

Athletic Programs Teach Goals - and Help Bullies

School administrators throughout Massachusetts victimize targets of bullies. It is cruel and devastating when authority figures sweep the crimes under the rug. Too many principals and teachers take the word of the offender over that of the victim. This disenfranchises the tormented and fosters additional abuses. Why is this so?

Bullies are usually jocks and upper-middle class students. The victims are usually misfits, unique, smart, self-conscious, or rebellious. Faculty often choose to ignore cries for help. Many faculty members seem to favor the jocks, pushing “undesirables” out of school.

I home-school my daughter. Students and teachers bullied her so viciously that she refused to attend. The school’s investigations resulted in the faculty asking the bullies if they committed the crime and then accepting their denial as truth. The school took a CHINS out on my daughter. I have spoken to other students who are being bullied. One has issues with the same teachers; people the vice principal defended when we complained.

My children no longer attend public school. Yet my blood is boiling. The Bridgewater student who was beaten by three jocks while another student filmed it was bullied for over a year. The school did nothing until his mother got a lawyer and the video leaked onto the Internet. This is the crux of the issue.

Scholastic athletic programs are important. They teach teamwork and goal setting. They also instill a pack mentality, program kids to attack differences, and strike at weaknesses as a team. Additionally, these jocks are lionized while their victims are scorned. Should we continue to celebrate athletes and forgive their violent tendencies? The answer is no. The time to act is now.