



# Buddies not bullies

*Celebrate Anti-Bullying Week with a fun, five-day activity guide*

**A**nti-Bullying Week is a great time to get children thinking about how they can take a more active role in their school to help support their peers. Over the past year, schools on the National Anti-Bullying Peer Mentoring pilot, run by the national body for mentoring and befriending, have been exploring effective methods of addressing emotional issues with younger children. Below is a tried-and-tested programme you could use during Anti-Bullying Week.

## Monday What is bullying?

- Introduce Anti-Bullying Week by asking the children to discuss and describe what they think bullying is. Write down all the different types of bullying they suggest on one side of your interactive whiteboard.
- Next, ask the children for their thoughts on what they might do to tackle bullying. Would they know what to do if they saw someone being unkind to someone else? Add their suggestions to the other side of your interactive whiteboard. These ideas could then be used to make a poster later in the week.
- Get the children thinking of all the different people they could turn to if they were being bullied, from teachers and family, to friends and peer mentors.
- You could use the children's findings to review your school's current Anti-Bullying policy.

## Tuesday Feelings and empathy

- Once the children have grasped the general concept of bullying, explore the importance of feelings and empathy. Ask the children to draw or write on a piece of paper how they are feeling today.
- Using the Anti-Bullying Week poster ([resource-bank.scholastic.co.uk/resources/61664](http://resource-bank.scholastic.co.uk/resources/61664)) ask the children to talk about how the children in the images might be feeling. Remember to stress that even though some emotions are obvious, it is not always easy to tell how some people are feeling from their outward expression. For example, a child that looks sad could just be tired or bored.
- Talk to your class about how they felt on their first day at school, noting down similarities and differences. Develop the discussion to consider how the class could help new children to feel welcome.
- Introduce the idea of body language to show how we are feeling without using words. For example, head and shoulders hung low might mean that someone is sad or shy. Ask a group of children to walk around and demonstrate with their bodies how they would look if they were sad, happy, angry, upset, bored, and so on. Allow them time to act out their emotions before calling Stop, at which point they should stand still for other children to discuss their body language.

## Wednesday Coping with differences

- For the majority of children, being part of a group is very important and brings a sense of belonging. However, we are all different, so take time to explore and celebrate the children's differences in an obvious but positive way.
- To help children understand inclusion and appreciate how differences can be positive share the poem 'I'll be there for you' from the Resource Bank. You could go on to perform this poem in a special assembly to celebrate Anti-Bullying Week (see 'Friday's activity, right)
- Place a large, scruffy or unfashionable pair of shoes in the middle of the room. Invite a volunteer to stand in the shoes and ask them what they think of them and who might wear them. How it would feel to be that person?
- Round up the session with a class discussion about differences to develop children's empathy for others who are not the same.

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## Thursday Identifying and accepting values

- It is important that children realise that we all have prejudices and that these can get in the way of us helping other people. A 'values continuum' is a good way of exploring feelings and attitudes on certain issues.
- Write a pair of opposing statements on large pieces of speech bubble-shaped paper. Statements could include: I love football/I don't like football; I think monsters are scary/I think monsters are funny; Winter is the most fun season/Summer is the most fun season. In a large open space, place the statements on the floor some distance from each other.
- Tell the children to choose the statement that they agree with and go and stand next to it. If appropriate, the children could stand in a position between the two statements, for example if they quite like football but don't love it. Encourage all children to be as honest as possible in their choices.
- Once children have placed themselves at either statement, invite points of view about why they chose to stand there. Do any of the children want to swap position based on what children stood at the opposing statement have said? Make sure that the children realise that all points of view are valid and remind them that we should always take the time to listen to what others have to say.
- To further support this activity, see online photocopyable 'Talk about: values' available from the Resource Bank.



## Friday The Anti-Bullying busters!

- Host a special assembly to draw together everything the children have learned over the week. Present role plays and poems, such as the poem on the poster 'I'll be there for you'.
- Reflecting upon what they've learned throughout the week, ask the children to make an Anti-Bullying poster to display around the school.
- If applicable, explain that the children's ideas have been used to revise the school's Anti-bullying policy to display in the school reception area.
- Launch a Peer Mentoring scheme. Put up an official 'job application' form inviting children to apply to become a peer mentor. On the strength of the children's applications, and from what you've witnessed over the week, recruit your team!

## Further information

When setting up a peer support programme, you'll need to establish a clear understanding among staff, children, parents and governors of what it is and how it fits in with existing support systems in your school such as PSHE, SEAL, Healthy Schools and Every Child Matters.

The Mentoring and Befriending Foundation is the national body representing education-based peer mentoring and mentoring programmes. It has produced a step-by-step Primary Schools Peer Mentoring Training Pack Lean on Me! developed collaboratively by NSPCC and Warrington Healthy Schools. The pack is full of activities, resources and training guidance to help schools set up peer support programmes, not just to help tackle bullying but to support social and emotional life skills.

