

Curriculum Guide

Bullying

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Student Workbook

Bullying

Character University: Bullying

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To the Teacher:

Thank you for choosing “Character University: Bullying,” by Syndistar, Inc., as part of your character education program. This videotape and accompanying study materials engage middle school students with realistic bullying scenarios. Bullying is a tough problem, causing untold pain and humiliation in young people everywhere.

Bullying is, unfortunately, common in many schools. In order to completely resolve bullying, a school must make a school-wide effort including staff, students, and parents. Lacking such a coordinated effort, however, students still have some tools to protect themselves from the senseless, persistent cruelty of bullies.

The “Character University: Bullying” video portrays two bullying situations that will ring true to young adolescents. Each situation is resolved in the video, but other outcomes are possible. Two young narrators provide insight into avoiding being victimized by bullies and rooting out bullying problems in school.

The issue of bullying is heart-wrenching and difficult to eradicate. Most of us can empathize with young students who are repeatedly teased, ostracized, or even physically attacked by other students. As adults, we realize that both of the young people are hurting: Bullies often act out to cover their own feelings of inadequacy. At the same time, as long as a bully is acting out, we need to protect other students from him or her.

It is important that the victims of bullying realize that they are not to blame for what is happening to them. Young people can learn to make themselves less attractive targets for abuse. The “Character University: Bullying” study materials provide some ideas for those on the receiving end of bullying.

Your students will appreciate the time you allow for discussion and reflection before, after, even during the “Character University: Bullying” videotape. We’ve provided a few ideas for discussion. You and your students will undoubtedly have ideas of your own and much to talk about.

Enjoy this opportunity to get to know your students better on a more personal level and to assist them in acquiring these valuable life skills.

Suggestions for Discussion

Allow as much time as you can for the following warm-up discussion and small group problem-solving, perhaps an entire class period.

Brainstorming Session: Before showing the videotape, begin by discussing bullying. Allow students to express all of their feelings on the topic, but request in advance that they refrain from naming specific bullies or victims during the discussion.

- What is “bullying”?
- What causes it?
- Why do bullies pick on others?
- Are victims of bullying partly to blame?
- Who is responsible for ending bullying in a school?
- How should we attack the bullying problem in our school?

Write students' remarks on the chalkboard or overhead projector.

Small Group Problem-Solving: After the brainstorming session, select several bullying-related issues that the students have identified.

- Divide class into several small groups, one per issue.
- Assign one issue to each group. Give groups five minutes to discuss the issue and come up with a solution.
- Have groups present their solutions to the entire class.

Getting Started

Be an Ally: After the brainstorming session and/or small group problem-solving session, tell the students that you are someone to whom they can come when bullying situations arise. By conducting this lesson, you've already let them know you care and that they can trust you. Make it explicit anyway. Tell them that if they bring a bullying complaint to you, you will help them. This does not mean you have to solve the problem yourself. No one person can. It simply means that you will make suggestions about others to approach, you will pass the information on to the proper authorities, or you will help in some other way that is within the scope of your training.

Journal Writing: Finally, ask students to write in their journals on the topic of bullying.

- Express your feelings about bullying.
- What ideas do you have for solving any bullying problems in our school or neighborhoods?
- Describe a situation you know about in which someone is (or was) being bullied. Was the problem solved? How?

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View the Videotape

Following the warm-up discussion and activities, show the videotape, which is about 10 minutes long. The video is designed to be viewed straight through, but you may choose to pause the tape from time to time to discuss what is happening. One effective strategy might be to pause the video after viewing the “problem” segment of each scenario. Ask the students at that time how the character in the video should solve his or her problem. After a brief discussion, start the video again. Following the “solution” segment of the video, pause the video once more and discuss the solution. The scenarios in the videotape are meant to trigger thought and discussion. Encourage students to question or to improve upon solutions shown in the video, if they choose. Finding their own solutions to these problems will give students a sense of mastery.

The Workbook

Accompanying your “Character University: Bullying” videotape is an 8-page student workbook. The workbook begins with recall and analysis questions on the video. It provides information and food for thought on bullying. Most of the questions are open-ended, without hard-and-fast, right-or-wrong answers. The following section contains sample responses for each of the questions and activities, along with the solution to the word search.

Think About It, Analyze It

1. Bruce was the first bully in the video. He attacked Chris, who was just walking down the hall. Why do you think Bruce would choose to pick on someone like Chris?

Answers will vary. Unfavorable responses are put-downs of Chris. More favorable responses say that Bruce is bigger, stronger, or tougher than Chris, or that Chris exhibits a poor self-image or looks fearful, etc.

2. Chris acted differently the second time he met Bruce and he kept a fistfight from starting. What did he do, and why do you think it worked?

Chris held himself with more self-confidence, then turned around and walked away.

3. In the third version of the meeting between Bruce and Chris, Chris ran from Bruce into a teacher's classroom. What are the advantages and disadvantages of this strategy?

*Advantages: Chris didn't have to confront Bruce or fight him. He gave himself an opportunity to tell a teacher what was going on and to get the teacher's help.
Disadvantages: It may seem shameful for students to run from a bully. Point out that not every student is capable of defending him/herself from a bully, and that running away is the smartest thing to do.*

4. Anna and her two friends made fun of Suzie. Why do you think the girls insisted on making fun of Suzie?

Favorable responses focus on Suzie's being an easy target because she's shy and Anna's seeking an easy target because she wants to make herself look better in front of other people.

5. In the video, Carrie saved Suzie from Anna and her friends. If you were in Carrie's position, would you have spoken up too? Why or why not?

Answers will vary. All are acceptable. In discussion, highlight the fact that those who step in to help someone are helping the whole school because bullies harm everyone.

Think About It, Analyze It *(Continued)*

6. Before Carrie stepped up to help Suzie, no one else seemed to notice Anna pick on Suzie. Why do you think no one else came forward to stop the bullying?

Bullies make everyone afraid that they could be the next targets.

7. Based on the consequences each of them faced for their bullying, do you think Bruce and Anna will continue picking on others, or stop? Why do you think as you do?

Answers will vary. Bruce faced some serious consequences both at school and at home. He will almost certainly leave Chris alone, but it's unclear how he will treat others. Anna faced no real consequences. She is probably finished with Suzie, but hasn't necessarily been changed at all

8. How are Bruce and Anna alike as bullies? (What do they have in common?)

Both pick on smaller or weaker students. Both use methods that will attract attention to themselves. They seem to be trying to make themselves look cool. Both are unprovoked. Both use physical intimidation or force.

9. What differences are there between Bruce and Anna as bullies?

Bruce "works" alone; Anna has followers. Bruce uses more physical force; Anna uses more emotional attacks.

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Anti-Bullying Plan *(Answer Key)*

Step That is Needed	Who Should Be Responsible at This School
1. All adults and students on campus must agree as a community that bullying is <u>not</u> okay.	<i>All adults and students on campus</i>
2. Students need to tell adults when bullying occurs. This means that victims must tell and students who witness bullying must tell.	<i>Those who witness bullying and those who are bullied</i>
3. Students need to let bullies know that their actions are not acceptable. This means standing up for students who are being attacked.	<i>Those who witness bullying</i>
4. Adults need to monitor open areas of the school during breaks and lunch.	<i>School staff (specific names)</i>
5. There must be consistent, school-wide consequences for bullying.	<i>School staff (specific names)</i>
6. Bullies need counseling to deal with the personal problems that make them want to hurt others.	<i>School staff (specific names)</i>
7. Students who have been bullied may need counseling to deal with the pain they have experienced.	<i>School staff (specific names)</i>

What do you think the consequences for bullying should be? *Answers will vary.*

Solution to Bullying Word Search

	Over	Down	Direction
BULLYING	8	1	SW
COMMUNITY	2	4	SE
CONSEQUENCES	12	14	W
COUNSELING	1	17	NE
FEAR ISN'T RESPECT	13	1	S
GET HELP	9	7	NW
HELP PEERS	15	5	S
IGNORE WORDS	11	11	NW
LOW SELF-ESTEEM	16	3	SW
POWER	2	9	NE
PROTECT SELF	12	11	N
TELL ADULTS	1	18	E
VICTIM	18	6	N
VIOLENCE	12	15	W

S A P P J B O B C H I F F X X W P M
 I D C L C O U D G H M L E V E A C I
 U V R N E L P M J H I E A Q W L M T
 N C V O L H Z T G D S S R N O C G C
 J Y O Y W R T D M Y P T I W H F N I
 N E I M E E T E F K N C S V E Y U V
 Y N D W M T R O G P O E N B L I K E
 G R O V Z U M O W G L T T L P Z G Q
 C P L U M H N T N F O O R J P J O F
 Q G A S Q C K I E G X R E C E N U E
 J U B I F N L S T G I P S X E L L Z
 M L L I P E T A B Y Q T P U R C N C
 D Y G G S E S K Q Y I S E P S P T H
 S E C N E U Q E S N O C C L T P H E
 P F U M E C N E L O I V T K H Z C W
 S O N S Y X J G O T B W Y F B A E H
 Q T Q I H G J U G R O B Z E H R F R
 T E L L A D U L T S K K W K I S X S

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