

Co-creating a Harmonious School - Stop Bullying” Resource Package

Preface

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 3.3 stipulates "Parties shall ensure that the institutions, services and facilities responsible for the care or protection of children shall conform with the standards established by competent authorities, particularly in the areas of safety, health, in the number and suitability of their staff, as well as competent supervision." Therefore, schools have the responsibility to provide a safe learning environment to provide students with happy learning experience and healthy development.

The former Education and Manpower Bureau distributed the “Co-creating a Harmonious School” CD-ROM (Chinese version only) in 2004, providing secondary and primary schools with suggestions and teaching materials to prevent and handle school bullying. The Guidance and Discipline Section of the Education Bureau has launched a web-based resource package on “Co-creating a Harmonious School: Stop Bullying” . It provides suggestions on establishing an anti-bullying policy and implementation strategies with a Whole School Approach. This further enhances the anti-bullying work in schools. Furthermore, the resource package includes lesson plans to develop students’ empathy through the use of drama skills and suggestions on parent education to supplement the areas not covered in the “Co-creating a Harmonious School” . The reason for naming the new resource package as “Stop Bullying” is to reiterate that schools must adopt a “zero tolerance” policy against bullying.

Bullying is a behavioural problem that schools should not tolerate and ignore. According to overseas and local research findings and experience, students being bullied are likely to skip classes, show a decline in school performance, suffer from low self-esteem, long-term anxiety and social withdrawal. Some of them may even commit suicide. Some victims will turn into bullies themselves due to long-term suppression. On the other hand, bullies will have difficulty in developing proper interpersonal relationships due to their lack of care and sympathy for others. Moreover, bystanders will face psychological trauma, fearing that they may become the next victims. They may even turn into bullies in order to protect themselves.

Based on students' needs, schools can select relevant parts of "Co-creating a Harmonious School" and "Co-creating a Harmonious School: Stop Bullying" to develop their anti-bullying work. This new web-based resource package is linked to the relevant parts of "Co-creating a Harmonious School" to facilitate easy cross reference by schools. Some parts of "Basic Drama Skills" and "Drama Education Class Activities for Primary Schools" in this resource package are illustrated with animation for teachers' handy use. The appendices are mainly uploaded in Acrobat format, while the lesson plans and parts of the information are also available in Word format to facilitate teachers' easy editing. The resource package is divided into three sections with contents as follows:

1. School Policy

Introduce how to establish an anti-bullying policy, implementation strategies and procedures for handling bullying with the Whole School Approach.

2. Preventive Measures – Drama Education

There are 12 lesson plans of drama education: eight for Primary 4 to Primary 6 students and four for Secondary 1 to Secondary 3 students. By means of drama activities, students can experience the situations that others face, understand others' points of view, the intention behind the behaviours and the feelings aroused. Students can then develop empathy, resulting in less bullying.

3. Parent Education

Provide reference materials for schools to use in parent education, including information on the nature of school bullying, symptoms of being bullied and the ways of supporting their children.

School Policy

"Stop Bullying" - Policy and Measures

"Stop Bullying" represents the firm stance schools take to stop bullying from happening or spreading. Schools should take all possible measures to prevent, handle and follow up bullying cases in order to offer a safe learning environment for students through cultivating a harmonious school culture. Every member of the school including staff, students and parents should be informed of the school's zero tolerance policy on bullying, procedures for handling bullying, follow-up strategies, preventive measures and review mechanism. This can raise the whole school's concerns about school bullying so that concerted effort will be made to create an orderly school life. When schools establish a comprehensive "Stop Bullying" policy and measures, the following steps should be considered:

1. Self-review
2. Policy
3. Organisation
4. Procedures for Handling Bullying Incidents
 - Intervening in the Incident Immediately
 - Follow-up
 - Handling Cyber-Bullying
 - Working with Parents to Deal with Bullying Problems
5. Teacher Training
6. Developmental Work
7. Assessment

Self-review: An Overview of the Current Bullying Situation in Schools

Review of the current bullying situation in schools

- Give a clear definition of bullying behaviour. (Please refer to "[Co-creating a Harmonious School \(Highlights\) - Concept](#)" for the definition, characteristics and forms of bullying behaviour.)
- Collect updated information on bullying incidents to understand their seriousness.

Policy

A. The principles for formulating a "Stop Bullying" policy should include:

1. Have a "definite and clear" belief: Schools have genuine responsibility to provide a safe learning environment for students. Therefore they should have a comprehensive and open policy on anti-bullying, clearly proclaiming schools' stance and institutionalizing the handling procedures, so as to increase students' confidence in reporting school bullying incidents.
2. Adopt a "Whole School Approach": To address students' behavioural problems, schools should have a clear and open policy for different stakeholders, namely students, teaching staff and parents, to participate, contribute opinions, develop strategies, monitor, handle and prevent bullying problems collaboratively.
3. Uphold a "Zero Tolerance" attitude: To address bullying incidents, schools should take a proactive and serious attitude to handle and follow up the incidents. They should guide the students positively to reflect on their responsibility and to bear the consequences of their actions.
4. Tie in with the "Home-school Cooperation" policy: To prevent bullying problems in schools, close collaboration between schools and parents is important. Schools should set relevant guidelines and procedures to facilitate home-school cooperation in preventing and handling school bullying.

B. Procedures to formulate "Stop Bullying" policy

1. Work in line with the mission and vision of the sponsoring bodies to formulate the concept of the school-based "Stop Bullying" policy.
2. Help the stakeholders (including teaching staff, students and parents) understand the nature of bullying and its negative impacts. (Please refer to "Co-creating a Harmonious School (Highlights) - Concept", and "Preventive Measures - Drama Education" and "Parent Education" in this resource package).
3. Discuss and establish a Whole School Approach to "Stop Bullying" policy.

- C. The content of the "Stop Bullying" policy should include:
1. Objectives of the "Stop Bullying" policy
 2. The stance of the school on bullying
 3. Definition of bullying
 4. Assessment of the bullying situation at school
 5. Procedures for stakeholders to handle bullying problems
 - a. What parents can do when their children exhibit bullying behaviour or become victims of bullying (Please refer to ["Handling Tips"](#) and ["Nurturing Your Child"](#) under the section ["Parent Education"](#) in this resource package).
 - b. Students' responsibilities and actions to take when they encounter or are engaged in bullying behaviour (Please refer to Chapter 2 - ["Improvement through Taking Responsibility"](#) under "Co-creating a Harmonious School", ["Follow-up"](#) under "Procedures for Handling Bullying Incidents" in this resource package).
 - c. Procedures for school staff to handle school bullying incidents (Please refer to ["Intervening in the Incident Immediately"](#) of "Procedures for Handling Bullying Incidents" in this resource package).
 6. Strategies for building a harmonious and caring school
 - a. Adopt a Whole School Approach to set the direction, the work plan and the method of review of the work on student development.
 - b. Take an educative approach for guidance and discipline policies to cultivate a critical mind and attitude among students.
 - c. Reinforce students' positive behaviour by means of encouragement and praise.
 - d. Develop class management strategies to improve teacher-student and peer relationships, as well as to establish a harmonious learning environment and a caring school culture.
 - e. Implement personal growth education or life education and tie in with different subjects, Value Education, Moral, Civic and National Education, etc. to cultivate students' positive values and attitude.
 - f. Implement diversified school guidance and discipline activities e.g. pupil ambassador scheme, peer support programme, student volunteer scheme, etc. to

strengthen positive peer influence.

7. Implementation, follow-up, and regular review of the policy.
8. For details of formulating "Stop Bullying" policy, please refer to ["Appendix 2" "Task List / Memoranda of the Stop Bullying Policy"](#).

Organisation

Schools may keep on using the current structure, for instance, the guidance and discipline team, to plan and implement the 'Stop bullying' policy and measures. However, to prevent and eliminate bullying incidents effectively, the whole school must work in concerted effort against bullying. (Please refer to ["Appendix 3" Suggestions on Implementation of the "Whole School Approach" to Anti-bullying Work](#)).

Procedures for the Handling Bullying Incidents

Intervening in the Incident Immediately

When bullying incidents happen / are reported

- When a teacher encounters or is informed of bullying incidents, he / she must stay calm and arrive promptly at the scene to put a stop to the incident.
- The teacher should separate the students involved, have an initial understanding of the situation and note down the key points of the incident, the names and classes of the students including the bystanders involved for follow up. The teacher should find out if anyone is injured and consider if assistance from other teachers or students is required.
- If a student is injured, the school has to notify the parents. At the same time, immediate first-aid should be provided by the first-aid team and an ambulance should be called to provide appropriate treatment.
- If the student is still in the mood, the school should inform the parents to take the

student home. Schools should not let the student go home alone.

Initial mediation

- When the students are physically and emotionally back to normal, the teacher can start the initial mediation. If the mediation is successful, the teacher should inform parents, take records and conduct a review of the incident.

In-depth follow-up work

- If the mediation fails, the teachers concerned or the anti-bullying team should handle the students involved in the incident (including the use of [Chapter 2 - "Improvement through Taking Responsibility" Approach](#) under "Co-creating a Harmonious School (Highlights)" to draw up improvement plans, meet with parents or refer the case to the Guidance and Discipline Team / social workers / student guidance personnel / educational psychologists for follow-up).
- Teachers should interview the students concerned separately, namely the bullies, the victims and the bystanders on the day the incident occurs. When the students concerned recall the incident, teachers should listen actively without making judgement, so that the students can recall the incident freely. For the steps and techniques related to interviewing students, please refer to Chapter 2 - "Improvement through Taking Responsibility" Approach under "Co-creating a Harmonious School (Highlights)".
- Where a bullying incident involves more than one bully, they should be interviewed individually prior to a group interview. Prompt follow-up action is required in order to prevent collusion in fabricating statements, mutual cover-up, etc.
- In the course of follow-up, the victims should be properly protected, and the identity of informants should be kept confidential to prevent retaliation.
- The aim of any follow-up should not focus on punishment but rather on education so as to help the students reflect on their own responsibilities. Then appropriate ways of addressing the incident and proper follow-up work should be drawn up to prevent bullying from recurrence.
- Once a bullying incident is confirmed after investigation, the school should give the bullies a definite message: 'His / Her / Their behaviour is a bullying incident which

has violated the school's "Stop Bullying" policy. The students should be warned not to repeat such behaviour and he / she / they should bear the consequences of their behaviour.'

- The school should meet the parents of the victims and the bullies separately at appropriate times, stressing that bullying is a concern for the school and the school will not tolerate recurrence of any bullying incidents. The school should also assure the parents of both parties that they will be notified of the results of the investigation, punishments and follow-up actions taken.
- If necessary, the school should consult the School Liaison Officer of the Hong Kong Police Force.

Referral and seeking support outside school

- If the incident requires further follow-up, teachers concerned or the anti-bullying team need to consider alternative methods of intervention or seek outside help (such as psychological counselling, short-term orientation programmes offered by schools for social development, psychiatric treatment and / or family services etc.). (Please refer to ["Appendix 4" Flowchart for Handling Bullying Incidents in Schools](#)).

Record, assessment and regular review

- After the incident has been settled, teachers should contact parents to explain details of the incident, handling procedures and follow-up measures. This aims to enhance home-school communication, so as to improve students' behaviour in concerted efforts. Teachers need to record details of the incident and conduct a review after the incident, as well as to evaluate the school's anti-bullying policy and follow-up work (including appropriate counselling for the students involved). For the recording of bullying incidents, please refer to ["Appendix 5" Bullying Incident Record Form](#).

Follow-up

Teachers should guide students to reflect on their behaviour when bullying happens (Please refer to [Chapter 2 - "Improvement through Taking Responsibility"](#) Approach under "Co-creating a Harmonious School (Highlights)"). Moreover, when providing counselling to students involved in different roles, teachers should take note of the following points:

1. If the students are bullies
 - a. Handle students' anger or other negative emotions.
 - b. Discuss with them the impact of bullying on themselves and others. Help them reflect on their own responsibilities and shoulder their responsibilities.
 - c. Explore various alternatives to resolve problems so as to enhance their problem-solving skills.
 - d. Reinforce their positive behaviour in order to reduce bullying.
 - e. Refer the students to student guidance personnel, social workers or other professionals for follow-up services as necessary.
2. If the students are victims
 - a. Handle students' negative emotions.
 - b. Rectify their myths of bullying and help them adjust their mindset. Some victims may attribute the bullying incident to their appearance, behaviour, religion or nationality and overlook the fact that bullying by itself is wrong.
 - c. If the students have fought back with violence, they should be taught that violence cannot solve the problem, but will only escalate for more violence, resulting in bodily harm to both parties. The victim might even be mistaken as the trouble-maker in the incident.
 - d. Encourage them to affirm their own value and adopt a positive attitude in handling bullying so as to prevent its recurrence. If the students are bullied verbally, encourage them to handle the problem in a non-violent way, including simply not to respond, laugh it off or say 'no' to the verbal provocation calmly. This will make the bullies know that you are not disturbed by the bullying behaviour so as to discourage the bullies from trying again.
 - e. If the students are disturbed by physical bullying or other bullying acts, they should be taught to report such incidents to their families, school staff and social workers so as to stop the recurrence and spread of bullying. This also draws the schools' attention to this phenomenon, thereby providing early intervention and

proper support.

- f. Refer the students to student guidance personnel, social workers or other professionals for follow-up services whenever necessary.
3. If the students are bystanders, the teachers should guide them:
 - a. Not to bully others.
 - b. To manage their emotions properly.
 - c. To understand and respect others' feelings.
 - d. Not to just observe without doing anything, but persuade the bullies to stop under a safe condition.
 - e. If they cannot stop the bullying, they should take the initiative to seek help from teachers or parents.
 4. Teach all students to understand the serious consequences of bullying behaviour
 - a. Inform the students who have heard about the details of the bullying incident and reiterate the anti-bullying stance of the school.
 - b. Help all students understand that bullying should not be considered as fun nor a playful act. In serious bullying cases, both the bullies and the bystanders have to bear legal responsibilities.

Handling Cyber-Bullying

Cyber-bullying has become a topic of concern because of the rapid development of information technology in recent years. Cyber-bullying generally refers to bullying that occurs over a platform of information and communication technology. This includes ridiculing or hurting others by sending offensive messages or making personal attacks via emails, SMS, webpages and online discussion forums, etc. Besides sending text messages, cyber bullying includes posting pictures, videos and audio clips which embarrass and threaten the victims. In fact, it is difficult to eliminate cyber-bullying. Teachers should teach students to make good use of information and communication technology, to protect their personal data carefully and to cultivate mutual respect and acceptance of others. Teachers may consider the following when teaching their students:

1. Protect personal data carefully: Change login passwords on a regular basis; never disclose personal information, such as telephone numbers and addresses on the internet; step up privacy settings if they want to visit social networking sites or setting up their own blog.
2. Be a responsible netizen: The best way to prevent cyber bullying starts from the self. Everyone learns to respect and accept different opinions and not to attack others intentionally so as to maintain a harmonious internet world.
3. Not to respond / revenge: If students are unfortunately cyber-bullied, they should avoid provoking the bullies, which might invite even more personal attacks on the internet.
4. Use internet tools wisely: Use software to block disinviting messages, or simply deactivate message boards or websites.
5. Be a good netizen: When students discover cyber bullying, they should not join any acts such as helping in "human search" or forwarding bullying messages. They should not just stand and observe, but should report the incident instead.
6. Save all the messages from the bullies: Keep all the bullying messages so as to inform parents and schools for proper follow-up actions.
7. Report bullying incidents: If cyber-bullying incidents occur on the school intranet, students can notify their parents or the school. For those bullying incidents occurring on the internet, apart from notifying parents or school, students can contact the service providers of the internet or mobile phone for assistance as well. For serious cases, they should consider seeking help from the police.
8. Emotional support: If students are emotionally disturbed by cyber-bullying incidents, they should seek help from parents and the school.

Working with Parents to Deal with Bullying Problems

Home-school cooperation is the key to handling bullying. Please refer to "Parent Education" in this resource package.

Teacher Training

1. Staff should reflect regularly and stay calm.
2. Schools should arrange regular training for teachers (e.g. teachers from the Guidance and Discipline Team) to enhance their skills in handling bullying incidents, including individual and group counselling techniques, communication and mediation skills. Schools should schedule regular meetings to help teachers understand the anti-bullying policy and the handling procedures.

Developmental Work

Regarding school bullying, schools should adopt a developmental perspective to nurture students with relevant knowledge, attitude, skills and values, for example by:

1. Developing students' positive values, mutual respect, the spirit of mutual help and care so that they will not bully others because of difference in body size, body shape, gender, culture, religion, race or sexual orientation, etc.
2. Strengthening students' critical thinking, problem-solving skills, goal-setting ability, interpersonal attitudes and skills through curricula like General Studies in primary schools, Liberal Studies in secondary schools, Moral, Civic and National Education, Personal Growth Education and Life Education so as to enhance their ability and confidence in handling bullying.
3. Implementing a peer support programme to strengthen mutual support among students.
4. Designing whole school activities / programmes which promote harmony, love, care and mutual respect.

Assessment

For details, please refer to "[Evaluation Stage](#)" of "School Policy" of "Co-creating a Harmonious School (Highlights)"

Appendices

Appendix 1a Example of Short Speech for Morning Assembly

Appendix 1b Example of Short Speech for Morning Assembly

Appendix 2 Task List / Memoranda of the Stop Bullying Policy

Appendix 3 Suggestions on Implementation of the "Whole School Approach" to Anti-bullying Work

Appendix 4 Flowchart for Handling Bullying Incidents in Schools

Appendix 5 Bullying Incident Record Form

Appendix 6 Tips on Counselling Bullies / Victims

Preventive Measures – Drama Education

This section focuses on the application of basic drama skills to implement preventive work in bullying in the classroom. Through drama elements introduced in class, students play various roles (including the bullies, the victims and the bystanders). This interactive role play enables them to put themselves in others' shoes so that they can understand the feelings, thoughts of others and the intention of their behaviour which will enhance their empathy and reduce the occurrence of bullying.

In addition to the drama classes, this teaching material is suitable for use in regular class teacher periods, Personal Growth Education, Life Education, and Moral, Civic and National Education. In view of the wholeness of the content of this teaching material, we encourage schools to adopt the entire drama education curriculum to teach students about the issue of bullying in a gradual and systematic way so as to nurture their empathy, enable them to care for and support each other, thus preventing bullying.

Learning and Teaching Strategies

Guidance and Encouragement

To provide "guidance" to students is to use various life experiences as examples with which they can discuss, analyze and work out the solutions. To give "encouragement" to students is to give them appreciation and due recognition so as to motivate them to engage in their learning, to freely express their views and feelings as well as to be observant and empathetic towards others' feelings.

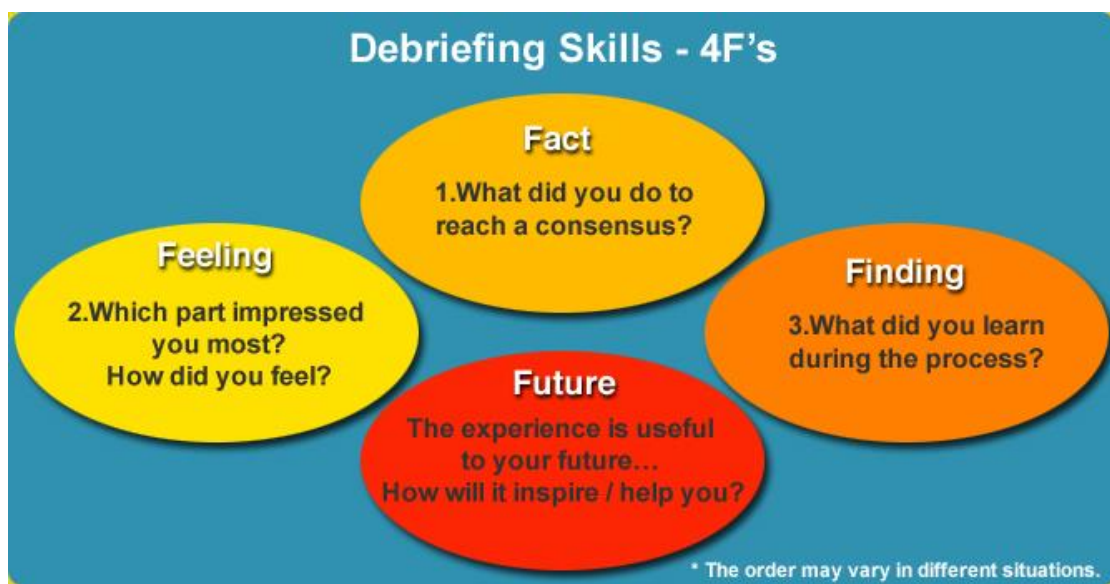
Teachers or guidance personnel have to create a free and open environment for students to explore and reflect on themselves so as to facilitate their development.

Good Communication and Open-mindedness

In order to implement drama education lessons smoothly, teachers / guidance personnel have to be equipped with effective communication skills, which include "attentive listening", "reflection of feelings", "techniques to express oneself and be receptive to others'

opinions" and "make good use of encouragement", etc. Good communication between teachers and students will not only create a caring and trusting atmosphere in class, but also encourage students to actively participate in classroom activities. In drama lessons, teaching by modeling is more important than teaching by indoctrination. In this connection, teachers / guidance personnel should keep an open mind, share their personal experiences and feelings with students as well as appreciate and accept students' uniqueness.

Debriefing Skills

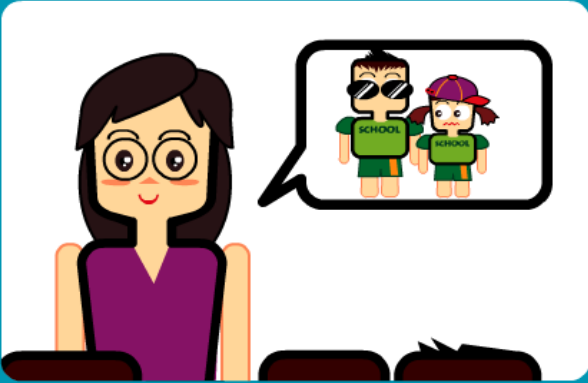


Basic Drama Skills

1. Narration:

- The teacher tells the development of a story or use of narrative language to create a good atmosphere.
- Student act out or tell part of the story while the teacher narrates.

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

2. Small-group enactment:

- Student design their drama episodes in groups and take turns to perform based on a particular topic in order to express their feelings and understanding of an incident or a scenario.

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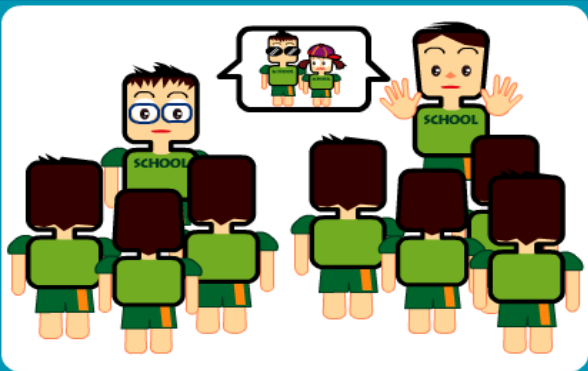
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3. Whole-group role play:

- By playing the same character, all students interact with one another as that character in the drama.

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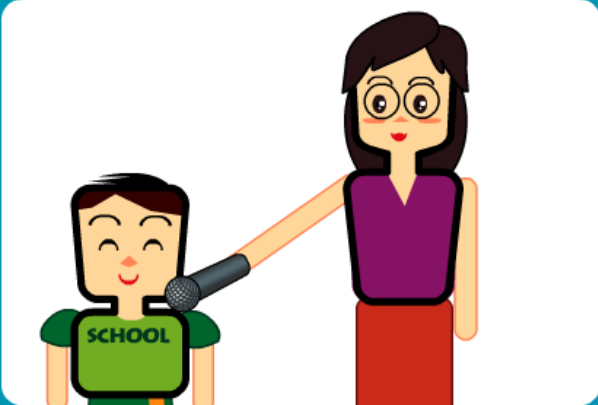
- By playing the same character, all students interact with one another as that character in the drama.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

4. Hot-seating:

- The teacher assigns a character for “hot seating” and asks other students to gather information from that character so that the story can be explored or further developed.
- Someone acting in the role as a character answers questions from others.

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● Someone acting in the role as a character answers questions from others.

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5. Teacher-in-role:

- The teacher plays the role of a character as required and plays the drama together with the students. The roles played by the students can be important or passive.

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6. Still-image:

- This can be a group, a whole-class or an individual activity in which the image of a certain idea or a significant moment of a specific incident is performed. It is similar to the still image on a videotape when you press the “pause” button.

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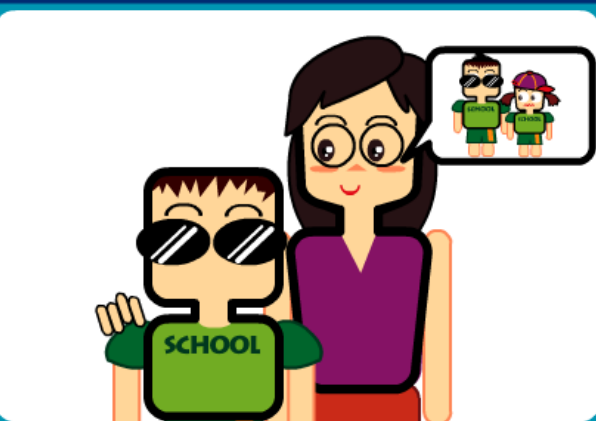
The illustration shows two cartoon characters wearing green shirts with 'SCHOOL' written on them. The character on the left is wearing sunglasses and holding a yellow ice cream bar. The character on the right is wearing a purple cap and has a sad expression. A speech bubble above the character on the right contains a red pause symbol. The background is white, and the entire scene is framed by a blue border with a timeline at the bottom (1-9) and navigation arrows.

- This can be a group, a whole-class or an individual activity in which the image of a certain idea or a significant moment of a specific incident is performed. It is similar to the still image on a videotape when you press the “pause” button.

7. Thought-tracking:

- This process is often performed in combination with still images. The teacher puts a hand on a student’s shoulder. The student should voice out his/her thoughts as if he/her were the character.

7. Thought-tracking :



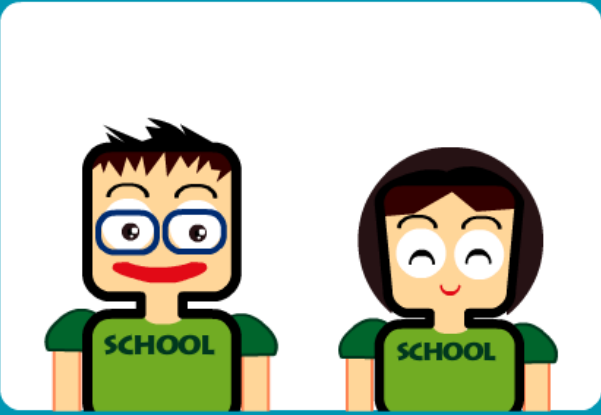
The illustration shows a female teacher with glasses and a purple shirt placing her hand on the shoulder of a male student wearing sunglasses and a green shirt with 'SCHOOL' on it. A speech bubble above the teacher contains a small image of the two characters from the previous slide. The background is white, and the entire scene is framed by a blue border with a timeline at the bottom (1-9) and navigation arrows.

- This process is often performed in combination with still images. The teacher puts a hand on a student’s shoulder. The student should voice out his / her thoughts as if he / her were the character.

8. Unfinished materials:

- Let students guess the storyline, speculate and discuss what happens in the drama by giving them various clues.

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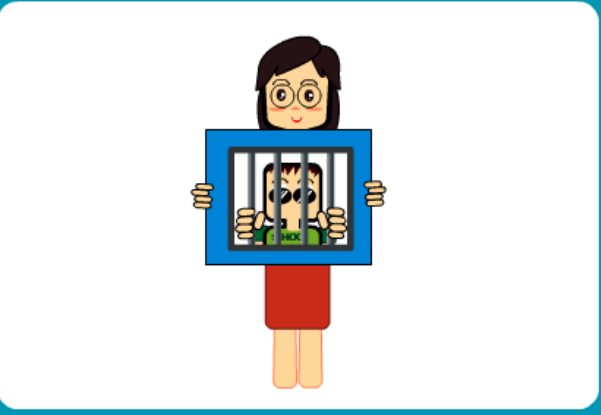
● Let students guess the storyline, speculate and discuss what happens in the drama by giving them various clues.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

9. Flash backward:

- First state the outcome of an incident, then let students think about the possible background of the incident and trace the mindset of the characters involved.

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● First state the outcome of an incident, then let students think about the possible background of the incident and trace the mindset of the characters involved.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Drama Education Class Activities for Primary Schools

Objectives

1. To help students understand bullying and experience the feelings of the three characters (the bullies, the victims and the bystanders) in different stages of the bullying process.
2. To equip students with methods in managing emotions, friendly attitudes and

communication skills so that they are able to take up the responsibility to prevent and reduce bullying incidents from happening.

Features of lesson design:

1. Each lesson is divided into three stages, which are:

- Introductory stage— Make use of warm-up activities to engage participants in the activities and scenarios gradually.
- Experiential Stage— To construct the meaning across through activities / drama activities.
- Reflection Stage— To reflect and conclude by reviewing the gains from the activities / drama.

*The reflection stage is not necessarily placed at the end of the lesson plan. It may be swapped with the experiential stage if necessary.

2. Based on a bullying incident students have encountered at school, students re-construct the development of the incident together. Ask students to play various roles (the bullies, the victims and the bystanders) so as to understand the feelings of the characters involved and enhance their empathy.

Class Activities Outline:

Target: Primary 4 to 6 students

Number of sessions (35 minutes)

Topics [Outline Download](#)

1. Understanding Bullying (1)

-To learn about bullying and the three major roles in a bullying incident (the Bullies, the Victims, and the Bystanders).

2. Understanding Bullying (2)

- To help students understand and experience the feelings of the three roles in a bullying incident through acting out.
 - To let students understand that "Stop bullying" is everyone's responsibility.
3. The bullies (1): Flashback – "Big Bullies Small"
- To help students explore the characteristics and behaviours of the bullies through the "Big Bullies Small" incident.
 - To help students understand the consequences of the bullies' behaviours.
4. The bullies (2): Flashback – "If I were Big Ko"
- To help students understand the responsibilities of the bullies.
 - To equip students with attitudes and communication skills to get along with others in a friendly manner: the "3N approach" and "Manage your temper ABC" method, in order to reduce or prevent bullying incidents.
5. The victims: Flashback – "If I were Little Lam"
- To help students understand the responsibilities of the victims.
 - To equip students with the "NOT" approach to handle bullying incidents.
6. The bystanders: Flashback – "If I were a bystander"
- To help students understand the responsibilities of the bystanders.
 - To equip students with the "NOT" approach to face and handle bullying incidents.
7. "Stop bullying", I can do it too.
- To have revision on various techniques, and use them to deal with bullying positively.
8. Charter on "Stop bullying – Everybody's responsibility"
- To encourage students to take actions to reduce or stop bullying through contracting.

Drama Education Class Activities for Secondary Schools

Objectives

1. To help students understand bullying and experience the feelings of the three characters

(the bullies, the victims and the bystanders) in different stages of the bullying process.

2. To help students realize the importance of "taking multi-perspectives to experience more, to understand more and to care more" through practical experience so that they are able to understand the causes of the bullying incidents and the feelings of the persons involved, thus helping to reduce the intensity and prevent bullying incidents from happening.

Features of lesson design:

1. Each lesson is divided into three stages, which are:

- Introductory stage—Make use of warm-up activities to engage participants in the activities and scenarios gradually.
- Experiential Stage—To construct the meaning across through activities / drama activities.
- Reflection Stage—To reflect and conclude by reviewing the gains from the activities / drama.

*The reflection stage is not necessarily placed at the end of the lesson plan. It may be swapped with the experiential stage if necessary.

2. Based on a bullying incident students have encountered at school, students re-construct the development of the incident together. Ask students to play various roles (the bullies, the victims and the bystanders) so as to understand the feelings of the characters involved and enhance their empathy.

Class Activities Outline:

Target: Form 1 to 3 students

Number of sessions (40 minutes)

Topics [Outline Download](#)

1. Episode I of Mike – Basic Drama Skills

-To enable students to acquire basic drama skills and engage in the drama class

activities.

-To enable teachers to observe students' social network and social skills.

2. Episode II of Mike - A Probe into the Mindset and Feelings of the Victim

-To enhance students' understanding and experience of the feelings of the victims through role play.

-To help students realize the importance of mutual understanding and support.

3. Episode III of Mike - A Probe into the Mindset and Feelings of the Bully

-To help students realize the importance of "taking multi-perspectives to experience more, to understand more and to care more".

-To help students understand the reasons behind bullying incidents from different perspectives.

4. Episode IV of Mike - Rebuilding Friendship

-To help students understand the needs of others and be considerate by putting themselves into others' shoes so as to build up a harmonious relationship.

-To discuss with students ways to avoid bullying so as to prevent school bullying.

Parent Education

This section aims at providing schools with reference materials for parent education in school bullying. Schools can help parents understand the nature, symptoms of bullying, and methods of supporting their children through seminars, parent-teacher sharing sessions, information booklets, newsletters, the school-parent website, etc.

Understanding Bullying

What is bullying?

In general, bullying is a repeated and intended act of harm or oppression of a less powerful

person by a person or a group of persons who is more powerful or in a larger number.

Bullying includes three basic components:

1. Repeated act
2. Malicious intent
3. Imbalance of power

The three common types of bullying:

1. Bullying involving physical violence: e.g. Punching, kicking, slapping, hitting, shoving, tripping, pulling hair, extorting money or properties, etc.
2. Verbal bullying: e.g. intimidating, using abusive languages, cursing, defaming, name-calling, mockery and taunting, etc.
3. Indirect bullying: e.g. spreading rumours, being hostile, deliberately isolating, boycotting and rejecting someone, etc.

With the drastic development of information technology in recent years, cyber bullying behaviours emerge in the internet world. Cyber bullying generally refers to bullying incidents happened through information technology communication platform, such as through e-mails, text messages, websites, online forums, etc. Apart from text messages to mock and slander others, cyber bullying also includes photos, short video clips, sound, etc., which embarrass and intimidate the victims.

Effects of bullying on children :

Children being bullied live in humiliation and rejection. If bullying remains unsolved, it may influence them in the following ways :

- affect their learning performance;
- result in truancy, skipping class or dropping out of school;
- influence their physiological and psychological performance (including physical and emotional conditions); and
- trigger vengeful deeds, etc.

The problem of bullying should not be ignored as it may lead to other serious and harmful behaviour (e.g. suicide and revenge with violence).

Teaching children about the serious consequences of bullying:

Parents need to help their children understand that the act of bullying is not for fun or simply like playing games with their friends. In some serious cases, the behaviour of the bullies and the bystanders may be liable to criminal charges.

In some previous serious bullying cases, the police has arrested and charged students who are bullies or bystanders with murder, manslaughter, suspected possession of offensive weapon, battery and wounding, robbery, theft, assault leading to bodily harm and common assault. (Ming Pao reported "Teen-gangs hit a young boy to death by iron pipe for revenge" on 27 August 2007; Apple Daily reported "Judge was shocked and denounced eight teen-gangs in Tin Shui Wai' s cruel behaviour while the female gang leader who bullied a girl has been put in jail" on 22 September 2007; The Sun reported "A chivalrous boy who tried to stop a fellow student bullying others was beaten up" on 1 May 2008; Singtao Daily reported "Two students who bullied their schoolmate were sentenced to the community service order" on 22 August 2008, Ta Kung Pao reported "Three youngsters involved in 'Lotus Tower Murder' faced heavy sentences" on 18 February 2009.) All of these cases have delivered a strong message: If we do not have early interventions in bullying incidents, the bullies may hurt others physically and destroy others' properties or instigate others to participate in fighting and hurting others due to lack of empathy. At the same time, the bystanders should not think that because they did not participate in the bullying, they can be excused. Bystanders can still be accused of conspiracy of wounding which will make them face grave outcome and liable to criminal charges.

Regarding the problem of cyber bullying, parents should firstly enhance their knowledge on the cyber world. They should pay attention to the webpages their children browse, teach them how to protect their personal information carefully, avoid talking with strangers and accompany young children in surfing the internet. In addition, parents should teach their children that gossiping online may constitute a slander and the sender may be liable to criminal offence.

Parents' Observation

Suspecting Your Child Being Bullied

If your child shows the following symptoms, it may reflect that he / she is being bullied by classmates. Parents should pay more attention and assist your child in solving the problem as soon as possible.

Checklist of "The Signs of Being Bullied"

● Feel frustrated or worried, not willing to reveal what things are bothering them.
● Have complained of being bullied, boycotted or treated badly by classmates.
● Behaviours and emotions change significantly (e.g. insomnia, anxiety, loss of appetite, having headache / stomachache without any reasons, sudden burst of temper, showing aggressiveness to brothers or sisters without any reasons).
● Fear of leaving home / change of the route to school without any reasons / reluctant to go to school / truant without any reasons.
● Request to transfer school or leave school without any reasons.
● Clothes torn after going out or going to school / books and belongings damaged or lost without any reasons.
● Bruises or injuries appear without any reasons.
● Have talked about using violent or rule-breaking ways to handle behaviours of other students.
● Academic performance falls significantly.
● Request for extra money or exhibit stealing behaviour.

If many of the above signs appear, parents should pay more attention to your child and observe the changes of his / her behaviours and emotions. Parents should take the initiative to contact his / her teachers or friends to understand what bothers your child, including whether he / she is being bullied by his / her classmates.

Suspecting Your Child Bullying Others

If your child shows the following symptoms, it is likely that he / she has the tendency to bully others. Parents need to pay more attention and help him / her solve the problems as soon as possible.

Checklist of "Signs of Bullying Others"

● Fond of playing tricks on others for fun.
● Enjoy damaging things.
● Feel excited when seeing other kids being bullied.
● Mistreat small animals or persons with smaller size frequently.
● Feel happy when seeing other children doing something wrong.
● Feel powerful when mistreating other kids.
● Often get angry that lasts for a long period of time.
● Often attribute causes of unfavourable incidents to others.
● In favour of revenge when being hurt.
● Feel jealous or get angry about others' success.
● Unable to accept any loss in playing games with others.

If many of the above signs appear, parents should pay more attention to your child's behaviours and emotions. Parents should take the initiative to contact his / her teachers in order to understand your child's behaviours, interpersonal relationship and study performance at school.

Verification

Guide Your Child to Voice Out His / Her Problems:

Who will engage in bullying behavior?

Everyone will have the possibility of being bullied or bullying others. People who are involved in bullying cases can be:

1. Schoolmates
2. People other than schoolmates (e.g. friends outside school, youngsters who hang out around, gangs)

3. Adults (e.g. teachers, school supporting staff, activity instructors, volunteers, parents)

4. Others

Listen to what your child thinks:

Your child is probably not willing to tell you that he / she bullies others or is being bullied.

They probably think that:

- 1."Your help will only make things worse."
- 2."My problems will still be neglected finally."
- 3."I will be threatened and will not be protected."
- 4."The bullies may take revenge on me."
- 5."I will be blamed as an informer or a sneak."
- 6."It' s only a trifle and it' s not so serious. Such things often happen."
- 7."I can handle my own problems."
- 8."It' s my own fault for being bullied. I incurred it by myself."
- 9."It' s just for fun and nothing special!"
- 10."He got beaten up because he looks hateful. He deserves it!"
- 11."If I don' t build up a considerable status for myself, others will come to bully me."

It is very important for your child to build up confidence on you. Trust will be fostered as children feel care from parents and realize that he / she will be listened to and get the help when in need. Eventually he / she will also be more willing to open up and talk about the problem of bullying. While listening to your child, consider the following:

1. Does your child need help?
2. What should be done to stop the child from being bullied or engaging in bullying behaviour?
3. What action can you, as parents, take?
4. Who can help to stop the problem from aggravating?
5. How can you seek help?

Handling Tips

If Your Child Has Been / Is Being Bullied

What should you do when you find your child is being bullied? Apart from listening to your child patiently, finding out what is distressing him / her. It is also important to contact the school and work in collaboration with the school staff to solve the problem. In order to help your child face the problem, parents may do the following:

1. Stay calm. Avoid blaming the child.
2. Find out from your child what problem / distress he / she is facing.
3. If your child is not ready to share the problem with you, bear in mind: Avoid pressing your child into telling the issue if he / she is not ready. Parents should let your child know you are happy to listen when he / she is ready to share and will solve the issue with him / her together.
4. If your child takes the initiative to talk to you about a bullying he / she encounters, praise him / her for his / her courage.
5. Listen carefully. Don' t respond too fast before you get enough information to understand the whole issue.
6. Help the child understand:
 - Reporting to the school can ensure safety of the school and other people.
 - Words like "Divulge", "Sneak" may upset your child, but these words can also be misused to stop him / her from reporting bullying cases.
7. Discuss with your child the causes of the problem.
8. Understand the methods your child has ever used in solving the problem.
9. Think before giving opinions to your child. "Has he / she ever used these methods?"
"Are there any other alternatives?"
10. Help your child find out previously used or workable solutions and encourage him / her to try the following methods if he / she is being bullied:
 - a. Try to avoid people who have ever bullied / harassed / hurt / attacked him / her.

- b. Ignore the bullies' words, e.g. pretending not to hear or laugh if off, making the bullies feel snubbed and then they would stop the behaviour.
 - c. Seek help from parents / teachers immediately when encountering serious bullying behaviours (e.g. those with violence).
11. Encourage your child to tell the bullying incidents to relevant adults (e.g. principals, teachers, social workers, the police, etc.).
 12. Parents could contact the school (e. g. principals, teachers, social workers, etc.), understand the causes as well as the process of bullying and discuss methods to prevent your child and others from being bullied again.
 13. Seek professional help. Provide appropriate counselling to your child to minimise the impact of bullying and help him / her learn how to protect himself / herself.
 14. Contact the school guidance personnel or social workers immediately and discuss possible solutions to resume classes in case your child is afraid of going to school due to bullying.

If Your Child Has Witnessed Bullying

Many students, who have witnessed bullying, are not willing to talk about or report the bullying incidents to their parents or teachers. They think that intervention in the issue may result in:

1. Being considered as the informer or sneak, becoming a victim of bullying out of revenge.
2. Making the bullying situation worse and unable to help the victims.
3. Being seen as meddlesome, not supported by the majority.

Parents should help your child understand that bullying is indeed very harmful and affects everyone. Silence will only make the problem worse. Parents should help your child build

up the tactics and courage in reporting bullying incidents. You let him / her understand that he / she has the responsibility to assist the school in building a safe learning environment with mutual respect. Parents can prepare your child with the skills and points to note in reporting bullying incidents. Parents should also be aware that in encouraging your child to report bullying incidents, you have to consider how to protect your child' s safety. Thus, if necessary, parents should contact the school so that the school can early intervene and discuss the safety measures in protecting your child, who is the informant.

If Your Child is the Bully

You play a very important role in resolving the school bullying problem. Both your child and the school need your support for making the school a harmonious place. In order to achieve this, you can:

1. Stay calm and avoid scolding your child.
2. Take the initiative to support the school in resolving the bullying problem. Stay calm and cooperate with the school to find out the underlying reasons why your child bullies others.
3. Encourage and teach your child to apologize to the victims in order to settle the conflicts, reconcile the resentment, and accept each other.
4. Help your child understand the serious consequences of bullying and the importance of having the courage to change.
5. To prevent bullying behaviours of your child from happening again, parents should:
 - a. Help your child understand himself / herself and establish his / her own self worth.
 - b. Help your child respect the individual differences and accept that every person is unique.
 - c. Help your child develop empathy in understanding the feelings of the victims.
 - d. Help your child find appropriate ways to express his / her emotions.
 - e. If necessary, seek professional services such as counselling; or psychotherapy, etc.

Home-school Cooperation

Cooperation between parents and schools is a positive way to solve the problem of bullying. However, children may have many worries regarding reporting bullying cases to the school by their parents. They will think that this is going to make the situation worse. Parents can:

1. Tell your child that you understand his / her worries, but reporting to the school is necessary in view of their safety and interests.
2. Help your child understand that reporting can help protect the school and the safety of others.
3. Share / discuss your plan with your child so that he / she will know the development of the issue so as to cease his / her worries.

When encountering bullying, relevant school staff such as the principal, teachers, etc. are appropriate persons for parents to take the initiative to approach. When solving problems, the following are areas that can be discussed:

1. Options in protecting the safety of your child (e.g. the identity and privacy of your child, how to prevent him / her from being taken revenge on).
2. Understand the anti-bullying policy, procedures and safety regulations of the school, etc.
3. How parents can cooperate with the school so that the issue can be dealt with smoothly.
4. Support and services that the school or the community can provide (e.g. the emotional or psychological assistance that your child needs).

Nurturing Your Child

What can parents do?

As parents, you can help to prevent school bullying. The method is to educate your child in these areas:

How to care about others ?

- Be considerate / Offer comfort / Be generous / Unconditional regards

How to get along with others ?

- Mutual respect / Mutual acceptance / Empathy

How to manage his / her emotions like anger or fear ?

- Leave the place where you are frightened or angry / Learn how to relax

How to ease tension with a sense of humor?

- Be calm / React with wit / Laugh the problems off

How to protect his / her right assertively without being provocative?

- Stay cool / Hold your head high / Keep faith in truths / Be neither humble nor pushy

How to solve problems or seek help when facing a problem?

- Don' t escape / Talk to someone you trust / Build up reliable interpersonal network

How to find out the cause of a conflict when it arises?

- Be reflective / Avoid over-generalization / Find out the truth

Communication and Role Models

Parents are advised to communicate more with your child in daily life. This can improve parent-child relationship, nurture your child' s confidence, perseverance, responsibility and humour. Parents should set good role models in their daily life. They should respect and care for the needy and the elderly. At the same time, parents need to demonstrate a positive attitude to their child when he / she faces difficulties. Parents can also teach him / her how to get along with people, care for, respect and accept others. Parents should also try to understand the school life of their child and how he / she gets along with his / her classmates from time to time and let him / her understand the way to live in harmony with others.

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(Arranged in random order)