STOP BULLYING NOW!
TAKE A STAND. LEND A HAND.

A Guide for Local Broadcasters
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Bullying. It’s been around as long as kids have left their families to attend school or go to work. But today, increasing numbers of parents, teachers, psychologists and students themselves are saying it’s a serious problem. Not only can it lead to violence, but it also ruins lives in other ways, turning schools into places where fear and seething hatred make it hard for kids to learn.
Bullying Defined

Bullying according to the experts, is a pattern of activity intended to cause harm or distress to others. It is intentional. It is repeated over time. And it occurs in a relationship in which there is an imbalance of power or strength. In other words, a bully or bullies tend to target students who have a hard time defending themselves.

Bullying includes both direct and indirect actions, as well as physical, verbal and non-verbal tactics.

**Direct Bullying**

*Physical*: hitting, kicking, shoving
*Verbal*: taunting, teasing
*Non-verbal/non-physical*: threatening gestures

**Indirect Bullying**

*Physical*: having a peer assault someone
*Verbal*: spreading rumors
*Non-verbal/non-physical*: excluding, manipulating friendships, sending threatening e-mails

Bullying exists in rural, urban and suburban communities and is a problem for students of all racial, ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Why It’s a Problem

Bullying causes problems for everybody—the bullies, children who are bullied, and everyone with a stake in the success of local schools.

**Children Who Are Bullied**

For children who are bullied, bullying can cause a variety of short-term problems, including depression, anxiety and difficulty with schoolwork. During a longer period of time, persistent bullying leaves lasting scars such as low self-esteem, depression and anger towards others.

**The Bullies**

Students who bully are especially likely to engage in other antisocial and delinquent behaviors such as vandalism, shoplifting, truancy and frequent drug use. This behavior often continues into adulthood, when bullies face a significantly higher rate of criminal convictions.

**The School and Community**

Bullying can contribute to a negative school climate that is not conducive to good social relationships or learning. This is a problem for all students, as well as teachers, parents, bystanders and others.

**The Bottom Line**

Stopping bullying can be a critical step in improving schools and school outcomes, preventing delinquency, crime and violence, and making sure young people grow up with the confidence and the trust in others that they need to succeed.
About the Campaign

This guidebook is the result of a collaboration between the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in support of HRSA’s multi-year National Bullying Prevention Campaign. The goal: to actively engage 9- through 13-year-old youths—and those who shape their world—in a comprehensive, research-based effort to change the environment in which bullying occurs.

The campaign includes a series of “webisodes” featuring a cast of animated characters whose experiences with bullying can teach important lessons to young people and adults alike.

For more information about the campaign, visit www.StopBullyingNow.hrsa.gov. In addition to this guidebook, PSAs and other campaign details are available.

Just the Facts

Use these facts about bullying in your station’s programming and public service announcements (PSAs) about the issue.

The fear of being bullied may keep as many as 160,000 students out of school on any given day. (National Association of School Psychologists)

Fifty-five percent of 8- to 11-year-olds and 68 percent of 12- to 15-year-olds say bullying is a big problem. (Kaiser Family Foundation)

Nearly 30 percent of all youth aged 11 to 15 have been a victim or perpetrator of bullying. (Journal of the American Medical Association)

One in four children who bully will have a criminal record by the time they reach 30. (U.S. Department of Education)

Youth who bully others frequently behave badly in school. Bullies also are more likely to smoke, drink alcohol and get bad grades. (Journal of the American Medical Association)

Sixty percent of boys who were bullies in middle school had at least one criminal conviction by 24; 40 percent had three or more convictions. Bullies were four times as likely as their peers to have multiple convictions. (Olweus Bullying Prevention Group)

Boys are more likely than girls to bully, but it is a problem for everybody. Girls are more likely to bully by excluding, while boys are more likely to engage in physical bullying. Both boys and girls engage in frequent verbal bullying. (Olweus Bullying Prevention Group)
The Power of Prevention: Reaching Key Audiences

Just as everyone in a community has a stake in putting a stop to bullying, everyone can and must play a part in the prevention effort. Parents, teachers, school officials, students and others can all contribute.

The key for local broadcasters is to understand what each of these groups can and should be doing to help stop bullying now, as well as what messages will inspire them to do their part.

Students

The target age group for bullying prevention messages directed at young people is the 9- through 13-year-old cohort known as "tweens." Within this group, it’s important to remember that there are several subgroups, each requiring a different message or approach:

Children who are bullied. More than anything else, children who are bullied need to be told that the best thing they can do to stop it is to tell a trusted adult. According to research conducted for HRSA, tweens are reluctant to tell adults about bullying for a variety of reasons. Many students, for example, believe that teachers and principals will not be sympathetic to their problems. Others fear retribution from the bully or bullies. Whatever the reason, local broadcasters should encourage young people to overcome their fears and concerns and talk to someone about how they are being bullied. If adults aren’t aware of the problem, there’s nothing they can do to stop it.

Bystanders. This group, while not directly involved in the bullying, can nevertheless play an important role in prevention. Once again, however, bystanders tend to be fearful of either standing up to a bully or approaching an adult to report a bullying incident. At the very least, this group needs to be reminded not to join in with bullying behavior. In addition, they should be encouraged to befriend those who have been bullied and to report the bullying to a trusted adult.

Bullies. Bullies themselves are, in all likelihood, not going to respond to broadcast messages about the harm caused by bullying. What will work? Strictly enforced, school-wide policies aimed at stopping bullying and punishing those who bully. (See “Teachers and School Officials,” on next page.)

Teens. Older students can play an important part in bullying prevention as "influencers." Having recently passed through the tween years themselves, they know how much of a problem bullying is, and how important it is to stop it. What’s more, teens are looked up to by their younger peers. As a result, teens should be reminded to model positive behavior by not bullying and not supporting it in any way. They also should be told to advise tweens who are being bullied to get help and to report any bullying they know about to a trusted adult.

Parents

Parents often can be remarkably unaware of the bullying problems in local schools. The reason: tweens tend not to talk to their parents about what’s going on. Therefore, a key bullying prevention message for parents is simply to open up an ongoing dialogue with their kids about their friendships, their experiences in school and their life.

Parents also should be reminded to react appropriately when a child says he or she has been bullied. The proper response is not to advise the child to strike back or to suggest that being bullied is just part of growing up. Rather, parents should convey their concern about the bullying to the child’s teacher and school officials and then follow through to make sure something is being done to put a stop to it.

Parents of children who are bullied also can help their children by encouraging them to connect with friendly students in their classes and helping them develop special talents and positive attributes that can be a source of greater self-esteem and confidence.
School-Wide Prevention Program Delivers Results

A comprehensive bullying prevention program adopted by schools around the world has delivered a marked reduction in student reports of bullying. Launched in Norway in the 1980s, the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program enlists school administrators, teachers, students and their parents in a multifaceted effort to change the school environment and accepted norms of behavior.

Under the program, which has been adopted by many schools in the United States, schools conduct an anonymous survey of students to get a better handle on the extent of the bullying problem. Administrators then appoint a Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee, initiate staff training, and develop school-wide rules and a coordinated system of supervision during school break periods.

At the classroom level, teachers engage students and their parents in regular discussions about bullying and peer relations, while holding individual meetings with bullies and children who are bullied, as well as their parents.

A survey of schools that had adopted the program found a 30- to 70-percent reduction in student reports of bullying, as well as significant reductions in student reports of other antisocial behavior, such as vandalism, theft and truancy. What’s more, participating schools reported a more positive attitude toward schoolwork and school among students, as well as significant improvements in classroom order and discipline.


Teachers and School Officials

The most important thing that can be done to stop bullying now is for schools to make bullying prevention more of a priority. That means establishing clear, school-wide rules such as:

- We will not bully others.
- We will try to help students who are bullied.
- We will make it a point to include students who are easily left out.
- When we know somebody is being bullied, we will tell an adult at school and an adult at home.

With clear rules in place, schools have taken the first step toward changing the school climate and creating new norms of behavior.

What next? Using the rules as their guide, teachers, principals, guidance counselors and other school staff need to react decisively when they become aware of bullying in their schools. That means telling the bully or bullies to stop and punishing them if necessary. School personnel also can do their part by supporting children who are bullied—for example, by creating situations where these students can connect with friendly peers or develop special talents and abilities.

“Once you are on the bus, the bus driver doesn’t care. He will drive and not say anything. If kids start swearing and picking on other kids, they are not going to care.” –Nick, 13
Programming Ideas

Consider the following ideas for news segments, special reports and public affairs programming.

**Bullying in Our Schools: How Bad Is It?**

Conduct on-air interviews, anonymously if necessary, with students about the extent of the bullying problem in local schools. Be sure to talk to children who are bullied, students who have witnessed bullying and, if possible, bullies themselves. Compare what the students say about the problem to the perceptions of parents, teachers, school officials and other adults. Consider this: One TV station recently watched a school recess with hidden cameras and was able to show its astonished viewers how bullying is an everyday event for many youngsters.

**Bullying’s Terrible Toll.**

Interview psychologists and other experts about the effects of bullying on children who are bullied. Focus on both the short-term effects—anxiety, fear of going to school, academic problems—as well as long-term problems such as a loss of self-esteem. You might also want to interview teenagers and adults who were bullied in school and find out how it affected them. Get their suggestions—and those of the experts—about what schools and the entire community can and should be doing to stop bullying now.

**Stop Bullying Now: Are Our Schools Doing What It Takes?**

Find out if schools in your community have any programs in place to address the bullying problem. Interview school administrators, guidance counselors and teachers about how they handle reports of bullying, whether the school has clear rules against it, and whether they even have a clear sense of how serious the problem is. Ask parents and students if they think the schools are doing enough and what more could be done to stop bullying now.

**Talking to Kids About Bullying: What They Need to Hear.**

Use the information in this guidebook, as well as interviews with local experts, to produce a report with suggestions for parents on how to talk to their children about bullying. Advise parents to engage in regular and continuing conversations with their children about their friends, their frustrations and what’s happening in school. Make certain parents know to help their tween children understand what bullying is, and to tell them it’s wrong. And be sure to tell parents what to do when they know or suspect that their child is being bullied: report it to the appropriate teacher or school officials, and follow up to make sure something is done to stop it.

**Bullying in Focus.**

Organize an on-air town meeting to discuss the problem of bullying in local schools and what should be done about it. Feature presentations from a diverse panel of students, parents, teachers, psychologists and others, and open it up for questions from the audience and the larger community. Try to end the town meeting with an agenda for action that everyone agrees to—for example, by getting all parties to pledge to do whatever they can to stop bullying now. Then be sure to follow up later to see how local schools and others have changed.

**Who’s Working to Stop Bullying? Becoming Part of the Answer.**

Use your station’s regular news coverage to spotlight local and national efforts to prevent bullying. Perhaps a local school has embraced the importance of prevention and adopted new rules and a comprehensive program. Or maybe there’s a group of students who are standing up to bullies, a local teacher who regularly engages a class in discussions of bullying and what to do about it, or a police officer or public official who has made this issue a priority. Ask around. You might also want to use your news coverage to showcase HRSA’s work on the issue, as well as other national and state efforts. The goal: to show the community what’s happening and the many resources that are available to concerned schools, parents, students and others.

**Coming Together, Taking a Stand.**

Join with others in the community to launch a broader effort aimed at stopping bullying. Enlist partners, public officials, other media and area foundations and nonprofit agencies serving young people. In addition to airing programming on your station, work with your partners to create web and print materials advising parents, teachers, students and others on how they can help stop bullying now.
PSA Scripts

What Bullying Is :30
Here’s what bullying is. It’s something that one person or group does to cause harm or distress to others. It’s intentional. It’s repeated over time. And it’s directed at people who aren’t in a position to defend themselves. Here’s what bullying is not. It’s not something we should put up with in our schools and our community. Take a stand. Lend a hand. Stop bullying now! For more information, go to www.StopBullyingNow.hrsa.gov.

What Bullying Is :20
Here’s what bullying is. It’s verbal. It’s physical. It’s a way for one group or person to intentionally cause harm or distress to others. Here’s what it’s not. It’s not something we should put up with in our schools and our community. Take a stand. Lend a hand. Stop bullying now! For more information, go to www.StopBullyingNow.hrsa.gov.

A Problem for Everybody :30
Bullying. For some of us, it’s something that happened to other people, to them. But the truth is it’s a problem for everybody. Study after study has linked bullying to violence and other delinquent behaviors, and it’s turning our schools into places where kids worry less about learning and more about how to steer clear of the class bully. Take a stand. Lend a hand. Stop bullying now! For more information, go to www.StopBullyingNow.hrsa.gov.

160,000 Students :20
160,000. That’s how many students may be staying home from school every day and not learning because of a problem we need to do more to solve. That problem is bullying. And those who are bullied aren’t the only ones who should be scared. Take a stand. Lend a hand. Stop bullying now! For more information, go to www.StopBullyingNow.hrsa.gov.

Criminal Record :30
One in four children who bully will have a criminal record by the time they reach 30. By putting a stop to bullying, we put a stop to behaviors that can lead to violence, delinquency and, of course, lots of hurt. Take a stand. Lend a hand. Stop bullying now! For more information, go to www.StopBullyingNow.hrsa.gov.

“It’s much worse now. Students torture each other.” –Marianne, middle school teacher
PSA Scripts, continued

Parents :30
If your child came to you and said he was being bullied at school, what would you do? Take it seriously. Don’t tell him to strike back. Don’t tell him “just toughen up.” And don’t tell her that being bullied is a normal part of growing up. Because it’s anything but normal. The best thing you can do: talk with your child’s teacher, the principal, the school counselor—whoever’s going to listen. And then make sure they do something about it. Take a stand. Lend a hand. Stop bullying now! For more information, go to www.StopBullyingNow.hrsa.gov.

Parents :20
If your child says he’s being bullied, take it seriously. Talk with a teacher, the principal, a school counselor—whoever’s going to listen. And then make sure they do something about it. Take a stand. Lend a hand. Stop bullying now! For more information, go to www.StopBullyingNow.hrsa.gov.

Padres: 30
Si su hijo dice que lo han estado acosando, tómenlo seriamente. Hablen con un maestro, el director, el consejero de la escuela, o cualquiera que los escuchen. Después, asegúrense que ellos hagan algo. Pon el ejemplo. Da la mano. Para el acoso ahora. Para más información, visite la página de internet www.StopBullyingNow.hrsa.gov.

Try to get a local tween—ages 9 to 13—to record the following scripts

Bystander :30
Someone else in your class is getting bullied. What do you do? Well, you don’t just stand there. And you definitely don’t become a bully yourself. What you do is step in if you can and stop it. At a minimum, you tell a teacher or another adult. And then you make sure the person who’s getting bullied is all right. Because the next time it could be you. And, believe me, you’d want other people to care. Take a stand. Lend a hand. Stop bullying now! For more information, go to www.StopBullyingNow.hrsa.gov.

Bystander :20
If someone in your class is getting bullied, don’t just stand there. Step in if you can to cool things down. Tell a teacher or another adult what’s happening. And make sure the person who is getting bullied knows you care. Take a stand. Lend a hand. Stop bullying now! For more information, go to www.StopBullyingNow.hrsa.gov.

Pon el Ejemplo: 30
Si alguien en tu clase esta siendo acosado, no te quedes sin hacer nada. Trata de calmar la situación. Dile a un maestro o a un adulto lo que esta pasando. Y asegúrate que la persona que ha sido acosada sepa que le importas. Pon el ejemplo. Da la mano. Para el acoso ahora. Para más información, visite la página de Internet www.StopBullyingNow.hrsa.gov.
For more information about the problem of bullying and what can be done to stop bullying now, visit www.StopBullyingNow.hrsa.gov