coping with
school
bullying

An educational resource
produced by:
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About this resource

The scenarios and videos are the result of workshops conducted with year 8 and 9 students at Unley High School. Through a process of brainstorming, scripting and filming the videos reflect the way in which students see and experience bullying.

Bullying is recognised worldwide as a problem for schools and the entire community. In Australia the National Safe Schools Framework requires that all schools provide a safe and supportive learning environment for all members of the school community. This DVD and it's accompanying leaflet goes to the heart of bullying issues in schools.

The intended audience includes educators, young people, parents, community representatives and other stakeholders concerned with addressing bullying.

The DVD is designed for viewing in upper primary and secondary school classrooms, staffrooms and school communities, with the aim of prompting discussion and promoting change.

Using the DVD

The DVD consists of 4 short videos and we suggest you watch them over 4 sessions and discuss each of them individually.

The accompanying leaflet provides:
- A context for each part of the DVD
- Questions to prompt group discussion
- A range of activities you may wish to do in class after watching them

The videos deal with four types of bullying:
- Exclusion
- Verbal
- Physical
- Cyber

Exclusion

There is a range of exclusionary behaviours, including ignoring others, exclusion from the group and full-scale ostracism from the class or even the whole school. The use of non-verbal behaviour is also prevalent. The students who devised this video wanted to depict the way in which they had experienced or observed students excluding others.

Ideas for Discussion:

- What types of excluding behaviour are shown in the video?
- What do you think of the students' ideas for solving the problem?
- How can adults, including parents and teachers help with this problem?
- What groups exist in your school and how do they work?

Activities and issues suggested by students:

- Role plays – devise your own examples and provide solutions to exclusionary behaviour
- Identify pecking orders and friendship groups in schools and how they promote/protect students from exclusion
- In small groups identify what you and/or your school could do to reduce exclusion

Research Activities

In small groups research the following and present your findings to the class.

- Films and resources about bullying
- Review your school policy and how well it addresses school bullying

Verbal

The idea behind this video is how an event – such as being in a school play - can lead to a student being targeted and bullied for sometime or even years after the actual event.

Discussion:

- What is happening to the girl in the video?
- What could be done to stop it?
- Are the suggestions for stopping it in the DVD helpful?
- Why doesn't the teacher who sees it happening say something?

Activities and issues suggested by students:

- Discuss what students can do in your school to reduce verbal bullying
- Gender is a huge part of bullying. The class could discuss sex role stereotypes, and insults about sexuality
- Discuss the "tall poppy syndrome". Is it a problem in your school?

Physical

Australian research shows that:

- Males engage in more physical bullying than females
- Males receive more physical bullying than females
- Females direct more physical bullying to males than males to females

The students who made this video identified a locker area that is an isolated space where a lot of physical bullying takes place. It is a place that is not well patrolled by the teachers and also an area where ongoing and daily incidents can occur.

Ideas for discussion:

- What do you think students should do if they see physical bullying?
- What could be done to stop it?
- What is the difference between bullying and aggression and/or violence?
- Do males and females physically bully in different ways?

Activities and issues suggested by students:

- Students can offer ideas about how/why power is an issue in bullying
- Students can prepare or review the school's grievance procedures and present their findings to the school
- Can you identify places in your school that are 'hotspots' for bullying and that could be improved and made safer?

Cyber

Australian research shows that cyber bullying is of concern for students and parents. The research also shows that cyber bullying is of concern for educators and lawmakers. The students who made this video identified cyber bullying as an issue.

Ideas for discussion:

- Discuss the different forms that cyber bullying can take
- What do you think students should do if they come across cyber bullying?
- What could be done to stop it?
- What can schools do about it?
- What are the differences between cyber bullying and other forms of bullying?

Activities and issues suggested by students:

- Students can offer ideas about how/why cyber bullying is an issue
- Students can prepare or review the school's grievance procedures regarding cyber bullying and present their findings to the school
- Students can identify the forms of cyber bullying that exist

Additional notes and ideas

Issues raised in all videos that could be discussed further include:

- Pecking orders in schools
- Safe and unsafe areas
- Retaliation
- Bystander behaviour
- Strategies to manage these behaviours
- The tall poppy syndrome and jealousy
- Gender, sex role stereotypes
- How insults about sexuality get used a lot in school
- Identify other forms of bullying ie. psychological and racial

More questions and issues to consider:

- Are there differences between bullying, harassment and violence? If so what are they?
- Does your school have a bullying policy? How can students have input into this policy and are students aware of this policy?
- If you are bullied what should and can you do about it at your school? Who can you talk to?
- What events happen outside of school and how do they impact on school bullying?
- Power is not always a negative. Who has good power in your school and why?
- How important is self-esteem in coping with bullying?

Role plays

- The videos are four examples of bullying. Working in groups discuss and devise short scenarios that present other examples of bullying

Group work

- Working in small groups discuss issues raised from watching the DVD and present findings to the class

Suggestions from students about difficulties facing teachers:

- What do students think teachers can do to help?
- Discuss the importance of teachers listening and knowing when to refer an incident
- How is bullying currently dealt with at your school?

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DVD CREDITS:

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OTHER RESOURCES:

CAPER (Child & Adolescent Psychological and Educational Resources)
www.caper.com.au
This website is supported by Professors Phillip Slee & Rosalind Murray-Harvey.
Additional resources and copies of the leaflet are available on this site.

DECS website www.schools.sa.gov.au (Search - Bullying)

Bullying - No way! www.bullyingnoway.com.au

National Safe Schools Framework (NSSF)
The national anti-bullying website www.dest.gov.au
(Search - National Safe Schools Framework)

Bullying Research Network
http://cehs19.unl.edu/wpmu/brnet

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