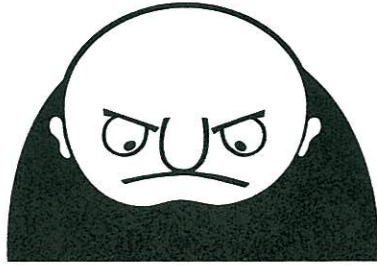


User's Guide

BULLY BREATH



How To Tame a Troublemaker

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Introduction

Bullying has changed a lot. Once little boys dipped little girls' pigtails in the inkwell. Now there is sexual harassment. Years ago, hotheads threw a few wild punches on the playground. Now knives and guns are showing up in schools.

Bullying is no longer just an irritating part of growing up. It's disruptive, dangerous, and a detriment to learning. Bringing the bully problem out in the open and making efforts to control and eliminate threatening behavior can help prevent violence from overrunning the education system.



236 East Front Street
Bloomington, IL 61701
Phone: (800) 727-5507 or (309) 827-5455
Fax: (309) 829-8621
e-mail: meridian@ice.net

The video, ***Bully Breath: How to Tame a Troublemaker***, encourages students to talk about the often "under wraps" topic. The program offers bullies good reasons to stop treating others badly. It provides techniques that victims can use to stop a bully in his or her tracks.

Bullies: For Parents and Schools, a short video that follows ***Bully Breath***, outlines ways parents and educators can support children who are being victimized by troublemakers and also help students who are trapped by their own bullying behavior.

Educational Goals

After watching ***Bully Breath: How to Tame a Troublemaker*** and working through the *User's Guide*, students will be able to:

1. Understand that bullying is a very big problem and can have lasting effects on both bullies and victims.
2. Identify the signs of bully behavior.
3. Identify the signs of victim behavior.
4. Discover the real reasons bullies act the way they do.
5. Learn ways to take away a bully's power and to stop personal bully attacks.
6. Make bully prevention a school-wide goal.

Video Overview

Bully breath is hot and mean and it can blow over you almost out of nowhere. Bullies are everywhere. They can taunt and tease kids on the playground, take money from them on the bus, or hurt them in the hallway or bathroom when no one is looking. They may also cause trouble in the classroom but they usually do their dirtiest work when adults aren't watching.

The Bully Secret

Most bullies wear a mask. Underneath, they may bear the scars of being bullied by someone else, possibly in their family. They may also want others to see them as powerful and in control even if they don't really feel that way. However, their problems don't give bullies the right to pass on their troublemaker tactics.

Bullies for Life

People who are bullies as youngsters often grow up to get in more trouble in high school. Later, they can have problems with their families, their jobs, and even the police. So the sooner a troublemaker shapes up, the happier he or she will be in the long run.

The Bully Mountain

You could think of bullying as climbing a mountain. The higher a person climbs on the bully mountain, the more severe the victimization.

| | |
|---------|-----------------------|
| Level 1 | Name calling, teasing |
| Level 2 | Shoving |
| Level 3 | Stealing |
| Level 4 | Violence |

Don't Get Blown Away by Bully Breath

There are several ways you can keep a bully from making your life miserable.

Stay out of the Bully Zone. If you know a bully hangs out in certain places, try to avoid those areas.

Buddy Back-up. Make sure you have some friends with you whenever you are anywhere near troublemaker territory. A bully might think twice about taking on you *and* your friends.

Face off with the Bully. A bully gets fear mixed up with respect. When you act like you aren't controlled by his power, he often loses interest. To confront a bully, stand up straight, look the person straight in the

eye and say that you will no longer be part of the deadly bully game. It helps to practice what you plan to say with a friend.

Find the Funny Bone. If you have a good sense of humor, you could laugh off minor put-downs or find a way to make the bully laugh.

Don't Act Like a Victim. Ask yourself, "Am I doing anything that makes me a big target for a bully?" Acting scared, whining, dressing oddly, or having poor grooming habits could make a person stand out and stand in the path of a bully. It's not fair but bullies like to pick on people they think are weak or strange.

Get Help. When you can't seem to stop a bully from picking on or even hurting you, it's time to ask for help. Talk to a parent, teacher, school counselor or principal.

Bully Code. Encourage your school to establish a Bully Code that says threatening behavior won't be tolerated. The code could set up a way to report bully problems and outline punishment for troublemakers.

Never, never fight back with a bully.

Poster Activity

After watching ***Bully Breath***, students may want to create posters that reflect a zero-tolerance attitude about bullies. The students in the ***Bully Breath*** video enjoyed making anti-bully posters. The activity served as an awareness experience, an interesting art lesson, and a bulletin board project.

Resources

Cohen-Posey, How to Handle Bullies, Teasers and Other Meanies
Rainbow Books, Inc. 1995

Ross, Dorothea M., Childhood Bullying and Teasing: What School Personnel, Other Professionals, and Parents Can Do American Counseling Association 1996

Ryder, Verdene, The Bully Problem, Signs of a Victim The Ryder Press 1993

Webster-Doyle, Terrence, Why Is Everybody Always Picking on Me? A Guide to Understanding Bullies for Young People Atrium Society 1991

Discussion Starters

1. Why do you think bullies pick on other kids?
2. Do you think bullies are strong or weak?
3. Have you seen any of the bully problems shown on the video in your school? Which ones?
4. Do you know anyone that was so upset by a bully that he or she was afraid to go to school?
5. Do you feel that most people have been kind of a bully sometime in their lives without even realizing it? Can you think of some examples? Were you ever a bit of a bully? How did you feel afterwards.
6. Could a person stop being a bully if he/she wanted to?
7. Picture a person you know who is a bully. What do you think he/she is going to be like in high school? What type of friends will he/she have?
8. What could you and other students do to banish *Bully Breath* from your school?

Parent-School Video

Parents, counselors, and educators have an opportunity to see the bully problem from the adult perspective in ***Bullies:For Parents and Schools***, a five-minute video which follows ***Bully Breath: How to Tame a Troublemaker***.

Kids Want Acknowledgment

Many children feel parents and teachers either don't know what bullies are doing or don't take the problem seriously enough. Because most acts of bullying last less than a minute and occur away from the eyes of adults, many of us may not be as aware of the situation as we could be.

Safe Environment

But as parents and educators, it's up to us to create a learning environment where our children can thrive. For children to learn, they must feel safe. Facing the bully issue head on would be a good start.

Parents and educators can aim for a zero tolerance policy on bullying. Parents will want to look for signs of bully and victim behaviors in their children. Rather than denying a child could be a bully or over-reacting if a child is being victimized, parents can work with school officials to find compassionate and workable solutions.

Prevention Programs

A school bully prevention program could include:

- ***Meetings*** where students talk about bully behavior and consequences.
- ***Handbooks*** which define unacceptable behavior and outline school rules.
- ***Parent Communication*** about bully issues.
- ***A Reporting System*** that provides a way to get help.