

TYPICAL TARGETS FOR BULLIES

Some people are easier targets for teasing and harassment than others and they include those who are:

- Suffering from physical or learning difficulties
- Quiet / studious
- Of a different ethnic origin / religion / culture

Flipchart the above categories and ask the group if they can think of anything else that would make a person a target for bullying?

Explain that people who are bullied can be made to feel worthless and consequently they will have little self-confidence and low self-esteem.

It is important to point out that we all have strengths and as well as areas that we need to work on. To increase our confidence and boost our self-esteem we need to pinpoint our good points and work on other areas.

Give out **WORKSHEETS 2 and 3**. Tell the group they have ten minutes to write down as many of their good points and areas to work on as they can.

When they are ready, ask for volunteers to read out their lists. Does the group agree on the same point? Did they find it easier to think of areas to work on rather than their good points? Why do they think this is?

Ask the group the following:

1. If we feel good about ourselves, is it easier to deal with bullying?
2. Are some people 'born targets' for bullies?
3. Does bullying only occur in schools?

TYPES OF BULLYING

VERBAL BULLYING

This type of bullying often takes the form of:

- Name-calling
- Spreading rumours
- Exclusion – nobody will talk to or work with the target of bullying
- Verbal threats
- Constant ridicule
- Sarcasm

This type of bullying can be particularly vicious and can leave the target feeling depressed or even suicidal.

PHYSICAL BULLYING

This type of bullying often takes the form of:

- Pushing & shoving
- Spitting
- Throwing objects
- Slapping and punching
- Kicking

Physical assault is a serious offence. If a teacher suspects any form of physical violence, it must be investigated immediately.

Peer pressure can also develop into a type of bullying. This issue will be dealt with later.

WHAT TO DO

Before you give any advice on how to tackle bullying, it is useful to ask the group for their ideas. Bear in mind that this can be a delicate subject if there is anyone present who is experiencing bullying. Make sure all students are aware that they can come to you in private if they wish to discuss the issue of bullying and emphasise that this will be done in the strictest confidence. It is useful if the facilitator writes their own answers to these questions before presenting it to the group.

Ask the following questions:

1. What advice would you give to a friend who was being bullied?
2. What would you do if you were being bullied?
3. Do you agree that bullying is 'just part of growing up'?
4. Does being bullied strengthen or 'toughen-up' a person?
5. How do you think bullies should be dealt with in your school?
6. Should bullies be punished (bearing in mind the reasons that can cause bullying)?

Flipchart their answers and give out **WORKSHEET 6**. Can they think of anything else to add to it?

WORKSHEET 6

What can somebody do if they are a target of bullying?

- Firstly – do not put up with it. You do not deserve to be treated in this way. Make a firm decision to tackle the bully's behaviour. This can be a very difficult thing to do but remember – you do not have to do this alone because help is available.
- Confide in your parents. They have a right to know what is going on. They also need to discuss the situation with the school so that they can identify strategies to deal with the bullying.
- Talk to your teacher – they are often unaware that any bullying is going on. Once you have reported it to your school they will be able to take steps to deal with the bully.
- Try not to react to the taunts and name-calling. Bullies want a reaction from you. They want to see you burst into tears or fly into a rage so do not give them the satisfaction. Do not hand over money or valuables because of threats. Get help as soon as possible.
- Do not take offence too easily. Is the name-calling really that serious or could you just laugh it off? However, bear in mind that you should not trivialise the bully's behaviour.
- Above all, do not allow the bully to rob you of your self-worth and self-confidence. Remind yourself that it is the bully's behaviour that is unacceptable.