

## Bullycide & Verbal Abuse TEACHER'S GUIDE

### What teachers need to know:

Bullying happens in school, in the neighborhood, on the playground. Now, with technology at children's fingertips, bullying is taking place online, over the Internet. How many children are affected? In a 2004 survey of 1500 students in grades 4 through 8, iSafe learned the following about "cyber-bullying" – bullying behavior via the Internet:

- 42% of kids have been bullied while online. One in four have had it happen more than once.
- 21% of kids have received mean or threatening email or other messages.
- 58% have not told their parents or an adult about something mean or hurtful that happened to them online.

### Lesson Plan

#### Objectives:

- Define "tattling" and "telling." NOTE: Older students should use the appropriate term used in their area, i.e., "ratting" or "snitching" and "getting help" or "informing."
- Analyze situations to identify tattling and/or telling.
- Develop an appropriate list of people who should be "told" when bullying is happening and how to tell.

#### Materials:

- Black/white board; paper, pens, pencils
- Guidance Counselor, social worker or another adult who helps children with bullying and can help class develop safe ways to "tell" if someone is in trouble.

#### Project and Purpose:

Students will define the difference between "tattling" and "telling" (or, for older students, "ratting" and "informing an adult.") and what they should do when someone is bullying or being bullied. Students will also identify who and how to tell about bullying.

1. After watching the video stories, ask the class: *Why don't bully victims tell someone? Do kids feel as if they are tattling if they report bullying? What is the difference between tattling and telling?* Be sure the students understand, after some discussion, that **tattling is meant to get someone in trouble; telling is to stop someone from getting hurt.**
2. Read each of the following scenarios and ask the class to decide whether letting someone else know about the situation would be considered **tattling** or **telling**. If the group selects **telling**, decide the people who should be told.
  - a. Several girls have teased Ebony about her clothes and they have caused her to cry on several occasions.
  - b. Gus threatens to beat up Victor after school.
  - c. Sharon overhears two boys talking about bringing weapons to school.
  - d. Zoe reads a website written by a bunch of kids in her class that teases other kids. Her own name has never appeared, but she constantly reads all the put-downs.
  - e. E.J. notices Bill has a bruise or a cut on his body almost every day. When he asks him what happened, Bill just says, "Nothing."
  - f. A bunch of guys decide to nominate Thad, the boy who lisps and stutters, for president of the class because they think it will be funny to see him make his speech. Katie and Mara overhear them.
3. Continue the discussion by asking: *How do you tell someone if another person is in danger? What if you feel that telling someone will also put you in danger? What do you do?*
4. At this point, you may wish to bring in a guidance counselor or the person who deals with "telling" situations to help students figure out ways to help others and themselves.

### **Class Discussion Questions:**

1. Why do you think bullies pick the people they do as victims?
2. In the video, Alison Goller says, "People at the school feel everybody gets made fun of." Is that your experience? Explain.
3. Do you agree or disagree with the comment: "The middle school environment is very toxic." Why or why not? Is any school – elementary, middle, high school -- free from bullying? Explain your answer.

### **Self-Reflection Questions:**

1. According to statistics, most school shootings are the result of someone wanting revenge for being bullied. What can we do about it?
2. How would you help someone—or yourself—not let other people's opinions control their life and future?
3. How do rumors get started? Why do people spread rumors? Do you think anyone stops to think about the effect the rumors have on others? What does it take to stop a rumor?

### **Evaluation:**

- Did each student participate in the discussion?
- Were students able to differentiate between tattling and telling?
- If a counselor was brought in, did students listen and respond?
- Did students complete the questions?