



BULLYING 101:

BE THE ONE WHO MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Here's a guide for middle and high school students to what you'll want to know about bullying before you present the lesson plan, role plays, suggested reading, and improve theater activities to younger students.

> **WHAT IS BULLYING?**

> **WHO IS INVOLVED?**

> **WHAT CAN BE DONE?**

> **SERIOUSLY?**

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Be the One Who Makes a Difference

Here's a guide for middle and high school students that includes what you'll want to know about bullying before you present the lesson plan, role plays, suggested reading, and improv theater activities, to younger students.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is different from the typical disagreements or arguments between friends and classmates. What's the difference?

WHAT IS BULLYING?



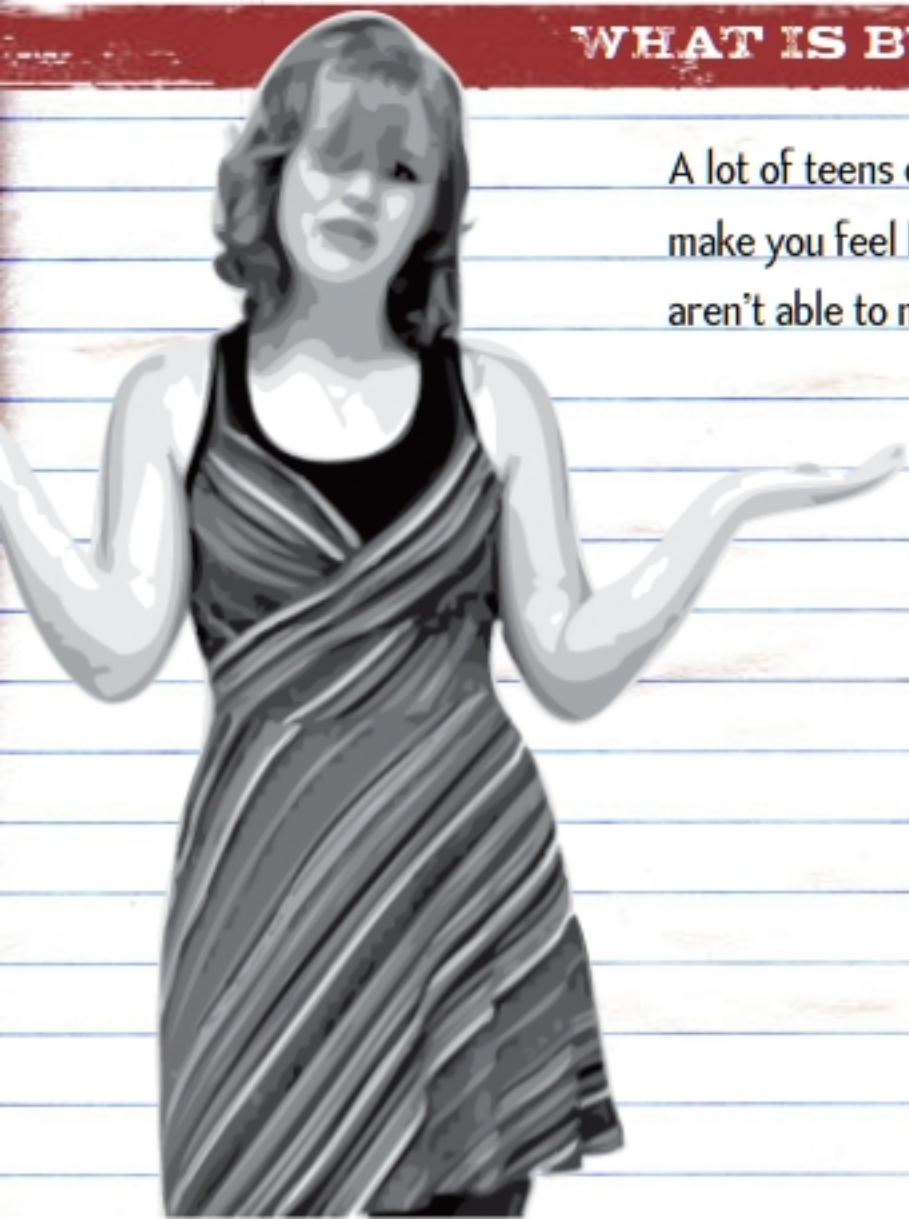
It's bullying if:

- One person is hurting or harming another with words or behavior.
- It is being done intentionally.
- The person being hurt has a hard time defending themselves from the behavior.
- The kids who are doing it have more power*.

*"Power" can include such things as being older, being physically bigger or stronger, having more social status, or when a group of kids "gang up" on someone.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

A lot of teens describe bullying as, "When someone tries to make you feel less about who you are as a person, and you aren't able to make it stop."




THE FIVE TYPES

Bullying can be:

Physical: This one's easy to recognize. Examples include pushing, shoving, hitting, kicking, biting, hair pulling, inappropriate touch, breaking objects, and taking or damaging another's stuff.

Verbal: It's really common because it's quick, direct, and easy to do. Examples include teasing, name calling, threats, intimidation, demeaning jokes, rumors, gossip, and slander.

THE FIVE TYPES



Emotional: This type of bullying is more sophisticated. It's calculated and often done by a group. Nasty stuff. It hurts people on the inside and makes them feel bad about themselves. Examples include leaving someone out on purpose, telling lies to hurt someone's reputation, and humiliating someone publicly.

Sexual: This one is something that not everyone thinks of as bullying. It can include using words that demean someone about their gender or sexuality, inappropriate touching of body parts, unwelcome physical contact, or even posting inappropriate photos online.

THE FIVE TYPES

Cyberbullying: Using technology is the newest way to bully. Examples include sending mean text messages, posting videos, stories, or photos that ridicule someone, and spreading rumors through social networking sites.



WHY IT MATTERS

It's not just the targets of bullying who suffer and pay a price. Students who bully grow up to have a greater risk of getting in trouble with the law. By the age of 25, one in four who have bullied will have spent time in jail.

Those who witness bullying often express that their feelings about seeing it range from anger to guilt to fear, and they wish they could help but don't know how.

WHY IT MATTERS

Why Does Bullying Prevention Matter?

Each school day, **160,000 students** in the United States stay home for fear of being bullied. They are scared to go to school. That means those students lose the opportunity to learn. It is every student's right to feel safe – and be safe – in school.

Students who are bullied may also have lower self-esteem, less self-confidence, increased fear and anxiety, depression, lower grades, and even suicidal thoughts.

WHO IS INVOLVED?

Bullying can happen to **anyone**. Bullying is about someone's behavior. That behavior could be directed at the shy, quiet student, or the class tough guy. Girls bully, boys bully, preschool kids bully, and high school kids bully – there is no one characteristic or aspect that indicates who gets bullied. The one sure thing is that no one **ever** deserves to be bullied, and if someone is being bullied, they have a **right** to be safe.



WHO IS INVOLVED?

So who bullies? Think the bully is the big guy who wears black, has low self-esteem, and gets mad a lot? Could be, but it can also be the petite cheerleader or the quiet honor student. It's not appearance that defines someone who bullies; it is behavior. Students who bully can be any size, age, grade, or gender.



WHO IS INVOLVED?

Then there is the group who sees the bullying and this group is really important. They may not be getting bullied, they may not be bullying, but their reaction has a direct impact on the situation. Think about it: Have you ever seen a group watching a fight? There are some who look, then walk away; there are others who watch and say nothing; and then there are those who cheer it on. These responses make a huge difference in the outcome of every bullying situation.



WHO IS INVOLVED?

And to add to it all, the role that any student plays in a bullying situation often shifts and changes from day to day. Somebody who was bullied one day, might make fun of a younger kid the next day. The kid who laughed with other kids at a fight yesterday, might ask the new kid with no friends to sit with him at lunch today.

Telling vs. Tattling

Students need to understand the difference between “telling” and “tattling.” Here is a general guideline: “Telling” is done to protect yourself or another student from harm. “Tattling” is done to get the bully in trouble. Help students understand that it’s okay to tell an adult when they see bullying.



WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Targets of Bullying – What Can They Do?

Help the children understand there's a lot they can do if they are being bullied:

- Know that they do not deserve what is happening
- Tell someone: their parents, a teacher or trusted adult.
- Develop a plan about how they can respond to the situation.
- With the help of an adult, decide how other students might help.
- Know your rights: most states have laws against bullying.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Students Who Bully – What Can They Do?

Encourage students who are aggressive toward others to:

- Understand that their actions are hurting another.
- Know that it is never okay to hurt or harm another.
- Realize that everyone deserves respect, that differences are a part of our world.
- Talk with someone: their parents, a teacher or trusted adult, and ask for help.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Witnesses – What Can They Do?

Help children understand there's a lot they can do if they see bullying.

Speak up!

- When students are willing to say they think something is wrong, they can make a difference.
- Let others know that you don't accept bullying at your school, and others will be more willing to speak up, too.
- If they see bullying, they can tell a grown-up. Telling is not tattling. It's okay to tell.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Reach out!

- Tell the kid who is being bullied that he or she doesn't deserve to be treated that way. Nobody does.
- Ask friends to join them in being a kid against bullying.

Be a friend!

- Invite the kid who is being bullied to play with them.
- Let the person being bullied know that you think they are okay. Give them a compliment about something they do well.
- Work toward an environment where everyone can feel accepted.

SERIOUSLY?

There was a time when bullying was actually seen as acceptable behavior. People used to say things like:

“Boys will be boys.”

Seriously? Hurting others is never okay.

“Words will never hurt you.”

Seriously? Words may not leave bruises or broken bones, but they can leave scars on the inside.

“Bullying will make students tougher.”

Seriously? Bullying can negatively affect how someone feels about him- or herself.



SERIOUSLY?

“Girls don’t bully.”

Seriously? Girls do bully, usually with words and verbal aggression.

“It was only teasing.”

Seriously? When it hurts someone, it is bullying.

“Bullying is a natural part of childhood.”

Seriously? There is nothing natural about being bullied.

“Some people deserve to be bullied.”

Seriously? No one ever deserves to be hurt or harmed.

Bullying is never okay. Seriously.