

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

ANTI-BULLYING WEEK

BULLYING: DEBUNKING THE MYTHS

ASSEMBLY

AN ASSEMBLY EXPLORING THE **MYTHS**
WHICH SURROUND BULLYING AND WHAT
PEOPLE CAN DO TO DEAL WITH SOME OF
THE ISSUES THEY MIGHT FACE

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

One of the biggest issues when talking about bullying, is that it is subjective and there are many different definitions and misconceptions about what bullying really is.

This assembly seeks to address some of the key myths about bullying, to arm students with the information and understanding to better combat and deal with bullying behaviour.

This assembly is fully scripted and can be delivered with or without the accompanying PowerPoint.

It is also suitable to be delivered by one person, or by a group of students.

WHAT TO PREPARE BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY:

- Print off a copy of the script
- Fill in the gap on page 5 for who to contact in your school if a student is experiencing bullying (you may need to refer to your school's Anti-Bullying Policy)
- Download and set up 'Debunking the Myths' PowerPoint if required

DEBUNKING THE MYTHS ASSEMBLY

SLIDE	SCRIPT
1	<p>Bullying is something that 1 in 2 people under 25 will experience in their lifetime, but it is a behaviour that we often find difficult to define.</p> <p>The reason why it's so hard to pin down and give a clear definition of bullying is because it comes in all shapes, sizes and subtleties, and there are a huge amount of misconceptions around it.</p> <p>This week is anti-bullying week, and so we are going to debunk 5 of those myths, and give people a clearer idea of what bullying really is.</p>
2	<p>Myth #1: Bullying is physical</p> <p>Bullying is definitely not always physical. In fact, there are loads of different types of bullying including; emotional, verbal, online, in-game, workplace, extortion, intimidation, humiliation... the list goes on. You may not even know that what you're going through falls into a category of bullying, but if you are being intimidated regularly and persistently over time, then you are probably experiencing bullying.</p> <p>The best way to determine whether you are being bullied is to analyse how it makes you feel and if it makes you feel this way on a regular basis. It is easy to coast through life thinking that bullying is just an awful thing that happens to other people, but then when you do find yourself feeling hurt, intimidated and humiliated by someone you just try to ignore it or pretend that it's nothing. Denial is a trick to make us think that everything is fine, even when it's not.</p>
3	<p>Myth #2: People are bullied because they don't fit in</p> <p>Although the majority of people who have been bullied feel like their own characteristics are to blame, research scientifically proves that this is not the cause.</p> <p>No matter who you fancy, what you wear, how you look, or what you do in your spare time, absolutely no-one deserves to be bullied.</p> <p>The reason people experience bullying is not because of their sexuality, gender identity, race, appearance, disability or any other unique factor; it is because of someone else's attitude towards that factor. The only thing possible to change is attitude, and the person who is bullying you is the one with the attitude issue, not you. You're great exactly as you are.</p>

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4	<p>Myth #3: Bullies are bad people</p> <p>So does this make people who bully bad people? Nope. In reality, they are people who are struggling to deal with unresolved issues. No one is born bad – bullying is a learnt behaviour and is completely reversible – and it's never too late to turn things around.</p> <p>There are several reasons why people bully others; more often than not, bullying can be a coping mechanism for people who are going through a stressful situation and it may be learned from abuse or prejudice-based attitudes at home. Often people who bully are currently, or have at some point been bullied themselves; many have low self-esteem and suffer from anxiety. Happy and secure people don't bully others.</p>
5	<p>Myth #4: Bullying is just part of growing up</p> <p>In terms of statistics, 51% of people will experience bullying at some point in their lives. Whilst this is a scarily high percentage, it's not an inevitable thing, and it doesn't mean that we should just accept it as a part of life.</p> <p>Saying that "Bullying is part of growing up" makes it seem like it's OK. But bullying is not OK – some forms of bullying are actually a criminal offence. It is up to you to decide how serious you perceive the bullying to be, but if somebody physically or sexually attacks you, uses prejudiced language towards you (such as homophobia and racism) or shares your private information or images online – these are all key signs that you should probably report it to the Police.</p> <p>Because people often feel that they need to just accept being bullied as a part of growing up, 45% of those who experience it fail to report it – either through embarrassment, fear, or a lack of faith in support systems. It is incredibly important that you go through the appropriate reporting channels by firstly telling a teacher, a parent or guardian, a mentor or another responsible adult. You can always get online too and look for digital support communities like Ditch the Label.</p> <p>If you see or know of bullying going on, make sure you speak up for those who are being bullied if it feels safe to do so, and if you're experiencing it yourself then don't ignore it.</p> <p>Even if you don't want to report it, speak to somebody and don't feel like you have to go through it alone because you don't.</p>

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6	<p>Myth #5: People who are bullied are victims</p> <p>The assumption that those who are bullied are <i>victims</i> is damaging because it disempowers those who experience it. Everyone is equally as vulnerable to bullying regardless of who they are, and no one is immune. Being bullied does not make you weak.</p> <p>Going through your teen years is really tough, and it's made even worse if you're struggling with your identity or being bullied. It's worth bearing in mind that we all have ups and downs and statistically, 1 in 4 of us will experience some sort of mental health complication such as depression or anxiety.</p> <p>Eating a good, healthy diet and working out can really improve your physical and mental health and reduce stress. Reductions in stress increase your clarity and break down difficult situations, making them much easier to deal with. Other things you can try include meditation, yoga, cooking, running and swimming.</p> <p>If you are being bullied, you are not a victim. Keep yourself healthy, embrace who you are, and find support from those around you, and you will be able to get through this. Search online, and you will find thousands of people who have experienced what you're going through and have overcome it: you are one of a group of incredibly strong individuals.</p>
7	<p>So what are the most important things to take away from this? If you're experiencing bullying, don't blame yourself, don't label yourself as a bully or a victim, and don't ignore it. If you need support, speak to _____ in school, or if you're interested, have a look at the support community at DitchtheLabel.org.</p> <p>Whether you're being bullied, you've witnessed it or if you're perpetrating it, speak up. Talk to someone and make sure you let people know what's happening. Whether that's through online support, through the school or your friends, you need to know that you're not alone.</p>

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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

