

Prevention Activities

AIM: As our society races ahead in leaps and bounds, it can become very confusing for young people who are trying to interpret the world and develop skills to grow into healthy functional adults. With bullying having an effect on a student's mental health, skills and awareness are needed to minimise the impact of such events and reduce the potential bullying from occurring. Students need effective communication skills, problem solving skills, self discipline and connectedness to act as a buffer and help build resilience.

Level A – Prep to Grade 3

Post a Letter

This activity is designed to help students gain a common awareness of what is expected from them as a class group and what to expect from each other. As the student gains an understanding on what is expected of them, the more confident the student becomes. Knowing what to expect from others also helps a student to decipher situations that might just be a simple misunderstanding or when it might be more of a bullying problem. For this activity, students identify behaviours and place them into either the important letterbox or the not very important letter box.

Taking time to think.

This activity uses some principles from mindfulness by having students begin to focus on their thinking and breathing as a strategy; a tool to help them with their thoughts. This will assist the students on a psychological level if they are involved in a bullying incident as well as assisting the student to think before a potential incident, thereby preventing a potential bullying incident or a misunderstanding. The activity demonstrates clarity through an experiment conducted by the teacher and then has the students complete an exercise where they hop on the spot and recite a nursery rhyme.

Level B – Grade 4 to Grade 6/7

Close your eyes and hold tight

Students are to choose an activity they would like to do on the weekend and devise the steps they will need to take to make it happen. Students also need to identify obstacles to achieving the activity and finding solutions around these obstacles. This activity is to help students identify and define what they have some control and influence over and what they can't change. Separating the control allows students to differentiate between what is their responsibility and what is not. The activity also provides for shared experiences of problem solving in small groups.

I am not alone

This activity provides students with a concrete visualisation of the support networks in the student's lives.

This is done to reinforce to students the fact that they are not alone and have people around to assist them when they are troubled by events in their lives. In this activity, students draw a picture of themselves and either record or draw people who are important to them into three separate circles. These circles represent the different levels of intimacy or closeness they have with the people selected. Students then cut out these circles and glue the circles onto the picture of themselves.

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Level C – Grade 6/7 to Grade 9

Pull me ups and put me downs

This activity helps students separate their thoughts into those that are helpful and those that are unhelpful. The activity highlights to students the power of positive thinking. In small groups, students select a particular event or situation and then devise three (3) helpful and three (3) unhelpful thoughts about it. A whole class group discussion is held at the end.

Tower of Strength

The aim of this activity is to show students that while negative events can happen to them, there are also many positive events that can happen as well. Students record on the handout sheet, positive events that have occurred over their 9/10 years of schooling and 1 negative event. This handout sheet is then folded in half and placed on the desk. The students then have a race to see who can be the fastest at blowing over the folded handout sheet to knock over the bad situation/circumstance.

Level D – Grade 10 to Grade 12

Pieces of the Pie

The aim behind this activity is: 1) to increase students' awareness of possible alternatives to their initial thought processes, and 2) for students to reframe events from a negative interpretation to a positive interpretation. Students are provided with three scenarios from which they must identify five (5) possible interpretations of the events. Students discuss in small groups the range of possibilities which are then presented to the larger class group.

Getting through the hard times

This activity is designed to highlight the importance of having support from others and how such support makes adversity more tolerable and easier to cope with. Trying to decipher the best course of action requires much thought and discussion. The activity involves small group work with students being stranded at sea and having to prioritise salvaged items that are critical for their survival.

Post a letter

This activity is designed to help students gain a common awareness of what is expected from them as a class group and what to expect from each other. As the student gains an understanding on what is expected of them, the more confident the student becomes. Knowing what to expect from others also helps a student to decipher situations that might just be a simple misunderstanding or when it might be more of a bullying problem. For this activity, students identify behaviours and place them into either the important letterbox or the not very important letter box.

Material Required

2 small boxes (shoe box size), photocopy of activity handout sheets for each student in the class, scissors

Step One

Collect two small boxes, the size of a household post box. Cover the boxes in paper and cut out an opening slot so mail can be posted. Label one postal box - very important mail and label the other postal box - not important mail.

Step Two

Photocopy the activity handout sheet for each student in the class. Depending on the age and development of the students, you may pre cut the labelled activities from the Activity Sheet handout or have the students cut these out themselves.

Step Three

Hold up one of the activity labels and ask the students to see if they can find the same activity label. Ask the students if the activity is very important or not important at all. With the older students in this age level, a discussion can be held about why they think the activity is or is not important. For the younger students, informing the students that for everyone to get on well with each other and to be happy, we all need to know what is important so we don't get caught up and have a misunderstanding. It is a bit like playing a game. If you don't know the rules of the game, it is hard to play and the other players can get cranky with you.

Step Four

When the students have decided what the correct post box is, ask each of the students to post the activity label in the correct postal box. Repeat step three until all activity labels have been posted.

Step Five

Time and facilities permitting, the students can collectively paint or draw the two letterboxes to make the boxes unique to the class.



Activity handout sheet

Talking really loudly

Having good manners

Being helpful to other students

Eating healthy foods

Doing what the teachers say

Having friends

Having money

Being at the front of the line

Listening to each other

Always being first



Taking the time to think.

This activity uses some principles from mindfulness by having students begin to focus on their thinking and breathing as a strategy; a tool to help them with their thoughts. This will assist the students on a psychological level if they are involved in a bullying incident as well as assisting the student to think before a potential incident, thereby preventing a potential bullying incident or a misunderstanding. The activity demonstrates clarity through an experiment conducted by the teacher and then has the students complete an exercise where they hop on the spot and recite a nursery rhyme.

Material Required

Large clear glass or jug, small objects such as paper clips etc, baking soda

Step One

Explain to students you will show them an experiment. Explain you want to show the students how sometimes we get upset and when that happens, sometimes it can be hard for our minds to think clearly.

We will often need to stop and rest and then our minds will be able to think clearly again. Ask the students to sit or stand around a table. Place a clear glass or plastic jar full of water on the table. Place some small objects around the jar. These can be pens, paper clips, small blocks, toys etc. Ask the students to look through the water in the jar and ask them what they see on the table. Students should be able to see the objects lying on the table. Suggest this is like when you go to the beach and the water is calm and there are no big waves churning up the sand in the water, you can see to the bottom.

Step Two

Place a cupful of baking soda into the glass / plastic container. With the lid on, shake the container. Now ask the students again what they can see when they look through the container. Students can no longer see clearly as the baking soda will initially make the water cloudy.

Step Three

Wait a few minutes for the baking soda to settle and the water becomes clear again. Ask students if they can look through the water again and see the objects on the table.

Step Four

Talk to the students about the fact that sometimes we can get so busy with what we are doing that we don't see what is really happening around us. This can mean that sometimes we might upset other students and be upset ourselves because our thoughts in our head are not clear. From time to time, we will need to take the time to slow down and rest our brains so we can think clearly.

Step Five

Inform the students they can have a practice at this. Ask them all to hop on the spot and recite a nursery rhyme aloud. When they have finished, ask the students if they were aware how fast they were breathing when they spoke. Tell the students this was a hard question to answer because their minds were having lots of thoughts. Their minds had to remember the rhyme, say it and know how to hop on the spot. So there were lots of thoughts going around in their minds. Now ask the students to sit and close their eyes for a minute. With eyes closed, ask the students if their breathing is very fast or slow. The point being, when they are still, they are able to think more clearly and notice things that they might not have noticed otherwise.