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Bullying Awareness Within Elementary School Children

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Bullying Awareness Within Elementary School Children

Maritsa Garcia Rendon

A Capstone project for the Bachelor of Arts in Human Development and Family Studies

Introduction

Bullying is common in elementary schools and may lead to long-lasting effects for children. Young Children may not be aware of the consequences that bullying may have on themselves and their peers. When bullied, children may not know how to respond and what resources may be available to them. In order to address the lack of bullying awareness, I have created a three-day curriculum about what is bullying and how to help prevent it, which will be delivered to children in a 1st grade class at Calaveras Elementary School in Hollister, California.

Needs Statement

Bullying is becoming more and more frequent in younger children (Conn, 2011). It is a type of violence that has the potential to harm a person's well-being. The consequences of bullying result in physical injuries, social and emotional problems, and academic problems (Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention, 2018). The painful effects of bullying may be perceived periodically by family and friends and can potentially distress the overall health and safety of schools, neighborhoods, and society (CDC, 2018). Bullying begins in elementary school and gradually increases throughout middle school (Jenkins, Mulvey, & Flores, 2017). There is evidence that suggests that bullying behaviors start as early as the preschool years (Jenkins, Mulvey, & Flores, 2017). According to the National School Safety Center, bullying is considered to be the most enduring and underrated problem in the United States' schools (Stokowski & Kopasz, 2005).

Bullying is defined as "behavior that is repeated, unprovoked, intentionally, [with] an imbalance of power, and harmful actions towards a peer" (Bullock, 2002, p. 130). Bullying can be seen throughout different types of aggression that are characterized by a repeated and ongoing

abuse of power (Cook, Williams, Guerra, Kim, & Sadek, 2010). Acts of aggression can occur through physical bullying that may includes hitting, kicking, or pushing. They can also be seen through psychological bullying that includes name calling, teasing, taunting, and making threats (Bullock 2002). Bullying can also be seen through relational bullying (e.g., social isolation and rumor spreading), and cyber bullying (e.g. text message, harmful messages or images, or social media attacks) all of these types of bullying become avenues for inflicting harm (Cook et. al., 2010).

Bullying patterns can be characterized by different groups in the bullying process: .

bullies, victims, and bully-victims (Cook et. al., 2010). Various behavioral and psychological outcomes have been found to occur within the three groups (Cook et al., 2010). Bullies are characterized as aggressive, destructive, and enjoy the domination over their peers (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). They tend to be hot-tempered, violent, and have low patience for frustration. In addition, they have a hardship in processing social information and often interpret peers behaviors as antagonistic (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). Bullies are more likely to suffer from attention-deficit disorders, depression and oppositional conduct disorder as they develop (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). They become at risk of increasing their antisocial and criminal behaviors as they age, and become socially rejected later on in life (Saracho, 2017). Children who were bullies, later on, experience underachievement in school and perform below potential in their employment settings. Bullies grow up to show displays of aggression to their spouses and are more likely to use physical aggression towards their own children (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005).

Victims are characterized as the recipients of peer abuse. They are submissive, passive, and some appear to have aggressive attitudes (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). In victims, their physical traits tend to be small in statue, weak, and frail. Most victims are quiet, cautious, anxious, insecure, and sensitive. Thus, making them unable to protect themselves from the different types of bullying aggression. From the children who experience bullying, 66% experience psychological distress and 41% experience physical harm (Saracho, 2017). Research supports that children ages five through seven who have been victims of bullying show different signs of behavioral and school adjustment problems (Saracho, 2017). Victims are more prone to low-self esteem, depression, anxiety, and self- destructive thoughts. (Saracho, 2017). As victims, they see themselves as outcasts and failures, and demonstrate several internalizing behaviors, such as psychosomatic symptoms, eating disorders, and oppositional-conduct disorder (Saracho, 2017). In addition, they suffer from sleep disturbances, enuresis, abdominal pain, headaches, and feelings of sadness (Vreeman & Carroll, 2007, p.78). Long-term, they become more depressed, isolated, experience social marginalization, obtain lower social status, and their personal relationships become affected (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005).

Children who bully peers and are bullied themselves are known as bully-victim. They are characterized as children who are anxious and aggressive (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005) Most bully-victims, are hyperactive, cause aggravations between peers, and obtain attention problems (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). Within bully-victims, 21.5% of them obtain an oppositional-conduct disorder, 17.7% of them have depression, and 17.7% of them obtain an attention-deficit disorder (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). Bully-victims suffer from low self-esteem and a negative self-image. Compared to bullies and victims, bully-victims obtain

higher risks of anxiety, psychosomatic symptoms, eating disorders, and co-occurring mental health issues (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). As children who are bully-victims develop, they are at a higher risks of experiences drinking and substance abuse as adolescents, and obtain recurring psychiatric symptoms as adults (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005).

Bullying is becoming a daily behavioral existence in elementary schools that become serious threat to the children and to the school environment (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). Due to the different types of bullying aggression, children are becoming more suicidal and some even portray life-threatening events within their school environment (Vreeman & Carroll, 2017). The negative effects have long-lasting physical, mental, emotional, and psychological harms that can affect children throughout their lifetime (Vreeman & Carroll, 2017). In order to minimize the negative effects of this behavior, I am creating a three-day lesson plan to address this behavior in a first-grade class. Within my project, I want to be able to address avoiding bullying by teaching the students what bullying is, the different types of bullying, and the actions needed when it occurs.

Theory Application

Bullying behaviors are learned through an individual's observational learning, reinforcement, and by reoccuring experiences (Swearer, Wang, Berry, & Myers 2014). When children socialize with other aggressive peers, they are more likely to perform those same aggressive acts towards other peers (Swearer et al., 2014). Research also suggests that if children live in violent neighborhoods, they learn different aggressive acts that later on are portrayed into engaging bully behaviors (Swearer et al., 2014). Bandura, as part of his Social

Learning Theory, stated that behaviors can not only be taught by operational or social conditioning, but can also be learned through direct or indirect observational learning (Mash & Wolfe, 2016).

Young children learn new behaviors by watching peers or adults model the behavior, without reinforcement or practice. Bullying behaviors are modeled by either peers or adults. If children observe these behaviors constantly, they will eventually perform such behaviors themselves. In order for the learning to develop, children must be exposed to a behavior, comprehend and understand the seen behavior, and reenact seen behavior (Swearer et al.., 2014). As stated before, children learn bullying behaviors through social learning experiences. In order to decrease negative behaviors, children need to be provided with useful support that allow them to identify, stop, and remove themselves from bullying. Providing children with resources, will help children develop anti-bullying abilities. These anti-bullying abilities will help them decrease violent, high-risk, and threatening behaviors, that later on, portray to negative long-term effects (Saracho, 2017). Therefore, I am creating a three-day curriculum to help young children understand what bullying is and model how to stand-up to it in order to prevent it.

Consideration of Diversity

My project will be conducted in a first grade classroom at Calaveras Elementary School in Hollister, California. Calaveras Elementary School serves over 500 students of diverse ethnicity (School Accountability Report ,2018). According to the School Accountability Report (2018), the ethnic composition of students at Calaveras Elementary School is made up of 1.7% White, 0.6% African American, 0.4% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and 96.6 % Hispanic

or Latino. Furthermore, 63% of the students that attend Calaveras are considered English Language Learners. In addition, 85% come from low-income families, and 86.9% are considered socially disadvantage (SARC, 2018).

I would assume that the first grade participants, are likely to be reflective of the ethnic composition of the whole school. The lessons I am presenting to participants, are limited to specific bullying content. I will not be explaining every topic that is associated to bullying, due to their developmental and chronological age. For example, I am not discussing cyberbullying because children this age are less likely to spend time alone on the Internet where cyberbullying may occur. Since Hispanic or Latino students make up the majority of the student population at Calaveras Elementary, culturally, Hispanic or Latinos children may not have been exposed to the concept of bullying at home. Since I will be conducting the lessons in English, the participants must be English proficient in order to participate in discussion and understand the content. This project will include one particular 1st grade class with which I am associated. Thus, other young children not in this class are not participating in the discussion and activities and getting the benefit of learning about bullying.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the project, participants will:

- 1. Describe what bullying is.
- 2. Describe three actions to help stop bullying.
- 3. Demonstrate how to respond adequately to a bullying behavior.

Method

Day 1

First, I will introduce myself and explain to the class why I am there. I will start by asking the participants if they have ever heard of bullying. If the students start to answer what bullying is, I will let the discussion go on for 5-7 minutes. Then, I will regroup the class and read, *Stop Picking on Me: A First Look at Bullying* (Thomas and Harker, 2000). Throughout the reading, I will ask question to help keep the class engaged. See Appendix A. Finally, I will lead a group discussion where the participants will be asked to describe what bullying is (about 15 minutes). I will write their responses on the poster paper. I will scaffold their thinking by asking them questions what happened throughout the story I read. See Appendix A. At the conclusion of the discussion, I will review for 5-7 minutes of what bullying is by reading over to their responses that have been written. In conclusion, I will give them a brief explanation of what we will be doing the next time I go into their classroom.

Day 2

Today, I will first ask the class if they remembered what bullying was. I will review the content from the previous lessons for 5-7 minutes. Then, I will ask them if they knew how to stop bullying, if it was happening to them or a friend. If students start to respond, the discussion will go for 5 minutes. Then, I will read, *My Secret Bully* (Ludwig and Marble, 2004), which addresses different actions needed to help stop bullying. Throughout the reading, I will ask question to help keep them engaged. See Appendix B. As I finish reading, I will lead whole class discussion about the content of the story (about 15 minutes). In this discussion, I will ask the participants for different forms to help stop bullying. Their responses will be written on a poster paper. Once again, I will scaffold their thinking by referring to the story with question. See

Appendix B. At the end, I will review what was learned and previous content in a 5-7 minute discussion to end the lesson.

Day 3

On the final day, I will start off by reviewing the content from the previous two days in 10 minutes. Then, I will split the class into small groups. After splitting them into 4 groups of 7, I will give each group a worksheet with two different scenarios to complete. They will have 10 minutes. See Appendix C .Within their groups, they will read the scenarios on their own and decide an effective form to address the bullying. I will be walking around the classroom to help with their reading, if needed. After the 10 minutes are over, each group will come in front of the classroom and read their scenarios with their response. The rest of the class will agree or disagree with them by putting a thumbs up or a thumbs down. See Appendix D. This step will be repeated with all four groups and will take about 10-15 minutes. As the lesson comes to a conclusion, I will review the content from previous lesson in a 5 minute discussion. I will then say my goodbyes to the participants, provide them with a sticker, and thank them for participating with me.

Results

Learning outcome 1 was that participants will describe what bullying is. I believe this learning outcome was partially met. From the discussion about bullying after reading, the book, *Stop Picking on Me: A First Look at Bullying* (Thomas, 2000), the participants focused a lot on defining bullying as an act of taking different items away since that was central to the plot of the book. Some of the participants did define bullying in other various forms, such as pushing, being

mean, throwing, breaking, and ripping items. In addition, they defined bullying as an act of physical violence, such as hitting and grabbing a person by their clothes to verbally hurt them with words. In total, they named 14 different notions for defining bullying. Although this does not seem to fully represent the responses of all 24 participants in the classroom, as a whole, they were able to define bullying in different forms. Thus, partially meeting the learning outcome. See Figure 1 and Table 1 for what they said.

Learning outcome 2 was that the participants would describe three actions to help stop bullying. From the discussion about how to stop bullying after reading *My Secret Bully* (Ludwig, 2004), the participants were able to describe and identify three different actions to help prevent bullying. Throughout the discussion, the participants focused on four specific actions, such as telling an adult, walking away, standing up for themselves, and talking to the bully with proper language. Some examples of their suggestions for addressing a bully were: "That's not nice", "Leave my friend alone", and "Can you stop?" In total, participants named 12 actions to help stop bullying, which does not fully represent each of the 24 participants in the room. However, the responses were sufficiently representative and had some consensus among the participants with make me feel that this learning outcome was met. See Figure 2 and Table 2 for their responses.

Learning outcome 3 was that participants demonstrate how to respond adequately to bully behavior. I believe that this learning outcome was partially met. The participants were divided into four groups to resolve the given bullying scenarios. Within these groups, participants focused on two specific actions to adequately respond to bullying behaviors, such as being friendly to the victim and telling an adult. As I walked around the groups, I noticed that the

majority of the participants were giving responses to the bullying scenarios. Thus, those responses may not fully represent the learning of the 24 participants. In addition, I believe this learning outcome was also partially met, because, as a class, they discussed the scenarios, and the participants were asked to raise their thumbs up if they agreed with the responses. Three of the twenty-four participants disagreed with the group responses. When asking their reason why, they stated negative responses for the bullying behaviors. For example, "I would have punched them," "I would have told them to mean things back," and "I would have thrown sand back to them." These three responses are not representative of the experience of the 24 participants but do demonstrate a few who did not meet the learning outcome. However, the majority of the participants did respond adequately to the bullying behaviors, thus, partially meeting the learning outcome. See figure 3 and table 3 for their group responses.

Discussion

Even though a small amount of participants were not fully engaged, I believe this project was successful. The majority of the participants were active and responsive throughout the class discussions and readings. In addition, the participants were fully engaged in the group activity. The participants interacted with their fellow peers to adequately resolve the bully scenarios they were given. In accordance with Bandura's Social Learning Theory, modeling and teaching children about certain interventions can help offer social and emotional skills. These skills can help them avoid bullying behaviors and forma foundation in establishing strong social relationships (Saracho, 2017). According to research, anti-bullying programs are more successful with young children (Saracho, 2017). Through modeling, practice, active participation, and

developmentally appropriate interventions, young children learn anti-bullying abilities, impulse control, perspective taking, recognition of bullying behaviors, and how to be more sensitive towards bullied children (Saracho, 2017). The participants engaged in the three day lesson plan, were able to describe and discuss bullying, demonstrated their awareness of useful tactics to help stop it, and also modeled different ways of adequately solving a bullying incident through writing. My project furthered the children's social and emotional skills given that the participants are now aware of the different types of bullying behaviors that could be seen in their environment and how they can potentially resolve them.

In terms of diversity, I don't think my project included everyone. Throughout the three days I visited the class, I was under the assumption that all of the participants spoke and understood English. On the very last day of my three-day lesson, I came to realize that there were participants who only spoke and understood Spanish. Therefore, they had a hard time understanding the lesson. Since the activities were all in English, participation for non-English speaking students was minimal. These participants did not fully understand the readings, discussions, or the group activity. Furthermore, in discussing bullying, some cultures are not aware of such behavior because it is not discussed in their native country or language. So, perhaps, in the future, I could include how culture may influence interpretation of bullying behavior.

If I had to do this all over again, I would have asked the site if all participants spoke and understood the English language prior to introducing my lesson plan. If a majority of them understood and spoke Spanish, I would have used my bilingual skills in order for everyone to participate. By utilizing my bilingual skills, I would hope that all participants would participate

in the language they feel more comfortable using. Throughout our bullying discussion, many participants were fully aware of the media usage, such as cellphones, video game chat rooms ,tablets, and snapchat. The majority of the children mentioned their ownership to a technological device. Therefore, if I were to do this again, I would expand on other forms of bullying, such as cyberbullying. I would not limit my activities to a specific bullying content. Finally, I wish I would have been given more time to execute my activities. During the lessons, the participants were fully engaged and wanted to keep learning more about the topic. If given more time, I would be able to execute a role play activity that I believe would be more beneficial to participants' experience. Nevertheless, I feel like the participants learned about the topic and became more aware of specific bullying behaviors and how to resolve them.

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Table 1
List of responses of how participants describe bullying.

Push and tie you up (4 responses)	Throw your food on the floor or trash	They rip your money (2 responses)
They take your things (10 responses)	Someone stealing your snack	They hit you
Break your eraser and pencil	Put you in the basement and lock you up, and tie you to a chair	Being meaning and beating them up (2 responses)
They push you on your back.	Grab your shirt and tell you bad words	Take your phone and crussh hit

Table 2

List of responses of how participants describe how to stop bullying.

Walk away from them Tell an authority and tell them to stop figure (6 responses)

(3 responses)

Defend yourself by Don't bully back, and

talking (3 responses) be nice.

Table 3

List of group solution on how they can aduately resolve eight bullying scenario.

We make him/ her feel better and invite them
Tell an authority figure (4 responses) to play (4 Responses)

Give the bully a time out

Figure 1
Students discussion on describing what bullying is.

Source: Book Highter Push you and the you up.	break your eraser and the period of they tip your money	ist gradeer by take your hinch.
They push	they hit	Meyrip oue things
they take away your back pack	Bullying)	they push you at you.
Being mean and beating them up	grab shirt tell you	your and bad
Being rude	stealing your	they push
in basement they and lock you in the partie you		things constant
in a chair	phone and	hat, chair, prem

Figure 2
Students discussion on how yo stop bullying.

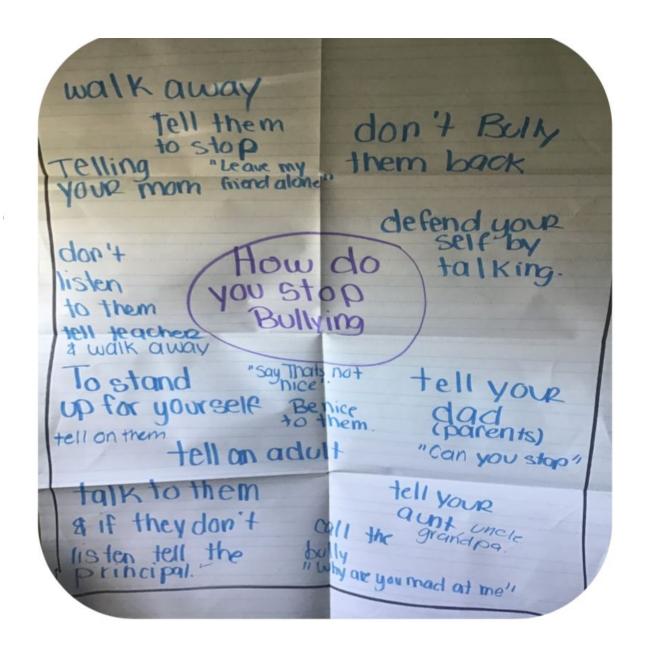


Figure 3

Student's responses to bullying scenarios

6. Dixon draws a monkey, writes Aaron's name below, and tells Aaron that he is the monkey.

Aaron tell him to stop. Dixon says bad words to Aaron and tells him to give him a pencil or some money to stop. If Aaron don't give him some of his things, he tells him that he will draw more animal pictures about him and post them. Dixon tells Aaron not to tell the teacher or he will hurt him. How do you help?

1. Jasmine bought a new sweater and cute skirt for the party at her school. Julissa was the most popular girl in second grade. Jasmine was afraid to go to school that day because Julissa would make fun of her new dress. When she got to school, a bunch girls came over to tell her that her new sweater and skirt were very pretty. Then, Julissa got jealous and mad. At recess, Julissa told Jasmine that her outfit did not look pretty, and it was an ugly color. Jasmine's feeling were hurt and she wanted to cry. She was mean! How do you help?

because Jonathan didn't score well on a test. He told his friends to call Jonathan similar names at recess. This made Jonathan feel awful. Everyone knows Juan is mean to lots of kids. How do

By make ing him fill Better. Do you what to play whith me, 3. Julian, a second grader, was playing in the sandbox at recess. He was building a sandcastle. Elizabeth, who is in first grade, came up and wanted to play. Julian told him her she was a baby, and babies couldn't build sandcastles. Julian threw sand in Elizabeth's face to make her go away. How do you help?

we Tell the techer.

4. A group of girls in class are telling things about Manny that aren't true. They told other students that Manny peed in his pants while on the slide at after school care. Many kids now call Manny names and won't play with him. Even some of his friends begin to think this is true. The students that Manny peed his pants are mean, want get attention for themselves, and don't want to be a good students. How do you help?

we make him feel happy!

7. Diego is a student in Dallas class. Diego has a hard time in Math and can't seem to understand it. He is jealous and embarrassed that Dallas knows more than him. Diego and two of his friends go up to Dallas and start making fun of him for being good at math. They start calling him a big fat nerd. Diego told Dallas that he has to do his homework, and if he doesn't he is going to make him eat worms for lunch. Dallas is scared of what Diego might do. How do you help?

Tell in a balut- if you seed aDalut Tell Them.

8. Esmeralda is a girl in your class, but she usually alone at recess or playing with younger kids.
Three girls invite Esmeralda to play. After a few minutes, they say they don't want to play with someone so boring and ugly. They call her nasty names, laugh at her, and tell her she is ugly because she wears glasses. Esmeralda then goes to cry by herself. This has happened before.

inbite her to play. We can tell the

Appendix A

Discussion question for the story Stop Picking On Me.

How did the bullies look throughout the story?

Where was bullying taking place?

Do you know anyone who is a bully?

How do bullies feel when hurting others?

Everyone feels differently about being bullied. Have you ever been bullied? How did it make

you feel?

Who do bullies hurt?

How do bullies hurt people's feelings?

According to the book, what kind of things do bullies do hurt people?

Appendix B

Discussion questions for the story My Secret Bully

Who was the bully in the story? Who was she hurting?

What types of things did the bully do?

Did the victim defend herself?

How did the victim stop bullying?

Who did the victim tell about the bully?

Did the victim stand up to the bully?

According to the book, what things were done to stop bullying?

What other ways can bullying be stopped?

How can a friend be helped if they are being bullied?

Appendix C

Bullying scenarios

- 1. Jasmine bought a new sweater and cute skirt for the party at her school. Julissa was the most popular girl in second grade. Jasmine was afraid to go to school that day because Julissa would make fun of her new dress. When she got to school, a bunch girls came over to tell her that her new sweater and skirt were very pretty. Then, Julissa got jealous and mad. At recess, Julissa told Jasmine that her outfit did not look pretty, and it was an ugly color. Jasmine's feeling were hurt and she wanted to cry. She was mean! How do you help?
- 2. Juan is a student in your class. He started calling Jonathan names like dummy and stupid because Jonathan didn't score well on a test. He told his friends to call Jonathan similar names at recess. This made Jonathan feel awful. Everyone knows Juan is mean to lots of kids. How do you help?
- 3. Julian, a second grader, was playing in the sandbox at recess. He was building a sandcastle. Elizabeth, who is in first grade, came up and wanted to play. Julian told him her she was a baby, and babies couldn't build sandcastles. Julian threw sand in Elizabeth's face to make her go away. How do you help?
- 4. A group of girls in class are telling things about Manny that aren't true. They told other students that Manny peed in his pants while on the slide at after school care. Many kids now call Manny names and won't play with him. Even some of his friends begin to think this is true. The

students that Manny peed his pants are mean, want get attention for themselves, and don't want to be a good students. How do you help?

- 5. Jade's older brother keeps hitting and kicking her when her parents and grandparents are not looking. He tells Jade that if she tell anyone he will hurt her more. Jade is scared and wants someone to help her. How do you help?
- 6. Dixon draws a monkey, writes Aaron's name below, and tells Aaron that he is the monkey. Aaron tell him to stop. Dixon says bad words to Aaron and tells him to give him a pencil or some money to stop. If Aaron don't give him some of his things, he tells him that he will draw more animal pictures about him and post them. Dixon tells Aaron not to tell the teacher or he will hurt him. How do you help?
- 7. Diego is a student in Dallas class. Diego has a hard time in Math and can't seem to understand it. He is jealous and embarrassed that Dallas knows more than him. Diego and two of his friends go up to Dallas and start making fun of him for being good at math. They start calling him a big fat nerd. Diego told Dallas that he has to do his homework, and if he doesn't he is going to make him eat worms for lunch. Dallas is scared of what Diego might do. How do you help?
- 8. Esmeralda is a girl in your class, but she usually alone at recess or playing with younger kids.

 Three girls invite Esmeralda to play. After a few minutes, they say they don't want to play with

someone so boring and ugly. They call her nasty names, laugh at her, and tell her she is ugly because she wears glasses. Esmeralda then goes to cry by herself. This has happened before. How do you help?

Appendix E

Final Capstone Presentation

Bullying Awareness Among Elementary School Children

Maritsa Garcia Rendon

Need Statement

 The consequences of bullying result in physical injuries, social- emotional problems, and academic problems.
 These negative effects can potentially follow a person throughout their lifetime.

Bandura's Social Learning Theory

- Behaviors can be taught by operational or social conditioning and through direct or indirect observational learning.
- Through modeling and peer interactions, participants will understand bullying and learn how to adequately respond to a bully behavior.

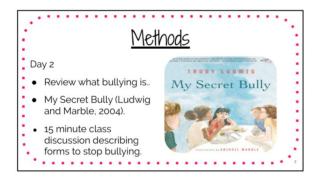
Learning Outcomes

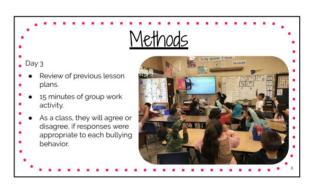
By the end of the project, participants will:

- 1. Describe what bullying is.
- 2. Describe three actions to help stop bullying.
- 3. Demonstrate how to respond adequately to a bullying behavior.



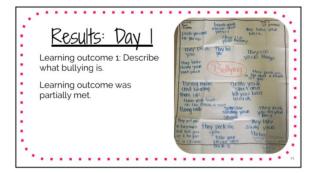


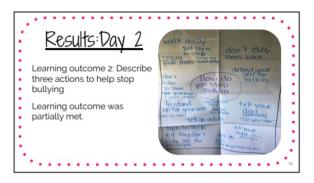


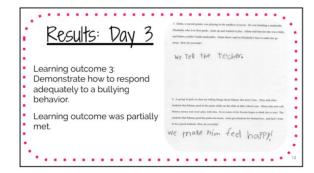


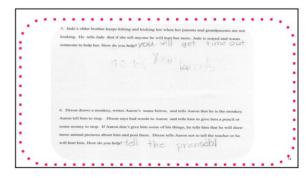












1. Samilar brought a new services and case shirt for the party of her school. Salinan was the small propose get to record price. Salinan was shirt for the party of her school. Salinan was the small service and the salinan was to expect the salina party, so the salinan was to expect the salina party, so the salinan was to expect the salinan was to expect the salinan party and to salinan was to expect the salinan party and to salinan was to expect the salinan was to salinan was to expect the salinan party and to salinan was to expect the salinan was to salinan was to expect the salinan was have a salinan was to salinan was

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Discussion Overall, I believe my project was successful. If I could redo it again, I would.. Do the activities in Spanish, so all the participants would understand Execute the activities with more time. Talk about Cyberbullying Change my final activity to an interactive role play activity.

