

# Understanding Social Media Bullying, Bias and Microaggressions

**Kelsey Leonard**, Cultural  
and Linguistic Competence  
Coordinator, PA Care  
Partnership

May 22, 2019

PA Care Partnership CLC  
Webinar Series 2019



Kelsey Leonard

CLC Coordinator for the  
Pennsylvania Care  
Partnership

[leonardkt@upmc.edu](mailto:leonardkt@upmc.edu)



# *Objectives*

- Understand how social media creates virtual spaces in which new forms of bullying arise
- Discuss what systems of care can do to address social media bullying, bias, and microaggressions
- Explore the culture of social media
- Learn about tools for limiting bullying, bias, and microaggressions in our online worlds



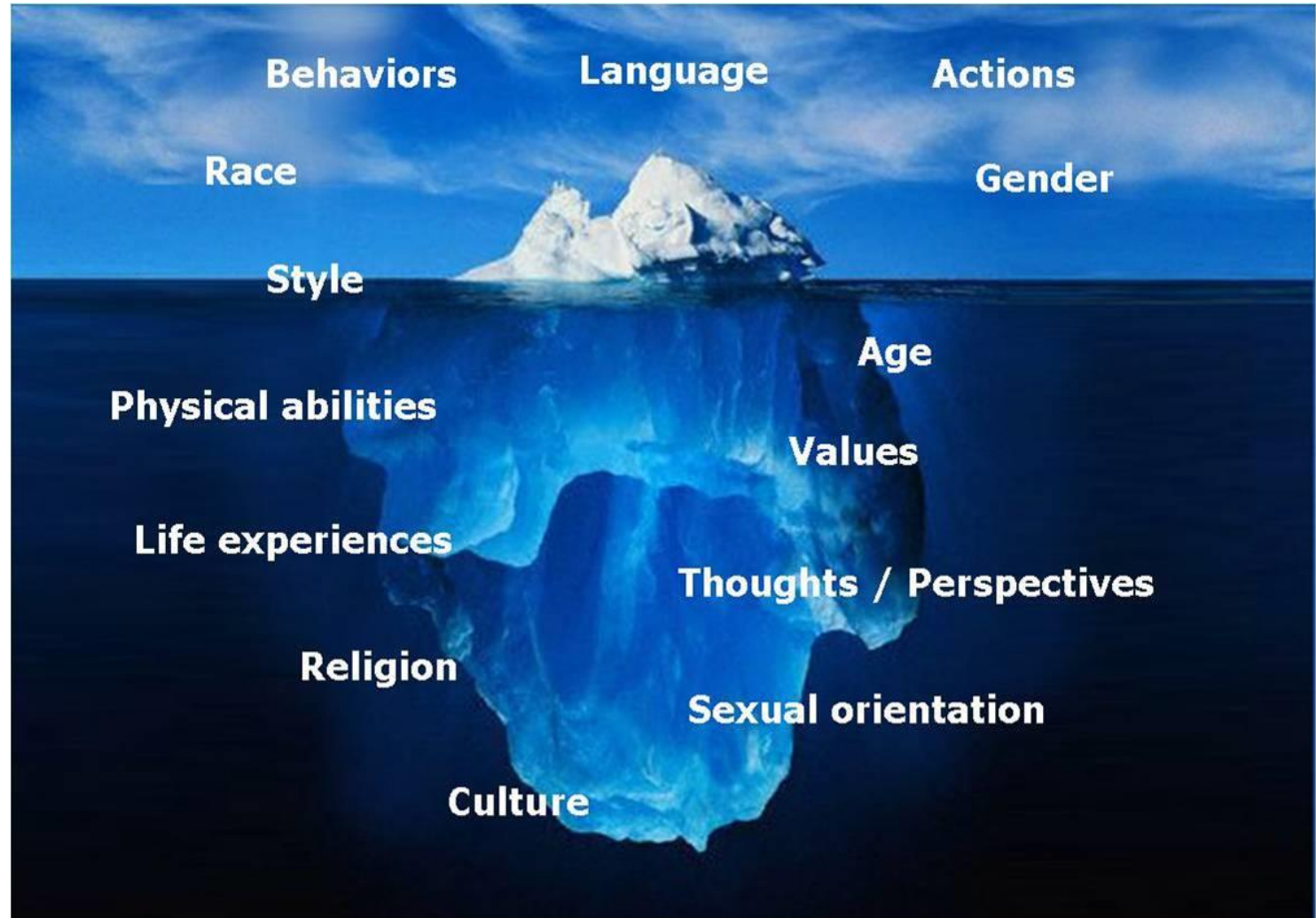
What is Culture?

- Let's brainstorm...

# What is Culture?


- Culture is the set of attitudes, values, beliefs, symbols, and behaviors shared by a group of people, but different for each individual, and usually communicated from one generation to the next.

## Cultural Iceberg

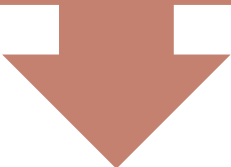


# Definition of Cultural Competence

Individual Cultural Competence: The state of being capable of functioning effectively in the context of cultural differences.



Organizational Cultural Competence: A set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals and enable that system, agency, or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.



Culturally Competent Mental Health Care: Will rely on historical experiences of prejudice, discrimination, racism, and other culture-specific beliefs about health or illness, culturally unique symptoms and interventions with each cultural group to inform treatment.

# What is Linguistic Competence?

The capacity of an organization and its personnel to communicate effectively, and convey information in a manner that is easily understood by diverse audiences including persons of limited English proficiency, those who have low literacy skills or are not literate, and individuals with disabilities. (Goode & Jones, 2006).



# CYBER BULLYING IS...

Being cruel to others by sending or posting harmful material using technological means;

an individual or group that uses

information and communication involving

electronic technologies to facilitate

deliberate and repeated harassment or

threat to an individual or group.

Also known as:

‘Electronic Bullying’ &

‘Online Social Cruelty’



# CYBER BULLIES' TECHNOLOGY

- ☐ E-mail
- ☐ Cell phones
- ☐ Social Media
- ☐ Defamatory personal web sites
- ☐ Defamatory online personal polling web sites
- ☐ Chat rooms
- ☐ Blogs
- ☐ Others...?

# DIFFERENCES

## BULLYING

▶ DIRECT

▶ Occurs in person

▶ Fear retribution

**Physical:** Hitting, Punching & Shoving

**Verbal:** Teasing, Name calling & Gossip

**Nonverbal:** Use of gestures & Exclusion

[www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov](http://www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov)

## CYBERBULLYING

▶ ANONYMOUS

▶ Occurs in digital spaces

▶ Fear loss of technology privileges

▶ Further under the radar than bullying

▶ Emotional reactions cannot be determined

{McKenna & Bargh, 2004; Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004}

# Bullying/CyberBullying

## Similarities

- ▶ Both deal with one person taking attacking another psychologically.
- ▶ Students can deal with both through intervention.
- ▶ Both can continue after school as well.

## differences

- ▶ Technology can make people feel anonymous.
- ▶ Technology can involve a larger number of people.
- ▶ Regular bullying can have a physical aspect as well.



# CYBER BULLYING TYPES

- **“Flaming”**: Online fights using electronic messages with angry and vulgar language
- **“Harassment”**: Repeatedly sending offensive, rude, and insulting messages
- **“Cyber stalking”**: Repeatedly sending messages that include threats of harm or are highly intimidating. Engaging in other on-line activities that make a person afraid for his or her own safety
- **“Denigration”**: ‘Dissing’ someone online. Sending or posting cruel gossip or rumors about a person to damage his or her reputation or friendships



# CYBER BULLYING TYPES

- **“Impersonation”**: Pretending to be someone else and sending or posting material online that makes that person look bad, gets that person in trouble or danger, or damages that person’s reputation or friendships
- **“Outing and Trickery”**: Sharing someone’s secret or embarrassing information online. Tricking someone into revealing secrets or embarrassing information which is then shared online
- **“Exclusion”**: Intentionally excluding someone from an on-line group, like a ‘buddy list’

**{Nancy Willard, M.S., J.D., Director of the Center for Safe and Responsible Internet Use}**

# Effects of Bullying

## People who are bullied:

- ▶ Have higher risk of depression and anxiety including these symptoms that may persist into adulthood:
  - Increased feelings of sadness and loneliness
  - Changes in sleep and eating patterns
  - Loss of interest in activities
- ▶ May have increased thoughts about suicide
- ▶ Are more likely to have health complaints
- ▶ Are more likely to retaliate through extreme violent measures.

# More Effects of Bullying

## People Who Bully Others:

- Have a higher risk of abusing alcohol and other drugs in adolescence and as adults.
- Are more likely to get into fights, vandalize property, and drop out of school.
- Are more likely to have convictions and traffic citations as adults.
- Are more likely to be abusive toward their romantic partners, spouses or children as adults.

[stopbullying.gov](http://stopbullying.gov).

A large, dark blue ink splatter or blotch is centered on a white background. The splatter has irregular, feathered edges with some smaller droplets and speckles trailing off from the main mass. The word "Microaggressions" is written in white, sans-serif font across the middle of the dark blue area.

# Microaggressions

# Microaggressions

Microaggressions are “brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults toward people of color” (Sue, et al., 2007, p. 271).

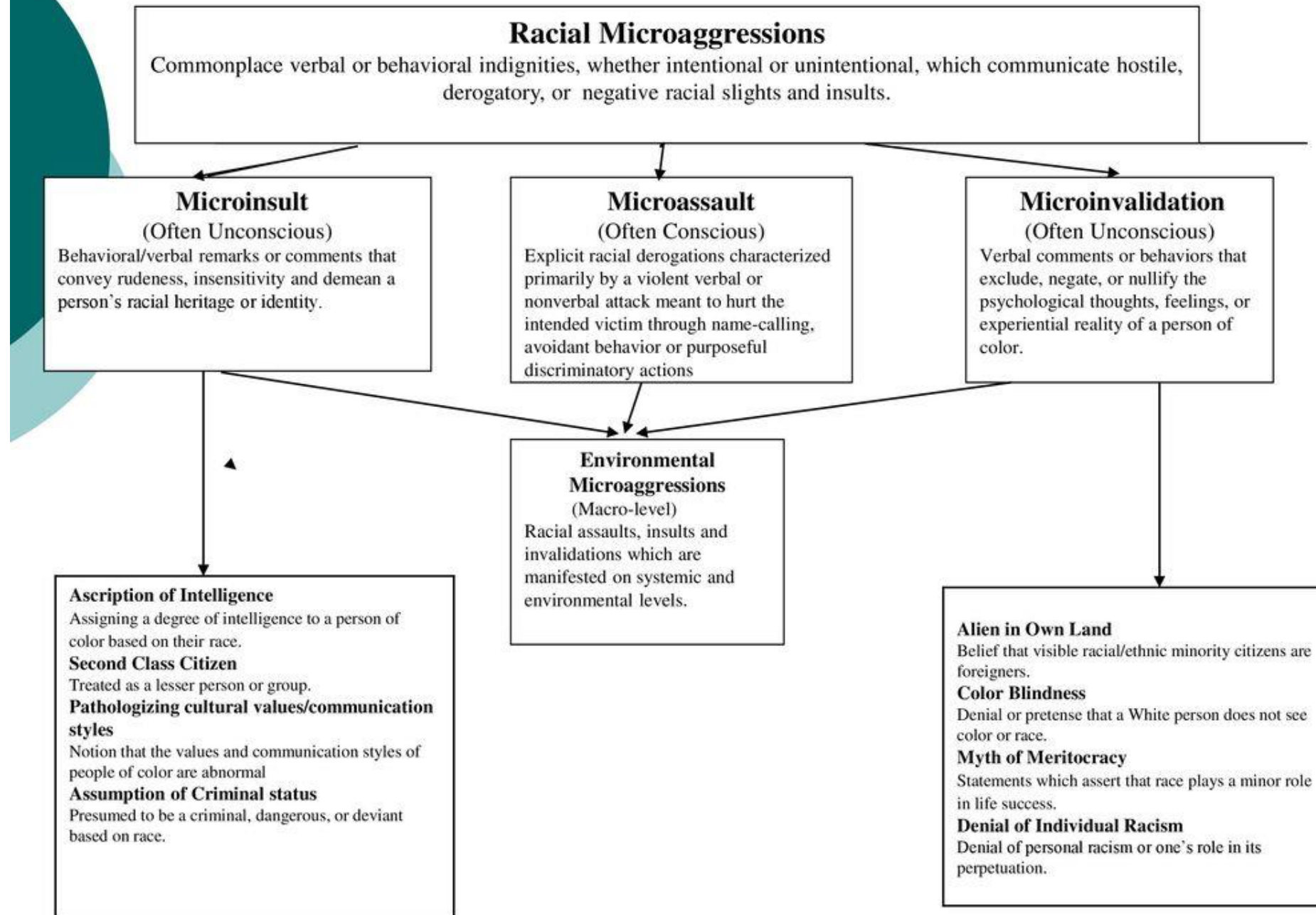


Microaggressions:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BJL2P0JsAS4>



Figure 1 – Categories and Relationship of Racial Microaggressions



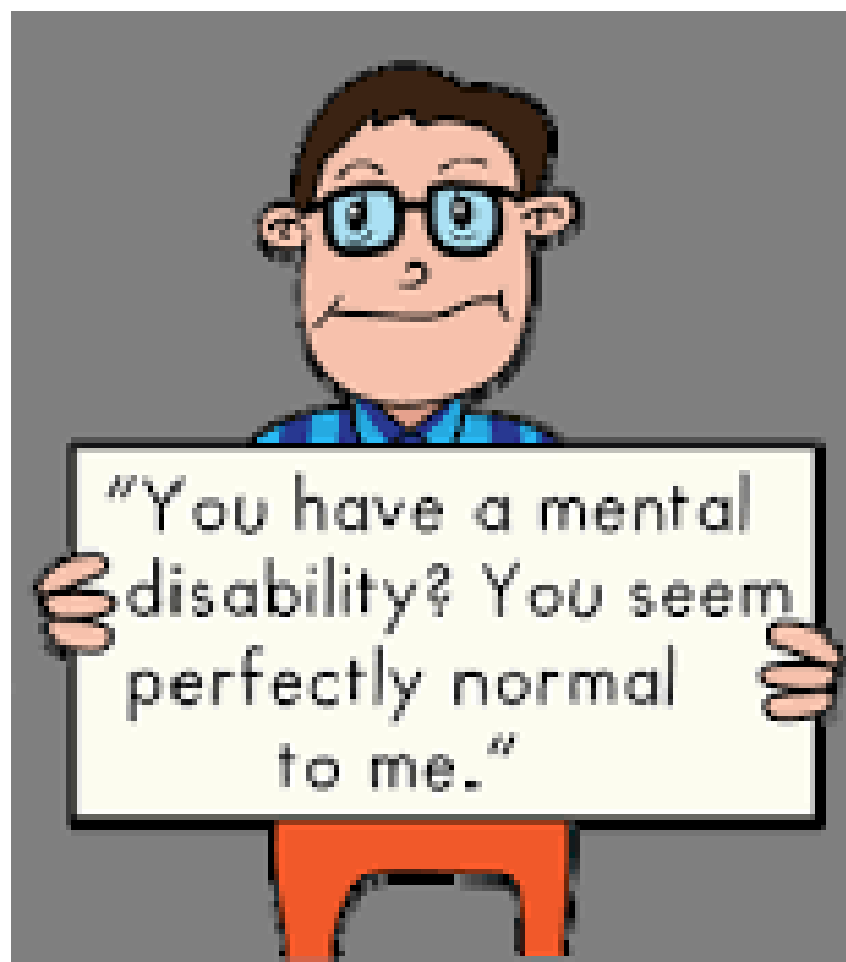
THEMES	MICROAGGRESSION	MESSAGE
<p><b>Pathologizing Cultural Values/Communication Styles</b> The notion that the values and communication styles of the dominant/White culture are ideal/"normal".</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To an Asian, Latino or Native American: <i>"Why are you so quiet? We want to know what you think. Be more verbal."</i> <i>"Speak up more."</i></li> <li>Asking a Black person: <i>"Why do you have to be so loud/animated? Just calm down."</i></li> <li><i>"Why are you always angry?"</i> anytime race is brought up in the classroom discussion.</li> <li>Dismissing an individual who brings up race/culture in work/school setting.</li> </ul>	<p>Assimilate to dominant culture.</p> <p>Leave your cultural baggage outside. There is no room for difference.</p>
<p><b>Second-Class Citizen</b> Occurs when a target group member receives differential treatment from the power group; for example, being given preferential treatment as a consumer over a person of color.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Faculty of color mistaken for a service worker.</li> <li>Not wanting to sit by someone because of his/her color.</li> <li>Female doctor mistaken for a nurse.</li> <li>Being ignored at a store counter as attention is given to the White customer.</li> <li>Saying <i>"You people..."</i></li> <li>An advisor assigns a Black post-doctoral student to escort a visiting scientist of the same race even though there are other non-Black scientists in this person's specific area of research.</li> <li>An advisor sends an email to another work colleague describing another individual as a "good Black scientist."</li> <li>Raising your voice or speaking slowly when addressing a blind student.</li> <li>In class, an instructor tends to call on male students more frequently than female ones.</li> </ul>	<p>People of color are servants to Whites. They couldn't possibly occupy high status positions. Women occupy nurturing positions. Whites are more valued customers than people of color.</p> <p>You don't belong. You are a lesser being.</p> <p>A person with a disability is defined as lesser in all aspects of physical and mental functioning. The contributions of female students are less worthy than the contributions of male students.</p>
<p><b>Sexist/Heterosexist Language</b> Terms that exclude or degrade women and LGBT persons.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of the pronoun "he" to refer to all people.</li> <li>Being constantly reminded by a coworker that <i>"we are only women."</i></li> <li>Being forced to choose Male or Female when completing basic forms.</li> <li>Two options for relationship status: married or single.</li> <li>A heterosexual man who often hangs out with his female friends more than his male friends is labeled as gay.</li> </ul>	<p>Male experience is universal. Female experience is invisible.</p> <p>LGBT categories are not recognized. LGBT partnerships are invisible.</p> <p>Men who do not fit male stereotypes are inferior.</p>



## Examples of Racial Microaggressions

Theme	Microaggression	Message
<i>Alien in own land</i> When Asian Americans and Latino Americans are assumed to be foreign-born	"Where are you from?" "Where were you born?" "You speak good English." A person asking an Asian American to teach them words in their native language.	You are not American You are a foreigner
<i>Ascription of Intelligence</i> Assigning intelligence to a person of color on the basis of their race.	"You are a credit to your race." "You are so articulate." Asking an Asian person to help with a Math or Science problem.	People of color are generally not as intelligent as Whites. It is unusual for someone of your race to be intelligent. All Asians are intelligent and good in Math / Sciences.
<i>Color Blindness</i> Statements that indicate that a White person does not want to acknowledge race	"When I look at you, I don't see color." "America is a melting pot." "There is only one race, the human race."	Denying a person of color's racial / ethnic experiences. Assimilate / acculturate to the dominant culture. Denying the individual as a racial / cultural being.

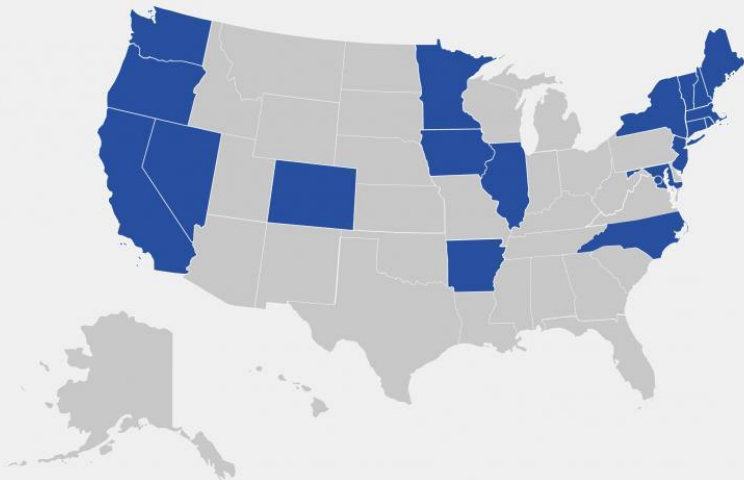
<p><i>Criminality – assumption of criminal status</i> A person of color is presumed to be dangerous, criminal, or deviant on the basis of their race.</p>	<p>A White man or woman clutching their purse or checking their wallet as a Black or Latino approaches or passes. A store owner following a customer of color around the store. A White person waits to ride the next elevator when a person of color is on it.</p>	<p>You are a criminal. You are going to steal / You are poor / You do not belong / You are dangerous.</p>
<p><i>Denial of individual racism</i> A statement made when Whites deny their racial biases</p>	<p>"I'm not a racist. I have several Black friends." "As a woman, I know what you go through as a racial minority."</p>	<p>I am immune to races because I have friends of color. Your racial oppression is no different than my gender oppression. I can't be a racist. I'm like you.</p>
<p><i>Myth of meritocracy</i> Statements which assert that race does not play a role in life successes</p>	<p>"I believe the most qualified person should get the job." "Everyone can succeed in this society, if they work hard enough."</p>	<p>People of color are given extra unfair benefits because of their race. People of color are lazy and / or incompetent and need to work harder.</p>
<p><i>Pathologizing cultural values / communication styles</i> The notion that the values and communication styles of the dominant / White culture are ideal</p>	<p>Asking a Black person: "Why do you have to be so loud / animated? Just calm down." To an Asian or Latino person: Why are you so quiet? We want to know what you think. Be more verbal." Speak up more." Dismissing an individual who brings up race / culture in work / school setting.</p>	<p>Assimilate to dominant culture. Leave your cultural baggage outside.</p>



# Need Legal Reform

**Anti-Bullying:** States that have laws prohibiting bullying of students on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity

Arkansas  
California  
Colorado  
Connecticut  
Illinois  
Iowa  
Maine  
Maryland  
Massachusetts  
Minnesota  
Nevada  
New Hampshire  
New Jersey  
New York  
North Carolina  
Oregon  
Rhode Island  
Vermont  
Washington  
Washington, DC



# Digital Citizenship

- ***Digital citizenship is the continuously developing norms of appropriate, responsible, and empowered technology use.***
  - To lead and assist others in building positive digital experiences
  - To recognize that our actions have consequences to others
  - To participate in a manner for the common good



We hear so many annoying and unpleasant things as physically disabled people. Wouldn't it be nice if we could leap to our feet (or fall out of our chairs) and yell: 'BINGO!' This body of literature is so vast and rich, we decided to divide it into categories for easy reference:

General Annoying Ignorance	Smug Superiority/ Condescension	Astoundingly Stupid Advice	More Annoying Ignorance	Outraged Hatred
You're too young to have that problem/use that mobility device/ need those painkillers!	Must be nice not to have to walk everywhere/work!	My [acquaintance] had that! She used [panpipes/pesto/ aromatherapy/reiki/ satanic chants] and is better now!	What's wrong with you? Why are you wearing/using those?	Being fat isn't a disability!
You don't look/act disabled!	Well, I just don't <i>do</i> sick.	Maybe if you'd exercise more, you'd get better!	Your spouse/ parent/ roommate must be a SAINT!	These parking spaces are for old people!
Are you sure you have [condition]? Do you really need that [mobility device/hearing aid/service dog]?	[Talking v-e-r-y s-l-o-w-l-y]	<b>Free Space YOU'RE SO BRAVE!</b>	Everyone has SOME sort of disability!	If you really had X then there's no way you'd be able to do Y.
But you speak/ walk/write/ think so well!	Careful you don't get a speeding ticket on that scooter! Heh, heh, heh.	If you'd stop being so negative/gave it over to God, you'd be cured!	How do you have SEX?	People with [your disease] are a burden and the reason the government had to raise taxes.
I should totally get my pet a vest like that; then I could take him with me everywhere!	I wish I could sit down all the time!	You don't really have to take those medications. Big Pharma has just convinced you that you do.	Oh yeah; I have [totally unrelated thing], so I know how hard it is!	By using [mobility device], you're just letting the illness win!

# Microaggressions Project

## MICROAGGRESSIONS

### POWER, PRIVILEGE, AND EVERYDAY LIFE.

Have a question/comment/similar experience to share? [Email us](#) or [fill out our contribution form](#).

Comments section provides a way to LEARN from one another.

*“I’m probably such a racist, but a black man dressed as Santa is just wrong.”*

(via [microaggressions](#))

1 year ago

44 0 share

I patiently waited after class to ask my professor a question. He then began making sexual comments such as that I made him aware of his age because he could never get with me because I was out of his league. I felt uncomfortable so I left, with my question unanswered. I could not believe that my college professor prioritized his inappropriate comment over my question and ultimately the quality of my education, as I am no longer comfortable going to him for questions.

[gender, survivor](#)

1 year ago

56 0 share

*“All immigrants should go back to their own country.”*

**Teacher::** what do they look like?

(referring to a picture of Middle Eastern women in hijabs)

**Student::** Terrorists.

**Teacher::** I was looking for “religious, traditional, or worried.” But yes, that too. Good, Tyler!

[ethnicity, religion](#)

1 year ago

50 0 share

*“CAN YOU HEAR ME?”*

The “joking” reaction of various friends, coworkers and bosses when I tell them that I’m hearing-impaired and used to have to wear aids. They then tell me “it’s not like it’s a big deal or anything, it’s not like you’re actually deaf”. Makes me feel like my problems don’t matter.

[ableism](#)

1 year ago

76 0 share

*“Whenever I look at a black person, I see a terrorist.”*

Follow microaggressions

tumblr

*“Yeah, but you’re not that kind of Native.”*

This has happened more than once. A person complains about the lazy “Natives” downtown, suggesting they are all a bunch of ‘huffers’ exploiting the system. I respond by pointing out that I’m Metis (I have pale skin).

[race, ethnicity](#)

1 year ago

65 0 share

It angers me when people measure my race by the way I talk, dress, and carry myself. It’s as if black women can’t possibly be educated and come from a family with both parents. What sucks the most is that my close friends still say comments like “you’re not really black,” or “but they’re the other kind of black girls.” Can someone please tell me what other black there is?

[race, gender](#)

1 year ago

60 0 share

- <https://www.microaggressions.com/>



Does  
Social Media  
Affect Your  
Culture?

# What is Culture?

- Culture is the set of attitudes, values, beliefs, symbols, and behaviors shared by a group of people, but different for each individual, and usually communicated from one generation to the next.

System of  
Care Core  
Values

---

Youth and Family Driven

---

Community Based

---

Culturally and  
Linguistically Competent

Recommendations  
for:



**SCHOOLS**



**COMMUNITIES**



**POLICY  
MAKERS**



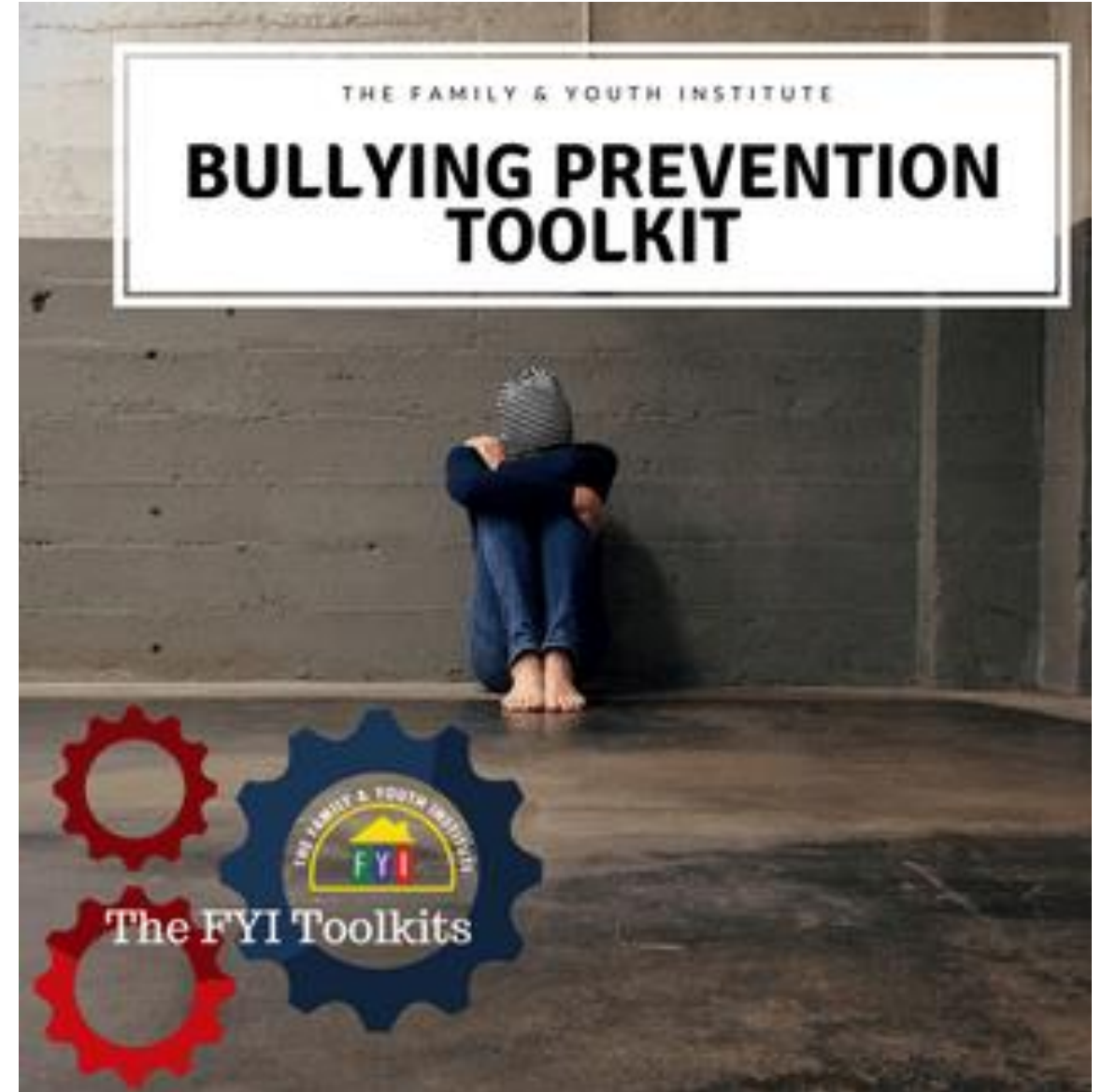
**RESEARCHERS**



**PROVIDERS**

# Families

- Be aware of the signs of bullying or discrimination experienced by children. Do not minimize their experiences or blame them for being overly sensitive. Work on developing an open relationship with children so that they feel comfortable sharing their experiences with bullying.
- <https://www.thefyi.org/toolkits/youth-support-tool-kit/>



# Schools

Anti-bullying programs in schools need to incorporate identity-based bullying & discrimination and explicitly mention protected groups in the school's bullying policy.

Mentoring Programs

Community Intercultural and interfaith initiatives

# Policymakers

Expand the definition of bullying by the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) from incidents in which one's religion is explicitly stated (e.g., "Bad Muslim boy") to include those incidents when it is non-explicit, but implied by the aggressor (e.g., "Go back to where you came from"). The exclusion of such acts makes it more difficult to decipher the prevalence and impact of microaggressions from current federal data.

New bullying laws for emerging technology

Others ...?

# Researchers

- Research on protective factors within various micro and macro systems, as well as examinations of effectiveness to mitigate negative effects of bullying.
- Others ...?



# Providers

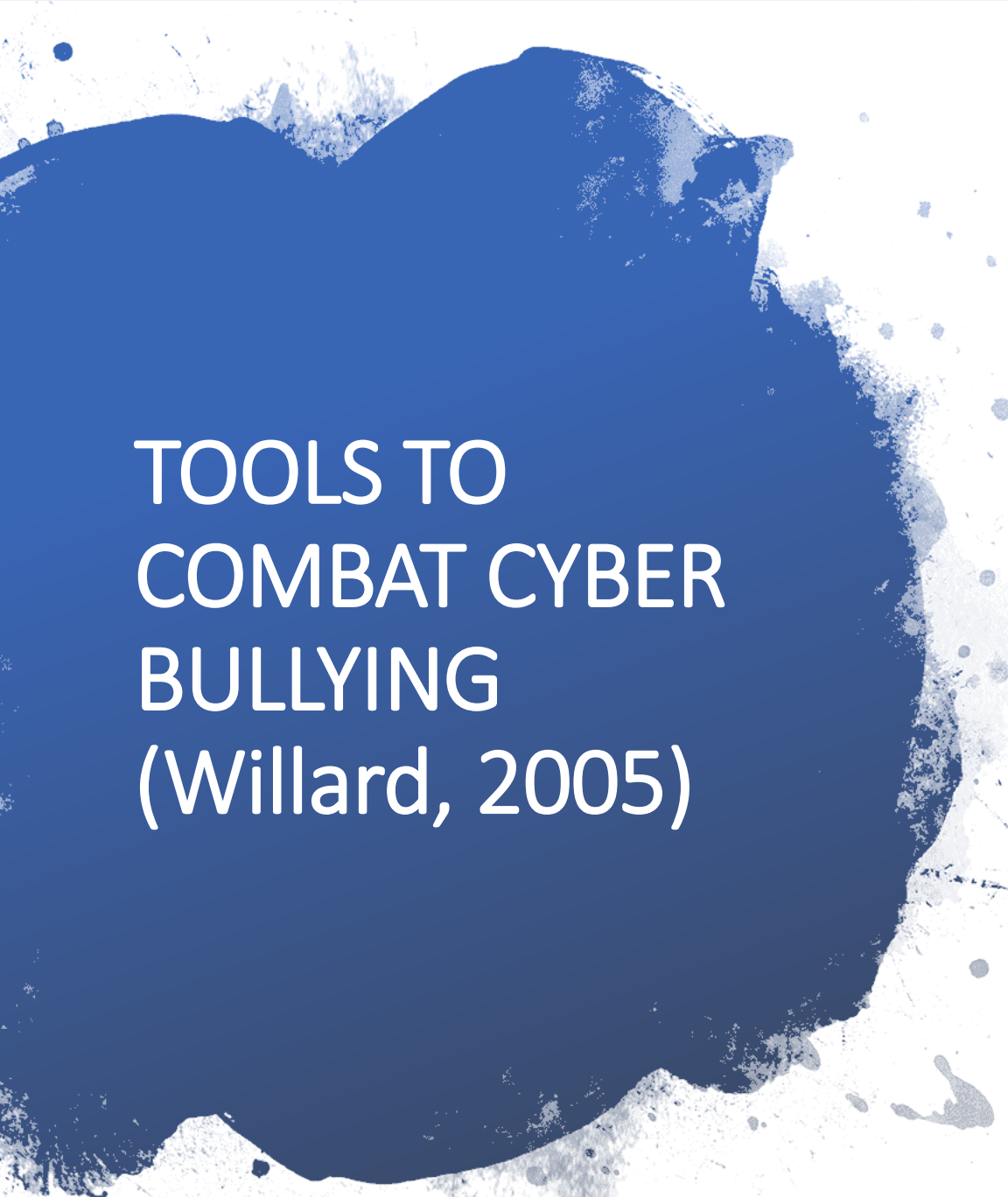


Workplace Code of Conduct

Welcome/Safe Environment Policies

Trainings

Others...?



# TOOLS TO COMBAT CYBER BULLYING (Willard, 2005)

## Specific Step Wise Plan:

- 1 Engage in participatory planning
- 2 Conduct needs assessment
- 3 Ensure that an effective anti--bullying program in place {core not authoritarian values; predictive empathy; peer norms vs. bullying; peer intervention skills, effective administrative responses}
- 4 Review policies & Procedures
- 5 Conduct Professional Development
- 6 Provide Education {prevention, detection & intervention strategies; alert child to potential consequences of school discipline, loss of family account, civil litigation, criminal prosecution}
- 7 Evaluate {prevention & intervention programs}



# Ongoing Cultural Competence

- Cultural **competence** clearly implies the ability to take action, adapt and function in a different environment
- It is a **commitment** to a developmental process - not a “check box” that you either have or do not have
- Elements should be integrated into all aspects of program, policy and services and not viewed as a separate component

# How Do We Acquire Cultural Competence?

Change	Change decision-making processes to include youth, families and the community
Commit	Commit to structural and policy changes that support cultural diversity
Make	Make policies and practices fluid to accommodate necessary adjustments

[illegible]

- **Attitudes must change** to become less ethnocentric and biased.
- **Policies must change** to become more flexible and culturally impartial
- **Practices must become** more congruent with cultures

# Culture Matters



When culture is ignored, families are at risk of not getting the support they need, or worse yet, receiving assistance that is more harmful than helpful.



**Cultural competence  
and linguistic competence  
are a life's journey ...  
not a destination**

**Safe travels!**



# Thank you

- Please contact Kelsey Leonard, CLC Coordinator for the PA Care Partnership at [leonardkt@upmc.edu](mailto:leonardkt@upmc.edu) with any questions, comments and/or for additional resources.