

Complementary Guide



BEEF

une histoire d'intimidation

A live action short film about bullying for children aged 9-13, made with the extraordinary participation of 48 young people from Montreal's Mercier-Hochelaga-Maisonneuve district.

The following documents will help you set the guidelines for screening the film and developing intervention measures:

Key Concepts, Workshop Suggestions, Response Strategies, as well as Resources and References about bullying.



Introduction

This film is designed to provide children aged 9 to 13 with a starting point for discussions and workshops about social exclusion and bullying at school.

The film shows a student being bullied at school, but it does not provide any resolution. It is important to remember that there is no single solution to the problem of bullying. The film raises the following issues:

- **What is bullying?**
- **What do the victims feel and what are the consequences of bullying?**
- **What can we do when this happens?**
- **Who can we turn to for support?**

To focus the young people's listening and reflection skills, it is a good idea to mention these issues before screening. After the screening, you can then use the guided workshops to introduce a few key concepts that will help the students to develop these skills so that they can be more effective in dealing with the problem.

We hope you enjoy this activity and wish you a successful intervention!

Key Concepts

1. Definition of Bullying

A person is the victim of bullying when he or she is subjected to coercion, threats or aggression repeatedly by an individual or by a group of persons who have a psychological, intellectual or physical advantage. Bullying can be divided into three stages: latent, emerging or open. Bullying is always:

- **intentional;**
- **repeated;**
- **disadvantageous for the victim and of benefit to the bullies.**

The following are recognized acts that constitute bullying: verbal aggression, social rejection, slandering and damaging rumours, denigrating, punching, verbal or physical threats, blackmail, physical aggression, rape, taxing and forcible confinement.

2. Different Roles

Many children are victims or direct or indirect witnesses of bullying. Most of them want to do the right thing but often they just don't know what to do. To help them intervene effectively, it can be very useful to discuss the different roles that individuals play in these situations.

- **victim;**
- **bully;**
- **accomplice;**
- **witness;**
- **protector.**

Bullies often need an audience. Witnesses and protectors have as important a role to play in preventing bullying as do the victims, or even more so. Each person can intervene in his or her own way, even if it's just by refusing to be a passive bystander when someone is being bullied or by refusing to encourage or play down such actions.

3. Signs Given by the Victim

Most often, bullying victims or witnesses would rather remain silent about what they know or have experienced, likely due to shame or fear of making the situation even worse. Nevertheless, by paying close attention to sudden or progressive changes in a victim's behaviour or by asking them or their friends questions, we can readily identify several signs of victimization such as:

- **unusual aggressive behaviour;**
- **benign symptoms that cannot be explained otherwise (stomach aches, headaches, nausea, pain, etc.)**
- **injuries;**
- **torn, lost, repeatedly stolen clothing or supplies;**
- **avoidance of certain students, recess, cafeteria, certain hallways, etc.;**
- **otherwise unjustifiable lateness and absences;**
- **loss of motivation;**
- **anxiety or anguish tied to certain activities (in which bullying occurs);**
- **loneliness and isolation;**
- **the fact that a young person is often the target of rumours, jokes and teasing by his or her classmates.**

If you see signs like those above, it's best to begin by asking questions, rather than jumping to conclusions. Ask the child some questions; ask his or her friends, parents, teachers, school staff, or coach to get a clearer picture of the situation and to decide on an appropriate course of action.

1. Consequences for the victim

There is no one single consequence for all bullying victims. Some people emerge from such an experience much stronger, while others experience insurmountable difficulties for the rest of their lives. The most damaging consequences for some victims, both short term and long term, are the following:

- **depression;**
- **anxiety;**
- **dropping out of school;**
- **drug abuse;**
- **low self-esteem;**
- **delinquent behaviour;**
- **aggression;**
- **suicide.**

These consequences are the result of many psychological factors, pure chance and circumstances. The most important thing is to support victims by active listening, understanding, respect, consideration and, if possible, giving them the opportunity to highlight their strengths and to make their peers aware of them. It is also a good idea to have the bully realize the implication of the situation by making him or her aware of the victim's position, by showing him or her the advantages of certain positive actions that are compatible with his or her personal ethics.

Workshop Suggestions

The workshop's foremost objective ought to be to inform the students what bullying is; to help them become aware of the consequences of bullying for both the victim and the bystanders; to enable them to identify and describe their emotions and their experiences of bullying and finally, to show them what they can do, the positive role they can play to combat this problem... We should not forget that most children want to do the right thing but often simply don't know what actions they can take in accordance with their personal ethics.

Role Playing *in which the roles are reversed. Invent a situation in which bullying can occur and allot roles to several children (3-5) so that each can play a different role from their usual one. Give them each time to describe their experience. Then, let the entire class participate in a discussion on each point of view.*

See Appendix 1: Examples of Role Playing.

Group Discussion *about some aspects of bullying, especially what the victim feels and what each individual can do to change the situation. Define bullying; identify resources that are available in the school, the neighbourhood, the district, on the internet.*

See Appendix 2: Questions for Group Discussion

Evaluation Questionnaire *of what the children understood about the film and the situation and what it means to them.*

See Appendix 3: Evaluation Questionnaire and Answers

Research by teams *on research studies, books, and on the internet to find a definition of bullying and a description of the effects that it can have on some people.*

Composition *of a short thoughtful examination of what the film's two victims experience, on what causes them to act as they do and on the solutions that are available to them. Find responses and behaviours that could have changed things for both individuals.*

Response Strategies *

* See Appendix 4: Response strategies for Young people

It has been observed that, in most cases, bullies can be stopped if someone intervenes within the first ten seconds. Why don't people intervene? The problem of bullying is, above all, a problem of relationships and that is why a group response is needed.

Limits must, of course, be set and we ourselves must respect them as much as we want others to do the same. One example is an unwavering stand against bullying and exclusion because they are unacceptable forms of behaviour. But 'zero tolerance' and severity have never proven to be a definitive solution to these problems. Rather, compassion, respect for differences, active listening and open-mindedness can improve the situation both at school and at home. Setting group challenges, encouraging cooperation and mutual help also contribute to significant improvements to the situation in the longer term.

Beyond the group itself, the combined cooperation of the entire social network made up of school, family, sports and cultural agencies, health and social services centres who are in touch with the children, makes it possible to develop effective solutions for the students.

Below you will find some examples of response strategies that you can easily use in the school as a whole, in the classroom or at home.

For the school administration

- **Establish a 'whole school policy' initiative (e.g. one for all and all for one,) at the beginning of the school year, instead of a punitive or negative policy against bullying.**
- **At the beginning of the school year, ask a coach or trainer to give a lecture about bullying to the teaching staff.**
- **Designate one person who will be identifiable as someone for the students, teachers and parents to turn to for advice, a sympathetic ear and information about taxing and bullying.**
- **Ensure that the nursing staff provide care for the children and are prepared to listen to them.**
- **See to it that all school staff members are sufficiently trained to provide adequate support.**
- **Set up psychosocial intervention projects in collaboration with social sector agencies, parents and research centres.**
- **Encourage collective initiatives linking classes, by promoting peer teaching, trust circles and discussion groups.**
- **Give open and official support to the combined efforts and commitment of all the staff, the social network and parents.**

For teachers and social workers

- Define bullying.
- Identify resources that can provide help.
- Be a role model by providing a sympathetic ear and showing tolerance, respect and understanding. In this way, you can request the same behaviour from both the victim and the bully.
- Establish a climate of cooperation rather than a climate of fear based on demeaning remarks, reprimands and punishment.
- When intervening with an individual bully, help him or her to understand the victim, ask him or her to use his leadership to improve the situation, make him feel valued for his strength, and in this way you can help him feel responsible for the way he uses it .
- When intervening with an individual victim, help him or her to express feelings in words, lend a sympathetic ear and be empathetic. Give the child examples of similar cases from your own past or from other time periods or from other circumstances so as to help the child feel that he or she is normal rather than marginal, then encourage him or her to get involved in activities that will help him to acquire new personal and social skills. Refer him or her to the resources he needs, if that is the case...
- Arrange the classroom space and organize activities that promote group exchanges, rather than letting the children organize the class, select their seats and activities. Separate aggressive children from each other to avoid reinforcing bullying behaviour.
- Make it clear to the children that they have a social responsibility regarding bullying
- In class, organize sharing circles on a weekly or monthly basis on various subjects about classroom and school life to find practical solutions to various problems and, above all, to establish dynamics which will develop the children's feelings of responsibility and solidarity.
- Find ways to help each student show off his or her individual strengths.
- Offer the students alternatives to direct denunciation (e.g. writing a letter, supporting the victim, asking friends for help, calling a telephone help line, etc).
- Supply information about helpful resources for young people.

For parents

- Be vigilant. Watch for signs of distress and maintain an interest in your child's life on a day-to-day basis.
- Ask questions without intervening, advising or over-reacting.
- Do active listening to develop a better understanding.
- Reassure in a calm manner, without making light of the situation and without any ideas of vengeance or threats.
- Write down all the facts in detail (dates, names, situations).
- Working with your child, try to find solutions and keep his or her point of view in mind.

- Speak with the principal, become involved, set up a plan of action and above all, trust your child.
- Share activities with your child outside of school. In this way you are opening up possibilities of new relationships that will help your child develop new friendships while strengthening his or her individual abilities.

Resources

Réseau d'information pour la réussite éducative - Centre pour le transfert et la réussite éducative du Québec (CTREQ_RIRE) CTREQ_RIRE's violence Bookmarks:
http://delicious.com/CTREQ_RIRE/violence

Le Réseau Éducation-Médias Media Awareness Network
<http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/index.cfm>
 TeacherNet : <http://bit.ly/q6fHq>

References

N. A. Card et al., “**Direct and Indirect Aggression During Childhood and Adolescence: A Meta-Analytic Review of Gender Differences.**” Intercorrelations, and Relations to Maladjustment, Child Development, 2008, vol. 79-5. (Boys are more inclined to commit physical violence than girls, but are just as likely to commit indirect violence.)

P. Fonagy et al., “**A Cluster-Randomized Controlled Trial of Child-Focused Psychiatric Consultation and a School Systems-Focused Intervention to Reduce Aggression.**” Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 26 January 2009. (Anti-bullying programs aimed at evoking bystanders' empathy can turn out to be effective.)

E. S. Buhs et al., “**Exclusion and Victimization: Processes That Mediate the Relation Between Peer Group Rejection and Children's Classroom Engagement and Achievement?**”, Journal of Educational Psychology, 2006, Vol. 98-1. (Peer exclusion affects classroom participation and educational performance.)

R. C. Vreeman et al., “**A Systematic Review of School-Based Interventions to Prevent Bullying.**” Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine, 2007, Vol. 161-1. (Multi-faceted approaches are more effective than single measures in combating violence in schools.)

E. Ahmed and V. Braithwaite, **“Forgiveness, Reconciliation, and Shame: Three Key Variables in Reducing School Bullying.”** Journal of Social Issues, 2007, Vol. 62-2. (Forgiveness and reconciliation are effective in counteracting bullying in the schools.)

A. Damasio and M. H. Immordino-Yang, **“Neural Correlates of Admiration and Compassion.”** Proceedings of the National Academy of Science, 2009, Early edition. (The rapid succession of media stimuli harms moral judgment.)

Workshop “Role-Playing” in 7 Steps

Step 1

Ask questions about the different roles that a person can assume in a bullying situation (victim, protector, witness, accomplice and bully).

Step 2

Screen the film and identify the different roles played by the main characters.

Step 3

Suggest a realistic bullying scenario that could take place at school and involve a bully, a victim and witnesses. For example:

It's recess and one student is sitting alone on a bench eating his or her snack. An older boy approaches with his friends.

Step 4

Select five appropriate students to participate in the role-playing and give each one a role that is in contrast to his or her usual behaviour. A student who tends to bully would play the victim; a victim could play one of the bully's friends (accomplice), with another student likely to play a protector role in the situation (protector or witness).

Step 5

Set limitations on each student's behaviour, according to the role being played. For example:

- ✘ The **bully** cannot hit or use foul language.
- ✘ The **victim** cannot defend himself or herself by speaking, hitting, or running away.
- ✘ The **witnesses** cannot defend the victim. Only one person can intervene directly by speaking.

Step 6

Have the students role play until the situation is sufficiently advanced that each student can verbalize what his or her feelings were during the role-playing. Conclude the session by asking a participating student or an observer to summarize what happened.

Step 7

Have the participants and the class share what they felt about the different characters. During this sharing session, define bullying and identify resources that can help victims and that are available at school, in the neighbourhood, and on the Internet.



Questions for Group Discussion

- Question 1** Have you ever been a witness or a victim in a situation like the one shown in the film?
- Question 2** Are there any other kinds of situations in which we can feel bullied or threatened, but in which we are not hit or punched?
- Question 3** How would you define bullying?
- Question 4** Imagine you are in Eliot's place. What do you think he feels:
- 1) **In the shop with his sister?**
 - 2) **As he imagines arriving at school?**
 - 3) **When Luc, the boy in the black hoodie, warns him to wait for him in the schoolyard at 4 p.m.?**
 - 4) **When he sees a classmate being bullied in the washroom?**
 - 5) **When he comes across Luc, Myriam and their friends in the hallway and he hides behind the janitor?**
 - 6) **When he imagines winning the boxing match?**
 - 7) **When he comes out of a closet, is pushed into the schoolyard and is forced to stay?**
 - 8) **When the teacher intervenes at the very end?**
- Question 5** What could he have said in each of these situations?
- Question 6** What would you do if you were Eliot?
- Question 7** Could things have happened differently? How?
- Question 8** What can we do if we are witnesses to bullying?
- Question 9** What can we do when it happens to us? Who can we turn to at school? In our neighbourhood? By phone or on the Internet?



Evaluation Questionnaire

I hope you were paying attention while you watched the film. 😊 Some of the questions are not so easy.... Careful! Watch out for traps! There are some questions for which there is no right or wrong answer, as you'll be able to see for yourself. Those are the easy ones because you just have to say what you really think. *Good luck!*

Question 1 – Right at the beginning of the film, when Eliot's sister is on the phone, she says that her brother is having a problem at school. What word does she use to describe the problem? "He's got a problem _____."

Question 2 – What do you think she meant by that?

Question 3 – Choose the definition below that best describes bullying and circle the appropriate letter

- A- Bullying occurs when a person is embarrassed in front of other people and they take advantage of it to tease or make the person afraid.
- B- Bullying occurs when a person repeatedly suffers coercion, threats or aggression by one person or a group of people who have an advantage over him or her.
- C- Bullying is a phenomenon that occurs when one person tries to integrate into a group of people who do not like him or her. The group rejects the individual or uses various means to makes him or her feel unwelcome.

Question 4 – Sometimes we differentiate between being a direct victim of bullying or an indirect one, such as a witness or someone who knows that a person is being bullied. Throughout that day, Eliot is a direct and indirect victim of bullying. Name one example in which he is a direct victim and another example in which he is an indirect victim.

Question 5 – If you paid attention, you will, no doubt, be able to identify certain scenes that are being played out in Eliot's imagination. What solutions does he imagine in these scenes? Why do you think so?



Question 6 – Perhaps you didn't notice, but Eliot only speaks twice in the entire film. What are his exact words?

« _____ »
« _____ »

***Question 7** – At what time does Luc, the bully in the black hoodie, tell Eliot to meet him at the bicycle rack?
_____h

Question 8 – Briefly describe what you would do to get out of such a situation, if you were in Eliot's place.

Question 9 – Why do you think Eliot did not do what you would have done?

Question 10 – At least three individuals try to help Eliot. Who are they?

Question 11 – Are they using the right approach? Why?



Question 12 – All the following expressions describe acts of bullying. Which one(s) accurately describe the acts of bullying to which Eliot is subjected?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal aggression | <input type="checkbox"/> Blackmail |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rejection | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical aggression |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Insults | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual abuse |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Degrading rumours | <input type="checkbox"/> Taxing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Humiliation | <input type="checkbox"/> Forcible confinement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal or physical threats | |

Question 13 – Witness often play a decisive role in bullying incidents. They can often offer the victim the most effective help. Which one(s) from the following list are, in your opinion, the most likely to provide real help?

- A- Refuse to be present at a bullying incident and leave
- B- Tell the bully to stop
- C- Encourage the victim to defend himself or herself
- D- Speak to the teacher, nurse, principal or a member of the school staff
- E- Speak to your parents about it
- F- Act as if this is normal
- G- Ask the victim if you can help

Question 14 – Name three people at your school or in your neighbourhood to whom you can turn to ask for help.



Answers

Question 1 – Right at the beginning of the film, when Eliot's sister is on the phone, she says that her brother is having a problem at school. What word does she use to describe the problem? "He's got a problem _____."

ANSWER: "He's got a problem integrating_."

Question 2 - What do you think she meant by that?

ANSWER: *Does the child understand the connections between bullying and social exclusion? If some students do not seem to understand this, now would be a good time to talk openly about it in class. If only one student is unclear about this, it would be good to take a few minutes to speak to him or her about it and to try to find out how much empathy that student is able to feel for the victim. A total lack of empathy could be a sign of more serious emotional problems. If you have any doubts, ask the psychoeducator for advice.*

Question 3 – Choose the definition below that best describes bullying and circle the appropriate letter.

ANSWER: B - Bullying occurs when a person repeatedly suffers coercion, threats or aggression by one person or a group of people who have an advantage over him or her.

Question 4 – Sometimes we differentiate between being a direct victim of bullying or an indirect one, such as a witness or someone who know that a person is being bullied. Throughout that day, Eliot is a direct and indirect victim of bullying. Name one example in which he is a direct victim and another example in which he is an indirect victim.

ANSWER: *Indirect victim: in the washroom.*

Direct victim: in the schoolyard at the beginning and end of the film; in the classroom.

Question 5 – If you paid attention, you will, no doubt, be able to identify certain scenes that are being played out in Eliot's imagination. What solutions does he imagine in these scenes? Why do you think so?

ANSWER:

- Being cool
- Finding someone to help him defend himself
- Boxing in the ring according to rules

Does the child understand why being the victim of bullying can cause fear, the desire to be stronger, the wish to be in a situation governed by rules for fighting, such as a beginning and an end?

Question 6 – Perhaps you didn't notice, but Eliot only speaks twice in the entire film. What are his exact words?

ANSWER: "Do you think that I can win?"
"Here, you want my hat?"



Question 7 – At what time does Luc, the bully in the black hoodie, tell Eliot to meet him at the bicycle rack?

ANSWER: 4 h

Question 8 – Briefly describe what you would do to get out of such a situation, if you were in Eliot's place.

ANSWER: *Does the child know how to get out of this messy situation? Does he or she suggest realistic solutions? Does he or she only write down what is expected, without any conviction, without showing any interest or does he or she react in a negative or cynical way? Use your discretion in deciding whether some students need to be better informed or if some need to be made more aware.*

Question 9 – Why do you think Eliot did not do what you would have done?

ANSWER: *To what degree does the child try to understand the experience of someone who is different from him or her? Does the child show any sympathy or empathy or is he or she indifferent? Is he able to imagine himself in such a situation, or does he seem to be experiencing the same kind of situation?*

Question 10 – At least three individuals try to help Eliot. Who are they?

ANSWER:
Eliot's sister
The janitor
Médéric
The teacher

Question 11 – Are they using the right approach? Why?

ANSWER: *Does the child see adults as being cut off from his experience or does he or she interpret this gap as the specific experience of each character? Does the student think it's possible to have adequate communication with an adult? To what degree does the student see adults as possible allies? A total lack of trust in adults can be a sign that the child is experiencing trouble in his relationships at home or at school. It could also simply be a sign of a group mentality that is shaping his opinions.*

Question 12 – All the following expressions describe acts of bullying. Which one(s) accurately describe the acts of bullying to which Eliot is subjected?

ANSWER:

<input type="checkbox"/> Verbal aggression	<input type="checkbox"/> Blackmail
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rejection	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Physical aggression
<input type="checkbox"/> Insults	<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual abuse
<input type="checkbox"/> Degrading rumours	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Taxing
<input type="checkbox"/> Humiliation	<input type="checkbox"/> Forcible confinement
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Verbal and physical threats	



Question 13 – Witness often play a decisive role in bullying incidents. They can often offer the victim the most effective help. Which action(s) from the following list are, in your opinion, the most likely to provide real help?

ANSWER:

- ✓ *Refuse to be present at a bullying incident and leave*
- ✓ *Tell the bully to stop*
- Encourage the victim to defend himself or herself
- ✓ *Speak to the teacher, nurse, principal or a member of the school staff*
- ✓ *Speak to your parents about it*
Act as if this is normal
- ✓ *Ask the victim if you can help*

Question 14 – Name three people at your school or in your neighbourhood to whom you can turn to ask for help.

ANSWER: Nursing staff, a teacher,
School principal, a discussion leader,
A monitor, the janitor.



Response Strategies

Being bullied is never right. **It has to be changed.** It's easy to take on those who are weaker than we are and **it's hard to find a way out** when we are the victim of a bully. We can **do more than make fun of the victim.**

We can:

- ✓ Show our solidarity with the victim and thereby support him or her.
- ✓ Defend the victim in a peaceful way by intervening in a calm manner when a bullying situation occurs.
- ✓ Refuse to stand by and encourage a bullying action.
- ✓ Tell someone what happened.
- ✓ Report the situation in a letter or by telling a member of the school staff.
- ✓ Talk with the victim to let him or her know that they are not alone, even if you don't feel able to intervene directly.
- ✓ Dissuade the bully if you are his or her friend.
- ✓ Together with other students and a teacher, form a group to help victims of bullying.
- ✓ Ask someone you trust for advice.
- ✓ Don't keep secrets about bullying; speak honestly.
- ✓ Turn to a resource person at school or at a social service agency that helps young people.

Resource person(s)

Name _____ email _____

Name _____ email _____

Social service agency helping young people

Name _____ email _____

Tel.: _____

