

Block the Bully: 5th Grade

Parent/Youth Follow-Up Discussion

Dear Parents: The following is a suggested discussion for you to have with your 5th grader as a follow-up to the online safety ed program on bullying. This is a very important topic and one that I'm sure you will want to make sure your child well understands. Taking the online course is a first step. It's also important that you discuss this subject with your 5th grader so as to make sure he/she has learned the concepts and to be able to give your input. We invite you take the course yourself if you find that you need to explore more of these topics yourself so as to better discuss them with your middle-school youth.

Discuss any bullying experiences you have had.

How often have you watched someone be the target/victim of bullying? Daily? Weekly?

Have you ever participated in bullying?

Does bullying happen more in groups or one-on-one interactions?

Why should students and communities care about preventing bullying?

Does bullying affect kids' mental and physical health? How?

What are some short term effects of bullying? Long term?

How does bullying differ from other forms of aggression, such as vandalism? What do they have in common?

Kids often say that they have been both bullies and victims of bullies. Discuss.

Which do you feel is more difficult to prevent: bullying that happens in a group or one-on-one bullying. Why?

Both adults and kids sometimes say that bullying is just a fact of school life. How do you feel about this statement?

Can anyone be a bully?

CYBER-BULLYING

Have you or your friends ever experienced cyber-bullying? Through emails, texting, sexting, i-chatting?

Are cyber-bullies the same type of kids who engage in face to face bullying? Why or why not?

TARGETS

What is the difference between a target of bullying and a victim of bullying?

Are targets chosen or does bullying just happen to someone unintentionally? Why or why not?

Can you give examples from your own experiences?

One of the most frequent reasons youth give for why individuals are targeted for bullying is that they "didn't fit in." Does this mean that targets are always outcasts?

Can popular kids be targets too? If so, why?

BULLY and TARGETS Point of View

Why might bullying happen at a locker rather than in a classroom?

Where else does bullying often happen?

Some bullies take actions against their target in a group setting. Why might bullies want an audience?

Is the bully who bullies in front of an audience different than one who bullies their target when he or she is alone?

Is it fair to stereotype bullies as bad kids?

Can bullies be good kids? Discuss.

Why would kids be uncomfortable if a classmate is different from them? Can differences be positive?

Do ethnic differences matter when a kid is being targeted?

What other differences might lead to someone being a target of bullying?

SIDEKICKS

Describe a bullying incident with several youth involved. Who are the sidekicks? What is their role?

What thoughts and feelings might sidekicks have during a bullying incident? Describe the emotions.

Are sidekicks always funny?

Is it easy being a sidekick?

How do sidekicks differ from bystanders?

How are they similar?

Is a sidekick in a better position than a bystander to prevent a bullying incident from happening or escalating? Why?

BYSTANDERS

What role do bystanders play in bullying situations?

Are bystanders at fault if they don't step in to stop a bullying incident?

Are there situations when bystanders should remain bystanders, rather than taking action? Can you give examples?

What thoughts and feelings might bystanders have in reaction to a bullying incident? Name the emotion, such as fear, embarrassment, helplessness.

When kids feel these emotions during a bullying incident, is taking action or doing the right thing in response easy? Difficult?

Sometimes thinking in advance about what to do in a bullying incident can help a bystander take action in the moment.

Be a friend not a bystander! What does this statement mean and how might it help a bystander?

Do bystanders act differently in a group than they would alone? Why?

Do boys act differently than girls when they are bystanders? Why?

Do bystanders ever feel that they'll be a target if they try to intervene?

Is doing the right thing sometimes viewed as "not fitting in?"

What can you do to make "doing the right thing" easier and more acceptable by your peers? For example, does tone of voice matter?

DEFENDERS

What does it mean to be a defender? Does it require action?

Is a defender the same as a hero? Why or why not?

Discuss some ways bystanders can be defenders to help prevent bullying. Here are few examples: be a friend; believe the kid being bullied; find help; don't fight the bully.

What is the difference between telling and tattling? Is telling always okay? Is tattling ever okay?
Do boys and girls experience being defenders differently? If so, how?

INTERVENING

What methods can bystanders use to intervene?

Does intervention always work?

Can intervention escalate a bullying incident? How?

If the incident escalates, would that be a reason for a bystander to change strategies or choose a different strategy?

Is walking away a good idea? Give examples.

VALIANTS

Can targets and victims deal with bullying by themselves? If so, how?

Is getting help more effective? Why?

What are some actions that victims can take to help themselves?

What are some ways that kids can cope with bullying? (such as staying positive, speaking up because everyone has a right to be heard, understanding that victims are not at fault.)

What are other feelings and values that can help a victim be a valiant?

Can some victims deal with bullying better than others?

If a victim has a hard time speaking up for themselves, should they go ahead and try anyway? Should they ask for help instead?

Is getting help a sign of weakness? Why or why not?

Can a target or a victim of bullying ask a friend to stand up for them? Would this be helpful or hurtful? Why?

Is it best to have several strategies in mind that can be used to stop bullying or is it best stick to one strategy that seems to work? Why or why not?

Discuss how recognizing bullying when it's happening is the first step to preventing bullying.