



Bullying:

Identification, Implications, and Interventions

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WHAT IS BULLYING?

- Bullying, harassment and intimidation is an intentional behavior (written, verbal, electronic or physical) toward another particular student more than once that involves unwanted negative actions and constitutes an imbalance of power. The intentional act also includes violence within a dating relationship.
- These aggressive acts can be physical, verbal, or relational and can take place in a physical space or in cyber space. It causes mental or physical harm to the other student and is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive enough that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for the other student.
- This behavior is prohibited on school property, on a school bus or at a school-sponsored activity.



*From The Ophelia Project www.opheliaproject.com and Hilliard City Schools

EXAMPLES OF BULLYING

- Physical Aggression
 - Hitting/punching others
 - Tripping someone “by accident”
 - Shoving/pushing others to show dominance
- Relational Aggression
 - Publicly excluding someone from an event or activity
 - Spreading gossip about others
 - Using lies and confidential information to get others mad at someone, to stop liking someone, or to build one’s own status
- Cyber Bullying
 - Using the internet (forums, social media, etc.), email, text messages or IM to spread rumors or say hurtful comments
 - Creating a web site and posting rumors, photos, or information in order to hurt someone
 - Forwarding a confidential email to others

LEVELS OF AGGRESSION

- Bummer

- A situation or comment that is not particularly desirable but is not aggressive in its nature
 - A person may feel like a target, but the perceived aggressor did not intend harm.

- Aggression

- A behavior intended to hurt or harm others
 - Can be physical, verbal, relational, or cyber. Each situation involves a target, an aggressor, and possibly a by-stander.

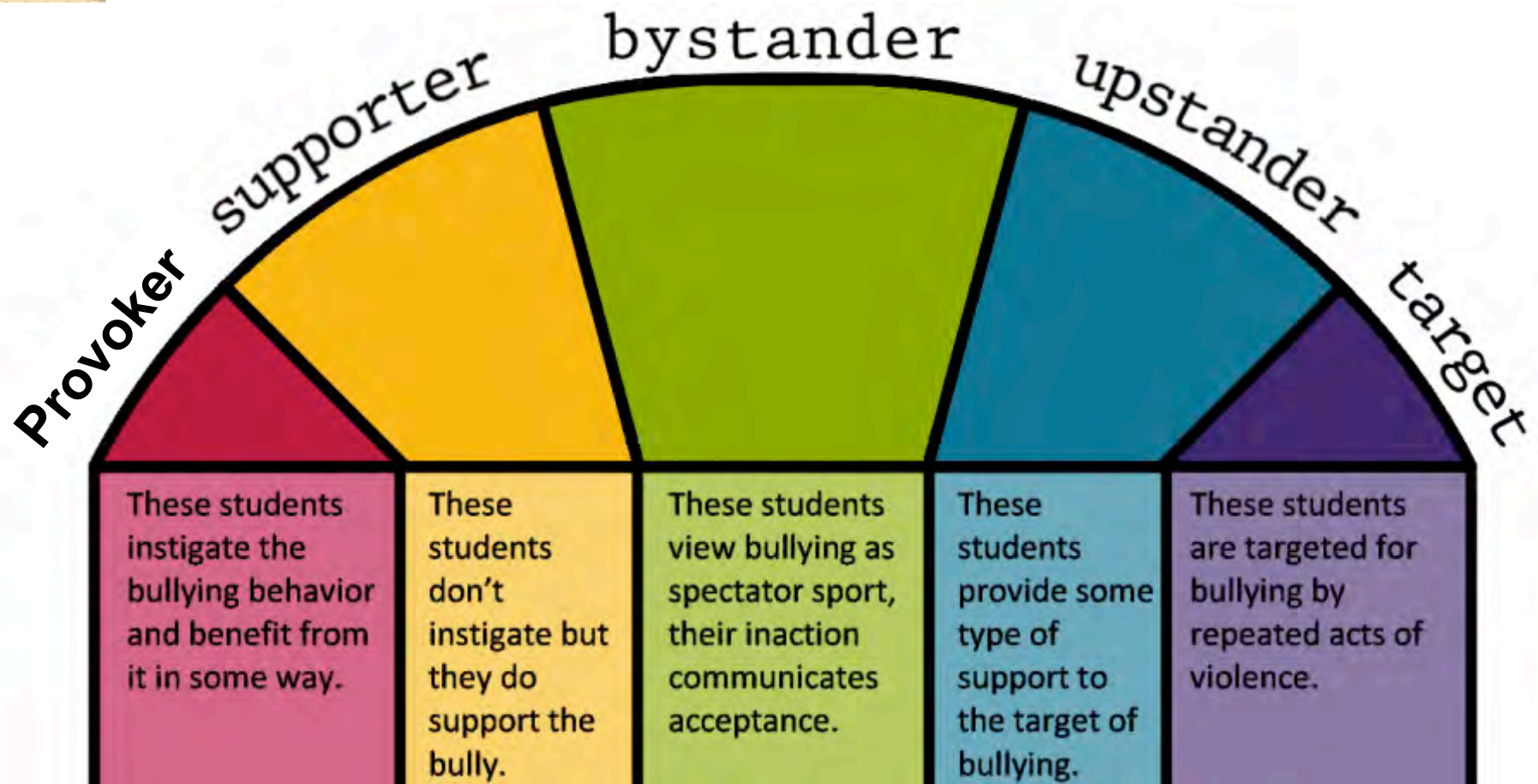
LEVELS OF AGGRESSION

- Bullying
 - Includes all of the following
 - Aggressive behaviors that are unsolicited by the target.
 - Aggression is repeated, often with increased intensity.
 - Imbalance of power
 - Aggression tends to be isolated incidents while bullying describes a pattern with increasing intensity

LEVELS OF AGGRESSION

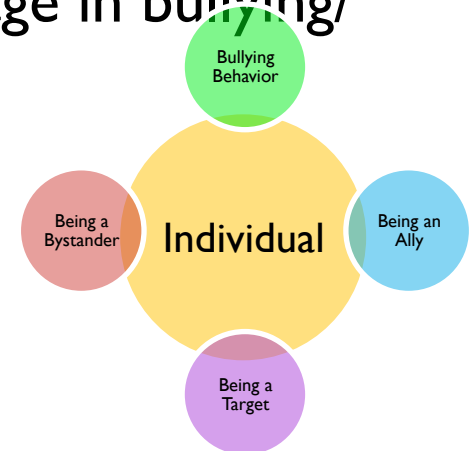
- Violence, Abuse, or Extreme Bullying
 - May include one or more of the following, but not limited to:
 - Is a threat to the immediate safety of the target
 - Involves weapons
 - Target contemplates hurting self or others to end unwanted behaviors
 - Legal consequences can be enforced upon the aggressor

ROLES IN AGGRESSION



Bully vs. Victim

- Students do not remain fixed in the roles of “bully” and “victims”
 - In a study of MS students, 87% sample changed their bullying/victimization roles during their 3 years of middle school
- Labels of “bully” and “victim” often signify that these kids are unchangeable
- All individuals have capability to engage in bullying/victimization behaviors



A Change in Perspective...

From...

To...

“Bully”



“Student who bullies”

“Victim”



“Student who was bullied”

Behavior is a
permanent
characteristic



Behavior can be
replaced or changed

Age-Specific Bullying

- Elementary School
 - Bullying is considered to start by kindergarten
 - 33% US Elementary school students report being frequently bullied at school
 - 20% kindergartners report being frequently victimized
 - Students who are aggressive in elementary school tend to be the same students who are aggressive in MS/HS

Age-Specific Bullying

- Middle School
 - Bullying and victimization peak during this time
 - 29.9% students grades 6-10 report moderate-frequent involvement in bullying
- High School
 - Bullying/victimization takes on form of harassment
 - 61% 10th-11th graders report being sexually harassed
 - 28% HS students report being victimized
 - School staff often grossly underestimate prevalence

STATISTICS

- 20% student ages 11-18 have been a victim of cyberbullying
- 48% students are regularly exposed to relational aggression twice a month or more
- 90% of students reported being the target of bullying or relational aggression at one time or another

Top Locations of Bullying

- Physical Aggression
 - 35% recess/break
 - 27% on the way home
 - 26% hallways
 - 21% restroom
 - 19% cafeteria
- Relational Aggression
 - 55% recess/break
 - 52% cafeteria
 - 42% hallways
 - 37% on the way home
 - 36% restroom
 - 36% in the classroom

Cyberbullying

- 7 in 10 young people are victims of cyberbullying.
- 37% of them are experiencing cyberbullying on a highly frequent basis.
- 20% of young people are experiencing extreme cyberbullying on a daily basis.
- New research suggests that young males and females are equally at risk of cyberbullying.
- Young people found to be twice as likely to be cyber bullied on Facebook as on any other social network.

Cyberbullying

- 54% of young people using Facebook reported that they have experienced cyberbullying on the social network.
- Facebook, Ask.FM and Twitter found to be the most likely sources of cyberbullying, being the highest in traffic of all social networks.
- Cyberbullying found to have catastrophic effects upon the self-esteem and social lives of up to 70% of young people.
- [Cyberbullying-Trailer](#)

Cyberbullying

- Kids have harder time getting away from it
 - Can occur 24/7
 - Messages and images can be posted anonymously and distributed to a very wide audience quickly
 - It can be difficult and sometimes impossible to trace the source
 - Difficult to delete the message photos, etc. once distributed
 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dkG00Czb4ho>

Bullying Myths

- Myth 1: Bullying is an isolated, individual aggressive action
- Myth 2: Bullying occurs between a “bully” and a “victim”
- Myth 3: Anti-bullying policies are ineffective
- Myth 4: Bullying is a “normal” part of growing up
- Myth 5: It is impossible to stop bullying
- Myth 6: Physical bullying is more damaging than relational bullying

Students Most Likely to Be Bullied

Some research suggests that students are most likely to be bullied because of perceived differences, such as:

- Appearance or body size
- Perceived to be gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender
- Degree of masculinity or femininity
- Performance in school
- Race/ethnicity/national origin and/or religion
- Low-income household
- Youth with disabilities and other special health needs

Possible Indicators of Students Who Bully

- Larger or stronger than classmates
- Enjoy controlling others
- Lack of empathy or compassion for others
- Feel more powerful than others
- Lack of emotion or remorse when discussing negative behaviors
- Enjoy conflicts and refuse to accept responsibility for negative behaviors
- Often have problems at school

Common Myths About Students Who Bully

- Students who bully are loners.
- Students who bully have low self-esteem and are insecure.
- Students bully others because they want attention.
- Bullying behavior is a normal part of children being children.
- Only boys bully others.

IMPACT OF BULLYING

Students who experience bullying are more likely to have difficulties in the following areas:

- Education
 - School avoidance, decrease in grades, inability to concentrate
- Health
 - Headaches, stomachaches, low self-esteem, increased fear or anxiety, depression
- Safety
 - Self-isolation, increased aggression, self-harm, suicide (ideation), fear of other students, retaliation

IMPACT OF BULLYING



Relational aggression has been linked with:

- Eating Disorders
- Substance Abuse
- Social and psychological maladjustment
- Suicidal ideation

What are the warning signs?

- Warning Signs:

- Has unexplained cuts, bruises, or scratches
- Has few, if any, friends with whom he/she spends time
- Seems afraid of riding the bus, going to recess/lunch
- Suddenly loses interest or performs poorly in school work
- Appears sad, moody, teary, or depressed during school
- Appears anxious and suffers from low self-esteem
- Frequent headaches, stomach aches
- Changes in eating habits
- Self-destructive behaviors
- Truant or frequent absences from school
- Doing poorly in school, declining grades

Additional Signs

- Signs a child may need additional assistance coping
 - Signs of Depression
 - Significant Anxiety
 - Beginning or increase in substance use

What Is Depression?

- Signs and symptoms of depression in general are:
 - Depressed mood and/or loss of interest or pleasure in daily activities for more than two weeks.
 - Mood represents a change from the person's usual state.
 - Impaired functioning: socially, occupationally, educationally
 - Five of the following symptoms
 - Depressed or irritable mood most of the day, nearly every day as indicated by either subjective report or observed behavioral changes
 - Decreased interest or pleasure in most activities
 - Significant weight change or change in appetite
 - Change in sleep
 - Change in activity
 - Fatigue/loss of energy
 - Feelings of guilt and/or worthlessness
 - Inability to concentrate
 - Suicidal thoughts and feelings

DEPRESSION IN CHILDREN & ADOLESCENTS

- Younger Children
 - Somatic complaints
 - Behavior changes
 - Irritability
 - Sadness (may be intermittent)
- Older Children
 - Same as younger children
 - Loss of interest in activities previously enjoyed
 - Loss of interest in engagement with playmates

DEPRESSION IN CHILDREN & ADOLESCENTS

- Adolescents
 - Same as young/older children
 - More similar to adult symptoms of depression
 - Mental/physical weariness
 - Feelings of aloneness/disconnectedness
 - Confusion
 - Feelings of vulnerability
 - Anger
 - Ambivalence towards friends
 - Self injurious behavior

Why Does This Matter?

- Victims of bullying are up to 9 times more likely to consider suicide compared to non-victims (study from Yale University)
- 50% or more of suicides among young people are related to bullying (study from Great Britain)
- A survey in 2008 found that 25% of 10th graders who reported being bullied had also made a suicide attempt in the last year

Suicide

- Suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death for individuals between 10-24 years of age
 - Results in approximately 4600 deaths per year
- Impulsivity leads to attempts
 - Study found 9 out of 10 individuals attempted suicide in less than a day of deciding they were going to complete suicide



CHILD AND ADOLESCENT RISK FACTORS FOR SUICIDE

- School problems
- Family history of suicidal behavior
- Poor parent/child communication
- Stressful life events
- Mood Disorder
- Substance Abuse
- Prior suicide attempts
- Self-injurious behavior
- Impulsivity
- High level of agitation



SUICIDE PREVENTION

- The main target of effective prevention of youth suicide is to reduce risk factors and increase protective factors.

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- Social/Family Supports
- Will to live
- Restricted access to guns and other means of suicide
- Treatment relationship
- Cultural / Religious beliefs and values
- Overall Life Satisfaction
- Problem-solving skills
- Coping Skills
- High level of distress/frustration tolerance
- Conflict resolution skills
- Felt sense of responsibility
- Good health and access to care
- Supportive peers



What can you do?

Simple Short-Term Solutions

- Bullying is a long-term, often repeated problem.
- It takes time and support to practice and master the skills for intervening in bullying behavior.
- Bullying is primarily a relationship problem among students, and long-term strategies are needed to create a safe school climate through building supportive and caring relationships.

Conflict Resolution and Peer Mediation Strategies

- Bullying is a form of peer abuse—not conflict between peers of equal power and control.
- The strategies may further victimize the student who has been bullied and inadvertently give the student a message that he or she did something to provoke the bullying behavior and is partly to blame.
- Such strategies incorrectly expect the student who has been bullied to solve his or her own abuse.
- The session can become another opportunity for the bullying behavior to be repeated.

Zero Tolerance Policies

- Bullying behavior is *never* tolerated, but the strategy fails to recognize that bullying behavior is not a permanent characteristic of the student who did the bullying.
- Because bullying is a behavior, it can be changed and replaced with more positive prosocial behavior.
- Nearly 20 percent of students are involved in bullying other students—
it is not realistic to suspend or expel 20 percent of any student body.
- Students who are involved in bullying behavior are suspended or expelled when they are the students who may benefit most from continued exposure to positive prosocial role models and a caring school climate.

Intervening in Bullying Behavior

1. Stop bullying on the spot.
2. Find out what happened.
3. Support the students involved.

De-escalation Techniques

Maintain Control of Your Emotions

DO: Appear calm, centered, and self-assured; use a modulated low tone of voice. Be aware of options. Be respectful even when firmly setting limits or calling for help. If you feel you are losing control, call on a colleague, an administrator, security, or (in serious cases) your school resource officer or the police for support.

DON' T: Be defensive even if the comments or insults are directed at you.

Communicate Effectively Nonverbally

DO: Allow extra physical space between you and the aggressor, get to the same eye level (kneel, sit, or stoop as needed), keep your hands out of your pockets to protect yourself, and stand at an angle to the student.

DON' T: Turn your back, stand full front to the student, maintain constant eye contact, point or shake your finger, smile, or argue.

De-escalate the Discussion

DO: Trust your instincts, empathize with feelings but not with the behavior, suggest alternatives, and explain limits in a firm but respectful tone.

DON' T: Get loud, yell, scream, argue, or analyze.

ASSISTING A CHILD WHO REPORTS BEING BULLIED

- Focus on the child, be supportive, and gather information
 - Do not tell the child to ignore the bullying
 - Do not blame the child who is being bullied
 - Listen carefully to what the child tells you about the bullying
 - Learn as much as you can about the bullying tactics being used and when/where it occurs
 - Empathize with the child
 - Do not criticize the way the child handled the situation
 - Do not encourage physical retaliation
 - Check your own emotions

5 R's

- Respond
- Research
- Record
- Report
- Revisit

Elements of a Good Behavior Report

- Fill out HCSD report completely and legibly.
- Report only what you are certain occurred.
- Avoid editorial comments.
- In cases where you observed the bullying behavior, report what you saw as accurately and in as much detail as possible.
- Unless school policy forbids, it is best to write down the actual words a student said, including curse words, so that the principal and the parents understand exactly what happened.



Providing Help & Support

As bullying continues and becomes more intense, reports about it decline

INTERVENING ON BULLYING

- When you see or hear bullying as it is occurring:
 - Immediately stop the bullying
 - Refer to the bullying behavior and to rules against this behavior.
 - Support the bullied child in a way that allows him/her to regain self-control and feel safe
 - Include bystanders in the conversation and give them guidance about how to appropriately intervene next time
 - Impose immediate consequences for bully
 - Do not require those involved to “work things out.”

Prevent Bullying: Create an Environment of Support

- What does this mean? Creating a safe environment for students is important.
- Be available and proactive. Check in on all aspects.
- Establish a culture of inclusion and respect for all students.
- Monitor bullying “hot spots” around the building.
- Create ground rules and reinforce the rules in the classroom.
- Have anti-bullying slogans located throughout the school.
- Monitor students body language-check in.

Supportive Classroom Settings

- **Engagement:** includes relationships, respect for diversity, and school participation
- **Safety:** includes emotional and physical safety and reduction of substance use
- **Environment:** includes the physical, academic, and disciplinary environments and wellness

Effects of a Positive Classroom Climate

In a positive school climate, students:

- Do better academically.
- Attend school more regularly.
- Feel better about themselves.
- Engage in fewer risky behaviors like drinking alcohol or using drugs.
- Engage less in bullying and other problem behaviors.



A Relational Problem

Bullying is a relationship problem that requires a relationship solution.

Who Was There for You?



Teacher



Family

Coach



The Little Things That Teachers Do

- Be available.
- Listen.
- Be positive.
- Have fun.
- Be real.



HELPFUL TOOLS

- Encourage self expression (talking, writing, drawing, play, etc.)
- Listen
- Be a calm, open presence
- Develop a safety plan
- Counteract isolation
- Support unconditionally

Student Intervention

In the majority of bullying episodes in which students intervene, the bullying stops within:

- A. Two minutes
- B. Ninety seconds
- C. One minute
- D. Ten seconds

Sample Anti-Bullying Rules

1. We will treat others with respect.
2. We will not use bullying behavior on others.
3. We will try to help students who are bullied.
4. We will try to include students who are excluded from groups.
5. If we know that somebody is being bullied, we will tell an adult at school and an adult at home.

Respect

Respect is a learned behavior and attitude—we cannot make it happen, but we can teach and encourage it.

- Set a tone of respect in the classroom.
- Expose students to accurate information and positive representations of those who they may perceive as different from them.
- Talk about differences in a respectful way including examples of people with varied backgrounds and orientations.
- Provide time for learning and practicing positive, respectful behaviors.

Communication

Communication can take many forms, including via:

- Posted norms
- Class lessons and meetings
- Individual conversations



Classroom Discussions

- Raise awareness of ideas and strategies.
- Teach and practice the difference between respectful deliberation and intolerant dialogue around issues of difference.
- Provide opportunities for students to express their discomfort about witnessing bullying behaviors within the safety of a classroom discussion.
- Help students realize that they are not alone in their wish for bullying behaviors to stop.
- Provide an opportunity for students to brainstorm possible solutions to common situations involving bullying behaviors.

Intervention Skills

Students can:

- Refuse to participate in the bullying behaviors.
- Tell the person to stop bullying.
- Tell a trusted adult what is happening.
- Be a supportive friend or ally to the student who is being bullied.

Supportive Classroom Settings

- Engagement: includes relationships, respect for diversity, and school participation
- Environment: includes the physical, academic, and disciplinary environments and wellness
- Safety: includes emotional and physical safety and reduction of substance use

Engagement

- Be a role model by treating all students and colleagues respectfully.
- Teach the difference between respectful deliberation and name calling.
- Let students know you are available to talk.
- Use conversations with students to find out what is going on in their lives and actively listen.
- Encourage positive thinking and offer positive strategies for dealing with problems.
- Teach inclusively. Integrate examples of people from different backgrounds every day.
- Use inclusive language.
- Have fun! It will make personal connections and help students feel like they belong.

Environment

- Weave positive behaviors into daily interactions with students and colleagues.
- Set a positive tone in your classroom.
- Demonstrate appropriate boundaries and expectations for positive relationships.
- Examine your own beliefs, and examine your own assumptions, biases, or stereotypes.
- Work directly with both students who are being bullied and students who are bullying others.
- Establish a culture of respect for difference.
- Talk about differences in respectful and informative ways.
- Work with parents and youth to send a unified message against bullying.

Safety

- Step up during problematic situations, actively using your power to identify concerns and offer solutions.
- Make a safe culture the “norm.”
- Encourage students to do what they love. Special activities can boost confidence, help students make friends, and protect them from bullying behavior.
- Make time for daily conversations with students about their lives and feelings.
- Ask a variety of questions when you talk with students.
- Talk about bullying behaviors. If concerns come up, be sure to respond.
- Read and learn about bullying.
- Create supportive ground rules for your classroom.
- Be positive—tell students what to do, not just what not to do.
- Teach positive relationship skills.

RESOURCES

Bullying

- Books

- The Bully, The Bullied and the Bystander (2003, Barbara Coloroso)
- Schools Where Everyone Belongs (2007, Stan Davis)
- Cyberbullying in the Digital Age (2012, Robin Kowalski, Stan Limber, & Patti Agatston)

- Movie

- Bully (2012, Lee Hirsch, The Weinstein Company)
- Cyberbullying

Resources Cont.

Bullying

- Web Sites

- www.opheliaproject.org
- www.stopbullying.gov
- www.csriu.org
- www.cyberbullying.us
- www.connectsafetly.org
- www.glsen.org

Resources Cont.

Suicide

- NetCare Access
 - (614) 276-CARE
- National Suicide Prevention Hotline
 - 1-800-273-TALK



Syntero
Care • Counsel • Support

Dublin Counseling Center
Northwest Counseling Services

**Dublin Counseling
Center**

**299 Cramer Creek Ct
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Services**

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