



CLASSROOM ACTIVITY 2.5 | Bullying & Teasing

GRADES
4–5

Timing

45 minutes

Materials

- Bullying images—
one set for teacher
- **Role Playing Scenarios** student handouts—cut into strips, one scenario per group
- **Refusal Strategy Exit Slip** student handouts—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

EXIT AND REFUSAL STRATEGIES

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, students will engage in a role play activity to practice using specific strategies to address bullying, both as a victim and a bystander before reflecting on which strategies they are most comfortable and most likely to use.

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.¹ 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.² Children who are bullied are more likely to have unhealthy coping

¹ Cash & Pruzinsky, 1990; Cash & Smolak, 2011

² Eisenberg, Neumark-Sztainer, & Story, 2003

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

A review of existing school bullying programs revealed that none of them address weight-based bullying and teasing.⁷ 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 exit and refusal strategies that can provide students with a sense of control if they encounter bullying, either as a victim or a bystander.

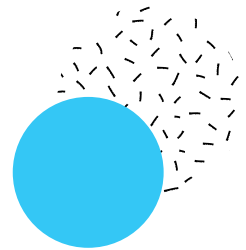
Objectives

Students will:

- Engage in role play with peers to practice exit or refusal strategies.
- Consider which strategies they are likely to use in the future.

Materials

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³ Puhl & Luedicke, 2012

⁴ Puhl & Luedicke, 2012

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

⁶ Puhl, Wall, Chen, Austin, Eisenberg, & Neumark-Sztainer, 2017

⁷ Aime et al., 2017

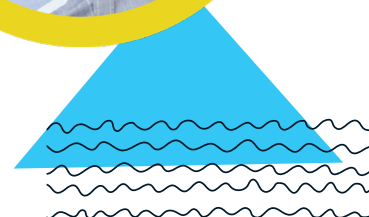
Essential Question

What strategies can I use if I am a victim of bullying? How can I help a victim of bullying if I am a bystander?

Teacher Preparation

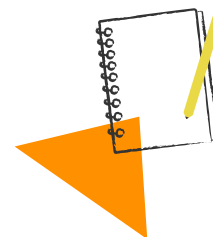
Before the students arrive:

- Before students arrive, assign students groups of four students each, arrange desks into groups of four, and assign scripts 1–4 to groups evenly, printing the correct number of each scenario.
 - If you are teaching virtually, determine how you will assign groups for the **Role-Playing** activity. If using breakout rooms, prepare prior to your session. Platforms like Zoom allow you to pre-assign participants to breakout rooms. Google Meet will randomly distribute participants.



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

- Facilitate a brief discussion about the following questions: "What does it mean to be bullied? What does it mean to bully someone else? What can you do if you are being bullied?" and "What can you do if you see someone being bullied?" Record student responses on the board.
 - Note: If not offered by student suggestions, reinforce that bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.⁸ Bullying is teasing, being mean, or hurting someone on purpose, over and over again.
- Explain that today the class will identify and practice strategies they can use to address bullying.

Do

- Arrange students into groups of four. Distribute one **Role Playing Scenario** to each group, making sure to distribute the scenarios evenly.
- Explain that each scenario features a different strategy that students can use when presented with bullying.
- Provide students with approximately 10 minutes to create and practice a skit based on their scenario. Invite groups one at a time to perform their skit for the class.
- After each skit, facilitate a brief discussion. Click to use the following questions as a guide:
 - What did you do in this situation? Did it work? Why or why not?
 - Do you think this would work in real life? Why or why not?
 - What else can you do in this situation?

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.

VIRTUAL FACILITATION OPTIONS

- Consider facilitating as a whole-group activity in which roles are assigned to specific students.
- Another option is to use breakout rooms to put students into groups so they can role play.
- You can also assign students a scenario and challenge them to independently write narratives detailing the scenario and strategy.

⁸ <https://www.stopbullying.gov/bullying/what-is-bullying>

- Let's say this really happened to you. How confident do you feel that you could stop bullying?
- Challenge the class to pick a strategy and try it the next time they see or experience bullying.

Reflect

- Distribute one **Refusal Strategy Exit Slip** to each student and provide time for them to reflect on their learning.
- If time allows, ask 2–3 volunteers to share their responses.

VIRTUAL FACILITATION OPTIONS

- This can be facilitated as a group discussion or via the chat box.

VIRTUAL FACILITATION OPTIONS

- This can be facilitated in a live/shared document or submitted electronically.



Strategy 1: "Please STOP."

A student is being bullied by a group of peers because he/she is short. The student firmly but calmly tells the bullies to please stop and leave him/her alone. The bullies are caught off guard and walk away.

Strategy 2: "Laugh it off!"

A student is being teased about the clothes they are wearing. The student uses humor to stop the situation and get rid of the bullies.

Strategy 3: "Walk away."

A group of students are bullying a kid. They are making fun of the kid. They are trying to grab at their hair. The student being bullied gets free from the bullies and walks away. The bullied student finds a teachers and tells them what happened.

Strategy 4: "Let's talk about something else."

A student sits alone. A group of students are staring. They are gossiping and pointing at the student. A student in the group uses the "let's talk about something else" strategy. They switch the topic away from the student.



Strategy 5: “Stand up!”

A group of students is teasing another student about their weight. A student comes up and tells the group to leave the kid alone.

Strategy 6: “Be inclusive.”

You see another student sitting alone at lunch. People are staring at the student and whispering. You invite the student to sit with you.

Strategy 7: “Get help.”

You go to the bathroom. There you see a group of students pushing another student. They are shouting insults like “weird” and “ugly.” You run out of the bathroom and find a teacher to tell them what is happening.



Refusal Strategy Exit Slip

STUDENT HANDOUT

1. Write a summary of what you learned today:
2. Of the strategies discussed during class, which ones do you think you will use in the future?
3. What will you say if you witness someone being bullied? What will you do?



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