



Education  
& Training

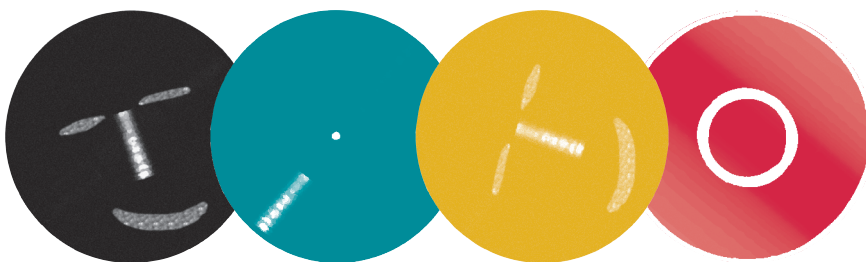
# Promoting positive bystander behaviour

Primary and secondary school activities



# Activities

Activity		Primary	Secondary
1	Introducing the concept of bystanders	●	
2	Feelings	●	
3	Everyday heroes	●	
4	The Bubbler story	●	
5	Bystander behaviour – how teachers can help	●	●
6	Helping yourself	●	●
	Discussion guidelines	●	●
	Some ideas	●	●



# Promoting positive bystander behaviour

For a bystander program to make an impact, educators must persist with it. The program should complement a whole-school approach to promoting safe and respectful behaviour.

A one-off session with a class is not likely to be effective. It is strongly recommended that students be asked to report back to the class on their experiences, good and bad, after they have acted to discourage bullying. In this way the teacher, as well as the children learn about what can be done to translate good intentions into effective action.

# Activity 1: Introducing the Concept of Bystanders

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View the film *The Dream* found on the ***Bullying. No way!*** website at: [www.bullyingnoway.com.au/talkout/spotlight/vid\\_thedream.shtml](http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au/talkout/spotlight/vid_thedream.shtml).

Ask students to identify the dream of the main character. Discuss the following:

- Do you think the boy will achieve his dream of becoming a dancer? Why or why not?
- What will work against him achieving his dream? Is this fair?
- Why do you think he was bullied?
- Is it fair that he was bullied?
- What do you think he should do about the bullying?
- Why do you think the other two boys bully the boy with the dream?
- How do you think each person in this story might feel?

Have five very resilient students recreate the story told in *The Dream*, with the addition of a bystander, who does not take part in the bullying, but who sees the bullying take place and does not do anything to help the target or to stop the bullies.

(Roles required: boy with the dream to become a successful ballet dancer, older boy who judges the audition, two bullies and a bystander).

Review the questions above and ask students to also consider the role of the bystander, asking the following questions.

- Why do you think the bystander did not help the target?

- Why do you think the bystander did not stop the bullies?
- How could the bystander have shown an act of kindness?

As a class, list reasons why bystanders often do not do anything to prevent bullying or to help stop bullying behaviour. Consider whether these reasons also occur with cyberbullying.

Have students form groups of six. Ask them to recreate the role play now showing how the bystander could have prevented or helped stop the bullying; for example, perhaps by asking an adult to help solve the problem.

As a class, revisit the ***Bullying. No way!*** website to discover further information about bystander behaviour and what bystanders can do to help stop or prevent bullying and cyberbullying. Visit: [www.bullyingnoway.com.au/talkout/spotlight/bystandermain.shtml](http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au/talkout/spotlight/bystandermain.shtml).

In particular, explore the sections:

- who are bystanders?
- why don't we do something to help?
- what can students do?
- what can teachers do?
- what can parents do?

## Exploring the role of bystanders

Role play – ask a small group to role play the game 'Chinese whispers' by passing a negative message around about the teacher, for example, 'Ms Smith likes eating stale sandwiches'.

Discuss the reactions of students. Did they continue the game? Did anyone think to stop the game? Who are the people that could be hurt by a rumour like this? Consider not just the target, but all who participate in such poor behaviour.

Debrief, explaining that this activity was intended to encourage students to think about the part we all play when bullying behaviour occurs.

Ask students to imagine the message had been passed around the class as a note. List additional problems that might be caused if the message was in written form; for example, it might seem true because it is written down, it becomes more permanent when written, more people might see it if it is put in a public place. Consider also the implications of the message sent as an email or posted in an online chat or discussion.

Have pairs of students' complete worksheet 1 to reflect on ideas related to bystander behaviour.

As a class, view the movie *The Bully* on the ***Bullying. No way!*** website at: [www.bullyingnoway.com.au/talkout/spotlight/vid\\_bully.shtml](http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au/talkout/spotlight/vid_bully.shtml).

List where the various examples of bullying take place in this claymation. Who are the people involved (bully, target, and bystanders)? What are the effects upon each of these people? How long do the effects last?

As a class, list the many forms of bullying and cyberbullying that exist. Beside this, list the many places, both real and virtual, where bullying and cyberbullying might occur.

# Worksheet 1: Exploring the Role of Bystanders

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Imagine a group of students sent an email to lots of kids you know saying mean things about you.

How would you feel?	
If your friend is in the group, should your friend send the email on to others?	
Why or why not?	
If your friend is in the group, what could your friend do to stop the cyberbullying?	
What else could your friend do?	
If you were the friend, rather than the target, what would you do?	
How might cyberbullying affect bystanders?	
How might cyberbullying affect the bully?	
How is acting to stop the bullying an act of kindness?	

(Source: Australian Communications and Media Authority. Cybersafety Centre [www.cybersmart.gov.au](http://www.cybersmart.gov.au))

# Activity 2: Feelings

The following activities help students learn about feelings, how to express them in a positive way, and how to manage negative emotions.

This is an important early stage for developing awareness, sensitivity and empathy towards others and improves students' tolerance and ability to cope.

## What's going on?

- **Discuss:** What are feelings? Does everyone have feelings? ... the same feelings? ... express them the same way? How did you feel about meeting new children in your class? ... already knowing some of the children? ... having a new teacher? ... already knowing some of the teachers you have? ... coming to a new place for school? ... coming to a familiar place?
- **Talk about experiences** which generate particular feelings eg can you tell us an example of a time you felt sad? How would you feel if ... your friend said he likes your new haircut? ... your sister won a new bicycle? ... someone took your ball from you at playtime?
- **List** all the feelings discussed on a large sheet of paper, leaving enough space for a collage of pictures cut from magazines, or photographs of students demonstrating their "feelings faces".
- **Make lists of comfortable and uncomfortable feelings** (eg happy, proud, excited, angry, sad, embarrassed)
- **Discuss:** How do we show each of these feelings to other people? How do other people feel when we show our comfortable feelings? How do other people feel when we show our uncomfortable feelings? How does expressing our feelings help us get along better with each other?
- **Play games.** Place your list words or this feeling words list on separate pieces of small paper in a bag or a hat, or use pictures of various feeling faces. Play music and stop at intervals for students to draw one out and show that feeling in their face, voice and body. Classmates guess the feeling expressed. Talk about what the student did to show the feeling and how that expression made others feel. Students can also describe a time when they felt that way.
- **Make a large cardboard dice or a spinner board** and glue on feeling words or pictures. Students take turns to roll or spin and demonstrate and give examples of the feeling shown.
- **Cut out, paint or colour** pictures of people showing different feelings and emotions.
- **Draw and embellish feeling words.** Discuss how colours, lines and shapes can be used to express emotion. Draw and embellish feeling words.
- **Make a "Class Feelings Book".** Get students to draw or cut out pictures of places, things, or people that make them feel different emotions. Assemble all the pictures into the book.
- **Play music** with different tempos and moods and ask the children to describe how the music makes them feel. Have them move to the different music while expressing the mood the music evokes.



- **Sing** "If you're happy and you know it..." introducing new feeling words and actions eg "If you're mad and you know it use your words – I'm mad", "If you're scared and you know it get some help, HEEEEELP!"

*"If you're mad  
and you know it  
use your words –  
I'm mad"*

*"If you're scared  
and you know it  
get some help,  
HEEEELP!"*

## Make a difference

- **Create a class collage** that depicts the various feelings on the list they created.
- **Discuss** how words and actions can promote certain feelings and/or actions. Explain that while all feelings are acceptable, some actions are not acceptable. Ask the following questions: How do you feel when someone shares his or her toy with you? ... someone says that he or she likes the block tower you just built? What might you do if ... someone will not share his or her toy with you? ... someone knocks down the block tower you just built? ... someone calls you a name?
- **What would you do if ... ?** Make a class list of possible bullying scenarios involving bystanders and responses which would help to stop the behaviour in a fair way.
- **Brainstorm possible acts of kindness** and affirmative statements. Write them on special cards. Post them around the room. Pick one from a box each day to keep on your desk.
- **Generating positive emotions:** Put each student's name on the top of a blank sheet of paper. Pass the sheets around the class and ask each student to write or draw something kind or complimentary about that person – what they like about them and nice things they have done. Try to emphasise behaviours rather than appearance. Take up the sheets for checking before distributing them to their owners. Students may wish

to paste or place them somewhere for frequent reference.

- **Practise steps for problem solving:** eg recognise your emotions, breathe deeply and slowly count to 10, think about your choices. Express how you feel in a calm way and act out your best choice.
- **Display** the class collage or word wall to support continual reflection about how behaviours towards one another can trigger various feelings.



# Activity 3:

## Everyday heroes

If students speak up to discourage bullying, the bullying often stops.

Help children to connect to and reflect on the experiences and feelings of others and foster the courage of the everyday hero to take a stand against bullying. This message reinforces the notion of kindness and having some appreciation of how other people feel.

### What's going on?

**What is a hero?** Make a list of heroes nominated by students on the board. Alongside this list, write their actions and characteristics. For example:

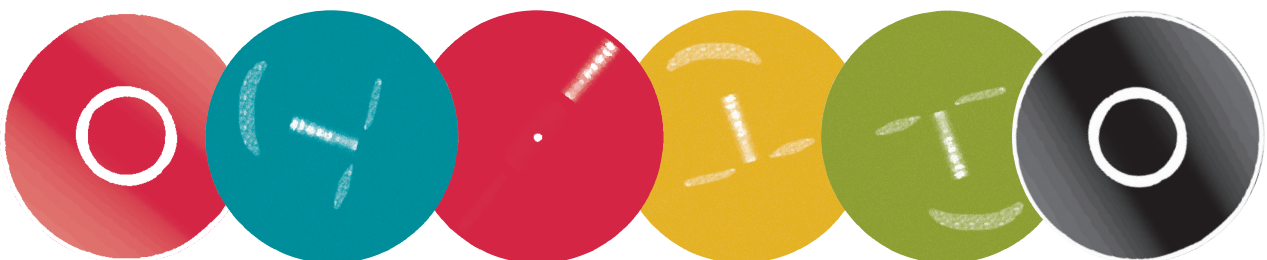
- directed people to safety (smart)
- knew the right thing to do (dependable)
- risked life to rescue someone (courageous)
- spoke up to prevent a wrong (strong)
- stopped a friend from doing the wrong thing (caring, kind).

Emphasise that "hurting baddies" is rarely necessary or heroic.

**The "unsung hero".** Discuss people whose actions are often unrecognised. Brainstorm unsung heroes, such as a student who helps someone being bullied, or witnesses who report a crime, a grandparent or a teacher.

Discuss: What are the characteristics of these people that make them kind?

**Read short biographies** of heroes from history, the Australian of the Year awards, newspaper articles of local heroes, and profiles from Bullying. No way! website. Add their actions and characteristics to the list.





# Activity 4: The Bubbler story



*The Bubbler* is a sample, thought-provoking short story that may be read by a teacher in conjunction with carefully structured discussion questions (below) as the basis for a reflective lesson.

To download story go to:

<http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au/pdfs/the-bubbler.pdf>

In *The Bubbler*, Emu Greatheart (EG) uses some interesting strategies to cope with harassment and fear. With a little help from his friends who show kindness, Emu Greatheart comes through his ordeals with dignity more or less intact. This is no hero's tale however and the final outcome is yet to be decided.

During the story, Emu Greatheart deals with a difficult situation by trying to:

- ignore the taunts from the gang of three
- reason with the gang of three.  
"How about you let me through," says Emu Greatheart, "I think it's the fair thing to do".
- stay positive. Emu Greatheart takes the sting out of some of the taunts by acting positively and agreeing in a humorous way.
- be confident. Emu Greatheart uses visualisation to help his confidence: He imagines "the power of rivers and mighty oceans running through his blood".
- self-talk. Emu Greatheart tells himself that he is "as brave hearted as an eagle".

In the end, Emu Greatheart finds someone to talk to when the three friends finally decide to talk to Ms Leo.

An outline of these personal strategies can also be found at 'Helping yourself, helping your friends' in the Chill Out Space Bullying. No way! website. See: <http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au/chillout/help.shtml>

## Using *The Bubbler*

The teacher reads *The Bubbler* (PDF, 40KB) for the class. See: <http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au/pdfs/the-bubbler.pdf>

Note: The text for the story is attached below. Although masculine pronouns have been used for Emu Greatheart throughout the story, Emu Greatheart's gender can be decided by the reader.

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## Questions for reflecting on the story

- Why did Syd and Con say “Uh oh!” when they saw the three figures hanging around the bubbler?
- Why do you think Syd told Emu Greatheart to “stay away from the taps”? (Do you think Syd later changed her mind?)
- How did Emu Greatheart feel after the first time he visited the taps?
- How do you feel when someone is mean to you? (eg sick, tummy ache, angry, scared)
- Why did Emu Greatheart tell the teacher “It’s all good” when it wasn’t?
- What ‘big mistake’ did Emu Greatheart make the second time he visited the taps? What might have happened if Emu Greatheart had continued to use this approach?
- What happened on the friends’ third visit to the taps?
- Why do you think they went to see Ms Leo?
- What could they tell Ms Leo?
- What are some of the things Ms Leo could do?
- What do you think Ms Leo should do?

## Activity

Students act out the conversation between Emu Greatheart, Con, Syd and Ms Leo. This activity can be organised in a way most appropriate for the class.

## Follow up

**Students look at some of the ways that Emu Greatheart and the friends could respond to the situation and for each, consider:**

- what might happen next? What might the outcome be immediately, in a while, and long term?
- which responses do you think will be more likely to end up decreasing or stopping the bullying and improving safety and relationships? In the short term? In the long term?
- what would you suggest that Emu Greatheart does next time?
- what do we know and learn about being good friends?
- what would you suggest that Syd and Con do next time to achieve the best result?

**Perhaps even if Emu Greatheart, Con and Syd make the wisest choices, the bullying may continue. Consider:**

- what could they do then?
- how might Emu Greatheart and friends stay positive if this happens?

List some strategies and some people they might ask for support and help.

**What are some of the rules and systems in our classroom / playground / school to keep students safe?**

**What are some types of things students and teachers do at our school to show acts of kindness?**

# The Bubbler story – Text

To download story  
go to: <http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au/pdfs/the-bubbler.pdf>

Story start ...

*"Uh oh."*

*Syd and Con stopped dead. Three figures were hanging about the water bubbler. Emu Greatheart walked towards it, unaware.*

*"So who's this ugly little pipsqueak," jeered the tallest of the three.*

*"He's got a face like a tawny frogmouth on a bad day," taunted the second. "What makes you think you can drink here, feather face?"*

*"What makes you think you can drink here, feather face?" sneered the third.*

*Emu Greatheart ignored them. He reached for the tap ready to fill his drink bottle.*

*Thwack! The bottle landed on the muddy concrete beneath the bubbler.*

*"Dwopped 'is liddle water boddle has 'e?" they laughed.*

*Emu Greatheart, Con and Syd had headed to the water bubbler at break time after a hot game of tag. It was Emu Greatheart's first day at his new school. He had been having fun making friends with Con and Syd and racing around with them.*

*Now, Emu Greatheart picked up his water bottle and walked away from the bubbler. He hung his head. His feathers drooped and his beak wobbled.*

*Emu Greatheart was quiet all afternoon. He did not lift his head. Syd and Con glanced at one another sideways. Their teacher wondered*

*about the looks that passed between the friends.*

*"Is everything okay, Emu Greatheart?" she asked.*

*"Yes Miss Leo, it's all good," mumbled Emu Greatheart. But it wasn't.*

*That evening in bed, Emu Greatheart curled up in a tight little circle. He thought about the bubbler. The insults kept playing over in his head. Was he really an ugly little pipsqueak? Well, so what, he thought to himself, yawning and stretching into sleep at last.*

*Three streets over, Syd was still awake and thinking about her new friend. "I don't like what's happening at the bubbler," she whispered into the night. "Water belongs to everyone. But we need to stay away from those three."*

*Next day, ignoring Syd's protests, Emu Greatheart strolled towards the bubbler, stubborn and determined. The trio barred the way.*

*"How about you let me through," said Emu Greatheart, keeping his voice as steady as he could. "Oh, if it isn't little pipsqueak with the stick insect legs. Haven't you learned your lesson, bird brain?" they jeered.*

*"You cackle like a sulphur crested cockatoo from back of beyond," they hooted.*

*Emu Greatheart ignored his quaking legs, struck a comical pose and called out cockily.*

*"I may be a little pipsqueak and I admit that my legs are really thin. I do have a bird brain but it's a pretty*

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good one actually." Three mouths dropped open.

"And I happen to like sulphur crested cockatoos. I am from the outback! At least I know what a dunny is!"

"Yeah!" said Con.

Syd grinned. Even the jeerers began to laugh and stood aside in mock disbelief as Emu Greatheart filled his water bottle. Con and Syd glanced at each other. It seemed like he was going to get away with it.

"Bunch of galahs" Emu Greatheart added cheekily as he turned to leave.

"Uh oh" said Syd and Con together.

Emu Greatheart tripped as his bottle was knocked flying. Water landed all over Syd as she raced to help. Emu Greatheart picked himself up and dusted the dirt from his knees.

"Here you are, you big galah," whispered Con, giving Emu Greatheart the empty water bottle. They both giggled.

But Syd scowled. She wouldn't talk to Emu Greatheart all that afternoon.

At break time next day, Syd tackled Emu Greatheart.

"Our teachers need to know about the bubbler Emu Greatheart. They will know what to do. I want school to be fun and feel safe again!"

"Syd, I can handle it. This time I won't insult anybody. Promise!"

"You just think you have to be the big brave hero and it makes me so mad! It's about all of us, Emu Greatheart, about making things feel OK for

everyone, not just for you and not just if you're funny and brave."

Syd watched, scowling, as Con and Emu Greatheart walked calmly over to the bubbler.

Emu Greatheart breathed deeply and slowly and practised feeling calm and powerful.

I am free to drink at the bubbler, he told himself. I am as strong and as gentle as water. He imagined the power of rivers and mighty oceans running through his blood. He stood taller, his shoulders relaxed. I am as brave hearted as an eagle. His chest expanded. He held his head high.

In a strong and clear voice, he spoke. "I have come to fill up my water bottle. Please move so that I can reach the bubbler."

"I have come to fill up my water bottle," mimicked the trio but they let him through.

Emu Greatheart filled his bottle and drank the clear water calmly and luxuriously. As more insults were hurled, Emu Greatheart imagined the words sliding off his skin and drowning in an arc of water as it splashed into the bubbler basin. Splutter, splutter, gurgle, gurgle.

One by one, Con, Syd and ten more classmates filled their drink bottles to their brims with cool water. The gang of three sneered and jeered but let them pass.

"Sweet" said Con, "Cool" said Emu Greatheart, and "Lucky" said Syd as they walked away together. There

was laughter in their voices and lightness in their steps.

But there was still tomorrow to deal with, and the day after and the day after that.

Emu Greatheart, Con and Syd went to see to Ms Leo.

**To be continued.....**

# Activity 5:

## Bystander behaviour – how can teachers help?

Promoting appropriate bystander behaviour among students who witness bullying taking place at school is now considered to be an important way of reducing peer victimisation.

Research has shown that bystanders are present when bullying occurs are mainly other students and if any of them speak up to discourage it on about half the occasions the bullying stops. Otherwise it just continues.

There are times when teachers are unaware of what is going on in the playground and often never hear about the bullying that has taken place. If they can influence students to act as positive bystanders bullying and peer victimisation can be significantly reduced.

However, when teachers TELL students to help students who are being bullied, they commonly disregard what is being said. If, on the other hand, students learn that their peers would like them to act helpfully and kindly they are greatly encouraged to do so.

### Classroom process

1. Hand out the bystander questionnaire and ask the students to complete it anonymously.
2. Collect the questionnaires.
3. In the next lesson, read back the answers that students gave on *why they would choose to support the person being bullied*.

Hearing these views directly from students can encourage other students to act positively. Some students might 'own up' to their statements and elaborate on why they would support someone being bullied. However, do not pressure anyone to speak up. It is important to:

- also read some of the responses from students who would ignore the bullying or who would tell a teacher
  - recognise that there may be dangerous situations where students should be cautious and avoid getting personally involved; and to discuss ways in which these risks can be minimised
  - discuss ways in which bystanders might safely help those being bullied
  - ask students whether they have tried to discourage bullying in the past and if it has been successful
  - discuss why taking some action is being 'kind'.
4. In subsequent lessons allow time for students to report on what happened when they tried to help, and reinforce their successes.

(Source: Bullying. No way! website – *Talk out* section, spotlight on bystander behaviour).



# Bystander questionnaire

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Here is a picture of a person being bullied with a number of people watching.



How often does this sort of thing happen at your school?  
Place a tick by your answer.

- ☐ Every day
- ☐ Most days of the week
- ☐ Once or twice a week
- ☐ Less than once a week
- ☐ Never or hardly ever

Now please think carefully about what you think you would do if you were watching what was happening. Place **ONLY** one tick by your answer.

- ☐ I would ignore it
- ☐ I would support the person being bullied
- ☐ I would support the person who is bullying the other person
- ☐ I would get a teacher

Write a sentence saying why you ticked the one you did.

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Please feel free to use for research purposes or in working with students, the Bubbler story together with the questionnaire on bystander behaviour. However, this material must not be used commercially except with the author's permission.



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## Think about it

- **Talk about** different types of bystanders, the roles that bystanders play and the effects they have upon bullying behaviour. There are those who choose not to get involved with the bullying (this may support the bullying behaviour), those who choose to get involved to stop the bullying, and those who encourage the bully.

- **Share** examples of real life situations (without mentioning names), read a story or show a video which enables children to identify with characters or animals that are being mistreated eg using stories .

One of the challenges in talking about bullying, harassment, and violence with young people is in relating the concepts to their own life experience in a supportive and solution-focused way.

Literature can help students to grapple with a range of situations and viewpoints, critically examine beliefs and actions, and consider alternative ways of understanding the world and social relationships.

Literary characters help young people to make sense of what it is to be a member of a community, to be a friend, show an act of kindness and to manage stressful situations.

- **Discuss** the situations or texts using the discussion guidelines – refer to the discussion guidelines handout. Guiding discussion and formulating questions about bullying, harassment and violence requires

teaching about thinking strategies and careful scaffolding, taking into account the developmental stages of students and their level of maturity.

- **Consider** the feelings of those involved, including those who are bullying, those who are being bullied, and those who are looking on.

- \* Think of a time when someone helped you. How did it make you feel?
- \* Did you think the person who helped you was kind? Explain why.
- \* Think of a time when you helped someone. How did it make you feel?
- \* Why do some people choose not to get involved?
- \* Why do some people encourage bullying?
- \* What is the difference between dobbing and reporting or asking a teacher for support?
- \* What might bystanders do when they see other children being picked on or hurt and why?

- Has anyone seen a bystander stop someone teasing another person? If so, what did they do or say?
- What are some other things that a bystander could do to stop or reduce bullying? Identify which responses are most effective. ie which ones are more likely to work and which ones will keep everyone safe.

- **Discuss** differences between heroes on television or in movies, and real-life heroes, whether anyone can be a hero and how. Develop a shared definition of a hero.

- **Write** a short essay or create a portrait of a hero, and design a logo symbol of their heroic behaviour or characteristics.

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## Make a difference

- **Brainstorm** a list of potential situations and responses. How can we all be everyday heroes and still keep ourselves safe? Talk about situations and what everyday heroes would do or say.
- **Generate** ideas about how to reinforce heroic action eg Make up and decorate hero awards or certificates to present to students who do something heroic; at the end of day meeting make it a routine to ask: Who did you help today? Who was a hero in your eyes?
- **Role play** ways in which bystanders can help stop others being picked on, without taking unreasonable and unacceptable risks.
- **Encourage** each other to look for opportunities to be a hero and to be kind to watch out for others in the school community and to be helpful when someone is being hurt or picked on. Give them an award.
- **Set up** a classroom or public display on a bulletin board titled "Our Heroes". Celebrate with a "hall of heroes" complete with invited guests, refreshments, and a guided tour by students.
- **Recognise** everyday heroes as a daily or weekly event in the classroom or whole school assembly.
- As a class, **brainstorm** which people within the school, students can talk to about instances of bullying, violence and harassment? Make a list for distribution.
- **Formulate statements** of rights and responsibilities concerning how they would like each other to behave. eg We are kind and caring towards each other. We will help children who are being bullied. We will include children who are left out of our games.
- **Invite** everyday heroes to school to discuss their occupations. Possibilities include a fire fighter, police officer, park ranger, nurse, animal recovery worker, lifeguard, conservationist, and many others. Have them explain their daily activities, equipment, training, what they contribute and why they enjoy their jobs.
- **Revisit** in a week and share what you've noticed about behaviours towards one another.

# Activity 6: Helping yourself



We are encouraging everyone to perform simple random acts of kindness. At times though, it can take courage as well as compassion to be kind, to help a stranger or someone who may be unable to help themselves. It may mean having to stand up or speak out and relinquish the safety of silence thereby putting at risk your own popularity.

## **Helping yourself, helping your friends**

*"I feel angry. People have no right to put other people down because of any differences they have. It's not fair. If I see someone being bullied I tell them it's not right and to leave them alone. If more people stood up, the world would be a better place."*  
(Year 8 student)

There are no simple, quick fix answers to bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence. But here are some ideas that have helped others and may help you.

## **Find someone you trust to talk to**

Tell a trusted friend, teacher or carer. They may be able to support you in your decisions or even mediate between you and the person who is doing the bullying. Best of all, they will listen to how you feel.

## **Talk to yourself**

No, you're not going mad! Your mind is your own private space to think through and talk about what has happened and how you feel. Writing down your thoughts and feelings can help too.

## **Stay positive**

Bullying usually makes us feel small and powerless so it can be difficult to feel positive. Focus upon all the things that you do well.

## **Be confident**

Use strong, assertive 'I' statements. When you think people are misusing power, tell them 'I don't like that,' in a strong confident voice. Practise this with your friends.

## **Use conflict resolution skills**

Talk with the person who is harassing or bullying you. Ask them if there is a problem that you might be able to sort out together.

## **Where possible, ignore people who bully or harass**

You don't have to respond. You can walk away from people who are harassing you. This does not always work, particularly if it is persistent bullying or violence that needs to be reported. You may need to continue ignoring the behaviour for a while.

## **Hang around with your friends**

Be with people who help you feel good about yourself. Good friends respect, encourage and support you. They care for your wellbeing and are fun to be around. And you'll make new friends by respecting, encouraging and supporting others.

## **Stick up for your friends**

If you have a friend who is being bullied, stick up for them, listen to them talk about how it feels, let them know you care... and give them this information. Also try standing up for others you don't know so well.

## **Remember if we do nothing we are part of the problem**

*"A lot of children and teenagers all have similar problems when it comes to growing up. Yet everyone has at some stage bullied someone. We should all be thinking of how we can help each other survive adolescence instead of bullying each other. We should work together."*

Year 11 student

# Discussion guidelines

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Guiding discussion and formulating questions about bullying, harassment and violence requires teaching about thinking strategies and careful scaffolding, taking into account the developmental stages of students and their level of maturity.

The classroom environment, indeed the whole school environment, must be a safe and trusting place; co-operative and non-confrontational, so that diverse and often strongly held views can be discussed and scrutinised. Be sensitive to exposing the behaviour or experience of particular children and the possibility of a strong emotional reaction for some, and be prepared to address this.

Questions asked in relation to stories and issues will help to draw out learning about relationships, conflict, and resolution, and the implications and consequences of behaviour. There are countless opportunities within the everyday curriculum, as well as in designated programs, for reflection on concepts which expose prejudice, and to examine and overturn the negative attitudes which underlie many bullying and violent behaviours. Equally there are many opportunities to reflect on and foster positive, inclusive and proactive attitudes and practices.

An inquiry approach seeks opportunities to challenge opinions and attitudes which are held uncritically and unreflectively eg “The better fighter you are, the better person you are” or “their problem is nothing to do with me”, and to strengthen good judgement. The community of inquiry challenges conceptions of “other” and provides the conditions for formation of relationships of respect, tolerance, care and even friendship. The inquiry approach, importantly, means that students are scaffolded and supported to develop and express their own questions and ideas for reflection and response within the group. Learning this process is an important part of developing skills for independent thinking and collaborative investigation and problem solving. Ultimately, the teacher will be an observer or an equal participant and only intervening in the group discussion process when support is required.

## Questioning

- What do you think character X or Y might have been thinking / feeling? (include peripheral characters for their perspectives)
- Can we recognise beliefs and values held by the characters?
- Which character/s showed kindness? Explain.
- Who/what are the influences that shape the story characters’, your and others’ ideas, attitudes, opinions and values? eg parents, friends, family, culture, media
- Have you experienced a similar situation? What did you do?
- Have you witnessed or been aware of a similar situation? What did you do?
- What was the outcome? What other choices could have been made?
- What are the possible outcomes for alternative choices?
- What are the constraints for particular choices?
- How might these constraints be addressed?
- What are the meanings of terms and concepts such as identity, beliefs, social hierarchy, power, freedom, choice, justice, respect, tolerance, acceptance, diversity and inclusion?

Ask for examples of concepts and language used from others’ experience.

# Some ideas



- The easiest way to spread kindness is to smile at the people you make eye contact with each day.
- Treat others with respect, and you will find that others will respect you.
- Everyone has 'special friends' at school, but don't forget to be friendly toward all the students.
- If you see someone in trouble, help them. They may have fallen over, or they may be being teased or bullied. If you can't help them, go and find someone who can.
- When someone new comes to school, volunteer to show them around, introduce them to as many people as you can, make them feel 'at home'.
- Set a good example to other students. Be as pleasant and well mannered as you can to fellow students, teachers, the school bus driver, and so on.
- Help people in class. This could be helping someone work out a problem they are having trouble with, if the teacher is busy, or it could be lending your ruler, eraser, pencil, etc to someone.
- If you are participating in a team sport, always remember that you are part of a team. Even if you are the best player in the team, do whatever you have to do to support the team.
- Pick up litter in the playground.
- Write notes of appreciation to teachers and staff at the school.
- Have each student write something positive about other class members.

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