

ANTI-BULLYING WEEK

# BEHIND THE BULLY

A LESSON EXPLORING SOME OF THE **ROOT CAUSES** OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

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## LESSON OBJECTIVES

To understand some of the root causes of bullying behaviour  
To analyse the complex variables behind bullying behaviour  
To devise potential methods of tackling bullying behaviour

# NOTES FOR TEACHERS

This lesson explores the root causes of bullying behaviour and encourages students to reflect on why people feel the need to bully others. It pushes high ability students to consider potential methods of combatting bullying through tackling the root causes.

When delivering this lesson, we would encourage you to use phrases such as 'perpetrator of bullying' or 'person who bullies' rather than bully.

We know it sounds a bit awkward at first, but at Ditch the Label we never call anyone a 'bully' or a 'victim' -because we don't see bullying as an identity.

Labels weighted with negative connotations such as 'bully' can be hard to shift. They dehumanise the person behind the word and can permanently tarnish a person's reputation regardless of whether or not they are actively participating in aggressive behaviours. It implies that humans are incapable of change, which we know is simply not true.

Bullying is a behaviour, and like all behaviours there is a root cause and a remedy for change.

The case study activity on slide 7 requires the class to be broken up into groups of 4-5, which equates to roughly 6 groups in a class of 30. This means that the case studies will be duplicated.

## WHAT TO PREPARE BEFORE THE LESSON:

- Print and cut out the Case Study cards on page 5. For a class of 30 students you will need at least 2 copies of the case study cards to allow for one per group.
- Download and set up 'Behind the Bully' PowerPoint

# LESSON PLAN

<b>SLIDE 2</b>	<b>DESCRIBE A 'BULLY'</b>
<i>5 minutes</i>	Whilst students are arriving into lesson, encourage them to annotate an outline of a person on the board, using adjectives which describe a 'bully'. They could write these words on post-its, or directly onto your whiteboard or smartboard. Allow them to write whatever comes into their heads – this will form an interesting base to start from when exploring what common preconceptions people have about bullies
<b>SLIDE 3</b>	<b>STATISTICS</b>
<i>5 minutes</i>	Show the statistical findings from The 2018 Annual Bullying Survey.  Ask students for their initial reactions: are they surprised, concerned, angry? Then reveal that those statistics are taken from people who <i>perpetrated</i> bullying, not those who had been bullied. Does that change their reaction? Why?
<b>SLIDE 4</b>	<b>YOUTUBE VIDEO</b>
<i>5 minutes</i>	Play the DTL YouTube video by clicking on the video link on slide 4. <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hizno9UvWEs">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hizno9UvWEs</a>  It tells the story of two boys, one of whom bullies the other.
<b>SLIDE 5</b>	<b>DISCUSSION: IS IT HELPFUL TO LABEL PEOPLE AS BULLIES?</b>
<i>10 minutes</i>	Lower ability prompt questions: "How do you think the guy who was doing the bullying felt when he was at home?"; "What was his dad like?"; "How do you think he felt when he was at school?";  Higher ability prompt questions: "Do you think anyone is born a bully?"; "Are people who bully innately bad people?"; "How do you think you would feel if you were labelled as a bully?"; "Why do you think the person who was being bullied smiled at the end when he saw the guy who had bullied him?"
<b>SLIDE 6</b>	<b>TEACHER-LED EXPLANATION</b>
<i>5 minutes</i>	<i>The information on this slide is the same as that in the 'Challenging Attitudes' assembly. If your students have seen the assembly, point out that this is a recap.</i>  <i>Click once for each bullet point, to bring up the heading on the slide.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Data shows that those who bully are far more likely than average to have experienced a <b>stressful or traumatic situation</b> in the past 5 years. While some people deal with stress in positive ways like meditation, exercise and talking therapy, others use negative behaviours such as bullying, violence and alcohol abuse.</li></ul>

# LESSON PLAN

<p>SLIDE 6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Those who bully are more likely to feel like their <b>friendships and family relationships aren't very secure</b>. 1 in 3 of those who bully people daily told Ditch the Label that they feel like their parents/guardians don't have enough time to spend with them,</li> <li>• They are also much more likely to come from <b>violent households</b> with lots of arguments and hostility. As well as this, their intolerant attitudes may be learned from abuse or <b>prejudice-based attitudes</b> at home.</li> <li>• It's not surprising then that more than half of those who bully <b>suffer from anxiety</b> and many <b>have low self-esteem</b>. In order to mask how they actually feel about themselves, some people who bully focus attention on someone else. They try to avoid any negative attention directed at them by deflecting.</li> </ul>
<p>SLIDE 7</p> <p><i>15 minutes</i></p>	<p>CASE STUDIES</p> <p>Split the class into groups of 4-5, and explain that you will give each group a case study (from the Printable Resources section of this Teaching Guide) which gives them information about a person who is perpetrating bullying.</p> <p>They should read through their case study and then answer at least the first 5 questions on slide 7. Push higher ability students to answer questions 6 &amp; 7.</p> <p>It is up to you whether you want their answers to be presented verbally, in books or on a poster.</p>
<p>SLIDE 8</p> <p><i>10 minutes</i></p>	<p>FEEDBACK</p> <p>Gather feedback from each of the groups on what they believe would be a good way to help the person perpetrating bullying.</p> <p>Draw discussions to a close with the idea that bullying behaviour is never OK, but it is complex: understanding the root issues of bullying behaviour is vital in fixing it – helping the person who bullies goes a long way in helping the person being bullied.</p> <p>Bullying is a behaviour which is often used to cope with a traumatic and stressful situation. Happy and secure people don't bully others.</p>
<p>SLIDES 9 - 12</p> <p><i>5 minutes</i></p> <p>SLIDE 13</p>	<p>PLENARY</p> <p>Choose 4 or more students to answer the following questions aloud. They increase in difficulty, so bear in mind your students' abilities when choosing.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Give one reason why someone might bully someone else.</li> <li>2) Give one reason why labelling someone as a 'bully' is unhelpful.</li> <li>3) Give one way in which we can help someone who is bullying someone else.</li> <li>4) Explain how helping someone who bullies people also helps those who are being bullied.</li> </ol> <p>Advise students that if they are experiencing bullying or are perpetrating bullying they should talk about it. They can talk to someone in school, a friend, or they can go online and find a support community such as ours at <a href="http://ditchthelabel.org">ditchthelabel.org</a></p>

# CASE STUDY CARDS

## CASE STUDY : FEMALE, AGED 13. WOLVERHAMPTON.

"There's a girl in my class that I pick on a lot, I take the mick, call her names, torment her. It's quite funny seeing how much control I have over her and I get a rush when I can make her react or cry.

My life at home isn't great. Since I was really little my mum would sometimes just not come home for days at a time so I'd have to clean my own clothes, find some food, take myself to school. When she is around, my mum brings home quite a lot of different guys, and they're not nice to me, they'll call me names and sometimes they'll shout at me. My mum doesn't care. I'm scared at home, but I don't really have anywhere else to go. It really sucks."

## CASE STUDY : UNSPECIFIED, AGED 14. LONDON.

"People always pick on me and tease me at school. They call me awful names and laugh at me if I speak in lessons. I know I look different to most other people, and I feel really unhappy when I look in a mirror.

When I'm on the computer I can make other people feel the way I do IRL. I create fake accounts and troll people on instagram and facebook. It's not fair that people pick on me for being different, so why shouldn't I pick on other people? There's one girl in particular who I make fun of a lot. She posts these selfies all the time, so I edit them to make her look ridiculous or gross then post them online."

## CASE STUDY : MALE, AGED 16. ABERDEEN.

"I get angry really easily. I don't know why, but when I see this particular kid in my class he just really gets on my nerves and I feel like I can take out my anger on him.

I enjoy the feeling I get when I hit him, it makes me feel powerful and satisfied. I feel like he deserves it for being so weak.

When I was 10, my older brother died in a car crash. I didn't really understand it for a long time, and my parents never talk about him or what happened. I don't like feeling so angry all the time, but I can't really help it. Hitting this guy is the only way I can kind of release it and feel normal."

**DITCH THE  
LABEL** YOUR WORLD, PREJUDICE FREE .

# WANNA TALK?

## INSTANT HELP AND SUPPORT

*You don't have to go through bullying  
alone. Get instant help and support  
from the largest online anti-bullying  
hub in the world.*

**Visit [DitchtheLabel.org](https://DitchtheLabel.org)**

