



• From the Australian Institute of Criminology •

## *Principles for managing school bullying*

A report released by the Australian Institute of Criminology has evaluated a program for managing bullying in schools. The program focuses on conflict resolution as a way of minimising bullying and the harm it causes. The program encourages children's active participation in addressing bullying and teaches five steps (known as the REACT keys) for dealing with the problem. The students who participated (from Year 5 in an ACT government school) had their feelings of safety at school measured on a four-point scale before and after taking part in the program. A general increase in feelings of safety was recorded (from 2.9 to 3.8). In addition, children exhibited more positive shame management skills. The report also highlights the importance of early intervention and the development of specific policies to address bullying in schools.

### **REACT: Principles for dealing with bullying**

<b>R</b> epair the harm done	<b>E</b> xpect the best from others	<b>A</b> cknowledge feelings/harm done	<b>C</b> are for others	<b>T</b> ake responsibility for behaviour and feelings
Reparation for the harm done is essential	Bullying and being bullied are ways of behaving that can be changed	The harm done by bullying to self and others must be acknowledged	Both bullies and victims are valued members of the school community whose supportive ties with others should be strengthened through participation in communities of care	Addressing wrongdoing involves actions and should not involve the denigration of the whole person

SOURCE: Morrison, B. 2002, "Bullying and Victimization in Schools: A Restorative Justice Approach", *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice*, no. 219, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra.

Full report available on AIC web site: <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/tandi/ti219.pdf>