



THE TRUTH ABOUT BULLIES

OVERVIEW:

The goal of this activity is to inform and educate students about bullying. The lesson plan asks students to consider a list of statements about bullies and to decide in breakout sessions whether those statements are true or false. After tallying the results, the Justice Teaching volunteer reveals the answers and provides the students with statistics and facts that address each statement.

OBJECTIVES:

Upon successful completion of this activity, students will:

- be able to define the term “bullying” and describe types of conduct that qualify as bullying;
- achieve an understanding about bullies and bullying in the United States today;
- recognize some of the long-term consequences of bullying; and
- learn techniques about how to address bullying behavior.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- PowerPoint Presentation
- Handout of quiz about bullying conduct in the United States
- A board or a large sheet of paper upon which to tally the students’ votes

TIME REQUIRED: 60 minutes recommended. Can be shortened or lengthened.

NEXT GENERATION SUNSHINE STATE STANDARDS:

Social Studies, Civics and Government: Standard 2

Grades 3-5:

Benchmarks SS.3.C.2.1, SS.4.C.2.1, & SS.5.C.2.5

Grade 7:

Benchmarks SS.7.C.2.12 & SS.7.C.2.13

Grades 9-12:

Benchmarks SS.912.C.2.10 & SS.912.C.2.11



ACTIVITIES:

This handout will be used in conjunction with the PowerPoint presentation titled: "The Truth About Bullies."

1. **Slide 1:** Introduce yourself and let the students know that they will be given an opportunity to consider and discuss one of the most important issues facing schools in America today: Bullying.
2. **Slides 2-3:** Ask the students what a bully is, how a bully behaves, and what a bully does. Follow up by showing the students a general definition of the term "bullying." Bullying means to systematically and chronically inflict physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students. See § 1006.147, Fla. Stat. (2012), "Bullying and harassment prohibited."
3. **Slide 4:** Let students know that, under this definition, bullying can be:
 - Physical (e.g., shoving a student into a locker, tearing up a student's homework);
 - Mental/emotional (e.g., spreading rumors about someone behind his back, whispering secrets to a friend in front of another student to make that student think you are talking about her); and
 - Technological (using a phone to take a photo of one student humiliating another student and posting the picture on Facebook; using an anonymous account to send an email to a student telling her that she is a loser and no one at school likes her).
4. **Slides 5-6.** Inform the students of their project for this session: They are to break into groups of four or five, review a list of ten statements about bullies and bullying, discuss those statements, and decide, as a group, whether each statement is true or false. Advise the students that they should try to reach a unanimous agreement with regard to each statement. **Distribute copies of the Handout to the students.** The students should nominate one person to present the group's answers to the rest of the class. Give the students ten minutes to make their decisions. While the students are in the breakout sessions, write the statements on a large sheet of paper or a board.
5. **Slides 7-8:** Ask the leader of each group to present the group's decision with regard to each statement. Place a "T" for true or an "F" for false next to each statement. Tally up the responses to determine whether a majority of the groups believe that each statement is true or false.
6. **Slides 9-18:** Using the answer key provided in this lesson plan, review individually each statement on the list (there is a slide for each behavior), and inform the students whether the statement is true or false. Also provide students with the data or information from the answer key.



7. **Slide 19:** Ask students if anything can be done to stop or curb bullying in school. Obtain a couple of general answers. There is no need to go into great depth as the lesson plan later provides the students with a number of suggestions.
8. **Slides 20-21:** Let the students know that while there is at least one bully and one victim in any bullying incident, there is also a possibility of a third-party being involved: The bystander. Explain that sometimes bullies like to exert their power in front of an audience to show that they are tough or to be feared.
9. **Slides 22-23:** Provide a list of actions victims can take to stop bullying that has already commenced or to avoid bullying altogether. **Emphasize that if there is any possibility of risk to their personal safety, victims should not stand up to the bully by telling him/her to stop.**
10. **Slides 24-26:** Let the students know that, as bystanders, they can help to stop or prevent bullying. Describe the various actions that a bystander can take to end a bullying situation that has commenced or to prevent a bullying situation from starting. As with the victim slide above, **emphasize that if there is any possibility of risk to their personal safety, the bystander should not stand up to the bully by telling him/her to stop bullying the victim.** Assert that telling a teacher, the principal, or someone in a position of authority about a bully is not tattling and explain the difference between the two terms. “Tattling” is when a student tells an adult about another student’s actions simply to get him or her into trouble. “Telling” is when a student speaks to an adult about another student’s actions because those actions were unsafe or hurt another person.
11. **Slide 27:** Conclude the presentation by emphasizing to students that each of them can make a difference with regard to bullies at their school. Thank the students for their attention and participation.



HANDOUT/The Truth About Bullies: A Quiz¹

Your task: Read each statement about bullies in the United States and circle whether you think the statement is true or false.

1. Nearly one-third of American teenagers are involved in bullying.
True False.
2. Less than 10% of American teenagers admit to bullying others.
True False
3. Students who are bullied in school usually pay attention and have good attendance records.
True False
4. Most students who bully are insecure.
True False
5. Contrary to stereotypes, male bullies are not usually bigger and physically stronger than their victims.
True False
6. Students who witness bullying often refuse to remain friends with the victim and feel guilty for not reporting the incident.
True False
7. Bullies have trouble making friends.
True False
8. Bullies do poorly in school compared to those who do not bully.
True False
9. Most bullies stop their violent or aggressive behavior when they become adults.
True False
10. If you are being bullied, it is best to handle it alone.
True False

1. Quiz adapted from www.safeyouth.org; www.teachingtolerance.org.



Answer Key for Justice Teaching Volunteers

1. TRUE: In a national survey, 13% of teenagers admitted to bullying, 11% admitted to being bullied, and 6% have been bullied, but also bullied others.
2. FALSE: See statistics above.
3. FALSE: Students targeted by bullies sometimes avoid school or have trouble concentrating. They can also develop depression or anxiety disorders.
4. FALSE: Studies show that most bullies are confident and have high self-esteem.
5. FALSE: Male bullies are usually bigger and stronger than their victims.
6. TRUE: Acts of bullying can have negative consequences even if you are not directly involved.
7. FALSE: Bullies usually make friends easily, especially with other students who are aggressive and may join them in bullying.
8. TRUE: Bullies usually have problems with impulse control, dislike school, and get into trouble often.
9. FALSE: 60% of bullies have at least one criminal conviction because their bullying behavior continues when they become adults. Further, teenagers who are bullies grow into adult bullies and are more likely to have children who are bullies. Thus, bullying can become a cycle of fear, intimidation, and violence that is passed down through generations.
10. FALSE: Ending bullying requires a commitment from everyone in school, including teachers, custodians, students, and principals.