

SUPPLEMENTARY LESSON: Subjects vs. Objects - Bullying

PURPOSE

To motivate students to prevent violations of human dignity through bullying in their surroundings.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand that persons should always be treated as subjects, and never merely as objects.
2. Recognize how human dignity is violated through bullying, as well as the reasons and consequences of bullying.
3. Understanding the roles people can have in bullying situations.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- Inside - Outside Box
- Why We Bully
- Consequences of Bullying worksheet
- The Bullying Circle handout
- The Bullying Circle Roles

VOCABULARY

- Treating persons as subjects: respecting persons and their dignity
- Treating persons as objects: not respecting person's dignity
- Bullying: aggressive behavior in which someone repeatedly causes another person injury or discomfort

PROCEDURE

Step 1: Review the previous lesson.

Step 2: Start the lesson by playing the [Inside – Outside game](#). Give each student [Inside – Outside Box](#) handout and ask them to make a box. They should cut out the template from the handout along the regular lines. On the front side of the template, they should write a word or draw a picture in each box that represents something they love about themselves on the outside. On the back side of the template, they should write a word or draw a picture in each box that represents something they love about themselves on the inside.

When everyone is done, they should fold their paper template along the dotted lines to make a box (with the outside words on the outside) and tape the sides so that they can still open the top of the box and see inside. Then the students should exchange their boxes, so that every person can see one inside and one outside quality that each person possesses. Discuss each other's qualities and affirm them together as a class.

Step 3: Emphasize that the previous exercise shows how each person possesses unique inside and outside qualities. External qualities are often visible with the naked eye or can be learned with a simple question, while internal qualities are often much harder to recognize. Nevertheless, they are equally real. These characteristics we can often recognize only by being friends and building the relationship with the other person. The students have also learned that the deepest quality that each person possesses is human dignity. Human dignity is the special value of every human person.

Human dignity is the deepest value of each human person, even though we often do not see this value in another person or in ourselves. Because of every persons' dignity, they should always be treated with respect..

Write the following definitions on the board:

Treating persons as subjects: respecting persons and their dignity
Treating persons as objects: not respecting person's dignity

One of the most common ways of treating persons as objects and not respecting their dignity is bullying. Recall that bullying is an issue that happens everywhere in the world. No matter where you live or where you go to school, bullying is a very serious issue that negatively affects people and violates their dignity.

Write the definition of bullying on the board:

Bullying: aggressive behavior in which someone repeatedly causes another person injury or discomfort

Highlight that bullying is intentional and repeated. While we occasionally hurt someone unintentionally (for example, by lashing out), bullying never happens by chance or unintentionally. Also, the person who bullies another, usually does that repeatedly over time. Moreover, there is always a person who is either physically stronger or appears to have more power that bullies the other. So, bullying exploits this imbalance of power. Without exception, bullying is always an example of disrespecting human dignity and treating another person as an object. It also is not real power, but is in fact, a sign of weakness in the bully.

Bullying can take different forms:

Physical (hitting, punching...)

Verbal (teasing, name calling, gossip...)

Intimidation (threats...)

Hazing (making someone do something that can harm them)

Social and emotional (intentionally hurting others' feelings, persistently excluding someone from the group...)

Highlight that all these forms of bullying can happen both in person and online. Online bullying happens through the use of emails, text messages, social media, posting online photos, etc. One of the online forms of bullying can also be so-called "challenges" where a person needs to do something dangerous that can harm them. It is a form of hazing done online.

Step 4: Ask the class if they can recognize the reasons behind bullying. Then divide the whole class into eight groups and give each group one card from [Why We Bully](#) handout. The groups should perform the situation from the card they have received and explain it afterwards with the class.

After all groups finish performing, motivate the students to share their thoughts and experiences on the recognized causes for bullying, as well as how they could be prevented or stopped.

Step 5: Next, give the groups [Consequences of Bullying](#) worksheet and ask them to think about three consequences of bullying for the bullied person, the school community and the person who is bullying.

After all groups finish, ask them to share the answers and lead the class discussion. Make sure to emphasize the following consequences of bullying:

Stresses of being bullied can interfere with a student's engagement and learning in school.

Children and youth who are bullied are more likely than other children to be depressed, lonely, anxious, have low self-esteem, feel unwell, etc. (Note that if someone is thinking of harming him or herself, they should talk to a responsible adult.)

Students who are bullied may fear going to school or riding on the school bus.

Children and youth who frequently bully their peers are more likely than others to get into frequent fights, be injured in a fight, vandalize or steal property, drink alcohol, smoke, be absent from school, drop out of school, etc.

Bullying also has an impact on other students at school who are bystanders to bullying. Bullying creates a climate of fear and disrespect in schools and has a negative impact on student learning.

Step 6: Finally, introduce the class to the bullying circle. Explain that in bullying situations, there are usually more people involved than just the person who is being bullied and the person who is doing the bullying.

Explain that besides the bully (or the bullies) and the one who is bullied, there are usually six other roles or modes of behavior people can perform in a bullying situation, such as being the followers, supporters, onlookers or even defenders. Give to each student his own [The Bullying Circle handout](#) and explain each role from the handout. Ask the students if they can recognize the roles from the everyday situations they have experienced.

Next, cut out the cards from [The Bullying Circle Roles](#) handout and distribute them among the students. The students will need to perform a role play in which they will simulate a bullying situation. The cards they will receive contain usual attitudes and things a person could say in this role in a bullying situation. Everyone will need to simulate his own role in the situation. Make sure that the students who are usually victims and bullies in real life do not play the same roles in this simulation. If time permits, switch roles and perform another improvised scenario.

Finally, lead the debriefing by asking the following questions:

- Which of these roles do you think we have in our school?
- Are people always in the same role or can their roles change?
- What kinds of things might affect the role changes?
(Responses may include what their relationship is with the student who is bullying and/or the student who is being bullied, peer pressure, and wanting to prevent the student who bullies from bullying them next.)
- Do boys and girls play all of these roles? To the same extent?
- How can more of us become defenders and less of us be bullies?

After finishing the discussion, teach the class the golden rule. Explain that this is the age-old principle present in almost all civilization throughout history. Write the golden rule on the board:

Treat others as you wish to be treated.

If the time permits, ask the class to make a big poster with the golden rule written on it so they can recall it afterwards.

Step 6: Summarize. Recall the definitions of treating persons as subjects and as objects. Describe the main characteristics of bullying, the reasons behind the bullying and the consequences it produces on everyone involved. Recall the roles in the bullying circle and motivate the students to prevent bullying in their surroundings.

INSIDE – OUTSIDE BOX

WHY WE BULLY¹

People bully because other people do it.	People bully because it makes them feel smarter, stronger and/or better than the person being bullied.
People bully because they want to be accepted by a certain group.	People bully because it keeps them from being bullied.
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People bully because they want to be accepted by a certain group.	People bully because it keeps them from being bullied.

¹ Prepared by the Kentucky State 4-H Teen Council: Bullying Awareness Lessons, Activities and Resources, available at https://4-h.ca.uky.edu/files/stc11_bullying_program.doc_1.pdf (last visited Dec 7, 2022).

CONSEQUENCES OF BULLYING

Write 3 consequences for the bullied person:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

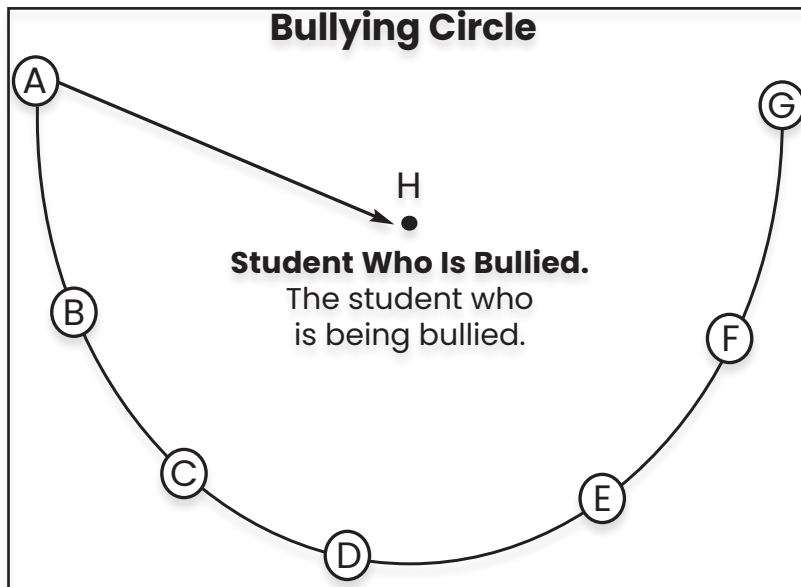
Write 3 consequences for the school community:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Write 3 consequences for the person bullying:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

THE BULLYING CIRCLE²



- A. Students Who Bully.** These students want to bully, start the bullying, and play a leader role.
- B. Followers or Henchmen.** These students are positive toward the bullying and take an active part, but don't usually initiate it and do not play a lead role.
- C. Supporters or Passive Bullies.** These students actively and openly support the bullying, for example, through laughter or calling attention to the situation, but they don't join in.
- D. Passive Supporters or Possible Bullies.** These students like the bullying but do not show outward signs of support.
- E. Disengaged Onlookers.** These students do not get involved and do not take a stand, nor do they participate actively in either direction. (They might think or say: "It's none of my business," or "Let's watch and see what happens.")
- F. Possible Defenders.** These students dislike the bullying and think they should help the student who is being bullied but do nothing.
- G. Defenders.** They dislike the bullying and help or try to help the student who is being bullied.

² Olweus Bullying Prevention Program: Bullying Circle Exercise, available at <https://pa02218550.schoolwires.net/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=36&dataid=521&FileName=18-bullying-circle-exerc.pdf> (last visited Dec 7, 2022).

THE BULLYING CIRCLE ROLES³

THE STUDENT WHO BULLIES	(I want to bully, start the bullying, and take a leadership role. I can usually get my friends to go along with whatever I say.) "I think (name of bullied student) is so stupid! I was making fun of (his/her) clothes, I said something like: "Hey, you loser! Where'd you get those "cool" clothes? The Loser Store?"
FOLLOWER OR HENCHMAN	(I like the bullying and take part in it. I usually don't start it, but will if my friends encourage me.) "Well, (name of bullied student) ISN'T very cool. I agree with (the person who bullies.) After things got started, I probably said, "Yeah, what's your problem, Geek?"
PASSIVE SUPPORTER (POSSIBLE BULLY)	(I like the bullying but don't show outward signs of support.) "Well, I think it's funny, too. I try to seem innocent enough...I really don't want to get into trouble. I may let the guys know later what happened. Yeah, (name of bullied student) is kinda goofy.... I mean...just look at (him/her!)"
POSSIBLE DEFENDER	(I don't like the bullying and think I should help the bullied student, but I don't do anything.) "This is making me sick. Those kids have NO right to do those things. That poor kid (being bullied) did nothing to deserve that. But.... I really can't say anything. I don't want to be the next person to be bullied. Besides, what could I do anyway?"
STUDENT WHO IS BULLIED	(I am the student who is being bullied.) "Oh, no...here they come again. What are they going to say NOW? I wish I could just disappear. This is just too hard for me..... man, do I hate school."
SUPPORTER (PASSIVE BULLY)	(I support the bullying: I usually laugh and point it out to others, but I don't join in.) "Oh, I really like (names of the people doing and supporting the bullying.) They are soooo cool. I don't usually say anything when they pick on people, but I'm laughing and letting others know what's going on so they can get a laugh, too."
DISENGAGED ONLOOKER	(I don't get involved in the bullying, and try to remove myself...and I don't help the bullied student.) "Hey, this is none of my business. I try not to even notice, and when I do, I pretend not to see it. The less attention I get from those people, the better"
DEFENDER	(I don't like the bullying and try to help the bullied student.) "I can't take it any more. I just have to do something. But what should I do? Hmmm, maybe talk to (him/her) later and say I was sorry it happened. I might even go over there right now..."

³ Olweus Bullying Prevention Program: Bullying Circle Exercise, available at <https://pa02218550.schoolwires.net/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=36&dataid=521&FileName=18-bullying-circle-exerc.pdf> (last visited Dec 7, 2022).