

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.

Prevention Activities

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.

Level C - Grade 6/7 to Grade 9 | Activity 1

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Material Required

Blackboard, sufficient photocopies of pick me ups and put me down handouts for all students, pens

Step One

In one large group ask students to brainstorm some of the things people their age worry about. Record these up on the blackboard. This list could include things like not doing well at school, not being invited to a party, not looking like a dork.

Step Two

Provide students with the handouts: 'Pick me ups' and 'Put me downs' and pens to write with. Ask students to form groups of 4 to 5 students taking the handouts and pens with them.

Step Three

Ask the groups to pick one of the worries listed on the blackboard. Try to ensure that all groups don't pick the same worry. Ask each group to write down on the Pull me down handout, three (3) unhelpful thoughts about the worry. For example, for the worry not doing well at school, three (3) unhelpful thoughts might be: I am hopeless, I will never be able to understand this work and the other kids are smarter than me.

Step Four

Ask the students to complete three (3) helpful thoughts on the Pull me up handout for the same worry they used in the previous handout. For example, stay back for extra tute classes, talk to the teacher, ask a friend to help explain it to you.

Step Five

Ask each group to stand up and read out the worry they selected and the unhelpful and helpful thoughts. Ask what was easier to do, unhelpful thoughts or helpful thoughts? Was it easier to think of helpful thoughts when you were trying to help someone with the same worry compared to trying to think of helpful thoughts for yourself? Suggest next time they have a worry, it might be useful to separate thoughts into helpful and unhelpful thoughts as it will provide some positive solutions to their worries.



1.

2.

3.





1.

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Material Required

Sufficient photocopies of Tower of strength handout for all students, pens

Step One

Provide the handout – Tower of Strength - to every student in the class. Ask the students to think about all the things that have happened to them (good and bad) since they first started school. Have the students write down on the back of the handout sheet something that has happened at school that they didn't like. This could have been in any year of their school life.

Step Two

Have the students flip over the handout sheet so the picture of the tower of strength is on top. On each year level of the tower, ask the students to write down something positive and good that occurred to them or their class in each year level. These could be things like school camp, making something in art, getting out of school early, something funny that happened etc.

Step Three

Explain to the students that even though bad things can happen to our lives, there are still a lot of good things that happen to get us through the bad times. For example people helping each other out in natural disasters like cyclones and earthquakes. Suggest to students to fold the handout in half so the bad time is on the inside of the fold. Sit the folded piece of paper on the student's desk like a billboard. Ask the students to stand behind their desk with their hands behind their backs. Inform the students they will knock their bad times over with just one breath. On the count of three (3), ask students to blow with their mouths towards the folded handout. Students are not to use their hands only their breath to knock over the folded piece of paper. You will need very quick eyes to see who the winner is.



Tower of Strength

