

Sure-Fire Bullying Lesson Activities

An important part of character education in the classroom is teaching students to cope with bullying. Effective bullying activities help students to realise not only how it feels to be bullied but also how it feels to be the person doing the bullying. Such activities will help them to empathise with the feelings of everyone involved in a bullying situation and focus on a solution, rather than laying blame. Here are some simple activities to try out in your classroom. You can use them as stand-alone events or as part of a series made up of a number of bullying lesson activities.

- Begin with class discussions on the broader topic of tolerance and how everyone is different. Emphasise that these differences make the world a wonderful and interesting place!
- Move from this topic onto self-esteem and self-confidence. Have the students make lists of what makes them special, create a 'warm fuzzy' bag for students to post positive things about their classmates and run 'show and tell' sessions where students talk about a hobby or other activity in which they have achieved good results.
- Create some simple worksheets that provide easy-to-understand definitions of bullies, bullying and harassment. You could look at common reasons why children bully and types of bullying - verbal, physical and emotional. Keep these bullying activities simple and non-frightening.
- Discuss the things that can make us angry and brainstorm with the students safe ways we can deal with anger. Emphasise that violence is not acceptable in any situation. Have the students draw cartoon strips showing things they can do to diffuse their anger.
- Read some stories or watch some children's TV show segments that show bullying situations. Discuss these after the students have viewed them and talk about the feelings of the characters involved in these situations.
- Depending on the age of the class, discuss cyber-bullying (mobile phones and the internet) and how it can make someone feel threatened and isolated from others.
- Use role-play to help students understand how to deal with different types of bullying. Include the use of 'I' messages. Have small groups of students act out bullying scenes and possible solutions.

Finally, remember to maintain your classroom as a generally positive place where children feel secure enough to talk about their feelings and emotions. This will help to keep any bullying among your students in check. With this in mind, you can be sure that you will have positive outcomes from using bullying lesson activities.