

# Bullying and Discipline for Students with Autism

Dr. Adrienne Seamans, Ph.D., BCBA, LMSW

None of the planners or presenters for this educational activity have relevant financial relationship(s) to disclose with ineligible companies whose primary business is producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients.



**University of Idaho**  
School of Health and Medical Professions  
College of Education, Health and  
Human Sciences



# Prevalence of Bullying for Students with Autism

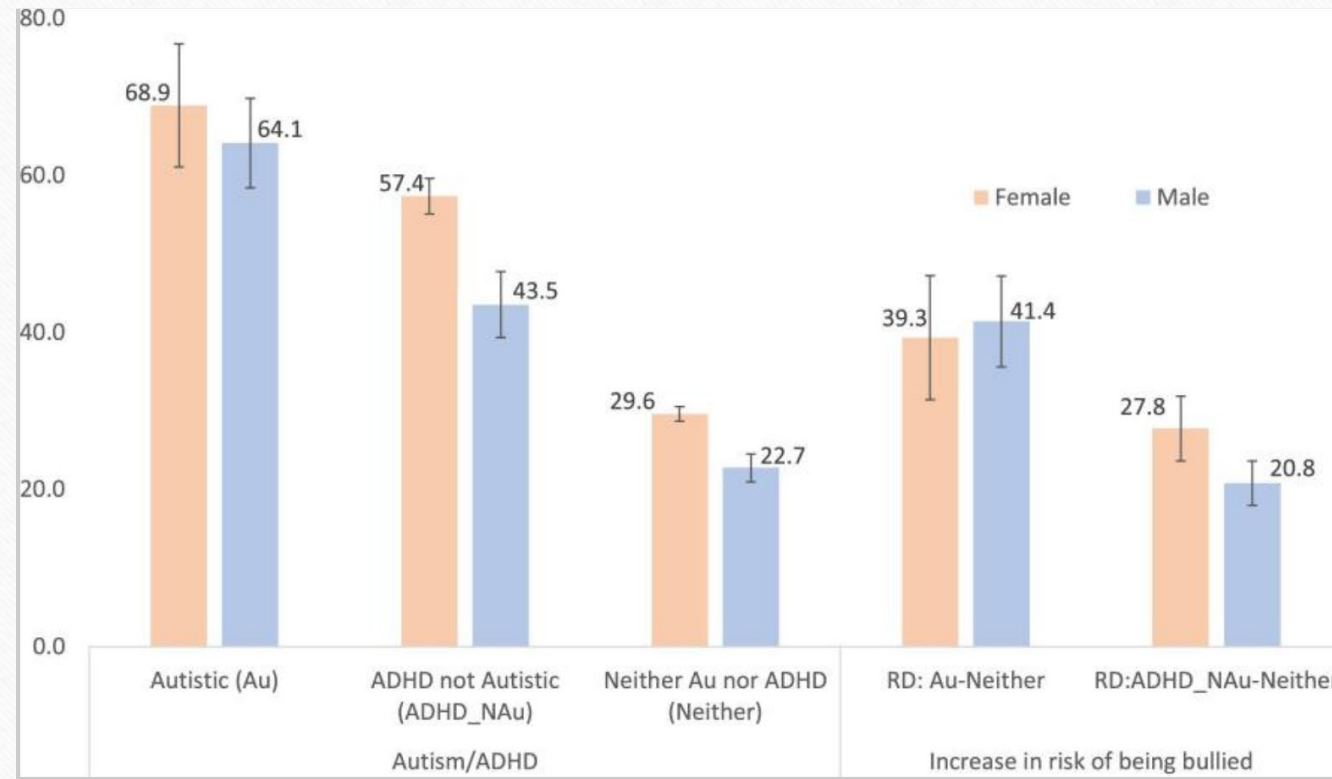
---

- 67% of Students with Autism reported being bullied (Park et al., 2020)

## Types of Bullying:

- 58% verbal bullying (e.g., vocal or written speech intended to harm or belittle others)
- 36% relational bullying (e.g., actions that aim to manipulate, exclude, or isolate the victim)
- 30% physical bullying (e.g., direct physical harm)
- 15% cyber bullying (e.g., bullying that occurs over digital and online platforms)

# With Co-Morbidity of ADHD



Average Marginal Percentage of US Youth 12–17 years who were Bullied Stratified by Autism/ADHD and Sex (RD = Percentage Increase in Bullying Victimization Associated with Autism/ADHD Stratified by Sex (Accardo et al., 2024))

## Risk Factors (Wang & Susumu, 2024):

---

- Challenges with communication (Adams et al., 2020; Wood & Freeth, 2016)
- Low support needs to help to transition into mainstream (Ghaziuddin, 2008; Kaland, 2011)
- Stigma of disability (Oexle & Corrigan, 2018; Turan et al., 2019)
- Lack of understanding by others (Thompson-Hodgetts et al., 2020)

# Prevention Strategies: (Wang & Susumu, 2024)

---

- Develop outside interests and talents
- Improve School Climate – Training for Staff and Students  
Amazing Things Can Happen
- Create a culture of diversity acceptance Announcement by AAC Users
- Support for parents to handle stress

# How to Support When Bullying Has Occurred

---

- **Develop Self-Advocacy:** Use role-playing to teach assertive responses, such as "Stop. Leave me alone".
- **Scripted Phrases:** Provide scripts for reporting bullying, such as "These kinds of things take more time for me to figure out".
- **Identify Trusted Adults:** Help the student identify specific staff members they can go to for help.
- **Teach Social Differences:** Educate them on the differences between friendly behavior and bullying.

# Discipline – Same Protections for Students on Section 504 Plans and IEPs

---

- >10 days of removal = Change of Placement
- If more than 10 = Must have Manifestation Determination Review (MDR)
- Three questions to answer at MDR:
  1. Is the behavior due to a manifestation of the student's disability?
  2. Did the behavior occur due to the school's failure to implement the current IEP or 504?
  3. Will the student be returned to the previous placement and/or amend IEP/504? (Does a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) need to be completed and a behavior plan implemented?)

# 3 Exceptions to Discipline Protections

---

1. Carries a weapon to school or has a weapon at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the State Educational Agency or a school district;
2. Knowingly has or uses illegal drugs or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the State Educational Agency or a school district; **or**
3. Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the State Educational Agency or a school district.

# Restraint and Seclusion

---

- *Idaho Code 33-1224 (In Effect July 1, 2023)*

<i>PROHIBITED PRACTICES</i>	<i>CONDITIONS FOR USE</i>
<b>Districts and charters SHALL NOT:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Use corporal punishment</li><li>2. Use chemical restraint</li><li>3. Use restraint or seclusion as a form of discipline or punishment.</li></ol>	<b>Restraint and/or Seclusion may only be deployed when:</b> A student's behavior places the student, staff, or others in imminent danger of serious bodily harm.