

# Addressing Bullying

Author: Barry van Driel

## THEME

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Addressing Bullying through formal and non-formal education

## CONTEXT

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Bullying is a major problem worldwide, in schools, in the workplace and in many other social environments. According to UNESCO, almost one in three students (32%) has been bullied by their peers at school at least once in the last month and a similar proportion are affected by physical violence, according to the publication\*. It affects both males and females. Young people who are perceived as different in any way are more likely to be bullied.

Bullying has short- and long-term effects on the individual who is bullied, the individual who bullies, the individual who is bullied and bullies others, and the bystander present during the bullying event\*\*. Bullying has a significant effect on people's mental health and can lead to depression and even suicide among those bullied. The growth of the Internet has added a new dimension to traditional bullying. Many studies show that cyberbullying is now the prevalent form of bullying\*\*\*.

## GOALS

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- Students/participants gain insight into what is bullying
- Students/participants gain insight into types of bullying
- Students/participants gain insight into the causes of bullying
- Students/participants gain insight into various ways to address bullying

## METHODOLOGY

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- Individual work
- Small group work and plenary presentations
- Brainstorming
- Presenting

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

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- Students/participants are able to distinguish different types of bullying
- Students/participants are able to distinguish between different ways of addressing bullying
- Students/participants can have open and honest discussions about bullying and potential solutions

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\*<https://en.unesco.org/news/school-violence-and-bullying-major-global-issue-new-unesco-publication-finds>

\*\*<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK390414/>

\*\*\*<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/teen-angst/201205/cyberbullying-versus-traditional-bullying>

# Overview of activities (process)

**Duration:** 2 – 2 1/2 hours.

## PREPARATION

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Multiple videos will be used in the educational work proposed here. The teacher/educator should pre-screen these and eliminate the ones that are less useful. The teacher/educator might also wish to add some video resources that are more local or appropriate.

## PART 1: 70-80 MINUTES

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### **Introduction and settling in: 5-10 minutes**

The teacher/educator briefly explains the topic, what is expected of the students/participants and also explains that they will be working both as individuals and in small groups.

The teacher/educator explains the focus of the activities to follow.

### **Identifying characteristics of bullying: 5-10 minutes (plenary format)**

The teacher/educator explains that there are many different definitions of bullying and the nature of bullying has especially changed in recent years due to the growth of social media.

The teacher/educator asks the students/participants to take 10 minutes to write down what they think the 5 main characteristics of bullying are. This is done individually and it is about the participants' opinions. There are no right or wrong answers.

### **Reflection in small groups: 30-40 minutes**

The teacher/educator creates smaller subgroups (of at least 4 people per subgroup), that reflect on the characteristics they have identified. These subgroups can be in a physical space or online.

A facilitator and presenter are appointed for each subgroup, or people can volunteer for these roles.

Each subgroup compares and contrasts the 5 key characteristics each person has identified. They then, in each subgroup, try to create a more comprehensive list of characteristics.

Subsequently, the subgroup members are asked to create 3-4 categories of these characteristics and place the characteristics into these categories. *Note: examples will likely include things such as causes, harm done or consequences, manifestations such as physical, psychological and cyberbullying, solutions or lack of them, duration of bullying, etc.*

Once completed, the students/participants are asked, still in subgroups, to examine the following official EU definition of bullying (see resource). Alternatively, the teacher/educator can select another official definition (for instance if the educator is outside of Europe), or have the students/participants research official definitions online.

Each subgroup, in about 15 minutes, is asked to identify what characteristics are contained in this official definition. Are there characteristics they missed? Are there characteristics they arrived at that are not contained in this definition? After reviewing this definition can they add characteristics to their categories? Do they need any new categories?

**Presentations in plenary: 15 - 20 minutes**

The first subgroup briefly presents its categories and the characteristics in its categories. The teacher/educator should have an idea of which subgroup can best go first. The subsequent subgroups focus on any differences/additions they might have.

**Debrief and summary by teacher/educator: 5-15 minutes**

The teacher/educator summarizes and debriefs the work conducted by the students/participants. Did they basically agree on the categories and characteristics? Did these differ from the official definition? Why might that be the case (note: many official definitions are a compromise among people who also have different opinions. There are also power dynamics at play.)

## PART 2: 75-90 MINUTES – INTRODUCTION TO EXAMPLES OF BULLYING, ITS IMPACT AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

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**Small group work: 50-60 minutes**

In small groups, the students/participants watch several YouTube videos that focus on bullying, to better understand the phenomenon (appr 30 min). This can be done as an online research assignment (to find examples online using keywords) or by watching any or all of these pre-selected videos. The teacher/educator should examine these in advance for their appropriateness and also select the most useful for any particular target group.

Video entitled: Cyber-bullying Facts – Top 10 Forms of Cyber Bullying; 3 min 30 sec  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Xo8N9qIJtk;>

Video entitled: Social experiment: Muslim girl bullied by a racist; 11min, 03 sec.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mbO3K90DyKQ>

Video entitled: A Bully Apologizes to Her Victim 15 Years Later; 5 min 55 sec  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=paJD4r31rB0>

Video entitled: Peer Advocacy: A Unique Bullying Prevention Model; 4 min 32 sec  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6MX1-6oU1Cc>

Video entitled: Anti-bullying App; 3 min 11 sec  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sl4eA3nNT7Y>

Video entitled: Restorative Justice for Bullies; 18 min 13 sec  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tvnfbsn6AaQ\\_](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tvnfbsn6AaQ_)

Each subgroup answers the following questions:

**Questions:**

1. Was there anything that surprised you in the informational materials? Please explain.
2. Why do you think bullying takes place? What motivates people to bully others?
3. What kinds of consequences do you think bullying, as described in these materials, has for those who are bullied? What about people who bully others?

**Plenary: 15-20 minutes**

Each subgroup presents for 3-5 minutes about their main insights. Members of other subgroups can ask questions of clarification (only).

**Debrief and summary by teacher/educator: 5-15 minutes**

The teacher/educator summarizes and debriefs the work conducted by the students/participants. Where did they agree and disagree? What did they learn?

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## HOMEWORK IDEAS

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Students/participants can show their friends or family members one or more 'bullying videos' to trigger a discussion with them about their own experiences with bullying.

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## ADAPTATION ALTERNATIVES

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The following work on restorative justice can serve as a follow-up to the activities above:

Background: When bullying takes place, there are many ways in which institutions, such as youth groups or schools can deal with this. One innovative approach is termed 'restorative justice'. In addition to videos in the main activities section, the following videos on restorative justice can provide more insight into this approach :

Video entitled: Justice Committee: Using Restorative Justice Practices to Resolve Conflicts; 4 min 30 sec  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zgw7gY9fbz8>

Video entitled: What is Restorative Justice?; 3 min 40 sec  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B9NeG9p4zI4>

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## QUESTIONS

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1. What are the general impressions among the students/participants regarding these videos and the concept of 'Restorative Justice' presented here? How do they compare to the impressions regarding the video on restorative justice in the main activities section?
2. Can the students/participants arrive at a list of pros and also cons associated with a restorative justice approach to bullying?
3. What aspects, if any, do the students/participants see in these videos that might be useful, and feasible, to implement in their own environment? Develop a brief outline of the kind of strategy that could be used to implement such a change in their environment.

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## EXPLANATION OF ROLES MENTIONED IN THE ACTIVITY

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**Facilitator**

- Makes sure that everybody understands the task
- Makes sure that everybody contributes to the task
- Focuses less on his/her own ideas and more on those of the entire group
- Tries to find where people agree and disagree
- Encourages a positive group atmosphere
- Represents the group if they have a question for the teacher/educator

**Presenter**

- Readies the group for presentation (who says what, what is used in the presentation)

## RESOURCE

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### EU DEFINITION OF BULLYING:

Definition of bullying from EU: There is no universal definition of school bullying, but it is widely agreed to be targeted aggressive behavior, characterised by hostile intent, an imbalance of power and repetition over time. Bullying impacts severely on the victims' physical and mental health, also having adverse effects on educational outcomes. Bullying can violate the rights of children and young people to a quality education. Children may often be picked out as targets for bullying as a result of some perceived difference – physical appearance, not conforming to gender norms, race, or nationality.

In addition to "traditional" bullying, cyberbullying is becoming increasingly widespread. Cyberbullying shares characteristics with other forms of bullying but is carried out using electronic means, with bullies typically posting rumors, threats, sexual remarks, personal information or insults on social media. As children and young people are increasingly immersed in the digital world, this type of bullying can have a dramatic impact on self-esteem, and has been linked to increasing levels of teenage depression and suicide.

Another important aspect of bullying is that it very often requires an audience – whether real or online. This has two important consequences: firstly, the victim will feel more humiliated and ashamed to have been targeted in front of peers; and secondly, the audience becomes implicated in the act of bullying when doing nothing to stop it.

Source: [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/focus-can-we-prevent-bullying-school\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/focus-can-we-prevent-bullying-school_en)



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