

Cyber Comic Lesson Plan for Anti-Bullying Week 2009

Anti-Bullying Week is a great chance for teachers to engage their pupils in important messages around bullying, cyberbullying, online safety, friendship and communication. To ensure that your Anti-Bullying Week gets off to a great start, we've created a special lesson plan that addresses the issue of cyberbullying, teaches safety tips for tackling it, and encourages children to support each other and behave responsibly online.

The following two 45 minute lesson plans are aimed at Key Stage 2 and 3 pupils, but can be adapted for younger or older pupils. They cover areas of the curriculum including Citizenship and PSHE, as well as Art and Design. They are designed to enable schools to address cyberbullying and raise awareness of the issue, in particular to the build up of Anti-Bullying Week 2009. The first lesson should be spent exploring the issue of **cyberbullying**: what is it, how does it happen, what are the effects, and what you can do to help?

Learning outcomes will include:

- * Understanding and respecting differences between people
- * Understanding the effects of bullying
- * Recognition of the influences and pressures on young people, and how to respond to them
- * Using imagination to consider other people's experiences and how to respond to them
- * Active participation, creativity, communication and group discussion

The second lesson is the exciting and creative part!

Pupils will have discussed and understood the problem of cyberbullying; now you can encourage them to show their creativity to design their own Cyber Comic. The idea is that the end product will be a cyber safety comic booklet.

Key learning outcomes will include:

- * Exploration of visual, tactile and other sensory experiences to communicate ideas and meanings
- * Using a variety of approaches and resources, including traditional art forms and new media, to experiment and develop their creativity
- * Development of practical skills and of confidence, competence, imagination and creativity.

To accompany both lessons, Beatbullying has also attached comic templates for pupils to complete, and created anti-cyberbullying stickers for the students to use as characters in their individual comic pages. The stickers consist of four widgets and four bubbles which the students will have to allocate roles to.

It is suggested that the work is extended over two 45 minute lessons, but feel free to take longer if required. Anti-Bullying Week is an opportunity for teachers and pupils to broach the subject of cyberbullying in a creative and positive manner, so please take as much time as is necessary.

This activity is also a great opportunity for schools to discuss their own measures in place to combat bullying, like peer support systems, whole school and community involvement in creating charters or anti-bullying policies, as well as being part of a national drive to raise awareness.



Lesson 1

Requirements

A classroom large enough for students to sit in circle, whiteboard (or flip chart), marker pen

Step 1

Start by drawing up a working agreement on confidentiality and respect for each other. (Some classes will already have such an agreement in place, and so this step can be skipped.)

Everyone should participate in suggesting ground rules for how everyone should behave, and the group must agree each point before it is added to the final contract and stuck to a wall. You may need to refer back to the rules if students begin misbehaving. It is also useful to state that this is an agreement that they have signed up to.

The Working Agreement should include:

- * Listening to each other, respecting the opinions of others, confidentiality and any others that the students deem to be appropriate

Step 2

Whilst the students are sitting in a circle, have an informal discussion about social networking sites.

Try and elicit whether any students use them and if they have ever experienced any bullying whilst online. An important point to consider would be to ask the students who frequently use either XBOX/PS3 if they have ever experienced bullying whilst gaming. Feedback can be quite enlightening at this stage.

Step 3

Discussion on cyberbullying: What is it and how does it happen?

Divide everyone into equal groups if possible. Give each group a sheet of flipchart paper and pens. Ask pupils to come up with their ideas of what cyberbullying is and list the ways in which it might happen. Maybe encourage pupils to create a mind map of all the words they feel are relevant to bullying. Mind mapping is a brilliant way to cover definitions and gives everyone an opportunity to participate.

Each group can then present their ideas which can be discussed by the whole class. You might want to discuss what bullying is and what it is not and why it is sometimes difficult to define.

Example definition

“Cyberbullying is when someone uses technology, like the internet or a mobile phone, to deliberately hurt, humiliate, harass, or threaten someone else.”

Different ways in which people cyberbullying include:

Sending nasty text messages, sending horrible emails, posting hurtful comments on Social Networking Sites like Bebo or MySpace, prank calls, putting up bullying photos or videos onto the internet, spreading these photos or videos, hate sites and bullying in blogs, chat rooms, virtual worlds or on gaming sites.

Step 3

The effects of cyberbullying

Discuss with the group what some of the effects of cyberbullying are. These can include a lack of self confidence, low self-esteem, depression, not wanting to go on the internet, becoming upset or angry, not wanting to go to school, and more serious effects, like self-harm, if suitable to discuss with the age group.

Step 4

Points to consider in discussions

- * Explore why cyberbullying might be worse than other types of bullying
- * Why it's not such a good idea to meet up with someone you meet online
- * Victims of cyberbullying feel like there is no escape - even at home or holiday, etc.
- * The fact that anyone can be cyberbullied if they have access to a mobile or a computer

Note down all ideas on the flip chart/IWB.

Step 5

If it were me...what would I do?

Divide everyone into groups again. Imagine the cyberbullying scenarios below (see boxes 1, 2, and 3 below), and encourage your pupils to imagine what it feels like to be cyberbullied. Explore with the students how they might feel in that situation and note feedback on a flip chart or IWB.

Ideas might include:

- * Tell parents
- * Tell teachers
- * Tell friends, etc.

This exercise is to gauge the understanding of the students in regards to cyberbullying and to get them thinking about empathy.

Teachers' Notes

Box 1

Kaitlin has recently joined BEBO. She has made quite a few friends online. Lately, Kaitlin has been receiving horrible emails saying things like "everyone hates you." Kaitlin doesn't know who it is but suspects that it might be someone she has recently fallen out with. She hasn't told anybody about it because she is scared. Now her mates are asking her why she hasn't been on BEBO lately and Kaitlin is too scared to tell them that she has been receiving hate mail.

What should she do?

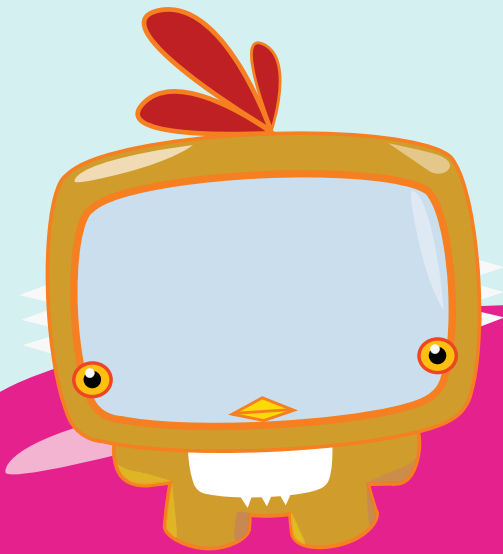
Box 2

Someone keeps calling my phone and when I answer they hang up. This happens all the time and sometimes when I answer the call they start breathing heavily or laugh before hanging up. The number is always withheld.

Box 3

I posted a few pictures of my mates and I onto my MySpace page. I logged in the other day and saw that someone had altered my picture and now I have received loads of horrible comments about the way I look. I'm really upset about it and I just want to get the comments removed but I don't know how.

***ACTION: Pupils to select a comic template**



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2 help U

Lesson 2

Requirements

1 pack of stickers per student, 1 comic strip template, drawing/colouring pencils

Step 1

Overview of Lesson 1

Review the mind maps and discussion from the last lesson: what is cyberbullying, how does it happen, what are the effects and what can you do to help? Stick up the flip chart papers and mind maps around the room.

Step 2

Design your own Cyber Safety Comic

Hand out a template of a comic template to each pupil. (You can download extra templates from www.antibullyingweek.org)

Have a look at <http://cybermentors.org.uk> and see Box 2 to understand what CyberMentors are.

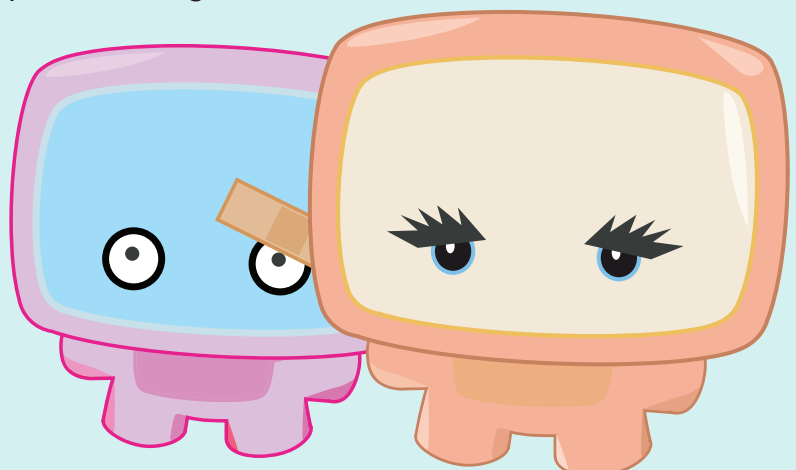
Step 3

Think of a comic scenario

Each student will need to think of a cyberbullying scenario containing each of their four widget stickers. They will also need to incorporate the slogans attached to the stickers in their scenario. The comic templates have 6 box sections - so their scenarios will have to be quite short.

Alternatively, they could partner up to produce a longer scenario.

(You can download a special PDF from the website that has extra widgets and bubbles if you want to photocopy lots of them for pupils to cut out.)



Step 4

What will your scenario look like?

- * Where will it be based? i.e. school, transportation, on an estate, shopping centre etc
- * What will this area look like? i.e. will it be clean, dirty, full of rubbish etc. The students will have to ensure that their comic is visually stimulating too.
- * The students will have to pay close attention to the emotional aspects of their widgets and ensure that each widget is given a personality which comes across in their individual comic strip. Are they happy, sad, are they bullies, victims of bullies or bystanders?
- * Students should be encouraged to give their widgets a name - be inventive!

Step 5

Now let's begin!

The students can now think of a cyber-scenario but they will have to make sure that their scenario is not duplicated by anyone else in their class. Alternatively, they can pick one of the suggestions below.

- * Someone being picked on due to their profile picture
- * Someone stealing someone's password
- * Someone creating a hate site about someone else
- * Someone intentionally making someone else lose a game on XBOX/PS3
- * Someone receiving prank calls
- * Someone being sent offensive emails or text messages
- * Someone arranging to meet up with someone they have met online.

Students can then write their dialogue in speech bubbles and use the slogans provided on their individual sticker packs to enhance their stories. Students will also have to ensure that they include appropriate advice for their chosen scenario. Please see **Box 1** below for advice and suggestions for people who have experienced cyberbullying.

Step 6

Giving advice and supporting those who are/have experience of cyberbullying.

Here are some tips for safer surfing:

- * Tell someone you trust that you are being cyberbullied
- * Report any cyberbullying, whether it's targeted at you or not

- * Never respond/retaliate as this can make things worse. It may be difficult not to, but try to ignore it
- * Block the cyberbullies from contacting you
- * Save any offensive emails/texts as this can be used to trace them if necessary
- * Tell your parents/carers that you are being cyberbullied - if they don't know, they can't help you
- * If you are continuously cyberbullied, consider changing your user I.D.
- * Don't post any personal details online
- * Don't let anyone know your password - even friends
- * Think carefully before you post any information
- * Never upload personal photos of yourself online for safety reasons
- * Register on our site <http://cybermentors.org.uk> to gain support from your peers
- * Don't allow these tips to hinder your enjoyment- but allow them to enhance your online experience. Have fun!!

Teachers' Notes

Box 1

CyberMentors (<http://cybermentors.org.uk>) is a website where young people can go if they are being bullied, cyberbullied or maybe just having a bad time. It is a resource that offers young people support and guidance from their peers as well as trained professionals. All our CyberMentors are aged 11-25 and have all been trained by Beatbullying to be online (and offline) Peer Mentors. They form relationships with the young people who register by chatting to them and offering assistance. The target audience of the website is young people aged 8-16. Many schools are now signing up en masse, to make sure their pupils are ready to get help if they need it.

Everything is kept confidential, unless there is a safeguarding issue - this is clearly stated on the site. CyberMentors are carefully trained to know that any Child Protection issue has to be passed on promptly to either Beatbullying staff or Beatbullying Counsellors. Registered users can also gain support and advice in real-time online access from Senior CyberMentors and BACP-accredited Counsellors.

Please rest assured that we take the wellbeing and safety of all young people very seriously.