
BULLYING – NO WAY!



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RT. 12 mins

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ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

This programme is directed at secondary students. It would also be useful for education professionals – teachers, administrative and welfare staff. – used as a discussion starter and policy making stimulus.

The programme could fit into school charter priorities and welfare / safety / personal development contexts, or more specific curricular foci – as in English, Personal Development, Health Studies and General Studies aspects of the school curriculum.

ABOUT THESE NOTES

You will see that there are two options to the notes for each of the 11 separate scenarios – one for teachers / adult discussion groups (shown by **T**), and one for students (shown by **S**). A brief description accompanies the more complex scenarios, before the suggested questions for discussion.

Teachers will need to decide how they are going to use the programme with their classes. They might wish to show all of the scenarios and discuss the broad range of questions raised, or to focus on the specific questions related to their students' age group. The former option might add an interesting perspective to older students' discussion as they recall their experiences from childhood and relate these to their attitudes now. In that way the continuum of bullying can be seen as the social trap and complex situation it is.

SECONDARY LEVEL SCENARIOS

1. One of Us

This segment looks at the issue of peer group pressure. As is often the case in bullying scenarios, here a group is lined up against one individual.

T – Discuss the comment of one of the boys – 'We've all done it. If you don't do it, you are not one of us.' How does this sort of pressure work on the students or on anyone? What does it attack?

S – What is going on in this scenario? How would Ayesha feel? Have you ever been in this situation?

2. Is He Tough?

Again there is a group involved here – but this time it is two against one. It also raises issues about stereotyping and identity or having the confidence to be different.

T – Discuss the dynamics of this situation – of speaking up and being different. How does the third boy differ from the other two? What is he experiencing? How would you tackle this issue with your students?

S – What idea of 'action' do two of these boys have, as opposed to the third boy? How could this matter have been better resolved – so that there was a win/ win situation?

3. Keep Your Mouth Shut

This raises the issue of gangs, group pressure and physical intimidation.

T - Discuss how this fits many people's notion of 'bullying' – is this any worse, or less so, than other more subtle forms? Again, look at the issue of this boy's isolation – one against many – how could this be counteracted? What happens to those in the 'in' group who try to protest about what is going on?

BULLYING – NO WAY!

S – The boy is told to keep his ‘mouth shut’ or he will not be part of ‘the group’. What do you think of this? Is this real for you? Has such a thing ever happened to you? What should be done about this sort of occurrence?

4. The Same Treatment

In this scenario Craig is stopped from getting on the school bus, thanks to physical intimidation – ‘You’ll get the same treatment as you got yesterday... we’ll throw your bag out and then we’ll throw you out.’

T – Note again, the single voice of protest from another student that is snuffed out in the same way (‘make up your mind, Rachel...’) and the dynamics of the group, again. What is that telling us about this kind of bullying? In what ways can this silencing influence be countered?

S – Discuss the ‘goings on’ on your school bus trips. What things have you witnessed or experienced? What is the solution to this kind of intimidation?

5. Invisible

This raises a lot of issues – racism, isolation, student and teacher responsibility for this boy’s ‘rejection’ by others.

T – How common is this kind of experience? Do we always know that this sort of thing is going on – particularly when the child is unsupervised at lunch and recess time? Come up with as many ways as you can for preventing this sort of experience and dealing with it, should it occur (for example, a school ‘buddy’ system?)

S – Have you ever felt ‘on the outer’ as this boy does? Why is he being ostracised? How did you react to this boy’s experience? What could you, as an individual and caring, sensitive person, do to help in a situation like this?

6. All Around the School

This segment raises the issue of sexual harassment. Jenny is the victim of a personal slur because she ‘would not go all the way’ with her boyfriend.

T – Discuss the range of issues involved in ‘sexual harassment’ – how does this fit into that category? In what ways could your school program address the issues raised here? How could Jenny learn to be strong enough to resist and deal with this? Students could perhaps watch the film, ‘Puberty Blues’, if the teacher wants to develop a unit of work on these sorts of issues.

S – How common do you think this sort of pressure is? Discuss the issue of early sexuality – how many people feel pressured to be sexually active when it is not necessarily what they want? What does this scenario say about supposed ‘friendship’ (note that Jenny says she thought Daniel and she were ‘friends’ before this.)

7. She’s Not Invited

The group situation comes into play again, here. Donna is on ‘the outer’ and four or five others are excluding her. There is one ring leader however who is setting the tone for the others’ behaviour and they are ‘going along’ with it by laughing and not defending Donna.

T – What more do you notice here about the power of group dynamics and the ostracising of one particular student? Does the teacher have a role here? How could we be more aware of what goes on in the course of school and our classes?

S – Consider why Donna might be on the ‘outer’ here? Can you identify with what Donna might be feeling? What is the complex ‘play’ going on here? Is all of the group actively rejecting her, or just one person leading and others following? Why might this girl be doing this to Donna and in front of her friends? What would you do in this sort of situation?

BULLYING – NO WAY!

8. I Play to Win

This again involves two groups and the situation quickly becomes heated. Ideas of 'toughness' emerge and the aggressive boy obviously feels he has something to prove to his mates.

T – Discuss the implied notions of masculinity and 'toughness' and 'winning' here. Does the teacher have (or should they have) a role here? In what ways could the school / teacher promote different ideas of sport / competition?

S – What do you notice about what develops here? Two groups emerge – how do they both behave? The ringleader of the pushy group – what does he use to ensure he is 'top dog'? How effective is this? What could its alternative be?

9. They All Started It

Racism comes into to play here – with two girls who are singled out as different. Again there is the sense of a ringleader – Therese, who is clearly angry and resistant anyway.

T – What could the teacher here have done differently?

S – Put yourself in Cheryl's and her friend's situation – how would you feel? Note how Cheryl puts up with these attacks at first and then explodes – what does that say to us?

10. She Deserves It

This is a three against one situation again. However, two members of the group are reluctant to participate and one attempts to speak up for the girl being victimised. The damage goes on regardless, but this time by one of the three only. She calls the others 'wimps' for not participating.

T – How could the two reluctant students be even further empowered to speak up? Imagine the possible / probable result of this incident – come up with a number of possible scenarios. How could the school deal with and follow up such a situation?

S – How would you describe this incident? What are the issues here, for you and how would you react in such a situation – either as the victim, or the perpetrator?

11. Who's Boss?

Issues of sexism and aggressive masculinity are raised here. Bob is told not to let his 'girlfriend' get 'away with that' and to 'show her who's boss'.

T – Consider the issues of patriarchy in our society and how that transfers to school situations. How is Jim 'different' and how effective is Shona's attempts to stand up to Rob?

S – What do you think of Shona's, Bob's and Jim's behaviours here? Look carefully at how each of them react and then decide who you think is at fault and why and what you would do in such a situation.

Other Sources of Interest

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/bullying

www.antibully.org.uk/

www.teachernet.gov.uk/antibully/

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www.bullyonline.org/schoolbully/links.htm

www.family2000.org.uk/anti-bullying.htm