



Imagine Newsletter

A School Climate Approach to Bullying Prevention

Information for School Staff

Issue 6

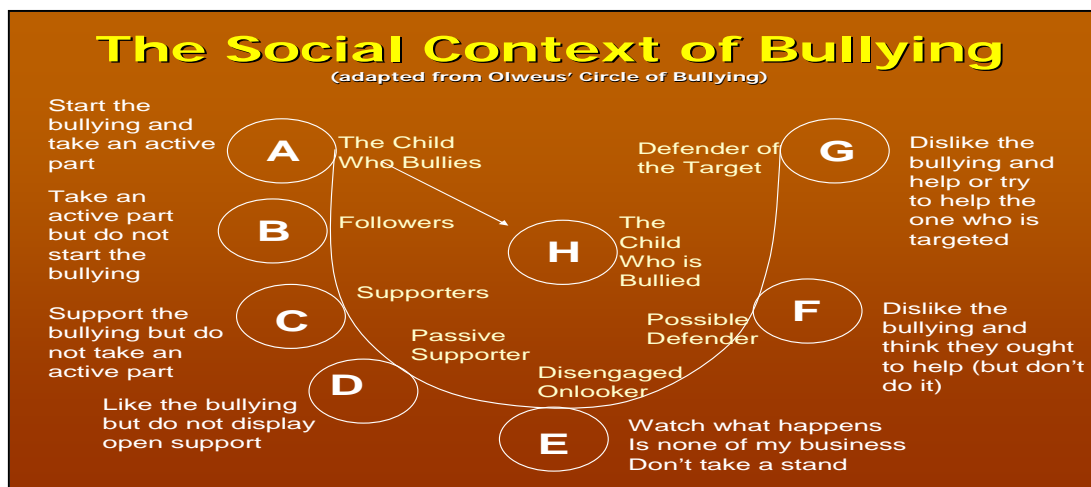
Helpful Bystanders

Why teach kids to be helpful bystanders?

Helpful bystanders can have considerable power to diffuse a bullying situation, whereas passive bystanders reinforce the bully by providing a consenting audience. If students become effective bystanders, many bullying situations can be diffused early. As a result, teachers and administrators would have “less to do” in regard to dealing with bullying behaviour. This means more time for teaching, and more time for kids to play and have fun on the playground.

What does the current research have to say?

- Teachers can be role models of effective bystander behaviour in their classroom and on the playground.
- The best time to teach effective bystander behaviour is in the primary grades because: kindergarten - grade four students have stronger anti-bullying norms, haven't yet entered puberty accompanied by its rules of conformity, and teachers have more authority. Young children enjoy being more responsible for their own helpful actions towards each other than if they have to ask for the help of adults.
- Students are more likely to intervene in a bullying situation if it is a school **expectation**.
- Students who have a sense of belonging and enjoy being at school are more likely to positively intervene as a bystander.
- Classroom meetings are helpful. Having students develop class rules is also helpful.
- Teacher “buy-in” to a bullying prevention program is closely related to its effectiveness.
- Students give several reasons for remaining silent as a bystander including: thought threats were false, were afraid of retribution, were concerned about the welfare of the bully, did not know where to go for help, did not think they would be believed, or did not think anything would be done. Zero tolerance policies that treat all infractions equally reinforce these bystander concerns resulting in them not taking action.



For more information, contact Region of Waterloo Public Health 519-883-2003 ext. 5356

www.region.waterloo.on.ca/bullying



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Teaching Tidbits from the Research.....

For students to become helpful bystanders they need to develop social intelligence and self-efficacy. Bystanders are more likely to act if they know what to do and feel they possess the necessary resources. Research details the knowledge young people need, including learning more about:

- joining groups
- assertiveness vs. aggressiveness
- empathy (younger students being more receptive)
- the ability to feel shame or guilt
- responsibility
- conflict resolution
- situational competence (being able to adapt behaviour to the particular circumstances)
- normative pressure to intervene: i.e. students are more likely to get involved if they know that the majority of their classmates dislike bullying and would like it stopped
- effect of group inhibition: i.e. bystanders are less likely to help when they see others doing nothing
- problem-solving/decision-making: a five step decision-making process for kids might include:
 - a) noticing that something is happening
 - b) interpreting the situations as calling for action
 - c) assuming personal responsibility for acting
 - d) deciding what to do
 - e) possessing the necessary skills and resources to act

* Bystanders can choose not to act at any point along the process.

Practice Makes Perfect!

As a teacher you may be covering some of these areas in other character education programs you currently use or from modules in the *Imagine* resource manual. In that case, you only need to use examples of bystander intervention to get your students to practice these skills. Students can practice these skills through written role-plays, skits, dramas and scripts (e.g. "STOP! This is bullying."). Classroom meetings are also a great opportunity to discuss and practice strategies.

Check out your *Imagine* Manual: Support for Developing Active Bystanders....

Topic	Grade(s)	Page #
The role of those who observe bullying and bullying group dynamics	ALL	Pg. 19-20
Responding to students who observe bullying incidents and debriefing by second responders	ALL	Pg. 108
Intervening with students who observe bullying incidents and debriefing by second responders	ALL	Pg. 139
Student Self-Reflection Activity Sheet	JR - INT	Pg. 165
Curriculum Expectations	ALL	Pg. 175-176
Using Role Play Activities Note: Most lesson plans include ideas, scripts, and story cards for role playing.	ALL	Pg. 178-179



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Lesson Plan Title	Grade(s)	Curriculum Expectations Page #	Module	Lesson #	Page #
"Tattling vs. Asking for Help"	Kindergarten	Pg. 184	A	2	Pg. 184
"Assertive Behaviour"	Kindergarten	Pg. 196	A	5	Pg. 196
"Students Can Help Stop Bullying Behaviour"	Kindergarten	Pg. 201	B	3	Pg. 210
"Be Assertive" (Review & Practice)	Kindergarten	Pg. 213	C	1	Pg. 213
"Ask an Adult for Help"	Kindergarten	Pg. 219	C	1	Pg. 219
"Tattling vs. Asking for Help"	Grade 1	Pg. 225	A	1	Pg. 226
"Assertive Behaviour"	Grade 1	Pg. 237	A	4	Pg. 238
"Students Can Help Stop Bullying Behaviour"	Grade 1	Pg. 253	B	3	Pg. 253
"Assertiveness Review"	Grade 1	Pg. 256	C	1	Pg. 256
"Tattling and Asking for Help"	Grade 2-3	Pg. 270	A	1	Pg. 271
"Be Assertive"	Grade 2-3	Pg. 293	A	4	Pg. 294
"Practicing Assertiveness"	Grade 2-3	Pg. 301	A	5	Pg. 301
"Students Can Help Stop Bullying Behaviour"	Grade 2-3	Pg. 322	B	3	Pg. 323
"Assertiveness Review"	Grade 2-3	Pg. 338	C	3	Pg. 338
"Asking for Help"	Grade 4-5	Pg. 366	A	3	Pg. 367
"Be Assertive"	Grade 4-5	Pg. 372	A	4	Pg. 373
"Assertive Behaviour"	Grade 4-5	Pg. 399	C	1	Pg. 400
"Be Assertive"	Grade 6-8	Pg. 448	A	4	Pg. 449
"Assess the Situation"	Grade 6-8	Pg. 466	C	1	Pg. 467
"Selecting Responses to Bullying"	Grade 6-8	Pg. 483	C	4	Pg. 484



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Other Resources you can use...

Region of Waterloo Public Health Resource Centre

99 Regina Street South in Waterloo. Call 519-883-2256 to reserve. WRDSB courier service is available. Materials can also be delivered to the 150 Main Street Cambridge Public Health office.

- **Bully on the Bus** – Gr. 1 – 6, video about social exclusion
- **Wise Owl Says: Don't Be a Bully Bystander** – K - Gr. 2, video and teacher's guide about becoming an active bystander
- **Bully Smart Series: Don't Stand By** – Gr. 3 – 5, DVD and teacher's guide about becoming an active bystander
- **Silent on the Sidelines** – Gr. 4 & above, DVD/video and teacher's guide about becoming an active bystander
- **It's a Girl's World: a documentary about social bullying** – Gr. 6 and above about "girl bullying"
- **"The Bully, the Bullied and the Bystander"** an excellent read by Barbara Coloroso, 2002

Resources from your Board of Education's Resource Centre

Check in the Imagine Manual pg. 491–498 for WCDSB resources and pg. 500-508 for WRDSB resources. You can also check your Board of Education's Resource Centre site or give them a call!

Websites:

www.canadiansafeschools.com The Canadian Safe School Network

www.prevnet.ca Promoting Relationships and Eliminating Violence

www.bullybeware.com

www.region.waterloo.on.ca/bullying

