TALKING ABOUT BULLYING: CLASSROOM DISCUSSION STARTERS

All years: Thinking about the consequences of an action

This discussion starter supports teachers to scaffold a collaborative discussion with students as a whole class or in small groups. The discussion requires about 20 minutes. It can be used as a stand-alone discussion or to conclude one of the other classroom discussion topics if time permits. (Refer to How to use for more information.)

Outline

1. **Present the definition of bullying**
   Share the definition of bullying with your students. Explain that this is how bullying is generally defined by society; however, in order to fully understand bullying, we need to unpack the ideas.

2. **Explore conditional reasoning: thinking about the consequences**
   Ask students to think about possible consequences of one or more of the following actions, as well as what might follow on from the consequences:
   - If I choose to be an inactive/passive bystander, then …
   - If we stand together against bullying and violence, then …
   - If we ignore bullying online, then …
   - If there is a misuse of power within our class community, then …
   - If we develop respectful relationships, then …

   As appropriate and necessary, use any of these additional questions to explore the students’ answers:
   - Why do you think that? (justification)
   - Can anyone build on that idea?
   - Does anyone have an alternative suggestion/different possibility?
   - Can you clarify that?
   - Could there be another way to think about this?
   - What might someone say if they disagreed with this?
   - What might follow from this?

3. **Reflect on thinking and learning**
   At the conclusion of the activity, take five minutes to reflect on the learning:
   - How did we work as a community of learners?
   - What new thinking and learning has taken place for our class community today?
   - How can we apply this new thinking and learning to our relationships with peers at school and beyond?