

The Big NO: Guide to Say NO to Bullying Lesson Plan: (Primary School)

For Anti-Bullying Week, Kidscape is launching a 'Say NO to Bullying' campaign to encourage students, parents, teachers, and communities all around the UK to take a stand against bullying and Say NO!

The following is a lesson plan suitable for use with KS2 age pupils (year 5 and 6) during Anti-Bullying Week, which will culminate in getting everyone to stand up and say a big NO to bullying. This will help bring together a sense of school community which clearly stands against bullying.

The lesson is structured to begin with setting 'ground rules' for student activities and the rest of the lesson (a form of behaviour code, set by the students). This is then followed by a discussion about bullying and an exercise to help understand the feeling of being bullied. This is followed by some practical strategies to avoid bullying. The lesson culminates in getting the whole class to stand up and shout a big 'NO' to bullying.

Setting the Ground Rules:

Objectives: To set ground rules for student activities – a behaviour code which all the class will agree to. This helps to create feelings of trust when beginning to address the feelings the students may have when thinking and talking about the emotive problem of bullying.

Resources:

Large pieces of paper & felt tips

There are two issues to deal with in this activity:

1. To set up Ground Rules which will be helpful in all work on bullying done with students
2. To begin to address the feelings the students may have when discussing the emotive problem of bullying.

It is important that the issue of Ground Rules is sorted out first to ensure that the students feel comfortable and safe when sharing feelings.

Depending upon the amount of time available, you may wish to divide this lesson into two or more parts and teach it on different days.

Ground Rules

'During this week, for Anti-Bullying Week, we are going to be exploring the problem of bullying.

Some of the things we talk about could be embarrassing or painful or cause you to laugh because you feel uncomfortable. The activities will involve some role-playing, writing and discussions with many of the ideas coming from you. So I would like to ask your help to set up some Ground Rules. When we have a list of Ground Rules, we will discuss them and then agree on which ones we will follow as a class.

'We are going to break up into small groups in a moment to discuss ideas, but perhaps it would be helpful if I gave you one or two examples of Ground Rules.

Let's say we are discussing the problem of bullying and there is someone in the class who is either a bully or a target. I would like to see a Ground Rule which says 'no put-downs.'

Write on the board:

GROUND RULES

We will: (for example)

- a. Not embarrass others
- b. Not make fun of anyone.

Divide the class into groups.

One person (student or teaching assistant (TA) will write up the group's ideas.

'Would you now get into your groups and agree one person to be your scribe or secretary.'

After you have thought of and written down your ideas for Ground Rules, we will put up the sheets of paper so that everyone can see what each group has written. You will have five minutes, so think fast and put down as many ideas as you can in that time.'

Give each group a large piece of paper and a felt-tip marker.

It may be that your students will need longer or shorter time to think. When the pupils have completed the Ground Rules sheets, bring them together as a large group and have each group put up their ideas.

As the groups in turn share their ideas for Ground Rules, write them on the flipchart paper without comment.

When you have recorded the Ground Rules, decide which ones are agreeable to everyone.

One class listed the following Ground Rules:

We will:

1. Listen
2. Not embarrass others
3. Allow each other time to talk without interrupting
4. Not put anyone down by making unkind remarks
5. Not talk about what is said in the lessons outside of the lessons
6. Help others so that everyone can join
7. Behave seriously
8. Be supportive of others

When the Ground Rules are agreed, have someone make a poster-type list which is posted up in the classroom.

You may want to agree what to do in case someone breaks the Ground Rules. What consequences will follow? You need to consider the possibility that the pupil is reacting because the issue hits too close to home.

What is Bullying?

'We are now going to discuss what bullying actually is, as it is not always easy to define.'

In most cases of bullying you will find that:

- It is deliberate hostility and aggression towards the target
- The victim is weaker and less powerful than the bully/bullies
- The outcome is always pain and distress for the victim

Although bullying can take many different shapes and forms, the key feature is that it is causing *deliberate* pain to another person. Any form of hurtful behaviour like name-calling can be classed as bullying if the bully persists with it after it is apparent that the victim is upset by what is being said.

The different forms bullying can take:

Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, and any other forms of violence

Intimidation: extortion, threats, stealing

Verbal: name-calling, spreading rumours, writing graffiti

Emotional: excluding someone, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), ridicule, humiliation, racial, homophobic or sexual taunts.

Cyber: Using technology to intimidate and upset, such as via text messages, email, social networking websites, internet

Theft: stealing a person's belongings

Racial: racist bullying can be verbal, emotional, or physical

Homophobic: homophobic bullying can occur regardless of a person's sexual orientation.

Understanding the feelings that bullying provokes:

The following exercise – 'The Rip Rip Story' - helps children to recognise how it feels to be the target of bullying. The teacher should give each child a small (A5 or A6) piece of paper. The teacher then reads out the transcript of the story written below, instructing the students that to put themselves in the position of the child in the story.

'We are now going to do an exercise where you can try to understand what it is like to be the target of bullying. I'm going to give everyone a piece of paper, and then read out a story. This story tells the thoughts of a child who is being bullied. While I am reading, close your eyes and imagine that you are the child in the story. Every time you feel angry, hurt, frightened, sad, unhappy, disgusted, intimidated, or uncomfortable, make a small rip in the edge your piece of paper. Do this again each time you feel one of these emotions.'

'Everyone find their own place to sit where you can have some privacy, and close your eyes.'

Teacher then reads the following story. Read the story with fairly slowly to give time for everything to sink in, and with emotion.

The Rip Rip Story:

"I can't wait to get to school. I know it's going to be a fun day today. Oh look, here come the other kids. I think they go to my school. They're waiting for the school bus.

What are they looking at? Me? They seem to be sniggering and pointing at me. Why are they doing that? I didn't do anything to them.

What are they saying? Ugly? They're saying that I'm ugly. Why are they saying that? I didn't do anything to them!

Here come some other children. Maybe they will stop those other kids making fun of me. What are they doing? Oh, they are looking away and pretending not to hear. I wish they wouldn't just stand there and do nothing. I guess they must think the same as those other ones.

I'll just look at the ground and keep to myself. I can't look at anyone. Oh great, the bus has come. Oh no, the driver is yelling at me to hurry up, everyone is laughing now!

In P.E. today, I couldn't run as fast as the others and nobody wanted me in their team. They all giggled at me!

In the playground, the kids from the bus surrounded me and started to push and shove me back and forth. The supervisor thought we were only having fun. I wanted to tell her I wasn't. But they told me to 'shut up' or I would 'get it worse.' I didn't tell!

At lunch they said no one was to sit beside me but... I never did anything to them... why are they doing this to me?

In science class, we were talking about monkeys, and looking at pictures of them. After class, some of them were standing outside and started to make noises like a monkey after me. It was so terrible. I felt horrible. I didn't want to hear anymore. I screamed at them:

WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS TO ME? I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING TO YOU!

The teacher heard me screaming. They all said I was pestering them and saying nasty things to them all day. The teacher believed them; she didn't ask me why I was crying. I got into trouble for doing nothing. I feel like I'm in shreds."

Tell the children to look open their eyes and look at their pieces of paper, which should now be covered in rips.

'Look at the rips in your piece of paper and think about what it must feel to be treated that way every day. Does anyone have anything to comment about the Rip Rip Story?'

Give children the opportunity to discuss any feelings they have resulting from that exercise. If they have a lot to discuss, you might want to consider following this up with the Rip Rip Story Worksheet (enclosed, on a separate sheet).

This discussion can lead into why some people are bullied.

Why are some people bullied?

'Now that we have understood how bullying takes place and what it feels like to be

bullied, we are going to consider why some people are bullied. Who are the victims of bullying? Why are they picked on? And what can they do to stop being targeted?’

‘It is important to acknowledge that the victims of bullying do not deserve to be bullied and that the bullying is not their fault. For this reason, from here on, we will use the term ‘target’ instead of ‘victim’.’

‘To understand why some people are targets of bullying, and others are not, it is important to think about how you present yourself. We have already understood that bullying relies on an unbalanced power relationship. A target of bullying is likely to have, unconsciously, presented themselves as weak (perhaps seeming under confident). This can be in a number of ways: through body language, eye contact, and a lack of assertiveness. This can indicate to a bully that this person might be an ‘easy target’.’

The following exercise is best illustrated with an assistant (with who you have previously discussed this) displaying the behaviour/body language described. It tends to be more effective when it is something the students can actually see.

Directions for assistant. Don’t stand up straight, hunch over, crumple your body, look at the ground, have your arms wrapped around yourself (like folded), fidget, shuffle around on your feet, don’t smile, look uncomfortable.

‘Body language is a key indicator as to whether a person is an ‘easy target’ or not. Look at [assistant] – s/he is not displaying any confidence and looks to be weak. Why is this? How can s/he appear more confident?’

Get the students to ‘unpick’ your assistant’s body language – put their hands up and suggest ways s/he can look like less of a target (things such as unfold your arms, stand up straight, loosen your shoulders, and the key one – look at me. Eye contact is crucial for this exercise).

‘This exercise demonstrates the importance of looking assertive and confident, even if you don’t necessarily feel it on the inside.’

What to do to avoid bullying?

‘There are three key things you can do to seem more assertive, to help you avoid becoming a target, and to prevent bullying. These are a ways of ‘bully-proofing’ yourself.’

Body language:

‘As the previous exercise demonstrated, assertive body language is crucial. If you look un-confident/weak, bullies will assume you are weak and this can make you a more likely target. Even if you don’t feel confident, if you present yourself in a way that makes you seem confident, people will never know the difference.’

Eye contact:

'Body language takes you half-way, which can be finished off through maintaining eye contact. This is not intended to be threatening, but simply by holding the eye contact of the person you are with it demonstrates that you are comfortable in yourself and don't have a problem with them. Try it with the person sitting next to you. Don't laugh or smile, but similarly, don't frown or look intimidating.'

Say NO!

'There is no magic wand to stopping bullies. Showing weakness or pain is life-blood to bullies, although that is no excuse for their bullying behaviour. One way to start gaining confidence is to practice shouting 'NO!' [*demonstrate this NO – a deep, long, and loud shout from your stomach. Should sound like a foghorn and will probably take the children by surprise*]. This, when shouted in a deep voice, is a good method to stand up to a bully as all you need to remember is one small word, said in a big voice. This will alert bystanders to the situation and embarrass the bully.'

'Kidscape, a national anti-bullying charity, are launching a campaign to Say NO to Bullying during this Anti-Bullying Week. Together as a school, we want to join together and take a stand against bullying by saying 'NO!'. [get everyone to stand up]

'Stand tall, shoulders back. Everyone on the count of three, shout 'NO!' in a deep voice. The shout should come from the stomach and sound like a foghorn.'

'One

Two

Three

"NO!!!!!"

Have the class practice shouting no until the rafters rattle. This is an energising way to bring the students together to say NO to bullying.

Please try and document your school saying NO to bullying. Take a photo or a video, or start a petition and get all your students to sign it (or alternatively sign the petition on the Kidscape Say NO to Bullying website), and please send this back to Kidscape at sntb@kidscape.org.uk or write to us at Kidscape, 2 Grosvenor Gardens, London, SW1W 0DH. We would love to feature stories about schools all around the country who have stood up and said NO to bullying this Anti-Bullying Week.