

Stories of Us

Episode 4: Bullying (Primary)

Teacher's Guide

Preview extracts of pages 12-15

It is highly recommended that teachers view the video before using it in class as it raises issues that may be sensitive to some students. It's also advisable to think about what back-up support is available – for example, coordinating with the Student Counsellor or Student Wellbeing Coordinator – as some students may wish to talk to someone after the class.

Before class, photocopy the centre page of the Teacher's Guide as a hand-out for the class. This page has photos of the dramatised characters with their names as a reference for the discussion. It also details where students can turn for support (teacher, Student Counsellor or Student Wellbeing Coordinator, parent, Kids Helpline, etc) and the *Stories of Us* website address (which contains further links for support, research links and so on). Looking ahead, some spare copies will be required for Class Two and Three, as students will be asked to hold onto their hand-out between classes – and invariably many will be forgotten or lost!

Because boys will be less likely to talk about the issues covered in the video they may require some patient prodding. Gently encouraging them to participate should avoid any embarrassment. Ideally, teachers will be familiar with the students and adapt the resource to the character of the class.

Lastly, teachers may wish to prepare in advance what they will cover in Briefing and Debriefing students in the following sessions.

Student Briefing

Before playing the video:

- Based upon past experience, students may be negatively predisposed to the prospect of watching 'yet another a video'. To help engender a more positive attitude, begin by emphasising that the *Stories of Us* video is unlike any they may have seen before. This program is Made with Students, For Students.
- Briefly summarise the types of issues touched upon in the video and explain the options should the students want private support with anything raised in the video (talking to teacher, Student Counsellor or Student Wellbeing Coordinator, parent or family member, another trusted adult or phoning Kids Helpline).
- Hand out the photocopied centre page of the Teacher's Guide with the characters' names, draw their attention to the Support & Research details on the hand-outs – and mention that they can take the sheets with them after class.
- Explain that the story does not come to a complete end – it is intentionally left unresolved so that they can explore possible endings themselves. In the second version (which they will see later) there are some additional scenes which provide a positive outcome to the stories.

Important Note: After playing the video, do not to ask students if they have been in similar situations, as the class is not the environment for personal disclosure. If some students have been (for example) the victim of bullying, it can be counterproductive to discuss it in front of the whole class.

- ▶ **PLAY THE VIDEO WITHOUT INTERRUPTION**
(The *Play Version* duration is 26 minutes 38 seconds)

- || **STOP THE VIDEO AT THE END PROMPT**
- When the *Play Version* finishes there is a series of still photos with the characters' names (similar to the hand-outs), then a prompt where the following questions are used as discussion starters.

- ? **PLAY VERSION QUESTIONS**
- How might Kelly be feeling? [Hurt; lonely; bitter; confused; vulnerable.]
 - How might Kelly be feeling about Leah? [Angry; disappointed; sad; manipulated.]
 - How might Simon be feeling? [Scared; desperate; unhappy.]
 - How might Simon be feeling about Jimmy? [Victimised; fed up; angry; powerless; frightened.]
 - What has happened to Kelly in this story? [Break down the different stages of her story step by step.]
 - What has happened to Simon in this story? [Break down the different stages of his story step by step.]

- i **ADDITIONAL TEACHER SUPPORT INFORMATION FOR *PLAY VERSION***
- There are many issues raised in the video. In this *Play Version* students should be encouraged to look at the 'big picture' and avoid becoming unduly bogged down in detail. In Class Two (*Segmented Version*) they will look in more depth at specific issues as they happen, and in Class Three they will explore what the characters might do to improve their situation. There are also extensive support notes in those sections of the Teacher's Guide.

NOTE: Do not rewind the video as the Segmented Version, which will be used in the next class, immediately follows the Play Version on the tape.

Student Debriefing

At the end of the session:

- It is particularly important to re-emphasise that in the next version of the video there is additional footage in which they will see a positive outcome for the two main characters.
- It's important that they don't leave the class feeling unsupported if they want to talk about it some more, so teachers should emphasise that they are available if students want to talk privately about the video or any personal reactions they may have experienced to the issues raised. They can also talk to the Student Counsellor or Student Wellbeing Coordinator, parent or family member, or another trusted adult.
- Also, ask the students to hold onto the hand-out for re-use in later classes and remind them that the sheet contains contacts for additional support with the issues.

Optional Activity

Having discussed the video in class, if time allows there is an optional extension activity in which the students break into groups and create possible endings to the story. They could also explore possible endings with role-play.

Optional Homework

There is also an option to set homework in which students write an end to the story. Keep it brief so it doesn't become a chore, as it's very important to maintain student interest for Class Two in which they explore the story in more detail. This homework has the added benefit of helping to keep the story 'alive' until next class.

Note: Some students may see this assignment as an opportunity to make light of the issues, so they may need to be reminded that such responses are not acceptable.

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Preview extracts of pages 22-25

Segment B

▶ **PLAY SEGMENT B**
(Duration 4 minutes 25 seconds)

|| **SUMMARISE SEGMENT B**

At the *End Segment B* prompt, summarise what we have learnt.

- Word spreads around school that the twins were away because their grandfather died.
- Leah blames Kelly for spreading the news about her grandfather.
- Leah moves seats and Chloe, Maria and Paula follow her; and Jimmy and his mates sit opposite Simon and his friends.
- Jimmy pushes Simon's desk tray onto the floor.
- Kelly tries to talk to Leah.

? **SEGMENT B QUESTIONS**

- Things seem to be getting worse: what is happening with the girls' group? [Leah blaming Kelly; Leah moves seat and the other girls follow; Rebecca stays with Kelly]
- How is Kelly reacting to Leah? [Not happy with Leah blaming her, but copes with it okay; tries to fix the problem by talking to Leah – refer to *Support Information below*.]
- What about the boys: how is Jimmy acting towards Simon? [Intimidating Simon by sitting in front of him; pushing the tray from his desk.]
- How does it seem to be affecting Simon? [Seems to be worried when sitting watching boys play soccer; concerned when Jimmy sits in front of him.]
- How do the other boys react when Jimmy kicks out Simon's desk tray? [John helps Simon.]
- What about Jimmy's friends, how do they react? [They laugh.]

B

i **ADDITIONAL TEACHER SUPPORT INFORMATION FOR SEGMENT B**

- After Leah yells at Kelly, Kelly bounces back quickly (is resilient), and jokes to Rebecca about her reaction to the spider.
- When Leah moves seat in class, Chloe, Paula and Maria follow her. They also seem torn: unhappy to be moving, but having to follow Leah.
- It took courage for Kelly to try to talk to Leah on the swings about why she moved seats.
- Simon appears to be worried, presumably about Jimmy, when he sits alone as his friends play soccer.

Segment C

▶ **PLAY SEGMENT C**
(Duration 6 minutes 37 seconds)

|| **SUMMARISE SEGMENT C**

At the *End Segment C* prompt, summarise what we have learnt.

- Simon witnessed Jimmy's mother being upset during a parent-teacher meeting.
- Jimmy warns Simon not to tell anyone about what happened.
- Leah gets Kelly into trouble in class.
- Some girls stir Jimmy about his mother.
- Leah yells at Kelly in front of their friends.
- Jimmy threatens Simon.

? **SEGMENT C QUESTIONS**

- The situation for both the boys and girls seems to be getting worse: what is Leah doing? [Set the alarm on Kelly's phone and seems happy when it goes off in class; tries to upset Kelly in front of her friends when Leah feels excluded from the basketball game.]

C

- How is Kelly reacting? [Cautious when Leah asks to look at her phone; tries to understand why Leah set her alarm (asks Chloe); includes Leah in game as 'ref', but stands her ground when Leah gets angry.]
- What is Jimmy doing? [Threatens Simon not to tell about his mother, and pushes his bag to the ground; blames Simon for telling others about his mother, and throws his ball away.]
- How is Simon reacting? [Doesn't do or say anything when Jimmy pushes his bag; worries that his friend John may have told others about Jimmy's mum; doesn't do anything when Jimmy throws his ball away.]
- What are their friends doing or not doing? [John doesn't own up to Simon that he's told others about Jimmy's mum; also doesn't do anything when Jimmy confronts Simon and throws the ball away; Chloe defends her sister regarding the mobile alarm; Rebecca defends Kelly, and Maria defends Leah – See notes below.]

ADDITIONAL TEACHER SUPPORT INFORMATION FOR SEGMENT C

- Before asking to look at Kelly's phone, Leah seems to be unhappy.
- When Simon asks his friend John if he's told anyone about what happened at the parent-teacher meeting, John says "no" but it's clear from his guilty expression that he has told someone. Some students may even have noticed him talking to a girl outside before the class.
- Chloe defends her sister with Kelly, saying she wouldn't have set the phone alarm.
- Rebecca defends Kelly when Leah starts yelling at her during netball, saying "Don't talk to Kelly like that"; and Maria defends Leah by saying "Stop being mean".

Note: Due to the more detailed discussion in this Class you may wish to plan a break for the students after this Segment C discussion.

Segment D

 **PLAY SEGMENT D**
(Duration 4 minutes 55 seconds)

SUMMARISE SEGMENT D

At the *End Segment D* prompt, summarise what we have learnt.

- Rebecca tells Paula she's sick of Leah's treatment of Kelly... and Paula tells Leah.
- Jimmy continues to threaten Simon.
- Leah has told Paula that Kelly is saying things about them.
- Leah says she wants to make it up to Kelly with a surprise at her party.
- Jimmy falls in the water in front of Rebecca and Simon.

SEGMENT D QUESTIONS

- Things don't seem to be getting any better: what's Leah doing? [Denies setting off phone alarm; blames Kelly for turning Rebecca against her; bumps Kelly; tells Paula that Kelly is saying things about Maria's 'colour'; scheming to exclude Kelly from the party.]
- How is Kelly reacting? [Defends herself when bumped by Leah; feels excluded when the girls stop laughing when she joins them at aquatics.]
- What is Jimmy doing? [Sends threatening SMS to Simon; jealous that Rebecca is having fun with Simon at aquatics; humiliated in front of Simon and Rebecca.]
- How is Simon reacting? [Distressed about SMS; has fun at aquatics.]
- What are their friends doing or not doing? What about Rebecca? [Rebecca is frustrated with Leah's treatment of Kelly; defends Kelly when Paula says she is saying things about Maria; suspicious about Leah's plan to surprise Kelly at the party.]
- What is Paula doing or not doing? [Paula agrees with Rebecca about Leah's treatment of Kelly, then immediately gossips to Leah; believes Leah when she says Kelly has been saying things about Maria, and gossips to Rebecca.]

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Preview extracts of pages 28-31

Segment F

- ▶ PLAY THE TAPE TO THE END CREDITS.
(Duration 2 minutes 37 seconds)

Note: This brief segment includes important interview statements from Kelly and Simon in which they explain what happened for them – which helps to resolve their stories.



Student Debriefing

At the end of the session:

- As with the previous session, it's important that students don't leave the class feeling unsupported, so emphasise that you are available if students want to talk privately about the video or any personal reactions they may have experienced to the issues raised. They can also talk to the Student Counsellor or Student Wellbeing Coordinator, parent or family member, or another trusted adult.
- Lastly, tell the students that they can hold onto the hand-outs for the next class.

Class Three – Third Viewing

The third class is designed to focus on the options that each of the characters have for helping to stop the bullying at an early stage, or dealing with it more effectively once it had begun.

In Class Three the *Play Version* is viewed again, with different probing questions at the end. After viewing the video you may choose to have the students work in groups when exploring the questions, then collate their suggestions on the board.

Note: If you haven't already done so, rewind the tape to its beginning.

The questions below cover three areas: the options of the victims; the bullies; and lastly the bystanders.

Note: In this last class it is particularly important to focus on positive modelling when exploring the options, and encourage resilience in dealing with bullying behaviour.

Student Briefing

Before playing the video:

- Ensure the students have their photocopied centre page of the Teacher's Guide.
- Explain to the students that in this class they will be watching the film again without interruption. At the end they will discuss how the characters in the story might have helped stop the bullying or dealt with it better once it had begun.

- ▶ PLAY THE VIDEO WITHOUT INTERRUPTION
(The *Play Version* duration is 26 minutes 38 seconds)

II STOP THE VIDEO AT THE END PROMPT

- As the students are now familiar with the characters you may choose to stop the tape once the character's names start to appear on the screen. Refer to the following questions as discussion starters.



QUESTIONS REGARDING THE VICTIM'S BEHAVIOUR

- What other ways could Simon deal with the situation? [Encourage the students to start to explore the general options. The following questions will deal more with specific incidents.]
- Let's look at what Simon could do when Jimmy first started picking on him – what was the first thing Jimmy did to Simon? [Sent the email to the class.]

Once a student has correctly answered the question, write 'Sent email' on the left of the board. We are going to create a table, with a list of the specific incidents in which Simon was bullied down the left, and suggested options to the right.

- What could Simon do when Jimmy sent the email? [Talk to Jimmy; talk to the teacher; tell his friends he didn't like them laughing.]

To the right, list the students' suggestions for dealing with the email incident.

Next, ask the students to list the other specific incidents in which Simon was bullied, and list them down on the left below 'Sent email'. Don't space the list too tightly as you will need room to add their suggested options to the right later.

- What could he do once things really started to get out of hand? Let's look at some of the things that happened and then we'll see how Simon might have been able to deal differently with them.

After you have generated the list of things that happened, move through the list asking the class what Simon could do at each stage.

As a guide, the table might end up as follows. As much as possible, allow the students to come up with the specific incidents, and possible options.

WHAT DID JIMMY DO?	WHAT COULD SIMON HAVE DONE?
Sent email	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk to Jimmy calmly and in a confident manner –don't retaliate • Show no reaction • Made a joke about it so others laughed with him • Tells his friends how he felt when they laughed
Told girls that Simon can't swim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggest good humouredly to Jimmy that he check his facts • Show no reaction
Pushed in mud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk to friends, acknowledge that they may be scared of Jimmy, but tell them how he felt • Plan with friends what to do if a similar situation happened again • Talk to student representative, peer support, counsellor, teacher • Talk to parent • Practice how would respond e.g. to say in a loud voice that it was bullying behaviour and this time / next time he will talk about it with an adult
Sits opposite in class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice ignoring it, keeping a blank face • Maintain good eye contact, and welcome him • Talk with friends about how to respond if bullying occurs • Talk to teacher, explaining what has been going on, and why Jimmy may have moved