



Letter to Students

Lesson 4, Counselor Resource

Greetings!

If you're like the kids I have in my school you may be getting a little defensive about all this talk about bullying. I heard some of my students say things like:

- Wow – you're making such a big deal about all this stuff.
- You're just exaggerating – we don't have much bullying here.
- This is just the way that things are in our generation.
- We're teenagers! This is just what happens in middle school/junior high!

We do understand that for most of you, bullying of any type may not be a huge issue. Many of you use your privileges responsibly, ethically and legally. The thing is, however, that way too many kids don't. We want you to be educated and empowered to handle it if something should happen to you. We also want you to practice caring for your fellow students and helping to stem this tide of Cyberbullying.

This goal of this lesson is to enlighten you about all the emotional, physical and psychological consequences that can fall on students that are involved in any part of Cyberbullying. These consequences can be truly life altering.

Bullies

- ✓ May be convicted of at least one crime by the age of 24 (up to 60%)
- ✓ Are engaged in frequent fighting (39%)
- ✓ Have trouble making and keeping friends
- ✓ Are more likely to be depressed and develop suicidal ideation
- ✓ Are more likely to abuse drugs and/or alcohol
- ✓ Are more likely to become abusive as parents or spouses
- ✓ Are in danger of failing school or dropping out

Targets

- ✓ Are more likely to deal with depression and suicidal ideation
- ✓ Suffer lack of power and choice
- ✓ Lose self esteem

- ✓ Feel a personal sense of loss
- ✓ Feel angry and vengeful; may become bullies later

Bystanders

- ✓ Feel confused about the way the world runs
- ✓ Feel helpless to make a difference
- ✓ Feel anxious about the climate of their school
- ✓ Worry about their own safety and well being

None of this is good! It's not really healthy for you to be in any of those roles; they're all harmful to your growth and development. There is a solution though. Most of you are kind and respectful. Most of you have care and concern about your friends and classmates. Most of you truly want a school where kindness is the norm and kids genuinely care for and about one another. Gandhi states, "***Be the change you wish to see in the world.***" I challenge you to do that. We'll talk more in the next few weeks about how you might do that.

Take care!

Mrs. G.