

**Lesson:
Bullying**

**Length of lesson:
45 Minutes**

Materials:

- **Board or large paper**
- **Videos or online videos about bullying**

Discussion Summary:

According to the US Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Women's Health, "bullying is when one person or a group of people repeatedly hurts someone else." Bullying can include hitting, gossiping, name calling, teasing, spreading gossip or rumors, telling lies, excluding, threatening, telling secrets, giving the silent treatment, betrayal, or harassment. Bullying is often done on purpose and happens "at school, in the park, on a sports team, or even at home." Though boys and girls bully each other, bullying amongst girls is uniquely nasty. Bullying hurts both the victim and the bully and leads to depression, low self-esteem, drug and alcohol abuse, and even suicide. Teaching girls that other girls are not enemies, to be assertive but not aggressive, to resist peer pressure, to report bullying, and to stand up to bullying can save their lives.

Discussion Questions:

- **Have you ever been bullied?**
- **What are the causes and effects of bullying?**
- **How can bullying be avoided or stopped?**

1. Begin by explaining that today you will be talking about bullying. Ask participants to raise their hands if they have ever been bullied.

2. Now ask participants, "What is bullying?" Record their ideas as they give them. Explain that bullying is when one person or a group of people repeatedly hurt someone else. Explain there are four kinds of bullying: physical, verbal, social, and intimidation.

3. Write each kind of bullying on the board. Going through each one, ask participants to think about what that kind of bullying looks like, feels like, sounds like, and why someone might bully someone that way. (Examples included following the lesson plan.)

4. Ask participants to think about why someone might bully someone else. Some reasons include: to get attention, insecurity, they feel bad about themselves, jealousy, to look tough, or because they are being bullied themselves.

5. Remind participants that different kinds of bullying often happen at the same time (calling someone a name while hitting them) and bullying often gets worse if it is not stopped right away (ex: a look or gesture could turn into shoving or hitting). Point out that all bullying causes pain, hurt, and fear. Explain that being bullied can play a role in sadness, loneliness, feeling bad about your body, skipping school, getting bad grades, headaches, stomach aches, trouble sleeping, and thinking about or trying to kill

yourself. Explain that choosing to be a bully can play a role in the same things, as well as fighting, using and abusing drugs and alcohol, and being a bully when you're an adult.

6. Ask participants to think about what they can do if they are being bullied. Examples include: tell a trusted adult, tell the bully to stop and calmly walk away, don't blame yourself, be strong and believe in yourself.

7. Explain that learning to be assertive and not be a bystander can help stop bullying. Explain that being assertive means saying something with confidence, but without anger in your voice, with steady breathing, and with sentences that start with "I." Remind participants that by being assertive you are not being passive or letting someone walk all over you, but you are also not being aggressive or starting to be violent or a bully too. Explain that a bystander is someone who watches an event like someone being bullied or someone getting hurt and doesn't do anything to try to help.

8. Explain that participants will now have a chance to practice standing up to a bully. Have participants get into pairs. Have one participant play the role of the bully and the other play the role of the person being bullied. Have them switch roles so they both practice being assertive.

9. Have participants get into groups of three or four. Have one participant play the role of the bully, one play the role of the person being bullied, and the others practice being assertive bystanders who stick up for the bully. Remind participants they are not to be aggressive, as that could make the situation worse.

10. Have a debrief discussion about bullying. Ask participants: What did you learn from the role playing activity? What choices can you make if you are being a bully? What are some consequences to bullying? What choices can you make if you are being bullied? Remind participants that putting someone else down is not the way to build yourself up.

11. Ask participants to share stories of bullying if they want to.

12. Remind participants they always have choices and to think before they call someone a name, tease someone, or spread a rumor.

- *Physical bullying*
 - *Looks like: shoving, hitting, pinching, punching, kicking, slapping, bruises, scratches*
 - *Feels like: pain, hurt, injury, sadness, anger, fear*
 - *Sounds like: yelling, slapping, broken bones*

- *Verbal bullying*
 - *Looks like: name calling, teasing, gossiping, spreading rumors, telling lies, telling secrets, sexual harassment, threats*
 - *Feels like: pain, hurt, sadness, anger, fear*
 - *Sounds like: “stupid, nosey, nerd, geek” (remind participants that saying “just kidding” after calling someone a name is still bullying)*

- *Social bullying*
 - *Looks like: verbal or physical bullying in front of others, betrayal, silent treatment, spreading rumors, excluding, ditching*
 - *Feels like: pain, hurt, sadness, anger, fear*
 - *Sounds like: silent treatment, “stupid, nosey, nerd, geek”*

- *Intimidation*
 - *Looks like: a look, gesture, physical bullying, threats*
 - *Feels like: pain, hurt, sadness, anger, fear*
 - *Sounds like: verbal bullying, “I’m going to get you;” “you better watch out”*

- *Cyber Bullying*
 - *Looks like: mean comments or posts about someone else on social media, starting an argument or spreading rumors in messages or online videos, posting incriminating pictures or videos against the will of the person being shown*

- *Feels like: pain, hurt, embarrassment, sadness, anger, fear*
- *Sounds like: hurtful words in videos, yelling in video chats*

