

Five steps of “Improvement through Taking Responsibility” (ITR) Approach

Five Steps of ITR	Objectives	Meet the Victims	Meet the Bullies	Meet the Bystanders/Informers
(1) Recalling	To understand the whole case.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review what happened in the incident with the students; listen to their stories carefully and do not force them to give details; guide them in relating their involvement in the incident. ● If the teacher knows roughly what has happened and finds that the students (including the bullies, the victims and the bystanders) are concealing the truth or lying intentionally, he / she may insist and ask the students to recall and repeat their stories. Do not argue with the students. 		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support and encourage the victims as their social skills are generally weaker. ● Assess the psychological and emotional impact of the bullying incident on the victims, help them manage their emotions and arrange professional counselling if necessary. ● Some victims may not be ready to tell the truth due to some worries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be serious, calm, objective and impartial in interviewing the bullies. Blame and reprimand will only make them more defiant and evasive, and may even reinforce their hostile and revengeful mentality against the victims. ● If the bullies are extremely defiant, let them calm down under supervision before 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Compliment the students who act positively to report bullying or their bravery or courage to help the victims.

		(e.g. do not believe that the school can protect them, fear of revenge by the bullies or afraid of punishment by the school). If such worries are relieved, the students may be more willing to give a detailed account of the incident.	proceeding with the interview.	
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(2) Reflecting	To help the students review their responsibility and what they can do better in the incident.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Guide the students to review their involvement in the bullying incident so that they can understand the impact of their behaviour on the development of the bullying incident and reflect on their own responsibility. ● Stress that the school is a big family and every member of the family is responsible for establishing and maintaining harmony and order in school. 		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Encourage the victims to face up to the problem and prevent bullying from happening again. ● Some victims may have improperly and aggravated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Guide the bullies to reflect on their responsibility. ● The bullies may evade their responsibility and put the blame on others. Instead of arguing with 	

		<p>the incident. Therefore, they need to make improvements too.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teachers need to handle the case carefully and avoid making the victims feel that they are being blamed and it is their fault that has led to the incident. 	<p>them who should be held more responsible, the teacher should stress that every person involved is responsible for what has happened in the light of their behaviour and involvement in the incident.</p>	
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(3) Taking Responsibility	To encourage the students to explore ways of handling bullying and strengthen their motivation to improve, thus helping them to face up to the problem positively and make improvement .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reiterate the school’s position that bullying will never be tolerated and bullying incidents must be stopped and tackled immediately. 		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Guide the victims to face the unhappy experience and strengthen their motivation to improve. ● Assess the victim’s possibility of revenge by the bullies; take every step to make the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Guide the bullies to reflect on the impact of the incident on students involved, and help them become more empathetic and enhance their motivation to improve. ● Guide the bullies to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Encourage the bystanders to explore ways to help prevent similar incidents from happening.

		<p>victims feel safe and protected; and hence help them face up to the problem positively and make improvement.</p>	<p>propose positive, specific and feasible ways of improvement and encourage them to put the ideas into action.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The bullies must be held responsible. The teacher may discuss with them their punishment under the system of award and punishment of the school. ● Punishment should be constructive, flexible and educational. (Please refer to “Success Factors in Handling Problem Behaviour”, Section 2 of Chapter 5 of the Guidelines on Student Discipline issued by the 	
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			former Education Department.)	
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(4) Effecting Improvements	To set improvement goals with the students involved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understand the background and limitations of the students before setting up goals. ● The goals must be specific, practicable, feasible, easily assessable and readily achievable to give the students a sense of accomplishment. Small improvements, when accumulated, may lead to significant changes. ● To avoid students taking the matter lightly, the goals must be challenging enough, requiring certain efforts from students. ● The numbers and dates of interviews should be agreed on with the students beforehand. ● Set the date (preferably 3-7 days after the prior meeting) and venue of the next interview. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To ensure sustained improvement, the teacher may interview the students regularly. Each interview should not last too long and should focus on the positive change of the students and its underlying factors. The direction of further improvement should be explored in detail. ● The teacher should monitor the progress closely before and after each interview, and consult those who are acquainted with the students, including teachers, student leaders and schoolmates, for better understanding of their conditions. Preventive measures should be agreed upon to stop bullying behaviour immediately. If there is any sign of recurrence, immediate intervention should be made. ● In follow-up interviews, the teacher should check if any improvement has been made since the last interview. If there is improvement, no matter how slight it is, the teacher should praise and encourage the students so as to make them more confident and motivated for further improvement. The teacher should also set up further goals with the students and encourage them to make more improvement. ● If the bullying behaviour persists, other measures should be adopted. If the situation 				

deteriorates, further actions may have to be taken, such as seeking support from other teachers or social workers and interviewing the parents, etc.

- It should be noted if the bullies have changed their target of bullying.
- With satisfactory progress and depending on the circumstances, the teacher may arrange the two parties to attend the next interview together to co-create harmony.

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(5) Co-creating Harmony	To enhance mutual respect and cooperation and develop harmonious relationship among students.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interview all the bullies first and ask them to share their improvements. Then let the victims join in and share their feelings. ● Review and appreciate the efforts of the students and celebrate their achievements. ● Invite the students to suggest ways to maintain harmonious relationship in the future. ● Depending on the circumstances, ask the two parties to prepare words of apology or appreciation and convey the message directly to the other party during the interview. 	