▶ SPEAK UP: Confronting Bullying Behavior

Could be follow-up activity to Sensitivity to Others

FOCUS

To learn how to actively confront bullying behavior in both face-to-face and cyber interactions.

. . . .

LESSON COMPONENTS

Discussion | Reading
Role Play | Journaling

MATERIALS

- Student handouts
  Confront Bullying Behavior (2 pages)
  Cyber-bullying
  Pocket version of **Confronting Bullying Behavior.** Copy and cut cards (1 per student) prior to class.

PROCESS

❶ Through a class discussion, in small groups or as a writing assignment, ask students to explain a situation where they were the bully, the bullied or a bystander.

❷ Ask students to read the handout, **Confronting Bullying Behavior.** As they read, ask them to underline things they agree with, circle concepts that are new to them and put a question mark next to things they do not fully understand.

❸ Through a class discussion, in small groups or writing assignment, ask students to answer the following questions.
- What do you agree with? (underline)
- What are new concepts or ideas for you? (circle)
- What do you not fully understand or question? (question mark)
- In terms of bullying behavior at our school, how big of a problem is it? Rank it on a Fist to 5 scale with 5 = very big problem and 0 = no problem. Please explain your rating?
- What bullying behavior is happening

at our school?
- What is being said or done?
- Who seems to be the target?
- Where is it happening? (bus, lockers, lunch hallways etc.)
- Think back to our opening reflection on the bully, the bullied and the bystander. What new thoughts do you have on these three behaviors based on what you have read and observed?

❹ Give each student a pocket version of **Confronting Bullying Behavior.** Ask the students to form groups of three and create mini-scenarios where they can practice verbally using the three part script to confront bullying behavior.

❺ Read and discuss the handout, **Cyber-bullying.**
- What are their experiences with cyber-bullying?
- From their experience is this a bigger issue in middle schools than high schools?
- Could the steps outlined work?
- What other resources are available to help in a campaign against cyber-bullying?

❻ Ask students to keep a journal for a specified time documenting how they have used the Confronting Bullying Behavior protocols in both face-to-face and cyber interactions.

❼ Optional Supporting Activity- Use the ***Stop, Drop and Roll*** lesson as a large group kinesthetic activity to reinforce the process.

Confronting Bullying Behavior

STOP and Name It | DROP the Golden Rule | ROLL out of there!

"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter." –Martin Luther King, Jr.

All of us, for our own reasons, have at some point shied away from confronting bullying behavior. In the moment, it always seems too difficult to do. The thing is, people using bullying behavior are operating on a limited script…in other words, they are only prepared for the target to be a target. If we create our own script for such encounters and keep "on script" we can actually stop bullying behavior.

Confronting bullying behavior effectively–whether you are protecting yourself or someone else– operates on three principles: redirection, staying calm and keeping to the script. Remember, you are not doing anything wrong by confronting bullying behavior. You are getting people out of trouble, not into trouble. You are not only helping the target of bullying behavior, you are helping the person using bullying behavior too. People who are never called upon to change their bullying behavior continue to use it. Inevitably, bullying behavior leads to loss of friendships, missed opportunities and punishments. The older a person gets, the more severe the punishments. It is also good to remind yourself that everyone has a moral compass that points to respect, dignity and kindness. The person using bullying behavior just has a compass in need of adjustment. They already know what they are doing is wrong, and so does everybody else who is a witness to the behavior. They just need someone to tell them to stop.

Step 1 = STOP and Name It: Be a referee and blow the whistle!

Bullying behavior often times continues simply because nobody says anything. As a student leader, you have the responsibility, like a referee, to help enforce the rules. With an assertive statement, loudly let everyone know what is happening. Shed light on the inappropriate behavior.

About 80% of the time, the naming of the inappropriate behavior stops the behavior. Sometimes, people are "experimenting" with bullying behavior or they are just being insensitive. Try any of these lines in your script.

> *"Stop!"*
> *"You are being mean!"*
> *"That is hurtful!"*
> *"What you are saying is not true!"*
> *"We have school rules about how we can treat each other, and you are breaking them!"*
> *"You are hurting his feelings!"*
> *"You are not teasing, you are taunting!"*

If *Step 1* does not stop the bullying behavior, sometimes the behavior gets turned toward you. This usually happens through a verbal attack.

So, you need to go to *Step 2.*

Step 2 = DROP the Golden Rule:
Calmly state that everyone deserves kindness

Sometimes the person who stands up to defend others gets verbally attacked for speaking up. In this step, it is crucial to stay calm. The goal is to redirect everyone's attention back to the original bullying behavior, which ultimately was something unkind done to someone. By redirecting to the concept of kindness, you are not confronting the person using bullying behavior directly. You are just stating a fact. Remember, you have done nothing wrong. You are simply concerned about the universal truth that everyone wants to be treated with kindness, respect and dignity. Don't go off script. Don't argue. Don't defend. Don't judge. Just simply state the fact that what happened was not kind.

> *"Everyone deserves kindness."*
>
> *"No one likes to get hurt."*
>
> *"Being mean is not the answer."*
>
> *"We don't have to like everyone, but we don't have to hurt anyone."*
>
> *"Everybody deserves to be safe."*
>
> *"The Golden Rule says we should treat others as we would like to be treated."*

Usually this calm reminder will stop the bullying behavior. The concept of kindness and love trumps a lot of negative energy. People ultimately want to be nice...you are just helping them to see this. If *Step 2* does not stop the bullying, sometimes the person will resort to a physical threat or violence. This is called an assault and is against the law, so you need to go to *Step 3*.

Step 3 = ROLL out of there: Call for back up!

When nothing else works, the person using bullying behavior may pull out their most effective weapon: the threat of physical violence. In this step, it's time to invoke authority. Remember, you've done nothing wrong. It's the person using bullying behavior that is wrong, and the last thing he or she wants is the negative attention of the group or the authorities (the rest of the school, school staff, parents, or if it comes to it, the police). Calmly state that you will need to tell an adult. If there is a chair near you, sit down when you say it. Be casual and use non-aggressive body language. It is just a fact beyond your control: nobody has the right to physically harm others. Period. Never. There are all sorts of policies and laws against it. If they have a comeback at all at this point, they'll usually try to take it back to *Step 2* to save face, for which you already have a script that works!

> *"Assaulting someone is against the law. I will need to tell an adult."*
>
> *"I can call 911."*
>
> *"Our principal has told us if we ever feel threatened, we need to tell her."*
>
> *"My parents are not going to be happy when I tell them what you are saying."*

Step 4 (If needed) = REPAIR

Sometimes in a bullying situation, it is hard to find the courage to use the Stop, Drop and Roll technique. You can still help "repair" a bullying situation after the fact. Below are a few ideas:

- Comfort the target of the bullying behavior. Let them know they are not alone and what happened to them was wrong and it is not their fault.
- Talk to the person using bullying behavior in private. Encourage them to apologize to the target of the inappropriate behavior.
- Sometimes after a bullying situation, the person using the bullying behavior becomes the target of bullying. They might need support, especially if they have stopped the bullying behavior.
- Talk to a trusted adult regarding the situation and explain what happened (or is happening).

Cyber-bullying

Cyber-bullying is a huge problem. It seems that more and more, bullying behavior occurs in this realm rather than face-to-face. This is horrendous because the consequences can be so severe: once something is online, even if it's been proven a lie, it stays there forever. Do not wait to confront cyber-bullying; act immediately! The stakes are too high. There are three steps to confronting cyber-bullies. They follow the same pattern of confronting bullying behavior in person.

Step 1 & 2 = STOP and Name IT and Redirect to Kindness: *Post the message*

Speak up for yourself or others by immediately posing a message on multiple forms of social media.

Step 1 of message - Shed light and name it!

"_____ is not telling the truth about _____!"

"That is a lie!"

"This is wrong!"

"Talk to _____in person, not about them online!"

"Leave _____ alone!"

Step 2 of message - Redirect the attention back to the concept of kindness

"I wish people would just be nice to one another."

"There's always time for kindness."

"We should be nice to one another."

"All of us make mistakes."

"Kindness is important."

Step 3 = Involve Adults: Call for back up

Always SAVE and PRINT screenshots of cyber-bullying and send it to the parents of the person using bullying behavior. (Snail mail works best.) Ask your parents or a trusted adult to help you with this process. They should be involved at this step. It might be appropriate to involve your principal or school counselor too, especially if the bullying behavior is creeping into the school day or it is connected to something that happened at school.

Tip = The Power of Six

Find five other friends to fight bullying behavior by using their networks of social media.

Six different people combined have a huge online footprint in one school. Remember, people using bullying behavior hate transparency. They do not like it when their poor behavior is exposed. Usually, nobody says anything and other people pile on their bullying behavior because they feel a sense of power online. One message telling people to stop might make them think; six or more will remind them that they are not using bullying behavior in a vacuum and that people will find out what they are doing. And people don't like what they are doing!

Step 1: STOP and Name It
Be a referee and blow the whistle!
- "Stop!"
- "You are being mean!"
- "That is hurtful!"
- "What you are saying is not true!"
- "You are breaking the school rules of how we are asked to treat each other."
- "You are hurting his feelings!"
- "You are not teasing, you are taunting!"

Step 2: DROP the Golden Rule
Calmly redirect to kindness
- "Everyone deserves kindness."
- "No one likes to get hurt."
- "Being mean is not the answer."
- "We don't have to like everyone, but we don't have to hurt anyone."
- "Everybody deserves to be safe."
- "The Golden Rule says we should treat others as we would like to be treated."

Step 3: ROLL out of There!
Call for back up!
- "Assaulting someone is against the law.
- I will need to tell an adult."
- "I can call 911."
- "Our principal has told us if we ever feel threatened, we need to tell her."
- "My parents are not going to be happy when I tell them what you are saying."

▶ Stop, Drop and Roll *(a large group activity)*

FOCUS

To anchor the script for **Confronting Bullying Behavior: Stop, Drop and Roll (and Repair).**

....

LESSON COMPONENTS

Self-reflection | Art project

MATERIALS

- Open space to accommodate the number of people in the activity. (For use with 20-300 participants.)

PROCESS

❶ Teach the commands and the actions of the game to the group. (It is helpful to pre-train a group of students to showcase each command and action). While you explain and demonstrate each command and action, highlight the main aspects of the Stop, Drop and Roll (and Repair) confronting bullying behavior technique (see suggested comments below)

❷ Once the commands and actions have been explained and practiced a few times, then play the game. The first command to call is **Walk the hallway.** After this command, rapidly call commands rather than keeping them in sequence. Do not stop for commentary, just keep calling commands. The goal of the activity is to get the group so mixed up while playing the game, that when a command is called, they find the people nearest to them and perform the required action. Participants continue to perform the required action until they hear another command.

❸ Commands *(see following page)*

Number of People	Command and Required Action	Suggested Comment when Teaching a Command and Action
1	**Command: Walk the hallway** **Action:** Participants walk quickly as if they are going to class during passing period. They attempt to make eye contact and say "hello" to as many people as they can. For fun, you can give the participants a specific type of greeting (wink, high five, hug, fist bump, etc.) to use each time they pass someone.	When confronting bullying behavior, the first step is to actually notice and observe what is happening around you. If you are not actively looking, you may miss when a bullying situation occurs.
2	**Command: Back to Back** **Action:** Two people stand back to back and take turns whispering over their shoulders: "I got your back."	Confronting bullying behavior takes courage, so you need to know you "have each other's back."
2	**Command: Stop and Name It** **Action:** One person points to an imaginary person and laughs at them; another person walks up to the pointer with hands on their hips and stands directly in front of the pointing finger and says: "Stop, that is mean." After the pointer hears this, they spin and point to another imaginary person and laughs again and the other person again moves in front of the pointing finger and says: "Stop, that is mean."	By simply naming the bullying behavior, 80% of the time this will stop it. By not saying anything when someone is being targeted, you are giving tacit (implied) permission to the inappropriate behavior.
3	**Command: Drop the Golden Rule** **Action:** One person stands and pretends to be shooting baskets. Two people join hands to form a circle around the person shooting baskets lifting up their hands from waist to eye level as the person pretends to shoot baskets. With each shot, the people circling the shooter say, "Kindness to all is the Golden Rule."	Often times, when you are the person to say "stop" by naming the behavior, you then become the target of the bullying behavior through a verbal assault. Don't react if this happens, simply state that kindness to all is the Golden Rule. Everyone knows that what the person did in the first place and what they are doing now is not kind. All you are doing is calmly reminding everyone about kindness.

4	**Command: Roll out of there!** **Action:** One person raising a hand as if to hit someone. Three other people linked together with hands on the shoulders of person in front of them walking away from the threat while the threat continues to follow.	The last strategy of a person using bullying behavior is the threat of physical violence. When this happens, you have to immediately "Roll Out of There" and call for backup. Laws and school rules protect you from assaults, but you need to find adults to help you deal with the situation.
5	**Command: Ensure Safety** **Action:** Five people linked arm and arm skipping around together and humming a happy tune.	When people feel safe socially and physically in a school, the school is a much happier and healthier place!
6	**Command: Repair** **Action:** Six people clump together and using mime, pretend to build a house (hammering, painting, hanging drywall, sawing, etc.)	Sometimes in a bullying situation, it is hard to find the courage to use Stop, Drop and Roll. But, even if you are not successful in the moment, you can help "Repair" relationships and environments after the fact.