

Intervention Activities

AIM : To help students identify that there can be many causes to bullying, some of which are not even clearly understood by the bullying student themselves. Attempting to clarify what causes a particular incident for the bully student, the aim is to open up conversations about other positive options the bully student could have chosen. The activities are by no means fully comprehensive and are provided as an additional tool for teachers when they do intervene to help facilitate clarification of the problem and in aiming for resolution.

Level A – Prep to Grade Three

I wanted it

This intervention is designed for the bully student to gain an understanding of the cause of the incident.

By breaking the incident up into three components - before, during and after, the student can be helped to see there were choices of behaviour available at each stage along the process. The intervention involves a re-enactment for the bully student with a new option of behaviour.

Level B – Grade Four to Grade 6/7

A piece of cake

Often bullying incidents can occur from misguided interpretations of behaviour. Using a cake diagram, it is illustrated how there are many sides to a story and therefore there can be different causes to a bullying incident.

This activity involves the bully student, the targeted student and the bystanders giving their explanation of what occurred and why. The purpose is to have the students realise they need to question their own actions before making quick judgements.

Level C – Grade 6/7 to Grade 9

Find the red smarties

Sometimes the cause of bullying behaviour can occur without the bully student giving it much thought or planning. Equally so, the bystanders can be oblivious to what is really going on. This activity is to get the students to identify their behaviour and why they behaved in the way they did. This activity has the bully student, the targeted student and the bystanders (where appropriate) sitting down together with a large plate in front of them, full of smarties for an exercise to draw attention to different ways of behaving.

Level D – Grade 10 to Grade 12

Do the means ever justify the end?

It is important for the bully to become fully aware of why they chose to do the behaviour they did. In doing so, the bully student may identify that the bullying incident was not a straightforward positive situation for them, and in fact they may come to realise that there were very real negative aspects for them, as the bully, too. The bully student is asked to answer a series of 'why' questions which leads them to weighing up if the behaviour was justified or whether alternative behaviour may have been more beneficial.

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Materials Required

Blindfold, M and M's, plate

Step One

Explain to the students that you want to do an exercise to help them understand bullying behaviour. Sit students down on chairs around a table that has a plate in the middle, and then blindfold them. Pour a lot of smarties or M and M's on to the plate. Inform students that shortly they will take their blindfolds off; but first you will explain the rules. When students are told to take off their blindfolds, they must pick up 3 red, 3 blue and 3 green smarties in 20 seconds. To start the activity you will count down aloud from ten and when you say zero, students can take off their blindfolds and begin to collect the smarties. Give the students 10 seconds of think time before you start the countdown.

Step Two

Start counting down to zero. Inform the students to take off their blindfolds if they have not done so after reaching zero. After the 20 second time period for collecting the smarties, see if students had collected the required amount of each colour. Ask students if anyone thought of a plan to obtain the smarties or did they just jump in. Could they have done it differently so that all students obtained the correct colours and quantities? Did smarties end up off the plate due to students trying to grab the smarties? Did someone push in hard to pick up the smarties? If they worked together could it have been a more successful outcome?

Step Three

Ask students if their behaviour in the activity had any similarities with the bullying incident? Did students think of everyone else involved in the incident at the time or just themselves? Was there someone trying to show they were more powerful than the others? Was this the same person as the bully in the bullying incident? What did students think of the person for trying to be powerful? Was there something different they could have done?

Step Four

Ask the students, what could the bystanders have done differently to support the targeted student? What could the bystanders have done to help stop the bully student from doing the bullying? Ask the bully, if they had time to think the whole situation through, what would they have done differently?