, hitting, spitting, pushing and tripping

**Verbal:** involves words or writing that cause harm, such as taunting, name calling, verbal threats, offensive notes or hand gestures

**Relational:** behavior designed to harm the reputation and relationships of the targeted individual, such as social isolation, rumor-spreading and posting mean comments or pictures online

**Reactive:** when a person responds to being a former victim by bullying others

**Damage to Property:** theft or damaging of the target youth's property by the bully to cause harm

**Cyberbullying** is **one** way in which some types of bullying can happen. It takes place using electronic technology. Electronic technology includes devices and equipment such as cell phones, computers and tablets as well as communication tools including social media sites, text messages, chat and websites. The most common places where cyberbullying occurs are:

- Social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and Tik Tok
- Text messaging and messaging apps on mobile or tablet devices
- Instant messaging, direct messaging and online chatting
- Online forums, chat rooms and message boards
- Email
- Online gaming communities

Cyberbullying can be relentless, prohibiting an escape for the victim, which can severely damage a person's mental health and negatively affect self-esteem.



Cyberbullying has unique concerns in that it can be:

**Persistent:** digital devices offer an ability to immediately and continuously communicate 24 hours a day, so it can be difficult for those experiencing cyberbullying to find relief.

**Permanent:** most information communicated electronically is permanent and public, if not reported and removed. A negative online reputation, including for those who

bully, can impact college admissions, employment and other areas of life.

**Hard to Notice:** because others may not overhear or see cyberbullying taking place, it is harder to recognize.

Aside from the increase in technology use, there are other factors such as increased stress, isolation, decreased supervision online and boredom, which contribute to increased tendencies of bullying. To make matters worse, many support networks for victims of bullying have limitations. In some situations, guidance counselors are inaccessible while face-to-face conversations with teachers, coaches and providers are limited as well.

Bullying often leads to suicidal tendencies among children, youth and even adults. It leads to psychological disorders related to depression, violent behavior, and drug abuse.

Relias offers FREE continuing education unit courses specifically geared towards your needs. If you would like more information and education around the topic of bullying, we encourage you to log into [Relias](#) and search for the following modules:

Bullying: Strategies for Prevention and Intervention	REL-BHC-0-BSPI
Bullying On The Job	REL-ALL-0-BOTJ
Recognizing and Preventing Workplace Violence Self-Paced	REL-SRC-0-RPWV-R1

In addition, you may find these resources helpful.

- <http://www.samhsa.gov>
  - KnowBullying App by SAMHSA -FREE
  - SAMHSA’s Bullying Prevention Resource Center: <https://www.samhsa.gov/tribal-ttac/resources>
- <https://www.stopbullying.gov/resources/get-help-now>

Thank you again for the work that you do each day with our members so that Idaho can continue to improve access to behavioral health services. Optum is excited to offer these resources to you.

Sincerely,

The Optum Education and Training Team