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3rd Edition



BULLY-PROOFING YOUR SCHOOL

**Teacher's Manual
and Lesson Plans**
for Elementary Schools

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Preface

Aggressive behavior in students has long been a disruptive element in the educational arena. At a time when violence is so prevalent in our society, bullies have become a (sometimes lethal) threat to the physical and emotional safety of students. Many of us can probably recall personal or professional experiences with bullies. The recall of these memories is intense and awakens strong emotions, especially of fear and helplessness. The pervasiveness of the fear results in a feeling of powerlessness. Bullies bring this imbalance of power and fear to schools, as well. After suffering unchecked bullying, self-destructive acts or desperate retaliation with lethal weapons is not uncommon.

A most discouraging situation is occurring in many schools today. Many children are unwilling to turn to staff for help with bullying because they believe that not only will the staff fail to help them but that telling will make the situation worse. Although we as educators would like to believe that we can simply send children to handle these problems on their own, many need adult support to develop the coping skills necessary to protect themselves from the attack of bullies. The old adage “just hit ‘em back” is one of the myriad of unsuccessful myths surrounding bullying behavior and is in fact probably one of the most dangerous strategies with a true bully. However, there are many approaches that can defuse the situation and lower the potential for aggression. For instance, just having more adults among students has been shown to influence bullying behavior.

Eighty-five percent of the students in schools are neither bullies nor victims. This “caring majority” of students, though, observe the behavior and interactions of bullies, live with an uncomfortable feeling about their own safety, and often believe that if they get involved the aggressive actions will be transferred to them. Fear and power struggles are a reality in elementary schools, and one of the goals within schools must be to bring these issues in line so they are manageable. The actions and influence of this caring majority are a powerful resource with which to maintain the value of kindness and decency. They are the untapped reservoir of strength, the leverage for impacting change in creating a safe school environment for all children.

The *Bully-Proofing Your School* program operates on many levels within a school. It is our belief that developing the caring majority’s intervention skills so they feel confident to be involved is crucial. Their power is implicit by number, and explicit by positive acts of kindness toward victims. By developing a strong, reinforced identity, they can help set the tone of a school and dictate its operating environment. This group can give strength and support to the victims and defuse the power of the bullies.

Bullies can occupy an inordinate amount of time from staff, students, and parents. Swift and precise adult interventions that avoid power positions and clearly establish bullying behaviors as unacceptable can prevent the wounds of repeated victimization. Escalating direct power struggles with bullies is exhausting and generally not effective. Intervening calmly and consistently before bullying behavior escalates can strip the bully’s power.

Many standard curriculum packages fail after three to four months because there is an expectation inherent to them that all staff members can and will intervene in the same manner. A lack of congruence between an individual and curriculum can cause the program to be undermined—one becomes uncomfortable with the new way and thus returns to one’s old style. However, this will not be the case with this program. We strongly

believe, and have designed this program around this tenet, that the acknowledgment of personal styles up front is crucial in formulating a team ethic comprised of multiple approaches achieving the same goal. Teachers need to identify and accept the skills they already have that can be implemented in a focused fashion to impact aggressive behavior, support the strength of the caring majority, and soothe the wounds of victims. The wheel doesn't need to be reinvented, just to be mounted and balanced.

The community should also be included in recognizing and supporting a "no-bullying" position. Addressing bullying behavior requires strong support from parents to prevent fractionalizing of the community. Understanding some basic tenets, such as that all parents believe their children are the victims and that very rarely are children self-confessed bullies, helps clarify the picture and enables collaborative relationships with parents to stop bullying.

Developing a comprehensive approach will lead to successful results in identifying and intervening with bullies. As a supplement to the *Administrator's Guide to Staff Development* and the *Teacher's Manual and Lesson Plans* this book presents two curriculums designed to be used in individual or small group formats: one for interviewing with bullies, the other for understanding and supporting the victims. These activities focus on kindness and inclusion for all students, and when used in conjunction with the rest of the *Bully-Proofing Your School* curriculum will help change the balance of power within a school.

Lesson 4

What to Do if Kids Are Not Being Friendly

MATERIALS

Handout/Poster 5: Modified HA HA, SO Strategies

Handout 6: Modified HA HA, SO Shield

Book titles: *Move Over, Twerp* by Martha Alexander or *Chrysanthemum* by Kevin Henkes

Video title: *Standing Up for Yourself* (or teacher alternate)

OBJECTIVE

To teach the students strategies that they can use when they are being victimized by a bully.

STEPS

1. Last Lesson Review

Ask the students to recall the classroom rules. Provide time on a daily basis to applaud friendly behavior and problem-solve issues as they arise. This discussion works well after recess time. Input from the playground supervisor, where appropriate, can be helpful.

2. Ways to Handle Bullying

Teacher: "Today we will be talking about ways to handle bullying."

- ▶ To refamiliarize the students with friendly behavior vs. bullying situations and break the ice, read a story or show a video that is suitable to the age group of the children and emphasizes appropriate responses to being bullied. The books *Move*

Over, Twerp by Martha Alexander or *Chrysanthemum* by Kevin Henkes are highly recommended. The video *Standing Up for Yourself* is another good choice.

- ▶ Teach and Model for the Students the Modified HA HA, SO Strategies

Modified Protective Strategies may be more appropriate when working with young children. The language and complexity level is more easily understood.

- Get Help: Go for help—it's not "tattling" when you feel unsafe.
- Stand Up for Yourself: Be strong, you are important.
- Walk Away: Stay away or find another way.
- Say Good Things to Yourself: Think!! Build yourself up—NOT down.

Teacher Tips for the Modified HA HA, SO Strategies

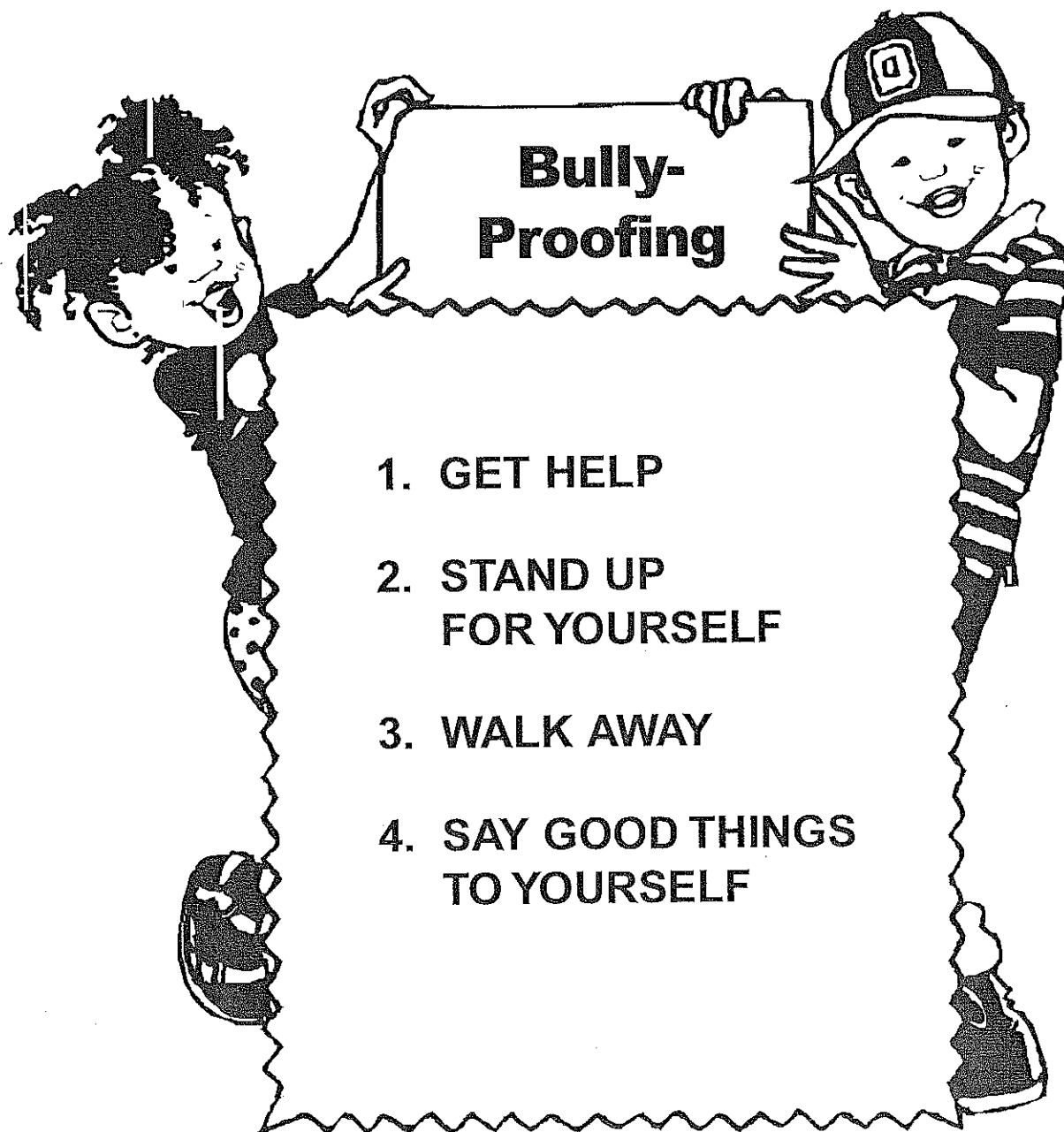
Illustrate the following student strategies by using examples that occur frequently in your classroom:

1. Get Help: Be sure to get help if you feel your safety is threatened in any way. This includes threats to your body and your feelings.
2. Stand Up for Yourself: Use "I" statements. "I feel hurt when you say that" or "I don't like it when you talk to me that way" are examples.
3. Walk Away: Leave the situation immediately. Don't respond with

RESOURCE GUIDE

See "Videotapes and Films for Students" and "Books for Primary Students" for materials suggestions.

Modified HA HA, SO Strategies



What I Can Do IF . . .

What I Can Do if I am Being Bullied

H elp	<p>Seek assistance from an adult, friend, or peer when a potentially threatening situation arises. Seek help also if other strategies aren't working.</p> <p>Tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Brainstorm all of the sources of help at your school: counselors, teachers, nurse, parent, neighbor, or sibling. ▶ Stress the different ways to get help—anonynously, in a group, a school hotline.
A ssert Yourself	<p>Make assertive statements to the bully addressing your feelings about the bully's behavior.</p> <p>Tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Best strategy for a victim to start with. ▶ Should not be used with severe bullying. ▶ Victim should look bully straight in the eye. ▶ Use "I" statement, ex. "I don't like that."
H umor	<p>Use humor to de-escalate a situation.</p> <p>Tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Use humor in a positive way. ▶ Make sure the joke is about what the bully said, not about the bully.
A void	<p>Walk away or avoid certain places in order to avoid bullying.</p> <p>Tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Best for situations when victim is alone. ▶ Avoid places where the bully hangs out. ▶ Join with others rather than be alone.
S elf-Talk	<p>Use positive self-talk to maintain positive self-esteem during a bullying situation.</p> <p>Tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Use as a means to keep feeling good about yourself. ▶ Think positive statements about self and accomplishments. ▶ Rehearse mental strategies to avoid being hooked by the bully.
O wn It	<p>"Own" the put-down or belittling comment in order to diffuse it.</p> <p>Tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Agree with the bully and leave the situation, such as, "OK" or "Thanks for the information." ▶ Combine with humor strategies, such as, "Yeah, this IS a bad haircut. The lawn mower got out of control this weekend." ▶ Combine with assertive strategies, such as, "Yes, I did fail the test and I don't appreciate you looking at my paper."

Grades K-5

Bully-Proofing Your School Teacher's Manual and Lesson Plans for Elementary Schools

Now In a New Edition—The Most Effective Way to Make Your Elementary School a Safe, Bully-Free Place!

Countless school districts across the country have used *Bully-Proofing Your School* to create a supportive environment for their students, one free of fear, violence, and intimidation. *Bully-Proofing* is a comprehensive program designed to teach educators how to recognize bullying, how to shift power away from the bullies, how to prevent future incidents of bullying, and, importantly, how to nurture the values of kindness and decency in their classrooms. But *Bully-Proofing* is not a vague, "touchy-feely" system based only in theory—it's a practical, easy-to-implement blueprint for decreasing physical and emotional aggression by mobilizing the "caring majority," the 85% of students who are neither victim nor bully.

This third edition of *Bully-Proofing* builds on the strengths of previous versions by expanding treatment of staff training, systems interventions, student instruction, and victim support.

The *Teacher's Manual and Lesson Plans* contains everything that instructors need to put the *Bully-Proofing* program into effect, including a complete classroom curriculum, strategies for fostering parent collaboration, and a helpful resource guide. Reproducible materials are included.

An *Administrator's Guide to Staff Development and a Working With Victims and Bullies* manual are also available.

Bully-Proofing Your School will ensure an educational climate that is both positive and caring, an environment in which everyone—even the ex-bullies!—can learn without fear or humiliation.



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