



## TIP SHEET FOR TEACHERS

### **Encourage Useful Sensitivity to Bullying and Injustice**

Research suggests that students who stand up to stop bullying: are sensitive to the feelings of bullied students, and/or believe that bullying is wrong, and/or feel comfortable being different, and/or feel confident that they can effect change in their peer group. Help students to feel the negative impact of bullying and this will encourage empathy. Help students to understand that bullying is a form of injustice and this will discourage an accepting attitude about bullying. Use honest and direct conversation with your students, and share your own feelings and experiences.

### **Work to See Students' Roles and Intentions in Bullying Situations**

Students may not stand up to stop bullying because of fear of that they too will be bullied, or they will lose status among their peers, or they may fear being punished by adults for being involved in the bullying situation. Help the staff in your school tease apart the different roles that a student can take in these situations, so that students are not disciplined for their positive efforts to stand up to stop bullying. Make it known to the students you teach that even if they have bullied or have been bullied in the past, they can use their past experiences to take a positive role to stop bullying in the future.

### ***Encourage Difference***

Upstander students described feeling that they were not afraid to be different from their peers. Encouraging difference in your classroom may not only assist in decreasing a root cause of bullying, it may be useful in helping to free students from conformity. A student who is not afraid to be different is more likely to go against the norm, which means they are less likely to remain silent and passive when witnessing bullying.

### ***Teach Concrete Skills***

- Help students recognize bullying or other forms of aggression and harassment.
- Provide students with multiple examples of ways to intervene. See Tip Sheet for Upstanders.
- Encourage practice through role-play. In addition to providing a chance to practice standing up to bullying in a respectful way, having students role-play a bullying scenario provides them with the experience of taking the role of the bullied student or the bystanders. We suggest that the teacher takes on the role of the student who is bullying because assigning this role to students may be counter-productive – it may provide an experience of power and negative peer modeling.
- Teach ways to make an intervention more effective such as: involving the student who was bullied, intervening with a friend, avoiding violence or threats, and treating the student who bullied with respect so that he or she doesn't feel the need to retaliate to save face.

### **Encourage an Upstander Identity**

Our identities can be shaped by the stories we tell about ourselves. Ask students to talk or write about a time when they stood up for another person or a belief. Help students to strengthen these identities by sharing stories of courageous or heroic action. These stories can be found in places such as the media, fiction, comic books, or historical events.

### **Encourage Inspiration to Resist Feelings of Uselessness**

Upstanders may express doubt about whether standing up for someone else makes a difference. Being an upstander is hard work and involves risk. Help students to maintain their inspiration. For instance, you could start an 'upstander wall' in which students and teachers can post examples of how an upstander has impacted their lives. Help students understand that one person can make a big difference!

**Find lots more information at: [www.prevnet.ca](http://www.prevnet.ca)**

Prepared by Shelagh Dunn for PREVNet