

Level
D

Module Two | What causes Bullying?



Activity One

E - Thos - Me - Thos

This activity looks at the school ethos in the context of being a factor that may affect bullying behaviour. Students are asked to identify the school ethos and determine if this affects bullying behaviour. Students then explore how they can each, individually, contribute to the school ethos.

Materials Required

- ✓ Sufficient copies of 'Handout 1' for all students and pens

Step One

Explain to the students that the school is more than bricks and mortar and more than teachers and students. The school has its own culture or ethos. Ask the students their interpretation of the word - ethos. If the school has the school ethos recorded on any documentation provide this for the activity. Explain it is the school culture / ethos that is one of the factors that can influence the amount of bullying occurring in the school. Obviously a caring, respectful school where students feel supported and connected contributes to the safety and wellbeing of students.

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Step Two

Divide the students into small groups and provide Handout 1 for students to complete. Once completed discuss answers as a large class group.

Handout 1 questions are below for your reference:

Q1. Does the school have a strong sense of nurturing, inclusiveness and community feeling?

Q2. Give examples of the things that help display this?

Q3. How could the school increase the level of nurturing, inclusiveness and community feeling?

Q4. Would these activities help reduce bullying?

Q5. What activity could you do as an individual student that would contribute to the school ethos?



Handout 1

Q1. Does the school have a strong sense of nurturing, inclusiveness and community feeling?

Q2. Give examples of the things that help display this?



Handout 1

Q3. How could the school increase the level of nurturing, inclusiveness and community feeling?

Q4. Would these activities help reduce bullying?



Handout 1

Q5. What activity could you do as an individual student that would contribute to the school ethos?

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Activity Two

The three wise monkeys

For this exercise, students identify what the most damaging aspect of bullying can be and then look at what behaviours around the bully behaviour could have the most dramatic effect. Students break into three groups and decide what is the most damaging part of bullying – not speaking up and stopping the bullying, pretending not to see the bullying or actually committing the bullying act.

Materials Required

✓ Nil

Step One

Divide students into three groups. The first group is 'see no evil', the second group is 'say no evil' and the third group is 'do no evil'.

Step Two

Each group is to answer the question – what causes bullying? They must derive their answer purely from their own group perspective. For example, the 'see no evil' group might typically answer by saying, "Bullying is done where no one can see; teachers and other students turn a blind eye".

The 'say no evil' group might identify that no one speaks up; not the victim, or the bystanders; to stop the bullying behaviour.

The 'do no evil' group might suggest that bullying is only done by the bully, not the other people in the group.

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Step Three

Ask the group, which behaviour is the most damaging – the doing, the not saying or the not seeing and gain explanations of why they believe this to be so.

Then, to the whole class group, ask the following question;

“If only one monkey group could change, which group would have the biggest effect on reducing bullying?”

Give the three monkey groups ten minutes to devise a response that represents the monkey perspective of the group; i.e., not seeing, not saying or not doing.

After they have spent 10 minutes to devise an answer to this question have each group present their argument to the larger class.

Step Four

Ask the class – Who was the wisest monkey of them all or were there 3 wise monkeys?

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Activity Three

To fix the problem, do we always have to know the cause?

The aim of this exercise is to show that even without knowing the cause of an action/behaviour, one change elsewhere in the situation, can have an overall effect on the outcome. As a large class exercise, students have to change behaviour in another student (make the student smile) purely by their own actions.

Materials Required

✓ Nil

Step One

Inform the students that: In trying to work out how to stop bullying, people look at why students bully. The presumption is, that if the cause is identified, then supposedly that will lead to the solution and there will be no more bullying in schools. Ask students if they can think of something in their lives that has been fixed without the actual cause being totally clear. One example may include, the computer freezing - sometimes turning the computer off then turning it on again can fix the problem without you even knowing what caused the problem. We change something - in this case the computer by doing something different ourselves, i.e. the action of turning the computer off and on. In the case of bullying, without knowing what causes the bully to act the way they do, changing our own behaviour can change the outcome.

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Step Two

Ask the students to sit in one large circle. Select one student to commence the game by being the student to sit in the middle of the circle. This student in the middle chooses a student on the outside of the circle by saying their name. The student in the middle then has to try and change the behaviour of the student they have selected, who is sitting on the outside circle. Specifically, the student on the inside of the circle has to try to get the student on the outside of the circle to laugh.

Step Three

The student on the inside of the circle says to the student on the outside of the circle:

“Honey if you love me, you’ll smile.”

The student on the outside must respond without smiling or laughing saying,

“Honey, I love you but I just can’t smile.”

The person in the middle can do various things, ensuring they don’t touch anyone, to get the selected student to smile. If the student does smile then they will become the centre person and the game continues on.

If the person on the outside of the circle does not smile (usually after a set time frame of one or two minutes), the student in the middle then moves on to the next person and repeats the exercise until eventually a person on the outside smiles.