“What Would You Do, What If It’s You?”
Strategies to Deal With a Bully

Bullying can be defined as a repeated negative interpersonal relationship characterized by an imbalance of power targeted at a person that is perceived to be weaker or more vulnerable, without apparent provocation.¹ One study reported that 30% of 6th-10th graders in the United States were either a bully, a target of bullying, or both.² When bullying is not addressed, the effects are substantial. Bullying affects the targets (anxious, afraid, and failure to concentrate at school), witnesses (guilt, helplessness, and fear), and those who participate in bullying (leads to other antisocial/delinquent behaviors).³ Types of bullying include physical (hitting, tripping, and shoving), verbal (name-calling, taunts, teasing, and roasting), psychological (excluding, rumors, gossip, bossing, and threatening), ostracism based on sexual orientation, sexual harassment (taunts, touching, coercion, and slurs),⁴ and cyberbullying (through Internet, e-mail, and cell phone).⁵

In cases of school violence, the attackers felt bullied, persecuted, or injured by others prior to the attack. One aspect of creating a safe school environment is increasing student efficacy and reducing all forms of bullying.⁶ This lesson was created to empower students to address bullying situations. In groups, the students will work to decide what they could do if they see bullying to others and then decide what they would do if they were being bullied. Each group will take a turn acting out both their scenarios and solutions, which will reflect the scenarios indicated in Table 3. On a piece of paper, each student observing will identify the type of bullying observed in the role play. Students observing will verbally explain other appropriate strategies in the observed situation.

GRADE LEVEL

Sixth grade, intermediate.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

As a result of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Articulate 1 interpersonal communication skill they could use if they see bullying done to others and if they were being bullied.

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2. Demonstrate 1 interpersonal communication skill on how to handle specific bullying situations.
3. Identify types of observed bullying.

**National Health Education Standards**

Indicator 5.8.4: Distinguish between healthy and unhealthy alternative to health-related issues or problems.7

Indicator 5.8.6: Choose healthy alternatives over unhealthy alternatives when making a decision.7

**MATERIALS**

Tables 1-3 contain information that can be used to create posters or PowerPoint slides presenting bullying statistics, types of bullying, and examples of how students can address bullying situations when no adult is present. Teacher prepared “What would you do, what if it’s you?” cards or worksheets (scenarios should reflect bullying behaviors that are specific to your school’s environment). Examples are shown in Table 3. Each student will need a piece of paper to write down the types of bullying observed in each role-play for summative evaluation.

**ACTIVITIES AND STRATEGIES**

**Part 1: Introduction (5 minutes)**

Teacher will present current statistics on bullying, the link between bullying and school violence, and the types of bullying (physical, verbal, psychological, sexual orientation, sexual harassment, and cyberbullying) using posters or PowerPoint presentation with information from Table 1. Teacher will also present strategies to use when encountering bullying behavior (Table 2).

**Part 2: Activity (10 minutes)**

The teacher will explain the importance of socially appropriate responses to bullying situations. Students are encouraged to not participate in bullying and to help prevent bullying of others through positive social reactions to incidences of bullying. Students will be divided into groups of 4 students. Each group will receive 1 card/worksheet identifying 1 “What would you do, what if it’s you?” scenario (examples in Table 3). A group member will read the situation out loud to their small group. As a group, students will develop (1) 1 socially appropriate (nonviolent) solution or reaction to each situation if they had observed it happening to another student and (2) 1 solution if it happened to them. Groups should write down solutions to 1 and 2 above and be prepared to act out both scenes in front of the class (bullying to other and then to them). Remind students that they should have 2 role plays: 1 resolution if they are observing the bullying and 1 resolution if they are the victim.

**Part 3: Sharing of Scenarios (20-25 minutes)**

Each group will take a turn acting out both their scenario and solution, which will reflect the scenarios indicated in Table 3. Students will act out 1 scene resolution as a bystander and 1 as the actual victim. At the end of each role play, observing students will write on their papers what type of bullying was observed in the scenario. Each group will give feedback and share other possible solutions to the bullying situation. Each solution should be socially appropriate (no cursing or violence) and demonstrate: (1) how they would deal with observing bullying happening to another student and (2) what they would do if it happened to them. Teacher will emphasize the importance of socially acceptable behavior and reactions to other peoples’ behavior.

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**Table 1. Presentation Information (Types of Bullying, Statistics, School Climate)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of bullying4,5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical—hitting, tripping, shoving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal—name-calling, taunts, teasing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychological—excluding, rumors, gossip, bossing, threatening.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sexual orientation—ostracism based on gender preference.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sexual harassment—taunts, touching, coercion, offensive sexual comments.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cyberbullying—harassment through Internet, e-mail, cell phone.</td>
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</table>

Statistics

- Eight percent of students miss 1 day of class per month for fear of being bullied. Forty-three percent fear harassment in the bathroom at school. More youth violence occurs on school grounds as opposed to on the way to school. A child is bullied every 7 minutes on the playground: adults intervene 4% of the time, peers intervene 11% of the time, and no intervention 85% of the time.8
- Thirty percent of 6th-10th graders in the United States were involved in bullying: 13% reported bullying others, 11% reported being the target of a bully, and 6% reported bullying and being bullied by others.7
- Bullying is most likely to occur in a school where there is no adult supervision, where teachers and students do not intervene and accept bullying behaviors, and where bullying rules are not enforced consistently.9
- Bullying victims tend to be depressed, anxious, and more insecure than other students. Bullying victims may be more cautious, sensitive, and quiet. Victims may also suffer from low self-esteem, perceive themselves as physically weaker, and have negative view of themselves and their situation.10
- Bullies are at increased risk of becoming involved in delinquency, crime, and alcohol abuse.11
- In cases of school violence, the attackers felt bullied, persecuted, or injured by others prior to the attack.12
ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES

1. Informal assessment—Accomplished through teacher interaction with student groups as they create, write down, and role-play their scenarios.

   a) Collect written assignments: After all role plays are completed including group card/worksheet with solutions to scenarios and individual student papers identifying types of bullying observed in each role play.

   b) Verbal summary of lesson: Teacher asks students to summarize what types of bullying occur in school. Teacher reviews importance of meaningful communication to solve problems and asks students as a group to articulate interpersonal skills they learned they could use when bullying occurs to others or themselves, and which skills demonstrated were the most helpful.

REFERENCES
