

What made it better?

What made it better for you,
might make it better for them.

respectme anti-bullying resources 2020/21



RESOURCES FOR ADULTS

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INTRODUCTION

This resource by respectme, Scotland's anti-bullying service, is designed for use by practitioners in environments in which a child or young person may make a disclosure of bullying, including education, youth, sports, and care settings.

The following activities aim to help practitioners explore their management of bullying incidents, and to promote the importance of youth-led anti-bullying solutions.

They have been developed as part of respectme's 2020/21 anti-bullying campaign, 'What Made It Better?', which aims to explore the things that helped children and young people and adults who have experienced bullying behaviour in the past.

Practitioners are encouraged to tailor their use of this resource to their specific environment as needed. The following activities can be delivered in one sitting, or as a series of separate sessions.

Who is this for?

This resource is designed for use by practitioners working with, or caring for, children and young people aged 10-16 years.

Remember

Bullying can be a difficult subject to talk about for adults. Remind participants that helplines such as Samaritans or Breathing Space can provide support if they wish to talk to someone.

Explain to the group that these discussions are a safe space where they can view their opinions. There is no requirement for participants to use their own experiences – they may share things that they know worked, or didn't work, for other people.

Please ensure that key messages from the discussion are recorded on the flip charts anonymously, and that no names or identifying details are recorded.

EXERCISE 1: ANTI-BULLYING DISCUSSION GUIDE (80 mins or 2 x 40min sessions)

Aim: To spark discussion among adults involved in the lives of children and young people about what worked and what didn't work when it comes to the management of bullying incidents.

You will need: Flip chart paper, coloured pens, and tape (to display flip chart paper).

Before you start:

1. Write each of the following questions on a separate sheet of flip chart paper and display them clearly to the group:
 - What has helped you manage bullying incidents in the past? Why?
 - What did not help, or has hindered, your management of bullying incidents? Why?
 - What feedback, if any, have you had from young people on your management of bullying incidents?
 - What do you think would help you manage bullying incidents better in the future?
2. Appoint a chairperson and someone to record the group's answers on the flip chart paper.

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EXERCISE 1 ...continued

The exercise:

1. Begin the discussion by ensuring participants all have the same understanding of bullying by sharing with them the agreed definition in Scotland:

'Bullying is both behaviour and impact; the impact is on a person's capacity to feel in control of themselves. This is what we term as their sense of 'agency'. Bullying takes place in the context of relationships; it is behaviour that can make people feel hurt, threatened and left out. This behaviour happens face to face and online. (respectme, 2015)'

2. Ask participants to think about a time that they, or someone they know, had to respond to a bullying incident or a disclosure of bullying. What were the things that helped them? Why did these things help? Record the answers on the correlating piece of flip chat paper displayed at the front. **(15 mins)**
3. Ask the participants if they can identify any approaches or factors that did not help. This may include things that made no impact or things that made the situation worse. What were these? Why did these not help? Record the answers on the correlating piece of flip chat paper displayed at the front. **(15 mins)**
4. Ask the participants to think about the bullying incidents they have managed in the past. Did they get any feedback from the young people involved? Was this positive or negative feedback? Did the feedback surprise them? Why? If they did not receive feedback from the young person, how do they know that the incident was resolved? Record the answers on the correlating piece of flip chat paper displayed at the front. **(15 mins)**
5. Finally, ask participants to share what they think would help them manage bullying incidents better in the future. Answers may include tangible tools such as more resources and training, or intangible factors such as more dedicated time to help, a change in anti-bullying policies and/or processes, or even a shift in thinking within their setting. Be creative!

Share your findings!

respectme will use findings of the 'What Made It Better?' campaign to create informational tip sheets on the management of bullying incidents. To contribute, please send the results of your discussion (you can photograph the flip chart sheets) to: enquire@respectme.co.uk so your organisation can be listed as a contributor. Please note: no names or identifying information of young people will be shared.

EXERCISE 2: PLEDGING TO IMPROVE PRACTICE (60mins for initial discussion)

The following exercise was inspired by young people in Angus, who developed an anti-bullying 'pledge' for school staff as part of their involvement in 'Angus, Think B4 U Type', a youth-led anti-bullying campaign delivered in partnership between Angus Council, NSPCC Scotland, and respectme.

Aim: To show young people that their expertise, views, and ideas are being listened to and taken seriously when it comes to anti-bullying solutions.

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EXERCISE 2 ...continued

You will need:

- A space and time for practitioners and young people to meet.
- The group of young people, or representatives from the group, who were involved in the 'What Made It Better? Discussion for young people' exercise.
- The key messages/findings from the 'Discussion for young people' exercise.
- Flip chart paper and pens for the young people and the practitioners.

Before you start:

- Display the completed flip chart paper from the 'Discussion for young people' exercise.
- Give the young people and the practitioners pens and clean sheets of flip chart paper.
- Appoint a chairperson and someone to record the group's answers on the flip chart paper.

The exercise:

1. Begin the session with your choice of emotional check-in. You can find more information on emotional check-ins in the 'What Made It Better?' resources for young people.
2. Taking each of the key messages from the 'Discussion for young people' exercise, discuss how the practitioners can continue to support young people and/or how they can better manage bullying incidents. **(30 mins)**
 - What are the young people's priorities when it comes to how bullying incidents are managed?
 - What are some realistic ways in which adults can help?

Try to keep this a two-way discussion. If a young person suggests an approach that is not realistic for practitioners, take time to explain why this isn't possible, then explore some alternatives.

3. Together, decide on 1-3 statements that practitioners can 'pledge' to commit to. These can be general: *'I will always make time to listen to young people if they have concerns about bullying'* or more specific: *'I pledge to dedicate 30 minutes at the end of each day when young people can come to me about bullying concerns.'*

Remember

Pledge statements should be tailored to your organisation but kept wide ranging enough that all adult staff members can be invited to sign it.

Statements do not have to be extravagant and they may even be things you do already and want to continue. The aim of the pledge is to reinforce the support available to young people

4. Once the statements have been agreed, it's time for the pledge to be designed - a great project for the young people! Pledges can be as big, colourful, and innovative as they like - as long as they leave enough space for staff to sign it in support.
5. Once the pledge has been designed, encourage the practitioners in your setting to sign it in support - the more signatures the better!
6. Your pledge is ready! Display your finished product somewhere public so as many young people can see it as possible. A reminder of the support available to them could be just what a young person needs when they arrive in the building!