

Promoting Positive Peer Relationships

Middle School Bullying
Professional Development Resource
PD Workshop Guide Preview Extracts

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The Modules

Following is a summary of the modules from which to construct the Professional Development Workshop.

Core Module

Duration

2 hours

Content Summary

Provides a general introduction including defining bullying and its various types, bullying statistics and the main obstacles to reducing bullying in schools. Participants then watch a 23 minute film developed and produced with middle school students, followed by an in-depth facilitated discussion.

Additional Modules

Module A: Witnessing Bullying

Duration

30 minutes

Content Summary

Explores the difficulty staff face in witnessing bullying.

Module B1: Bystanders

(Use if *Film One* was viewed in the *Core Module*)

Duration

20 minutes

Content Summary

Highlights the important role played by bystanders, why they often support bullying (both directly and indirectly) and what might be done to help create a more positive social climate.

Module B2: Bystanders

(Use if *Film Two* was viewed in the *Core Module*)

Duration

18 minutes

Content Summary

Highlights the important role played by bystanders, why they often support bullying (both directly and indirectly) and what might be done to help create a more positive social climate.

Module C: Beyond the School

Duration

16 minutes

Content Summary

Looks at cyber-bullying and other off-campus bullying, and how to deal with it – including the role of families and the broader community.

Module D: Crossing the Line

Duration

10 minutes

Content Summary

Explores when occasional teasing behavior crosses the line and becomes bullying, and suggests ways to handle the problem.

Module E: Many Students, Limited Time

Duration

7 minutes

Content Summary

Suggests ways in which teachers can help the many students they deal with daily when staff have such limited time.

Module F: Sexual Harassment

Duration

10 minutes

Content Summary

Outlines the main forms of sexual harassment, the role they can play in bullying and how to address the issue.

Module G: Special Needs

Duration

10 minutes

Content Summary

Outlines some of the bullying-related problems faced by students with special needs, and presents key issues to be aware of for special needs students.

Module H: Students Who Do Not Listen

Duration

20 minutes

Content Summary

Raises the issue of students who do not listen to adults and presents some suggestions for dealing with the problem – including advice from students involved in making the films.

Concluding Module I: Promoting Positive Peer Relationships (Recommended)

Duration

23 minutes

Content Summary

Explores how schools, students and the community can work together to promote more positive peer relationships and help to reduce the incidence of bullying in schools.

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Core Module

Duration

Approximately 2 hours

Core Objectives

- To provide a general introduction including defining bullying and its various types, bullying statistics and the main obstacles to reducing bullying in schools.
- To provide a rare insight into bullying from the students' perspective, expand staff understanding of bullying and explore some of the complexities to be faced in reducing bullying in schools.

Resources

- DVD
- Sufficient copies of the slideshow pages and any other photocopied material.
- Sufficient copies of the school policies and procedures addressing bullying (if such a document is developed).
- Snacks and beverages for participants.

Commence Workshop

In preparation, load the DVD and navigate to the **Core Module** menu.

STAGE ONE

FACILITATOR (5 minutes)

- Have staff seated in groups in preparation for later discussion.
- Explain to the workshop participants that the *Core Module* is a 2 hour session composed of a combination of discussion based on prompt questions, group work, and watching DVD. They will first view an introduction to bullying presented by three of America's leading specialists on bullying and school violence. Then later, a 23 minute film made with 8th grade students.
- *Important Note: if a half-day session, explain that the Core Module will be followed by Additional Modules, many of which will explore issues raised in the Core Module in greater detail.*
- Explain that the aim of this workshop is to help staff define and understand what is potentially happening for many of their students, and consider how they can help to create a safe and supportive environment for students. The intention is not to arrive

at definitive answers, but to constructively explore the issue, allow staff to share their experience, explore how the school might address the issue and consider how they create a safe and supportive environment for students. Participants should be cautioned against looking for “right” or “wrong” answers, as many challenges and solutions are context specific.

- Based on past experience, staff may be negatively predisposed to the prospect of watching “yet another video.” To help engender a more positive attitude, begin by emphasizing that the *Stories of Us* film which they will view in this workshop is unlike any they have seen before as it was developed and produced with middle school students.
- Hand out the slideshow pages and any other photocopied material.

STAGE TWO

- ▶ DVD (14 minutes)
Select the **Introductory Presentation** from the menu.

STAGE THREE

- ? FACILITATOR (15 minutes)
Explain that staff should discuss and record their thoughts in groups, prompted by the following questions. They will have 5 minutes for each of three questions:
 - What consequences of bullying concern you most? [The intention here is to explore the notion of “bullying” and acknowledge the various problems associated with it.]
 - What might be signs of bullying that staff can observe? [Generate a list.]
 - How does our school find out what is happening with students regarding bullying? [Encourage staff to share their experiences.]

STAGE FOUR

- i FACILITATOR (5 minutes)
 - Introduce the film, explaining that it was made with students – that it is their perspective, they provided and approved the content and performed in the film. There may be details which are not necessarily best practice from a teaching perspective. The “teachers” are their actual teachers. (*Note: some of the teachers also appear, as themselves, in the Additional Modules – so if you will be working with subsequent modules it’s important this is understood.*)
 - Explain that to develop the film, a class of 8th grade students worked with a filmmaker three times a week for six weeks brainstorming the subject, developing the story and rehearsing the scenes. They then spent five full days filming – in their school, with the general student population as a backdrop. This was their collective experience of the reality of bullying.

- *Note: if viewing Film Two, point out that the outcomes described by the students at the end of the film are also their perspective. They are realistic, but provide a less-than-ideal outcome.*

STAGE FIVE

- ▶ DVD (23 minutes)
Select the **Film One** or **Film Two** from the main menu.

STAGE SIX

- ? FACILITATOR (45 minutes)
After viewing the film:
 - Has the film highlighted any examples of bullying that you hadn’t formerly considered?
 - Has the film highlighted any consequences of bullying that you hadn’t considered?
 - Does an understanding of how bullying develops over time influence how you might deal with specific bullying incidents? If so, how?
 - How can you tell if something is bullying or just harmless horseplay and alike?
 - What option would students have if they do not want staff to be involved in dealing with a particular problem, and how would you communicate these options to students?
 - What power inequalities amongst students do we have to accept in school, and which could be reduced?
 - How can students be involved in initiating action to combat bullying? [Share strategies].
 - How does your school deal with bullying? [Following discussion of this question, it would be valuable to also identify whether the school has established policies and procedures to address bullying and victimization. If so, then providing copies of this document would be important to be certain all teachers and staff are clear about the content of this document.]
 - What are the issues regarding involving parents? How and when do you involve them in dealing with incidents of bullying? How proactive should you be in this regard? How can schools and parents work together when cases occur?
 - *If viewing Film Two: how else might the two victims, Darren and Dinah, have dealt with their problem?*

Note: if continuing with Additional Modules, this would be a good time to take a short break.