



## Timing

45 minutes

## Materials

- **Teasing and Bullying** video (<https://youtu.be/61AqBH0bqIQ>)
- **Bullying Article** student handout—one per student
- **Bullying Multiple Choice Questions** student handout—one per student
- **Bullying Multiple Choice Questions** answer key—one per teacher
- **What I Can Do** student handout—one half sheet per student

**Note:** *There are facilitation options below if the students are in a virtual situation. Handouts can be provided electronically to be printed at home or as an editable Microsoft Word template to be submitted via email, learning management systems, or a live/shared document.*

## Tools to Build Body Confidence

### WEIGHT-BASED BULLYING: WHAT CAN I DO?

## Overview

Content for the *Amazing Me* program was created in partnership with Dr. Marisol Perez, a clinical psychologist and researcher at Arizona State University and The Institute for Research and Education Advancing Children's Health (REACH). Dr. Perez has dedicated her career to assisting future generations be less focused on appearance and more focused on respecting, liking, and appreciating their bodies.

In this activity, the teacher will lead the students through a close reading of an informational text on weight-based bullying and teasing before they brainstorm strategies that could be used if a person is being bullied or teased.

Each activity is part of a five-lesson series that focuses on the effects of bullying and teasing on body confidence. Lessons 1–3 include core content and should be completed in sequence. Lessons 4–5 are supplementary and provide students with an opportunity to extend their learning of core concepts.

## Background

Body image is the way we feel about our bodies, including how it looks and functions.<sup>1</sup> Many things can affect body image, including weight-based bullying and teasing. When students get bullied or teased, it can damage their self-esteem and lead to serious negative outcomes. Research shows that children who are bullied are at increased risk of suicidal ideation and attempts.<sup>2</sup> Children who are bullied are more likely

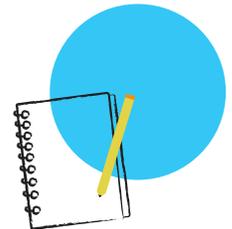
<sup>1</sup> Cash & Pruzinsky, 1990; Cash & Smolak, 2011

<sup>2</sup> Eisenberg, Neumark-Sztainer, & Story, 2003

to have unhealthy coping behaviors,<sup>3</sup> and skip school.<sup>4</sup> In addition, children who are bullied engage in more unhealthy eating and dieting.<sup>5</sup> These consequences are not limited to childhood: weight-based bullying is also associated with poor body image and unhealthy eating in adulthood.<sup>6</sup>

A review of existing school bullying programs revealed that none of them address weight-based bullying and teasing.<sup>7</sup> There are several school bullying programs that have a [BluePrint](https://www.blueprintsprograms.org) (https://www.blueprintsprograms.org) Designation (consistently demonstrated to reduce bullying in students and schools). These programs focus on the following dissonance-based, teacher-led activities: classroom discussion on bullying and why it is bad, rules against bullying and why they are important, activities to reinforce anti-bullying norms and values, and what to do when bullying occurs.

This lesson will focus on why students should not bully others and what to do if bullying does occur.



## Objectives

### Students will:

- Read an informational text on weight-based bullying and teasing.
- Brainstorm exit strategies to use when bullying occurs.

## Essential Question

***What is weight-based bullying, how does it affect kids, and what can I do if it happens to me?***

<sup>3</sup> Puhl & Luedicke, 2012

<sup>4</sup> Puhl & Luedicke, 2012

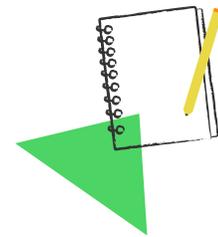
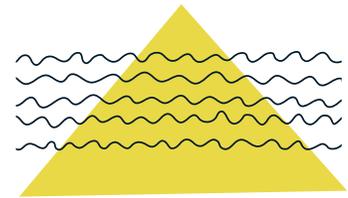
<sup>5</sup> Hayden-Wade, Stein, Ghaderi, Sabinski, & Wilfley, 2005; Neumark-Sztainer, Falkner, Story, Perry, Hannan, & Mulert, 2002

<sup>6</sup> Puhl, Wall, Chen, Austin, Eisenberg, & Neumark-Sztainer, 2017

<sup>7</sup> Aime et al., 2017

## Suggestions for Implementing Virtual Virtual Meetings

- **Lighting:** Backlighting prevents your audience from seeing you clearly. Make sure that you have lighting in front of you to ensure that you are seen.
- **Camera Placement:** Try to make sure that your camera is placed at eye level. This helps to create eye contact and engagement with your audience. You can use books or other items to lift your computer (if using a laptop).
- **Sound:** Make sure that you do a quick sound check before beginning your session. Ensure that you can be heard and that participants will not hear an echo effect. Consider the usage of headphones equipped with a speaker.
- **Make Connections:** Remember to try to connect with your audience, which can be challenging, virtually. Connect with them using quick stories or humor. Some suggestions have been included.
- **Troubleshooting:** It is okay to make mistakes or have technology issues. If you have a technology hiccup or things don't go as planned, do your best to reconnect and move forward with your lesson. The best thing you can do is be prepared by testing your internet connection and sound and video settings prior to your session!



## Sensitivity Note

Due to the nature of today's discussion, be aware of student feelings and sensitive to the emotions and reactions of all students in the classroom. There can be a diversity of emotions and reactions to these topics. Teachers should feel free to paraphrase/edit the language to suit their classes learning abilities.

## Procedure

### Discuss

- Show the video **Teasing and Bullying** (<https://youtu.be/61AqBH0bqIQ>).
- Facilitate a brief discussion, using the following questions as a guide:
  - Have you ever been teased because of the way you look?
  - Have you ever teased someone else because of the way they look?
  - Why do you think people tease others?

## VIRTUAL FACILITATION OPTIONS

- Allow them to share their answers out loud or encourage students to write their answers down to reference later, add to a live/shared document, or comment in a chat box.

- Explain that today the class will read about weight-based bullying and brainstorm some strategies to use if they are being teased or if they witness someone else being teased.

### Do

- Direct students attention to the **Bullying Article**.
- Read article aloud while students follow along silently, invite volunteers to read each paragraph aloud to class, or direct students to read it to themselves silently.
- After reading the article, distribute and instruct students to complete the **Bullying Multiple Choice Questions** student handout.
- Review student responses using the **Bullying Multiple Choice Questions** answer key, stopping to address misconceptions as they arise.

### Reflect

- Distribute one **What I Can Do** handout to each student.
- Reinforce students' learning about weight-based bullying and teasing and challenge them to brainstorm some ways they can handle being bullied if it happens to them or if they are witnesses to it.
- Allow time for students to brainstorm ideas. Ask for volunteers to share their responses. Allow time to make connections between student responses and why weight-based bullying and teasing are harmful.

### VIRTUAL FACILITATION OPTIONS

- This can be facilitated as a whole group discussion, in a live/shared document, or submitted electronically.

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## Bullying Article

Bullying is being mean to a kid over and over. There are many types of bullying. Bullying can be teasing or making fun of someone. Another example of bullying is leaving someone out on purpose. Bullying can also include talking about hurting someone or yelling at a person. It can be hitting or kicking.

Making fun of people because of the way they look, their body, or their weight is bullying too. This is called “appearance-related bullying.” Here are some examples:

- Making fun of someone because his/her pants are too short
- Calling someone fat
- Calling someone ugly
- Making fun of someone because he/she is tall or short

Bullying and teasing hurts other people. Students who are bullied feel sad, feel lonely, and have their feelings hurt. Sometimes, they do not want to go to school. Appearance-based bullying makes students feel bad about the way they look and can make them ashamed of their bodies.

Bullying and teasing is common. Students in 4th grade, 5th grade, middle school, and high school were asked about bullying. Almost half of them (49%) said they were bullied in school in the past month. However, there is some good news. If you see someone being bullied and try to stop it, the bullying usually stops within 10 seconds!<sup>8,9</sup>

There is a lot you can do to stop bullying. You can start by trying to be nice. Practice saying nice things to others. If you say something mean, say you are sorry right away. Also, you might be more likely to say something mean when you are feeling upset. Ask a teacher for help if you feel upset.

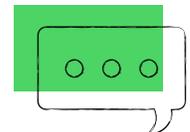
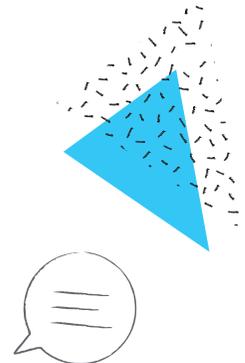
There are safe things you can do to stop bullying if you see it. Tell an adult right away. Be nice to the person who is being bullied. You can hang out with him/her or sit with him/her at lunch.

If you are being bullied, stay calm. Tell the bully to stop in a clear voice. If you can, stay away from the bully. Tell a teacher right away.

Remember, everyone is different, and different is not good or bad. Everyone is born looking different, and everyone is born with different abilities. Some kids may be taller than others. Some kids can jump higher than others. Some kids have bigger hands than others. We are all different, and we are all wonderfully unique!

<sup>8</sup> Bradshaw, C.P., Sawyer, A.L., & O'Brennan, L.M. (2007). “Bullying and peer victimization at school: Perceptual differences between students and school staff.” *School Psychology Review*, 36(3), 361-382

<sup>9</sup> Hawkins, D. L., Pepler, D., and Craig, W. M. (2001). “Peer interventions in playground bullying.” *Social Development*, 10, 512-527



## Bullying Multiple Choice Questions

1. Which sentence best describes the main idea of the passage?
  - a. Bullying is being mean to someone else.
  - b. Bullying is harmful, but there are things we can do to make the situation better.
  - c. Everyone is different, and that's not good or bad.
  
2. True or False: Making fun of a people because of their weight is bullying.
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
3. When are you more likely to say something mean to someone else?
  - a. When I am happy
  - b. When I am excited
  - c. When I am unhappy.
  - d. When I am hungry.
  
4. Read each situation and circle the ones that are bullying.
  - a. Megan and Srivi are good friends. Srivi wants to invite Ronda to hang out with them, but Megan says no. Megan tells Srivi she will stop being her friend if she hangs out with Ronda.
  - b. Carlos and Brad are playing basketball. Every time Brad misses a shot, Carlos laughs and says, "You're terrible! You have weak mouse arms!"
  - c. Joaquin and Jasmine are twins, and they both got braces. They did not want to go to school because they were afraid kids would make fun of them. On the school bus, Matt started calling them "metal mouth twins." Soon, other kids were calling them "metal mouth twins," too.
  - d. Taylor was sitting on a bench at lunch. A kid passed by and said, "I'm not sitting next to you! You are too fat!"
  
5. What is appearance-based bullying or teasing?
  - a. Telling someone you like his/her shoes
  - b. Hitting or kicking someone
  - c. Hugging someone when he/she feels sad
  - d. Making fun of someone because of how he/she looks or because of his/her weight
  
6. Based on the passage, do you think the author believes bullying is a good thing or a bad thing? Why? Use examples from the passage to support your answer

## Bullying Multiple Choice Questions: Answer Key

- Which sentence best describes the main idea of the passage?
  - Bullying is being mean to someone else.
  - Bullying is harmful, but there are things we can do to make the situation better.**
  - Everyone is different, and that's not good or bad.
- True or False: Making fun of a people because of their weight is bullying.
  - True**
  - False
- When are you more likely to say something mean to someone else?
  - When I am happy.
  - When I am excited.
  - When I am unhappy.**
  - When I am hungry.
- Read each situation and circle the ones that are bullying.
  - Megan and Srivi are good friends. Srivi wants to invite Ronda to hang out with them, but Megan says no. Megan tells Srivi she will stop being her friend if she hangs out with Ronda.**
  - Carlos and Brad are playing basketball. Every time Brad misses a shot, Carlos laughs and says, "You're terrible! You have weak mouse arms!"**
  - Joaquin and Jasmine are twins, and they both got braces. They did not want to go to school because they were afraid kids would make fun of them. On the school bus, Matt started calling them "metal mouth twins." Soon, other kids were calling them "metal mouth twins," too.**
  - Taylor was sitting on a bench at lunch. A kid passed by and said, "I'm not sitting next to you! You are too fat!"**
- What is appearance-based bullying or teasing?
  - Telling someone you like his/her shoes.
  - Hitting or kicking someone.
  - Hugging someone when he/she feels sad.
  - Making fun of someone because of how he/she looks or because of his/her weight.**
- Based on the passage, do you think the author believes bullying is a good thing or a bad thing? Why? Use examples from the passage to support your answer.
 

**A bad thing: answers will vary but should be supported by information presented in article.**

## What I Can Do

STUDENT HANDOUT

What I Can Do if I am Being Bullied or Teased	What I Can Do if I Witness Bullying or Teasing



## What I Can Do

STUDENT HANDOUT

What I Can Do if I am Being Bullied or Teased	What I Can Do if I Witness Bullying or Teasing