 Being an upstander to bullying – support for everyone – Stage 4

Suggested duration: 2 x 45 minutes

Students will examine the enablers to being an upstander to bullying and consider strategies which could support young people to overcome barriers. The activity aims to build student empathy and compassion for all young people and recognise the importance of support networks and health services in young people’s lives and how help seeking skills can assist in feeling connected and supported. It aims to build on student’s knowledge and understanding of upstander behaviour so they can identify attitudes, behaviours or actions which promote inclusiveness and connectedness such as providing and seeking support for themselves and others. The activity encourages students to move beyond the notion of tolerance and acceptance by becoming an upstander to bullying.

PDHPE outcomes

PD4-2 examines and demonstrates the role help-seeking strategies and behaviours play in supporting themselves and others

PD4-3 investigates effective strategies to promote inclusivity, equality and respectful relationships

PD4-6 recognises how contextual factors influence attitudes and behaviours and proposes strategies to enhance health, safety, wellbeing and participation in physical activity

PD4-9 demonstrates self- management skills to effectively manage complex situations

PD4-10 applies and refines interpersonal skills to assist themselves and others to interact respectfully and promote inclusion in a variety of groups

What do we want students to know, understand or be able to do?

* Identify a range of support structures that are available to young people.
* Recognise the impact that being an upstander can have on bullying situations.
* Challenge their own thoughts and attitudes about bullying behaviour.
* Identify the barriers and enablers to being an upstander to bullying.
* Understand different ways of being an upstander.
* Identify services and personnel in the school and/or community that are available to support young people.
* Justify how various services and personnel support young people involved in bullying situations.

PDHPE content

| Key Inquiry Questions | Content |
| --- | --- |
| What skills and strategies can be used to manage change, challenges and seek help? | * evaluate strategies to manage personal, physical and social changes that occur as they grow older (ACPPS071)   + access and assess health information, resources and services that support young people to effectively manage changes and transitions, eg websites promoting young people’s mental health S * practise and apply skills and strategies to seek help for themselves and others (ACPPS072)   + propose individual support networks and external support services S   + identify barriers to seeking help and propose strategies to overcome these barriers S   + recognise scenarios that involve change and challenge for young people and rehearse help-seeking strategies to overcome each situation S I |
| What skills and strategies can be used to promote inclusivity, equality and respectful relationships? | * investigate the benefits of relationships and examine their impact on their own and others’ health, safety and wellbeing (ACPPS074) I   + examine how culture and relationships with family and peers can influence people’s attitudes, behaviours, decisions and actions in different situations S   + analyse how behaviours, actions, and responses to situations can change depending on who they are with S * explore skills and strategies needed to communicate and engage in relationships in respectful ways   + demonstrate ways to resolve conflict in a range of contexts I   + investigate personal, social and cultural factors that influence the way individuals respond emotionally to different situations and propose strategies for managing these S   + practise being respectful, sympathetic and empathetic to different viewpoints and plan alternative ways to respond to others S I * discuss the impact of power in relationships and identify and develop skills to challenge the abuse of power   + discuss the influence of family, media and peer attitudes to power in relationships   + explore how external influences impact power in relationships in both a positive and negative way, eg bullying, homophobia, intolerance, help-seeking, social support, advocacy on one’s behalf, upstander behaviour S   + describe forms of bullying, harassment, abuse, neglect, discrimination and violence and how they impact health, safety and wellbeing   + devise help-seeking strategies that address imbalance of power in relationships, eg contacting the police and other external organisations, staying at a family/friends place S   + develop skills to challenge the abuse of power S I |
| Why is connection, inclusion and empowerment important for the health, safety, wellbeing and physical activity levels of the wider community? | * examine influences on peoples’ behaviours, decisions and actions (ACPPS074)   + discuss the influence of contextual factors on individual decisions and actions |

Assumed knowledge and understanding

To participate in this activity, it is assumed that students have a basic understanding of the following Stage 4 PDHPE content:

* A sense of self
* Caring and respectful relationships - Types and nature of relationships
* Power in relationships
* Bullying and harassment
* Stage 4 learning activity - Stairs to inclusivity
* Stage 4 learning activity – Upstander behaviour

Required resources and materials for preparation

* Classroom stairs to inclusivity for reference
* Stairs to inclusivity cards – respect, mutual understanding, celebration
* Example: barriers to being an upstander to bullying – teacher copy
* Positioning activity cards – class set
* Positioning activity teaching considerations – teacher copy
* Bullying no way image

PDHPE skills focus

| Skill domain and skills | Evidence of learning - what do we want students to be able to do? |
| --- | --- |
| Interpersonal skills   * communication * collaboration, inclusion and relationship building * empathy building * leadership and advocacy | * Communicate clearly with others * Share thoughts and emotions appropriate to the situation * Actively listen to others * Understand the needs and circumstances of others and express that understanding * Value an individual’s or group’s worth * Adopt a variety of roles such as group member to support and encourage others * Relate to others experiences and circumstances * Show compassion * Encourage people to look out for themselves * Encourage and guide others in a positive way * Contend the negative attitudes and behaviours of others |
| Self-management skills   * decision making and problem solving * help seeking | * Locate relevant and reliable information and services * Seek help where required * Justify why a particular option has been chosen over others * Locate support services * Find out where to go or how to access support services/networks |

Teaching notes

Considerations when selecting activities

* Preview and evaluate all strategies, resources and teaching and learning approaches in full before use with students to determine suitability for student learning needs, stage of development and local school context.
* Consider the age, maturity, cultural background, sexuality, gender, sex, health and other characteristics of students in your care.
* Apply professional judgements to all strategies, teaching and learning approaches and resources including audio visual materials (e.g. videos, media clips and YouTube), interactive web-based content (e.g. games, quizzes and websites) and texts.
* Seek endorsement by the school principal before use of materials in NSW government schools.
* Select the activities most suitable for your students.
* Individual students within the group have differing needs and backgrounds. Modify or extend some aspects of suggested activities accordingly.
* Consider and tailor lessons to cater for differing cultural perceptions of what should be taught at a certain age.
* Undertake a comprehensive step by step process to assess any physical or psychological risks associated with an activity before following using a variety of teaching strategies.
* Enable students to withdraw if they find issues personally confronting.
* Recognise that some students may find it difficult to contribute to class discussions and may say little in group activities. Don’t assume they are not engaged in the activities but rather provide all students with the opportunity to contribute in less public ways.
* Be guided by the department's [Sexuality and sexual health education in NSW government schools fact sheet](https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/83181e69-4daf-4308-a7dd-d05f11af5cbd/1/sexuality-ed-nsw.pdf) when planning and implementing any sexuality or sexual health education lesson.
* Access more information about child protection education on the department’s [PDHPE curriculum website](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/key-learning-areas/pdhpe/child-protection-and-respectful-relationships-education).
* Use the [resource review flowchart](https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/083acd3a-daca-4307-9afe-bc6c888f694a/1/final-resource-flowchart-html5.zip/index.html) to decide about the suitability of teaching and learning resources.

Communication with parents and caregivers

Some aspects of PDHPE may be viewed as sensitive or controversial, such as learning about abuse, child protection, drugs, respectful relationships, sexual health, sexuality and violence. Inform parents and carers, prior to the occasion, of the specific details of the PDHPE program, so that parents and caregivers have time to exercise their rights of withdrawing their child from a particular session. In this regard, a parents or caregiver’s wish must be respected.

Establishing how parents and caregivers will be informed about programs and involved in consultation is a school-based decision. Where parents and caregivers indicate they wish to withdraw their child from a program it is useful to negotiate which parts of the PDHPE program they are concerned about. Sample information letters are available on the [PDHPE curriculum website](https://education.nsw.gov.au/curriculum/pdhpe/general-information/parents-and-carers).

Creating a safe and supportive learning environment

There are a number of strategies that can be used to create a supportive learning environment which enables students to feel safe to learn and ask questions. They include:

* making students aware at the beginning of PDHPE lessons that disclosing personal information that indicates they may be at risk of harm will be reported to the school principal in all instances. This includes personal disclosures related to instances of abuse, drug use, neglect or sexual activity under the legal age of consent.
* being aware that some parts of PDHPE can be confronting and sensitive for some students.
* enabling students to withdraw if they find issues personally confronting to protect them from making harmful disclosures. Equally, it is important to be prepared for issues that arise as a result of a student making a public disclosure in the classroom.

It is recommended that staff use a question box to allow for students to ask difficult questions anonymously through the unit. The question box provides staff with information on student prior and post knowledge by assessing the questions which arise through the question box. Students should be provided with a piece of paper at the beginning of each lesson which they can write their question on and submit. All students should submit a piece of paper, even if it is blank to ensure anonymity.

More information on creating a safe and supportive learning environment can be found on the [PDHPE curriculum website](https://education.nsw.gov.au/curriculum/pdhpe/general-information/learning-environment).

Background information

Bullying within the school environment is a serious social problem both in Australia and globally (Gini & Pozzoli 2009; Morrison 2001).

One in four Australian young people are bullied every day ([The Bully Project Australia](http://www.thebullyproject.com.au/portfolio/bully-in-australia/)). Both those who bully and those who are bullied experience long-term psychological and social problems associated with their behaviour that may extend well beyond their schooling years, such as depression and thoughts of suicide. These young people are at greater risk of criminal conviction and school drop-out (Beaty & Alexeyev 2008; Brunstein-Klomek et al. 2007; Lodge 2008).

School environments that promote school connectedness and supportive social relationships have been shown to positively influence health and academic outcomes in school-aged children, for example, lower levels of absenteeism, aggression, substance use and sexual risk behaviour, and higher levels of academic performance and self-esteem (Hopkins et al. 2007; Springer et al. 2006).

Young people, while they experience their world, may face the challenge of being subject to, observers of and/or promoters of bullying and harassment. Non-inclusive actions or behaviours such as bullying are sometimes tolerated or accepted by the wider community and this is generally labelled as bystander or onlooker behaviour. By exploring how young people can respond to or seek support for bullying towards themselves and others, teachers can encourage students to become upstanders and demonstrate more inclusive attitudes and behaviours which move them beyond tolerance and acceptance on the stairs to inclusivity.

[The BULLY Project Australia](http://www.thebullyproject.com.au/upstander/) defines an “upstander” as – “someone who recognises when something is wrong and acts to make it right. When an upstander sees or hears about someone being bullied, they speak up. Being an upstander is being a hero: we are standing up for what is right and doing our best to help support and protect someone who is being hurt.”

Students who have previously experienced or been subject to bullying and harassment may find this activity very empowering, however, it is important that they are supported by additional information or referral as needed.

While for some resilient young people bullying and harassment may not be a matter of concern, the majority of young people experiencing this will be affected emotionally, physically and/or socially at some time in their adolescence. Bullying and harassment is a common experience in the school environment and is one that can bring with it an extreme amount of distress and a sense of isolation with its consequent impact on feelings of self-worth. Whilst counselling has an important role to play in supporting young people, teachers should also respond to issues of bullying and harassment within the school as per school policy and procedures.

Learning experiences

**Activity 1 – review the impacts of bullying and bystander behaviour (20 minutes)**

1. Review student’s knowledge and understanding of the impact and/or effects of bullying and bystander behaviour. Provide students with current research data that focuses on both the effects on those who are bullied and those who display bullying/bystander behaviours. Teachers should ensure that the examples provided below are current at the time of delivering this activity.
   1. One in four Australian young people are bullied every day ([The Bully Project Australia](http://www.thebullyproject.com.au/portfolio/bully-in-australia/)).
   2. Both those who bully and those who are bullied experience long-term psychological and social problems associated with their behaviour, such as depression and thoughts of suicide that may extend well beyond their schooling years, and are at greater risk of criminal conviction and school drop-out (Beaty & Alexeyev 2008; Brunstein-Klomek et al. 2007; Lodge 2008).
   3. Research shows that bullying can have a negative impact on students' academic performance, self-esteem, coping skills, and can increase anxiety and unhappiness. Bullying can negatively affect how children and young people see themselves and how they feel about themselves. ([Bullying no way](http://news.bullyingnoway.gov.au/the-facts/Pages/Impact-of-bullying.aspx))
   4. The outcomes for people who bully others are also not good in the long-term. Children and young people who bully others may come to see bullying as a normal and acceptable way to behave. Those who bully others need support to learn more appropriate ways of behaving and of resolving conflict to prepare them for adulthood and to reduce the likelihood of developing even more serious anti-social behaviours. ([Bullying no way](http://news.bullyingnoway.gov.au/the-facts/Pages/Impact-of-bullying.aspx))
   5. Research indicates that bystanders can be negatively impacted by witnessing bullying. ([Bullying no way](http://news.bullyingnoway.gov.au/the-facts/Pages/Impact-of-bullying.aspx))
2. In small groups, students develop an example of a bullying scenario and brainstorm the feelings that each person in the situation might experience. (Alternatively the teacher can provide various scenarios).
   1. Groups share their ideas with the class to create a list of feelings associated with various bullying situations.
   2. Discuss how these feelings can be linked to the impacts or effects of bullying or bystander behaviour. The following questions could be used for class discussion in relation to all or any of the individuals in the scenarios e.g. people being bystanders, people bullying, people being bullied;

* How might the person’s feelings impact on the thoughts they have about themselves and others during and after the situation?
* How might the person’s feelings impact on their sense of self?
* How would the person’s feelings impact on their relationships at school?
* How might the person’s feelings impact on their learning and education?
* How might the feelings of the person who is the bystander be a barrier to them becoming an upstander and supporting the rights of others?

**Activity 2 – the barriers to being an upstander to bullying (25 minutes)**

1. Refer students to the classroom set of stairs to inclusivity or alternatively use the stairs to inclusivity cards provided as a reference. Highlight those stairs which are beyond acceptance - respect, mutual understanding and celebration.
   1. Explain that moving beyond acceptance requires a person to be able to challenge their own beliefs and attitudes (respect), support the rights of others and combat the negative behaviours of others (mutual understanding), and value a person or group’s worth and be an advocate for their rights (celebration).
   2. Explain that these actions or behaviours reflect different ways of being an upstander.
2. Use a positioning activity to explore the barriers to being an upstander in relation to reporting bullying and standing up to support others.

Teacher note: It is important that teachers refer to the positioning activity - teaching considerations before undertaking a positioning activity. For professional learning to increase understanding of how to use values-based activities effectively in sexual health education lessons access the Taking up a position self-paced, online resource.

Activity suggestion:

1. Place the position cards; strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree around the room or on the floor in correct order.
2. Explain to students that you are going to read out a statement related to sexual health services.
3. Inform students that once they have thought about the statement they need to move to the position card that best represents their thoughts about the statement i.e. do you strongly agree/agree/disagree/strongly disagree with the statement?

It is important to explain to students that there is no right or wrong answers in this activity and that they are free to change their mind at any time. After each statement is read out and students have positioned themselves, invite students to share their thoughts about the statement. Try to ensure a range of views are discussed.

1. Ask students:

* What was your thinking when you moved to the position of strongly agree/agree/ disagree/strongly disagree?
* To avoid having all students standing at the one position, invite a small number of students to volunteer to position themselves on the scale from the perspective of:
  + a parent or an adult
  + someone of the opposite sex
  + someone of another age, culture, religion or sexuality.

1. Use the following statements to explore student’s personal values and attitudes.

Warm up statement - You can still be friends with someone who has different opinions to you.

* If the person bullying wasn’t my friend, I would report it
* It is okay for an adult to bully a young person because they are older
* If I report bullying I will get bullied myself
* It’s okay to ignore when a person is being bullied if that person has bullied me in the past
* It is better to ignore bullying and stay safe than to help a person who is being bullied
* If I don’t know how to support a person being bullied, then it is better that I do nothing
* A person who bullies others doesn’t deserve any support

After each statement is read out and students have positioned themselves, invite students to share their thoughts about the statement. Try to ensure a range of views are discussed. Ask students:

* What was your thinking when you moved to the position of strongly agree/ agree/ disagree/ strongly disagree?

**Extension (higher order thinking)**

1. The teacher can prompt students to think more critically by providing other elements to some of the statements:
   1. Statement: If the person bullying wasn’t my friend, I would report it.Extension: What if... the person bullying was a friend, would you change your position? Why/ Why not?
   2. Statement: It is better to ignore bullying and stay safe than to help a person who is being bullied.Extension: What if... the person being bullied was you? Would you change your position? Why/ Why not?
   3. Statement: A person who bullies others doesn’t deserve any support*.* Extension: What if... the person bullying was you?Would you change your position? Why/ Why not?
2. As a class, discuss the barriers for young people in reporting bullying or standing up to support those people who are being bullied. Teachers can refer to the example barriers provided for guidance during discussion.
   1. Students use a think, pair and share strategy to respond to the following questions and to compile a class list of strategies to overcome the barriers to being an upstander to bullying.
   2. If you were the person being bullied, would you want someone to support you by being an upstander? Why or why not?
   3. What strategies are already in place in the school, community or online communities to support young people experiencing bullying and to support people to report and stand up to bullying?
   4. What strategies could be put in place to help young people overcome the barriers to being an upstander to bullying? Think about the strategies that are already in place or could be put in place at school and/or the community?

**Activity 3 – the importance of support networks (15 minutes)**

1. Explain to students that the barriers to moving beyond acceptance and being an upstander, no matter what the situation, can often have a lot to do with the support networks or services that are available to us. When support structures are in place people often feel safer or more confident to report the abuse of power, to combat the negative behaviours of others or to advocate for the rights of others.
2. As a class, use ideas from the previous *think, pair, share* to develop a list of existing support structures or strategies within the school and community that support young people to report the abuse of power or combat negative behaviours. Consider both online and offline communities. Examples could be placed under specific categories, for example;

* School and social networks - such as family, peers, teachers, school counsellor
* Policies and practices - such as anti-bullying policy, incident reports
* Community services – such as organisations, websites, helplines

1. Explain to students that moving beyond acceptance to become an upstander to bullying is not just about supporting the person being bullied. As upstanders we can support the rights of every person (mutual understanding) – which includes encouraging or supporting those people who display bullying behaviours to seek support and/or challenge their own attitudes and behaviours.
2. Discuss how the class list of existing support structures or strategies could support those people who display bullying behaviours.
3. As a class debate the statement; It is important for every person in a bullying situation to feel supported. After the debate, students consider the following questions;

* How can others help or support a young person who is being bullied?
* What support is available for people who witness bullying behaviour?
* Do you think people who display bullying behaviour would benefit from support? Why or why not?

**Activity 4 – establishing support networks (30 minutes)**

1. In small groups, students examine the image from the Bullying no way photo gallery*.* Allocate one person from the image to each group. Groups research information to respond to the questions relevant to their allocated person;
   1. Person 1 – ‘I’ve just bullied someone’

* What support networks or services are available in the school and online and offline community to support young people who display bullying behaviours?
  1. Person 2 – ‘I’ve just been bullied’
* What support networks or services are available in the school and online and offline community to support young people who are bullied?
  1. Person 3 – ‘I’ve done nothing about it’
* Where would you place this person’s behaviour on the stairs to inclusivity?
* What online and offline services are available to support this young person in being an upstander?

1. In the same small groups as above, students redesign the bullying no way photo gallery image by taking ‘selfies’ with the types of support structures available to support person 1, 2 or 3.

Teacher note:

A selfie is described by the Oxford Dictionary as a photograph that one has taken of oneself, typically one taken with a smartphone or webcam and shared via social media.

Depending on the student’s interest and the time available, this activity could be done within the school and/or as a take home task in the local community.

1. Encourage students to be creative with their selfies and possibly change the signs in the original image when taking selfies, examples may include;

* Person 1 - 'I've just bullied someone again and I need/want help to stop. Things that could support me are…'
* Person 2 - 'I've just been bullied and it hurt. I want to talk to someone about it. Things that could support me are…'
* Person 3 - 'I have seen someone get bullied and I'm going to do something about it. Things that could support me are…'

1. Encourage students to take a variety of photos which showcase individuals, groups, services, places, policies or posters within the school and/or community which could offer support if a young person was seeking help.
2. Set up a private class social media group/page or common Google doc or Google drive. This allows students to share their images with the class. To support their images, students post a comment that includes an explanation of how the person, group, service, place, policy, or poster supports young people involved in bullying situations and where the support structure/s can be located/accessed, i.e. the person’s role e.g. school counsellor/ mother/ friends, the website address or contact information.
3. As a class, create a catalogue of support services for young people by compiling the posts from the class social media page.

Taking up a position cards

Teacher can photocopy, cut out and laminate.

AGREE

DISAGREE

STRONGLY AGREE

STRONGLY DISAGREE

Taking up a position activity – Teaching considerations

Key messages

* Create a safe and supportive environment
* Share thoughts not feelings
* There are no right or wrong answers
* Respect each other’s differences
* Feel free to move or change your mind
* Use appropriate and inclusive language.

| Do | Do not |
| --- | --- |
| * Set boundaries and expectations * Use inclusive language * Listen to what students are saying * Encourage everyone to share thoughts rather than feelings * Rephrase student thoughts without judgement * Thank students for sharing * Use the ‘teachable moment’ * Invite analysis * Reflect questions back to students * Use other situations to expand values continuum * Invite students to move if they change their minds | * Give research or facts * Judge the student * Show your opinion * Try to change values or beliefs * Give advice * Pressure students to share their thoughts |

Example: Barriers to being an upstander to bullying

Personal Safety

* Doesn’t want to be hurt or bullied themselves
* Doesn’t want to get into trouble
* Doesn’t want to get involved

Relationships

* Doesn’t want to be seen as taking sides
* The person bullying is their friend or relative
* Doesn’t know or doesn’t like the person being bullied

Power

* The person bullying is bigger, older or stronger than they are
* The person bullying is an adult
* Dislikes the person being bullied and thinks it is okay for them to get hurt
* The person being bullied has bullied them in the past

Knowledge and skills in accessing support

* Doesn’t know how best to support the person
* Doesn’t know where to go for help
* Doesn’t know how to report the bullying

Information has been adapted from:

[Child and Youth Health website](http://www.cyh.com/HealthTopics/HealthTopicCategories.aspx?p=286): Your school - Are you a bystander to bullying?

Image – Bullying no way

Source: Bullying no way photo gallery, Renmark North Primary School, SA



Stairs to inclusivity cards

Celebration

To nurture and treat a person or group with genuine sincerity or delight.

To value a person or group’s worth and be an advocate for their rights.

Mutual Understanding

To appreciate and support the rights of a person or group and combat the negative attitudes and behaviours of others.

Respect

To value the diversity in a person or group and challenge your own personal beliefs and attitudes.

Acceptance

To acknowledge difference but feel the need to approve or give permission for it to occur. (Someone who accepts difference is still placing themselves in a position of power, implying there is something that requires ‘acceptance’).

Tolerance

To put up with difference that you disagree.

To allow difference to exist or occur without interference.

Dislike

To withhold approval from a person or group.

To have a feeling of distaste towards a person or group.

Discrimination

To treat a person or group differently, usually in an unfair manner, because of your personal attitudes and beliefs.

Prejudice

To treat a person or group differently, usually in an unfair manner, because of a preconceived opinion.

To make a prejudgement or form an opinion without knowledge of the facts.

To express bias against a person or group based on stereotypical views.

Hate/Violence

To feel intense dislike, towards a person or group, so strong that it results in negative behaviours and actions towards the person or group.