IDENTIFYING AND PREVENTING CYBER-BULLYING

Cyber-bullying
Harassment
Bullying
Aggressive
Power imbalance
Social media
Bystander
Gender-based violence
Victim
LGBTQ /LGBTQI
Abuse
Women
Gender roles
Sexual harassment
Slut shaming
Victim blaming
Heteronormativity
Homophobia
Risk
Perpetrator
Victim
Sexual orientation

✓ 1. To help learners identify **cyber-bullying** and online **harassment**.
✓ 2. To identify what is acceptable and what is unacceptable behaviour.
✓ 3. To help learners know what to do when experiencing **bullying**, **cyber-bullying** or **harassment;** and helping others who may be victimised.

🕐 45 Mins

Blackboard and chalk / markers and paper
Teacher Prompt: **Scenarios and Answer Key** (provided)
☆ **Worksheet: 'OK/ Bullying/Cyber-bullying' Cards** (provided)
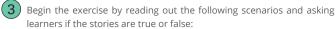**Information Sheet: Bullying Behaviours**

PROCEDURE

PRIOR TO CLASS

1 Print a set of three cards '**OK|Bullying|Cyber-Bullying'** (provided) for each learner. If resources are an issue at your school, you could also simply have learners draw a set of icons on a piece of paper.

2 Draw three vertical columns on the board and label them with each of the three options on the cards. You will total up how many learners vote for each kind of face in response to the scenarios.

IN CLASS

3 Begin the exercise by reading out the following scenarios and asking learners if the stories are true or false:

a. A boy in Soshanguve (near Pretoria) committed suicide in 2012 after being attacked by four bullies.

b. In 2012, 96 schoolchildren in the Eastern Cape committed suicide, and **bullying** was a contributing factor in their suicides.

c. In 2012, a child in Durban stopped going to school for two weeks because he was bullied.

d. A few years ago a 16 year old learner in Cape Town was hospitalised because a bully threw coffee in his face.

e. The mother of a 16 year old boy in Cape Town said her son would repeatedly come home with bruises on his face inflicted by bullies.

f. Gay and lesbian teens are 2-3 times more likely to commit suicide than other teens, often due to bullying.

g. In 2012, a 15-year-old Krugersdorp schoolgirl was attacked with a glass bottle by a schoolmate, after a series of online attacks by the girl and her friends.

Tell the learners that all of these statements are true, and that they all happened in South Africa. Explain to the class that today's activity looks at bullying and cyber-bullying behaviours, and the ways that learners can stand up for themselves, prevent **bullying** and **cyber-bulling** and maintain a healthy online lifestyle.

4 As a class, or in small groups, come up with a definition of bullying, and one for **cyber-bullying**. After some discussion, read out or write the following definitions on the board:

BULLYING: Unwanted, **aggressive** behaviour, often but not only among children, that involves a **power imbalance**. Bullying is often directed at children who are smaller in size, or are seen to be different.

CYBER-BULLYING: Bullying that occurs using electronic technology, such as cell phones, the internet, and **social media** (such as Facebook). This includes texting, e-mailing or posting on the internet, to or about someone, anything that may make them feel bad, humiliated or afraid, or any information that is private.

5 Ask the class what a **bystander** is. Suggest:

BYSTANDER: Someone who witnesses or has knowledge of someone being victimised (abused or violated). For example, if someone is being bullied at school and other learners see this happen, those other learners are bystanders.

6 Remind learners that bystanders have a responsibility to speak out against abuses such as **bullying** or **gender-based violence.**

Tell them that you will read out scenarios to the class that will be examples of things that are ok to do, things that are **bullying,** and things that are **cyber-bullying**.They will have to identify which kind of behaviour it is.

7 Hand out a set of the 'OK|Bullying|Cyber-bullying' Cards to each learner.

8 Tell learners that once you have read out a scenario from the sheet (provided) they will 'vote' for whether they think the behaviour in question is acceptable (OK) behaviour, **bullying** or **cyber-bullying** behaviour. They will vote by holding up the relevant card.

9 For each of the scenarios, note down on the board in the relevant columns how many learners voted for each type of behaviour. The correct answers are provided in the Answer Key**.** After you have noted down the votes on each scenario, encourage discussion on:

a. How the learners decided on a category for each scenario.

b. Differences between how learners voted on a single scenario.

c. What criteria they applied in making their decision.

10 After hearing the scenarios, ask the learners the following questions:

a. Why do people bully others? How does it make the bully/victim feel?

b. Who are the targets of **cyber-bullying**?

c. What methods can be used to perpetrate cyber-bullying?

d. What is different about bullying by use of digital media versus **bullying** in person?

If learners are struggling, you can suggest answers like:

- **Cyber-bullying** can happen outside of school.

- Cyber-bullying can happen any/many hours a day. Information, images and rumours can get around faster and spread further using social media than by passing from person to person.

- More people can be targeted for **bullying** more quickly using technology.

- It is more difficult to escape from cyber-bullies.

- It is more difficult for parents and teachers to recognise and monitor cyber-bullying.

- Cyber-bullying can affect all aspects of your life, and is not just limited to school time or time with peers.

- Cyber-bullying can be even more devastating for the victim because it can seem so completely present in their lives and hard to escape.

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e. Why do you think that victims of bullying often do not tell adults?

Answers may include:

- They are scared to be bullied even more for telling someone.

- **Victims** don't want people to think that they are weak.

- They feel alone and isolated.

- They fear being physically hurt.

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f. As a **bystander**, what would prevent you from sticking up for someone or telling an adult about **cyber-bullying**? How can you stand up for your peers who have been bullied or cyber-bullied?

11 Ask learners what they would do in cases of bullying or cyber-bullying? Who could they turn to for help?

Some ideas to share with learners include:

BULLYING:

- Ask for help from a trusted friend, teacher, parent, religious leader, or other responsible adult.

- Tell your school principal or guidance counsellor.

- Avoid the bully.

- Do not argue with the bully.

- Walk with a buddy at all times.

- Walk away if the bully tries to taunt you.

- Tell the bully to stop in a clear calm voice.

- Stay away from places where bullying happens.

- Stay near adults since most bullying happens when adults aren't around.

CYBER-BULLYING:

- Always keep your personal information private.

- Keep records (text messages, Facebook posts, emails) of cyber-bullying activities as evidence to stop the bully.

- Do not reply to bullying calls or messages.

- Ask for help from a trusted friend, teacher, parent, religious leader, or other responsible adult.

- Report the bully.

- Block the bully from contacting you.

- Contact the police.

- Change your contact information.

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12 Wrap up the discussion by telling learners that it is always a good idea to ask people before you share their information, stories, pictures or videos on **social media**. Never share anything that you think will hurt someone's feelings, embarrass them or get them into trouble. Remind learners that it is a crime to share any information, stories, pictures or videos about minors (people under 18 years old) that has any sexual content. If you see someone doing this tell a teacher, parent or other adult you trust.

Provide learners with copies of the **Bullying Behaviours Info Sheet** (provided) for their reference, or put a copy up in the classroom.

Provide learners with the link to **http://cybercrime.org.za/** for more information regarding **cyber-bullying** and the law in South Africa, as well as helpful resources.

TEACHER TIPS

General

It is important to emphasise that **cyber-bulling** can happen 24 hours a day, making it almost impossible for teens to avoid it by going home (as they may be able to do with in-person bullying). Also discuss the vulnerability of **LGBTQ** populations to cyber-bullying. It is important to stress the severity of the problem without making it seem impossible for learners to resolve.

If you know of specific examples of **cyber-bullying** that have happened among your learners, avoid specifics and name-calling, but encourage learners to discuss their experiences with you after class if they are feeling like they need to talk to someone. Since cyber-bullying in South Africa happens predominantly with cell phones, focus on this modality during discussion.

Making the Link with Gender & Violence

Cyber-bullying is a widespread problem that seems intractable to **victims** since they can't escape through traditional methods (such as changing schools). Because of this, cyber-bullying is a serious form of **abuse** and can lead to suicide in the most extreme cases.

Women and minority groups may be at special risk of cyber-bullying. Because **gender roles** in society often depict women as objects, cyber bullying often perpetuates sexism via digital technology, and can include **sexual harassment, slut shaming**, and **victim blaming**. Furthermore, because the internet is a social space, it also perpetuates **heteronormativity** and **homophobia**, putting **LGBTQ** teens at special **risk**.

Do not try and take on the role of counsellor to learners during the class. If a learner discloses that they have been the **victim,** or perpetrator, of **bullying/cyber-bullying,** acknowledge their disclosure (by saying something like 'It was very brave of you to tell us that') and ask them to come to you after class so that you can provide them with more assistance. Be prepared with the telephone numbers and information of NGOs or other counselling services that they could contact for assistance.

Assessment Ideas

1. Since there are several important definitions and distinctions that are made in this lesson, learners can be quizzed on these definitions. One way to do this would be to ask them to provide examples of how a **perpetrator, victim** and **bystander** may act and feel in a **cyber-bullying** situation.

2. Ask learners to provide an article from the news about a case of **cyber-bullying** (this can be a local or an international example). They should then do a written assignment about the article where they define who the bully, target, and **bystander**(s) are, how the situation could have been prevented (if at all), and how the situation could have been resolved in a healthy manner.

3. Require learners to make posters about prevention of **bullying** or **cyber-bullying**, and how targets of (cyber)bullies can protect themselves. These can then be displayed in or near the classroom for other learners to see.

4. If your learners have access to fast internet connections, ask them to watch this video from the 'It Gets Better South Africa' Campaign: **http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1MsDEevbkbc**

   Ask them to write a reaction paper to the video, arguing whether they agree or disagree with the message that the video is sending. Ask learners to reflect on how they can create a healthier and more accepting classroom for different **sexual orientations**, races, ethnicities, nationalities, religions, body types, etc.

CARDS:OK|BULLYING|CYBER-BULLYING

Print. Cut out one set of cards for each learner.

✓ **OK**

✗ **BULLYING**

✗ **CYBER-BULLYING**

SCENARIOS AND ANSWER KEY

Read each scenario and ask learners to vote on whether they are 'OK' or 'bullying' or 'cyber-bullying' behaviours. The answers are listed in the column to the right.

SCENARIO	ANSWER
1. You create a fake email address for the new kid in school, and use it to send love emails to other people in the class.	CYBER-BULLYING
2. You take the diary out of someone's bag and read it together with other learners in the class.	BULLYING
3. On your way to school each day, someone grabs your bag from you and throws it on the ground.	BULLYING
4. You and a few of your friends are going to the mall after school to play games, but you don't invite one of your friends.	OK
5. You and a few of your friends spread rumours that a girl in your class has kissed (or hooked up with) all the boys in the grade above you.	BULLYING
6. Someone creates a website about another learner that criticises the way she looks, and many people in the class post mean comments about her on the website.	CYBER-BULLYING
7. After someone in your class comes out as gay, you begin sending him mean text messages, making fun of him for his sexual orientation.	CYBER-BULLYING
8. You send your girlfriend naked pictures of yourself and after you two break up she forwards it to your classmates.	CYBER-BULLYING
9. You are playing a game and one of your friends is rude and bossy during the game. It really annoys you.	OK
10. Someone finds a picture of you on Facebook, anonymously prints it out, and posts it around the school with the word 'whore' written below it.	CYBER-BULLYING
11. You tease a classmate all the time about having ugly and worn out clothing.	BULLYING
12. You send anonymous text messages to someone, pretending to be their crush.	CYBER-BULLYING
13. You intimidate one of the shy girls in your class to do your homework by saying that you will tell everyone she is gay if she doesn't do your work.	BULLYING
14. You tease your best friend about an ex-boyfriend, but she is not hurt and she also laughs with you.	OK
15. You take a goofy picture of yourself and send it to your girlfriend as a funny way of saying hi.	OK
16. Your friend continuously phones a classmate to make sexually offensive comments, and you laugh without doing anything to stop her.	CYBER-BULLYING
17. You have been receiving mean text messages from several classmates making fun of you. You know some of the bullies but you don't report them because they said they would beat you up if you did.	CYBER-BULLYING

BULLYING BEHAVIOURS INFO SHEET

VERBAL BULLYING	SOCIAL BULLYING	PHYSICAL BULLYING	CYBER-BULLYING
TEASING	TELLING OTHER CHILDREN NOT TO BE FRIENDS WITH SOMEONE	PHYSICALLY ATTACKING SOMEONE INCLUDING HITTING, KICKING, PINCHING	PRETENDING YOU ARE ANOTHER PERSON ONLINE TO TRICK SOMEONE
NAME-CALLING			
UNWANTED SEXUAL COMMENTS	SPREADING RUMOURS ABOUT SOMEONE	SPITTING AT SOMEONE	TRICK PEOPLE ONLINE INTO REVEALING PERSONAL INFORMATION
TAUNTING	SLUT-SHAMING	TRIPPING/PUSHING SOMEONE	
SLUT-SHAMING	SHARING SOMEONE ELSE'S PERSONAL INFORMATION IN A SOCIAL FORUM	THROWING THINGS AT SOMEONE	SPREADING RUMOURS ABOUT SOMEONE VIA THE INTERNET, SOCIAL MEDIA OR CHAT
THREATENING TO CAUSE PHYSICAL HARM		TAKING, HIDING OR INTENTIONALLY DAMAGING SOMEONE'S BELONGINGS	POSTING OR SHARING SOMEONE ELSE'S PERSONAL INFORMATION ONLINE
THREATENING TO EXPOSE SOMEONE'S PERSONAL INFORMATION OR TO PUBLICALLY EMBARRASS THEM	EMBARRASSING SOMEONE IN PUBLIC		
	MAKING FUN OF OR LEAVING SOMEONE OUT BECAUSE OF THEIR WEIGHT, BODY, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER, RACE, NATIONALITY, LANGUAGE, ABILITY OR ANY OTHER PERSONAL CHARACTERISTIC	MAKING MEAN, RUDE OR SEXUAL HAND GESTURES AT SOMEONE	POSTING OR SHARING PICTURES OF SOMEONE ELSE ONLINE, IN SOCIAL MEDIA OR VIA CHAT WITHOUT THEIR CONSENT
VERBAL ATTACK ABOUT SOMEONE'S WEIGHT, BODY, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER, RACE, NATIONALITY, LANGUAGE, ABILITY OR ANY OTHER PERSONAL CHARACTERISTIC			SEND OR FORWARD MEAN TEXT MESSAGES
MAKING SEXUAL OR RUDE SOUNDS AT SOMEONE			