

Middle School Cyberbullying Curriculum Preface

CONTEXT

Our young people are **digital natives** in a virtual world which most **digital immigrants** rarely visit – if ever. And as Seattle Police Detective Malinda Wilson says, “Puberty and the internet do not mix!” As a result, keeping our young natives safe online has become a serious challenge for parents and educators. Although issues of online predators, identity theft, intellectual property rights and gaming and addictive behaviors often make headlines, surveys tell us that cyberbullying (online bullying, harassment, intimidation and overall peer abuse) is more pervasive and seriously impacts more young people than other better known cyber-safety issues.

For that reason, and in support of **RCW 28A.300.285**, Washington State’s 2007 cyberbullying anti-harassment legislation, this initial set of internet safety curriculum materials focuses on cyberbullying. To keep the project manageable, that focus is further limited to the middle school / junior high school classrooms. In time, the plan is to expand this middle-school-cyberbullying beginning in two directions: from MS to K-12; from cyberbullying to overall internet safety.

As a part of a bullying prevention program, the Lessons contained in the materials are designed to coordinate with and fit into ongoing Olweus Bullying Prevention programs.

CURRENT MATERIALS

The curriculum you find here is complete. However, it is not done. The current set of Lessons is “**Drafts**”. Once the school year begins, they will be piloted in various classrooms. In addition, over the next few weeks, even more wonderful student activities will be incorporated into the current set of Lessons. As they are added, we will seamlessly change out the pages. We also anticipate that Lessons will be updated as they are piloted and Teachers suggest improvements, additions, etc. That said, we also know that, given the ever changing nature of technologies, and the creativity of our digital natives, this curriculum will never be really *done*.

The materials you will find here were built with WA State Essential Academic Learning Requirements (**EALRs**) and ISTE **NETS standards** in mind. Realizing that there is a wide range of skills and comfort with the topic, the materials were also developed with teachers in mind. There is no need for classroom teachers to be ‘tech savvy’ – everything classroom teachers need to implement the curriculum is included within the Teacher Manuals. There is also a growing list of on-line and print resource materials.

IMPLEMENTATION SUGGESTIONS

These materials were designed to be incorporated into ongoing Olweus bullying prevention program classroom meetings. The individual Lessons were created to be flexible enough shorter **classroom meeting/advisory settings** or to be used in longer classrooms periods.

If they are used in longer classroom settings, they would fit nicely into existing **Technology, Health** and **Language Arts** units. They can also be used as stand-alones within an Exploratory-type setting.

They were also designed with **Teachers** in mind: all the information and materials which a classroom teacher needs to present a Lesson are self-contained. Teachers who may think of themselves as less-than-tech-savvy will be able to use them as easily as high-end tech users.

APPRECIATIONS

These materials were made possible thanks to a generous grant from **Qwest Communications/Qwest Foundation**. In addition, Thanks to the Seattle Public Schools Prevention-Intervention programs for the additional funding which was made available. The writing team has been composed of individuals with expertise in bullying prevention, curriculum development, internet safety, educational technology, the writing process and years of classroom teaching.

Special thanks to **Linda Bakken** for her efforts in combining bullying prevention information with her expertise in pedagogy, curriculum development and educational technology in putting the materials together. Thanks, too, to **Neilia Solberg** for sharing her expertise in the writing process, and for her creativity in developing the writing activities – many of which will be incorporated very shortly. Thanks to **Annie Laurie Armstrong** for developing our future-looking evaluation process.

And thanks to **many other eyes and minds** for their ideas, suggestions and willingness to preview some very rough drafts of the work along the way.

Your input will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you very much.

