



ACTIVITY SEVEN:

Bullying and other irritating stuff

Bullying is often cited as a reason for not using public transport. Often young people observe bullying while travelling to school on the train or bus and while waiting at the stations. By using interactive drama, students have the opportunity to think about the positive actions they could take if they are in a situation where they are observing or experiencing bullying. The activity aims to set up acting scenarios based on young peoples' real observations of bullying. By providing a safe place for students to act out their experiences, students can try out different solutions and discuss which solutions work and which ones do not.

Student Outcomes

Health and Physical Education

Strand: Interpersonal Skills

- IS 2 The student uses communication skills and cooperation to share feelings and achieve basic needs when interacting with other people.
- IS 3 The student demonstrates communication and cooperation skills that enhance interpersonal and group relationships.

Purpose

This activity will provide an opportunity for the student to:

- Examine students' responses to bullying and aggression
- Discuss options available to resolve situations.

Preparation

Photocopy *Resource Four – Bullying: Responses to Conflict*.

Procedure

1. Read 'From the Kids' (right) as a starting point.
2. Brainstorm the alternative actions the students on the bus could have taken.
3. Use *Resource Four – Bullying: Responses to Conflict* to role play a variety of different reactions that could have been played out.
4. Ask the following questions:
 - What do you think provoked the attack?
 - Which alternatives are likely to make things worse?
 - Why didn't anyone do anything?
 - What could you have done in this situation?
5. Discuss the types of bullying students have witnessed.
6. Ask the following questions:
 - When you see bullying what can you do that is safe and helpful?
 - What have you done when you have observed bullying?
 - Did it work?
 - What will you do next time?
 - What did other people watching the incident do and say?
 - Were they silent?
 - Did they laugh?
 - Did they join in the bullying?
 - Did they say or do something to stop the behaviour?
7. Discuss the bullying scenarios students have witnessed. Ensure students are aware they can discuss situations without naming anyone. Use *Resource Four – Bullying: Responses to Conflict* to shape the responses students attempt.
8. Discuss the interventions students attempted through role play. Could any of these interventions be used effectively in real situations?
9. Create a series of role plays to promote a 'Bully Busters' message for the school assembly.



Variation

- Many schools are implementing 'Bully Buster' programs to help students develop strategies to reduce bullying behaviours. Research bullying strategies and develop a 'Bully Buster' program in your school.
- Select books, newspaper articles and documentaries about bullying and the consequences of bullying. Make sure these resources are age-appropriate and use them to develop a better understanding of bullying in its various forms.

Suggested resources include:

- 'The Boy Who Lost His Face' by Louis Sachar
- 'Nips Eleven' by Ruth Starke
- 'Two Weeks with the Queen' by Morris Gleitzman
- Students can keep a 'bullying diary'. Students can write down their observations, without names, and use these to develop real scenarios that can be used to create theatre productions that explore the issues associated with bullying.
- National Safe Schools Week promotes an active, innovative and whole school oriented week-long event encompassing the concepts of caring, supporting and looking out for others. It aims to raise community awareness of the importance of all members of a school community having the right to learn or teach in a safe and supportive environment, free from all forms of bullying, harassment, violence, abuse and neglect. Find out more by visiting: www.safeschoolsweek.dest.gov.au

Fact File

Bullying in Australian schools

- Estimated number of children bullied at school in Australia on a weekly basis: 1 in 6
- Percentage of children bullied frequently who stay away from school: about 20 percent
- The number of children who considered staying away from school: about 50 percent
- Percentage of children bullied weekly who do not tell their friends: boys 40 percent, girls 25 percent.

Source: Rigby, K. 1997, 'What children tell us about bullying in schools', Children Australia, v.22, n.2, pp.28-34

From the Kids

"I was on my bus going to school in the morning. A young kid in Year 8 was being cheeky on the bus and a Year 12 guy didn't like it so he punched the kid continuously. No one did anything. No one went to help. Everyone just talked to themselves. They changed the subject and ignored the problem. I was really shocked that no one did anything. I was also shocked that I couldn't do anything to help. It was all a bit of a joke and it went too far." – Anonymous (15)



Use this template to try out your scenario.

