

The Latest Buzz

“The Bullying Issue”

Grades 4-8

Teacher’s Guide prepared by
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In collaboration with PREVNet



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WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is a relationship problem that requires relationship solutions.

Bullying is a relationship problem in which an individual or group **repeatedly uses power aggressively to cause distress** to another.

The child who bullies is learning to use power and aggression to control others. **The child who is being victimized** becomes trapped in an abusive relationship and needs help to stop the bullying.

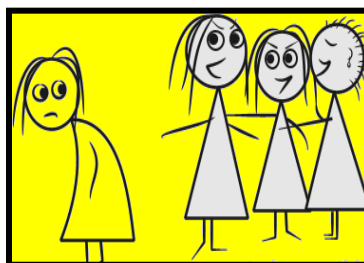
Children and Youth can Acquire Power through:



- Physical advantages such as size and strength
- Social advantage such as a dominant social role, higher social status in a peer group, and strength in numbers
- Knowledge of another's vulnerability (e.g., obesity, learning problem, sexual orientation) and using that knowledge to cause distress
- Systemic power (e.g., racial/cultural groups, sexual minorities, economic disadvantage, disability)

Bullying can take many forms including:

- **Physical bullying** (hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting, beating up, stealing, or damaging property)
- **Verbal bullying** (name-calling, mocking, hurtful teasing, humiliating or threatening someone, racist comments, or sexual harassment)
- **Social bullying** (excluding others from the group, gossiping or spreading rumors, setting others up to look foolish, and damaging friendships)
- **Cyberbullying** (the use of email, cell phones, text messages, and internet sites to threaten, harass, embarrass, socially exclude, and damage reputations and friendships)



For more information about bullying and a wealth of free down-loadable resources for teachers, go to www.prevnet.ca



STORY SYNOPSIS

The Latest Buzz, a Family Channel Series, chronicles the lives of five grade nine students (Michael, Wilder, Noah, Amanda, and Rebecca) who are trying to reinvigorate the struggling school magazine, *Teen BUZZ*.

In this episode, *The Bullying Issue*, three different storylines and forms of bullying are explored. The show is light and humorous, yet the issues it raises are both common and complex. It is noteworthy that all of the bullying scenarios take place within the context of friendships. The interlinked stories make it very clear that bullying is a relationship problem that requires relationship solutions. In this episode, the young people who were bullied were eventually able to speak directly to the other person and express their feelings. Each person who was bullying was able to hear the other person and the situations were resolved. This is the ideal way to resolve bullying, but one that is very difficult for many young people.

We believe that this episode provides an accessible and engaging entry point for discussions of bullying. Ultimately, we hope these discussions will enable young people to:

- Recognize bullying in its many forms
- Reach out for help and to offer help to others
- Develop empathy for those who are bullied
- Diminish “pro-bullying” attitudes and tolerance of bullying
- Use their voices to confront bullying assertively and respectfully

Storyline 1

Michael started dating Yolonda a couple of weeks ago. Although he really enjoys Yolonda’s company and having a girlfriend, he finds that Yolonda is controlling and bossy. She makes a schedule of what his day will include, tells him how to behave (when he can and cannot clap), and physically hurts him when he doesn’t do what she wants (wear glasses so they look more in synch). Michael is afraid to confront Yolonda about being bossy, as he does not want to upset her and risk losing the relationship. Although depicted with lightness and humour, this scenario shows that bullying can take place within the context of a romantic relationship. There is a power imbalance because one person feels intimidated and more vulnerable than the other, and is consequently silenced.



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Storyline 2

Noah and Amanda win the “Beware of Bullies” campaign contest and consequently begin to prepare a video about bullying. Amanda has many ideas for the video written in her binder, but when she tries to tell Noah about them, he dismisses her ideas and insists his are better. As the video preparations continue, Noah continues to be dismissive, rude, and aggressive towards Amanda when she tries to tell him her ideas and refuses to consider her input. Here, the bullying behaviour occurs in a friendship with one individual assuming a dominant position making decisions alone rather than collaboratively.

Storyline 3

Rebecca asks Wilder to teach her how to play a video game. Wilder agrees to help her, but when they play together, he doesn't help her learn how to play or give her any tips. Instead, he uses his skills to beat her in the game and then make fun of how bad she is. He even posts the video of her losing on the internet and tells everyone about it. In this scenario, Wilder is in a position of greater power because he is more skilled and able. Rather than using his power positively (i.e., by coaching and encouraging a willing learner), Wilder bullies Rebecca verbally to her face, socially by telling others about her struggles, and then humiliates her through cyber bullying.



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PRE-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Begin by talking about expectations and guidelines for discussion

Bullying and victimization can be a sensitive issue for many children and care must be taken to ensure that discussions about bullying do not cause additional distress to vulnerable students. In order to provide a positive classroom environment where all students feel supported by peers and the teacher, the following guidelines can be discussed with students:

- No interruptions, one person speaks at a time.
- Listen attentively.
- No negative comments about other students (e.g., no “put downs”).
- Students should not identify children who are involved in bullying.
- Students do not have to participate if they are not comfortable doing so.

At the end of the discussion, the teacher should offer to speak privately with students if they would like to discuss any of these issues, and describe a time and a place where a student can anonymously do so.

Discussion: What do the students know about bullying?

- Have the students **brainstorm** in small groups about some **definitions for bullying**. Their responses can be recorded on the bullying brainstorming sheet on page 10.
- As a class, **discuss definitions** and help clarify their understanding of bullying.
- Talk about the **different forms of bullying** that can occur. Be sure to use many examples of the different forms, to ensure that all students understand.
- Ask them **how they feel** when they see someone being bullied.
- Talk about **strategies to Stand UP to help** someone who is being bullied.



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POST-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Discuss the episode and the different storylines.

- Where did the students see bullying in this episode?

Have each student complete a character analysis and/or storyboard (on pages 11 and 12) and then discuss as a class or in small groups.

For each storyline of bullying, answer the following questions as a class or in small groups.

1. What type of bullying was occurring?
2. What was the power difference that enabled the bullying?
3. What did the student being victimized do when he/she realized he/she was being bullied?
4. How did the student who was victimized ultimately resolve the problem?

Here are some talking points and potential answers for these questions:

Storyline 1: Michael and Yolonda

1. Verbal and Physical bullying occurred.
2. Yolonda was aggressive, which intimidated Michael and Michael was afraid that Yolonda would stop dating him. An optional talking point is that the humour in this scenario may be related to the reversal of the traditional gender stereotype, i.e., typically males do not fear females.
3. Michael asked a trusted teacher for help.
4. Michael spoke to Yolonda about how she was making him feel and they agreed to end their romantic relationship, although they preserved their friendship. Sometimes the better course of action is to end a relationship that is causing distress. This is painful, but it is part of growing up.

Storyline 2: Noah and Amanda

1. Verbal bullying occurred.
2. Noah was more outspoken than Amanda. The issue of gender might be raised here as well, for example, the traditional gender role for males is to speak in a louder voice and assume the role of decision maker.
3. Amanda avoided Noah and made excuses to get away from him and the bullying situation. Additional talking point: avoidance is a common and not very helpful strategy. People often avoid problems when they don't know how to solve them.
4. Amanda spoke to Noah about how he was making her feel.



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Scenario 3: Rebecca and Wilder

1. Verbal and cyber bullying occurred.
2. Wilder was better at the videogame.
3. Rebecca tried to explain to Wilder that it wasn't a competition and that she wasn't learning anything.
4. Wilder's dad stepped in after seeing Wilder's video on the internet and spoke to his son about his behaviour.

Discuss what may have happened if the characters had dealt with the bullying immediately...or never at all.

- What could the students in each storyline have done to address the bullying earlier?
- What would be the pros and cons of addressing the bullying earlier?
- What might have happened if they had never addressed the bullying at all?

Discuss the fact that these bullying scenarios all took place within friendships and that bullying often does not take place within friendships.

- How might the students have felt differently if the bullying was not among friends? Is bullying more or less hurtful within a friendship?
- How might you handle bullying differently with friends versus someone you're not friends with?
- What are some strategies for dealing with bullying when it's not among friends?

Student Supplement on Friendship – handout and activities

The Student Supplement on Friendship can be found at FamilyChannel.ca. This supplement can be used in many ways, for example:

- The supplement can be distributed to all students to read in conjunction with the learning activities in this teacher's manual.
- The supplement can be used as a Language Arts expository writing piece that students are required to read and answer questions based on it, or write a journal entry about.
- This supplement can be used as a resource when a student comes to a teacher or guidance counselor and seeks support in dealing with a friendship that is causing distress.



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TEN WAYS TEACHERS CAN HELP WITH BULLYING

1. Lead by Example

- Model respectful and empathetic behaviours and positive conflict resolution strategies.
- Think carefully about the words you choose and the way you behave with both children and adults.

2. Establish a Code of Conduct

- Involve students in developing a code of conduct about acceptable and unacceptable behaviours.
- If children are responsible for creating the classroom policies about bullying, they are much more likely to follow them.

3. Relationship Problems require Relationship Solutions

- Use “formative consequences”. Formative consequences are designed to send the message that bullying is unacceptable while also providing support for the children who bully to learn the skills and acquire the insights they are lacking. For example, a child who bullies may have to sit out of an activity but can use the time to write a letter of apology or draw a picture of what it feels like to be bullied.
- Children who bully need help to understand the impact of their behaviours on others.

4. Encourage Children to Report

- Be sure that children know it’s the teacher’s responsibility to keep children safe and that you want to know if someone is repeatedly or seriously bullied.
- Clarify the difference between tattling and telling.
 - Tattling = what you do to get someone into trouble
 - Telling = what you do to get someone out of trouble
- Provide confidential ways to report bullying at school such as an anonymous “safety box” to reduce student discomfort with reporting.

5. Acknowledge Positive Behaviours

- Notice and praise respectful, cooperative, and caring behaviour whenever you see it. The more you praise a behaviour, the more often it will occur.



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6. Minimize Opportunities for Bullying

- Organize activities so that a child who is vulnerable to being bullied is in a group monitored by a teacher, or grouped with students who will stand up for him/her.
- Select children's teams, groups, partners and seating arrangements. If children are allowed to make these decisions, vulnerable students will be distressed and at high risk of being left out or chosen last.

7. Teach the Social Skills Children Lack

- Teachers can help children who are bullied to practice standing up for themselves through role plays in which they practice assertive but respectful behaviour.
- Children who bully need help with learning social problem-solving skills, how to use power positively, and strategies to resist peer pressure to bully

8. Build on Children's Strengths

- Encourage children who are bullied to participate in activities they enjoy and highlight their talents for other children to see.
- Provide opportunities for children who bully to use their leadership skills in a positive way (e.g., teaching younger students a new skill).

9. Trust your Instincts

- If you suspect a child is being bullied, you're probably right.
- Trust your instincts and start to ask questions and observe carefully, so that you can intervene and keep the child safe.

10. Be Ready to Listen and Help

- If a student reports bullying, be ready to listen and take action right away.
- Thank the child for having the courage to come forward, ask for details, and convey your concern.
- Be willing to respond to all reports, even the seemingly trivial ones like name calling – consistency matters!



ADVICE FOR TEACHERS TO SHARE WITH STUDENTS INVOLVED IN BULLYING

Children who are being bullied

- If it's hard for you to stand up for yourself, try to ignore the bullying and walk away...then tell someone who can help, like a friend or a trusted adult.
- Talk to someone who can help, like a parent, teacher or coach. If the adult doesn't take action, tell another adult. Keep telling until you are safe.
- If you're scared to talk to an adult on your own, ask a friend to go with you.
- Go to areas where you feel safe.
- Stay close to students you can count on to stick up for you.
- Be like an actor on stage...pretend that you're not bothered. Here's how:
 - Look confident and tell the child who bullies to back off...bullying is NOT cool!
 - Stay calm...try not to show you are upset when being bullied.
 - Get funny...humour shows you're not bothered.
 - Be assertive, not aggressive...fighting back often makes the bullying worse.



Children who see others being bullied

- Talk to someone who can help, like a parent or a teacher... remember that telling is not tattling. Tattling is to get someone into trouble, telling is to get someone out of trouble.
- Stand up for children who are bullied...they can't do it themselves.
- Invite kids who are bullied to play with you somewhere else.
- Support the person who was hurt and make it known that what happened was not fair or deserved
- The best thing you can do for kids who are bullied is to be their friend
- If it is hard for you to speak out against bullying on your own, ask a friend to do it with you.
- Help kids who bully, don't hurt them... Speaking out helps, bullying back (e.g., hitting and name-calling) doesn't help.
- If you walk away and get help from an adult, you are part of the solution. If you stay and watch, you are part of the problem.

Children who bully others

- Find a positive way to use your power.
- Talk to someone who can help, like a parent, teacher, or coach. They can help you find ways to get along with others.
- Ask a friend to help you stop if you start to bully others.
- Set goals each day to make it easier not to bully (e.g., Keep cool; Today I'll help others rather than hurt them)
- Understand that you may not like everyone around you but you do have to treat them with respect.
- Appreciate kids' differences...different doesn't mean worse or better than you.
- Put yourself in other kids' shoes...would you want to be picked on, put down, or left out?
- Apologize to the kids you have bullied
- Know that if other children watch and laugh, it doesn't mean they like it when you bully.
- Find other positive ways to get attention and be popular.

BULLYING PREVENTION AND RELATIONSHIP PROMOTION RESOURCES

Websites on bullying awareness

www.prevnet.ca

www.antibullying.net/youngpeople.htm

<http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/index.asp>

www.canadiansafeschools.com/students.html

<http://www.kidshelpphone.ca/en/>

www.safeyouth.org/scripts/teens/bullying.asp

www.talk-helps.com

www.bullying.org

Books

Fiction for Children (Kindergarten-Grade 3):

Myers, Christopher. (2000). *Wings*. Scholastic.

Levy, Janice. (2005). *Alley Oops*. Flashlight Press.

Sadu, Itah. (1992). *Name Calling*. Women's Press.

Henkes, Kevin. (1991). *Chrysanthemum*. Greenwillow Books.

Cosby, Bill. (1998). *The Meanest Things to Say*. Scholastic Books.

Surat, Michele Maria. (1983). *Angel Child, Dragon Child*. Scholastic.

Passen, Lisa. (1991). *Fat, Fat Rose Marie*. Henry Hold and Company.

McCain, Becky Ray. (2001). *Nobody Knew What to Do*. Albert Whitman & Co.

Fiction for Children (Grade 3-Grade 6):

Moss, Peggy. (2004). *Say Something*. Tilbury House Publishers.

Brown, Marc. (1998). *Arthur's April Fool*. Little, Brown, and Company

Shreve, Susan. (1993). *Joshua T. Bates Takes Charge*. Alfred A. Knopf

Estes, Eleanor. (1974). *The Hundred Dresses*. Harcourt Brace & Company.

Non-fiction for Children

Sanders, Pete. (2004). *Bullying: What do you know about it*. Aladdin Books Ltd. (Grades 5-6)

Cohen, Posey, Kate. (1995). *How to Handle Bullies, Teasers and Other Meanies: A Book That Takes the Nuisance Out of Name-Calling and Other Nonsense*. Highland Rainbow Books Inc. (Grades 5-6)

Films

"It's A Girl's World" Classroom version (52 minutes) Produced by the NFB. (Grades 4-6)

www.nfb.ca/itsagirlsworld

"Glasses" (23 minutes) Produced by the NFB. (Kindergarten-Grade 6)

www.nfb.ca/glasses

"Learning Peace: A Big School with a Big Heart" (57 minutes) Produced by the NFB (Grades 5-6)

To order call: National Film Board of Canada @ 1.800.267.7710

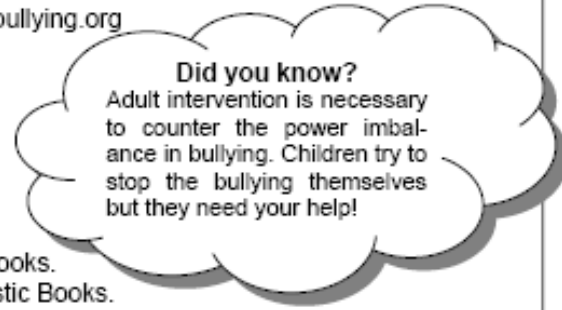
"Make the Change... Don't Be a Bully" (20 minutes) Produced by the NFB (Grades 5-6)

To order call: National Film Board of Canada @ 1.800.267.7710

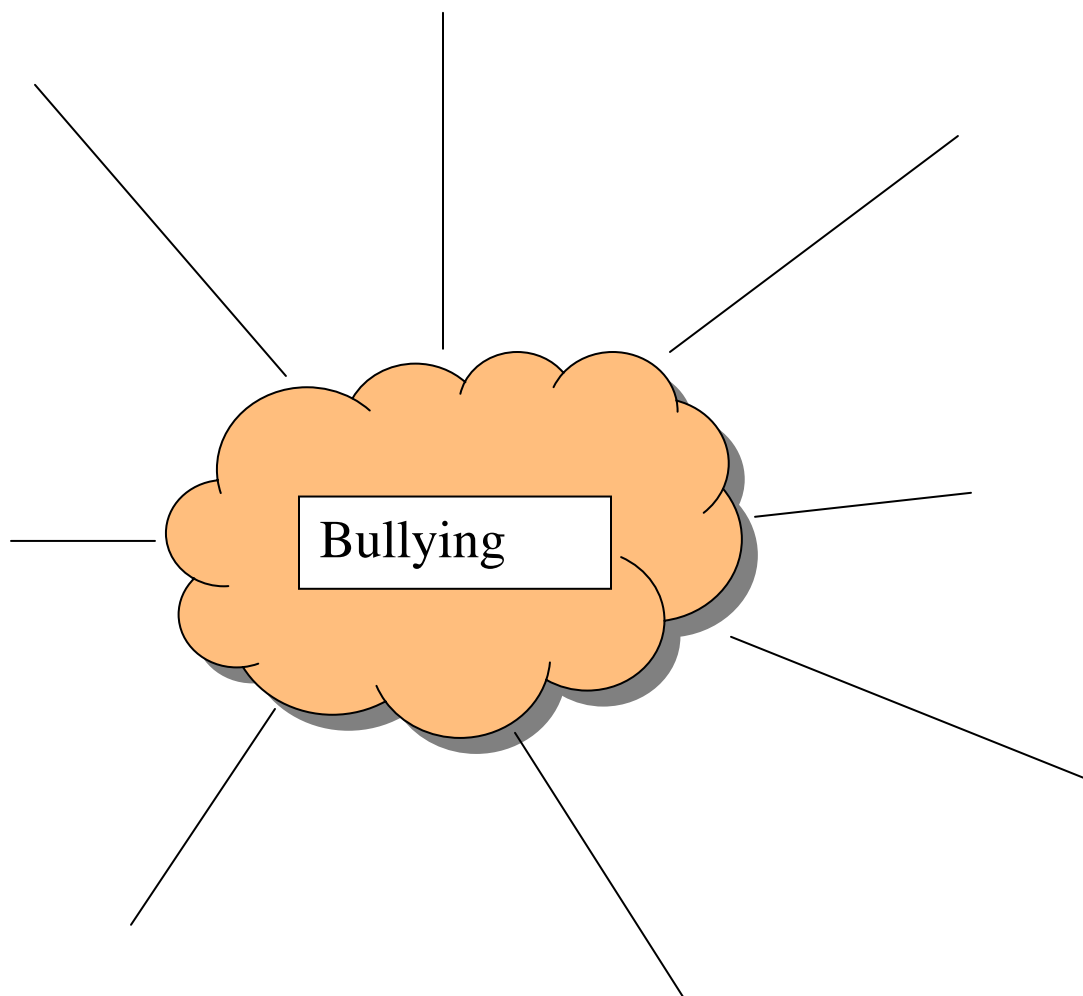
Public Service Announcements

"*Alone*". Produced by Spyfilms. Commissioned by Family Channel for the Canadian Initiative for the Prevention of Bullying

<http://www.family.ca/takethepledge/video2.php>



Bullying Brainstorming



Name: _____

Character Analysis

☆ Pick one character from the episode.

☆ According to your own personal beliefs and the following rating scale decide how you felt that character acted in regards to bullying.

There are four categories to choose from:

- Not yet within expectations
- Minimally meeting expectations
- Fully meeting expectations
- Exceeding expectations

☆ Choose and justify why that character acted the way they did.

Character: _____

Rating: _____

Evidence:

Type of bullying: _____

☆ Share your responses in a small group setting.



Storyboard

Select one of the scenarios from this episode of *The Latest Buzz* and draw the beginning of the scene in the first box. Write what is happening in the box next to each. In the last two boxes continue the story sharing what would have happened if the characters had dealt with the bullying right away.

