

The Allen Adventure



Lesson plans for 5 to 6 year olds

Chapter 1 – The New Kid

1. Reading Chapter 1 of The Allen Adventure

Duration 5 mins

Introduce the main character and read chapter 1 of The Allen Adventure.

Teacher Notes

Show the first screen of the iPad or Android tablet, and tell children that you will be hearing a story called The Allen Adventure. Explain that as you read the story there will be things to do and time to talk about the story in the group.

Show the **Talking and Thinking poster** and talk through the 'rules' for group discussions and mention that listening is just as important as talking.

Orientate students to the story as you would usually. Suggested orientation questions – feel free to change; discussion should be fairly brief:

- What can we see on the screen?
- Who do you think this is?
- What can we see about Allen?
- What is an 'alien'?
- Where do aliens come from?
- What is an 'adventure'?
- Where do you think Allen might go on an adventure?

The group listens to the narrator read the first chapter of The Allen Adventure. Invite children to participate at the relevant places.

2. Retelling and extending the story

Duration 10 mins

Retell the story of Chapter 1, highlighting the actions and emotions of each character.

Teacher Notes

Focus group discussion on Allen's experiences and feelings because he is new to the class and doesn't know how to do things the way the Earth kids do. Use the **Critical point** illustration for Chapter 1.

Scaffold the group to retell Chapter 1, with an emphasis on what the characters might have been thinking and feeling. Suggested retell prompts (you do not need to use all the questions):

- What happened in the beginning of this story?
- How do you think Allen was feeling as he was travelling in the space ship to come to Earth?
- What might he have been thinking?

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- What pictures did Allen show his new classmates?
- What do you think the Earth kids thought of Allen's pictures?
- What do you think Allen was feeling as he was showing his pictures to the class?
- When the children went out to play, what happened to Allen?
- How did Allen feel when he didn't know what to say or how to join in?
- What did Allen do? What else could he have done?
- Who helped Allen? How did the girl know that Allen was sad?
- How did she help Allen? Did it work?
- How did Allen feel when he could finally join in with the skipping?
- What do you think will happen next time Allen wants to join in and play with the other kids?

If suitable, include questions that relate Allen's story to the children's own experience:

- We got to pick ways that Allen could ask to join in. Can you think of some other ways?
- Can anyone remember a time when they were the new kid in a group? How did that feel?
- At the end of the story, Allen wanted to 'skip for joy'. Who can remember a time when they felt so happy, they wanted to skip or shout or jump up and down?
- What other things might Allen need to learn in his new classroom?"

Alternative retelling

Provide the **Stick puppets** to the class and ask five children to act out Chapter 1. Highlight how Allen is feeling at each point. Have the children make their faces show the same emotion that Allen is feeling. Also ask the children to suggest what Allen might be thinking at each point.

3. Discussing the themes

Duration 10 mins

The discussion explores students' idea about how they make others welcome, what being 'new' feels like, helping others to feel included, happy and safe.

Teacher Notes

Ask students prompt questions to encourage further exploration of the concepts from Chapter 1. The questions provided are suggestions only and can be altered as required. As much as possible, facilitate a student-directed conversation.

Relate the events to their personal experiences but also ask children to explain the reason for their opinions, asking, 'And why do you think that?' Select from the optional activities if you want to provide skill development opportunities for students.

Suggested discussion questions

- If Allen came to our school, how could you help him?
- How would it feel to be a new kid on their first day in our school?
- What do you need to know about in our classroom, if you're a new person?
- How can we help new kids who come to our school to feel happy and safe?
- Why is it important for everyone to feel like they 'belong' in this class?
- How would it feel to be left out?
- Why is being friendly and helpful important?

Optional activities for children for additional skill development

Puppet games or role plays allow young children to 'practise' what they could do and say to make a new person feel welcome. You can use any puppets or The Allen Adventure characters **stick puppets**.

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1. Set up scenarios when the **stick puppet Allen** has to ask to join in or participate in various classroom activities, e.g. feeding the class pet, taking a turn with a particular piece of equipment. Children use the puppet to ask other students how to join in and how to do the activities. Talk with students about appropriate and inappropriate ways of asking and responding. Then discuss what was okay and would help people get along together and be friends.
2. In pairs children use the **stick puppets** of Allen and his Earth classmates to discuss and compare how people do things on Earth and on Goopiter. Start off discussion, using some prompt questions:
 - On Goopiter our dogs have 6 legs. What do you have on Earth?
 - On Earth we like to play on swings and climbing frames. What do kids like to do on Goopiter?
 - On Goopiter people can have green or purple skin. What do people look like on Earth?
 - On Goopiter we fly in rockets to the shops. What do you do on Earth?Talk and think about how they might do things the same and how they might be different. What do the different characters do, say, and feel?
3. Set up students in concentric circles or parallel lines and as children move around the circle, they have to think of things to say to a new kid to make him/her feel welcome. The challenge is to think of as many different things they can think of by the time they move around the circle, greeting each child in their class.

4. Allen 'on the go'

Through the week after the class discussion on Chapter 1, identify times when children are being helpful, welcoming and friendly in their interactions. Highlight these 'Allen Moments' labelling and describing the prosocial behaviour:

- David, I really liked the way you *helped* Jill and showed her how to put that model together.
- Lisa, just then when Ben didn't know how we line up, you told him in a very nice way how we do things around here and showed him where to put his bag. You were *making him feel welcome* here.

You can also use the **Allen stickers** to show that you have noticed children's prosocial behaviour.

Chapter 2 – The Rocket

1. Reading Chapter 2 of The Allen Adventure

Duration 5 mins

Read chapter 2 of The Allen Adventure.

Teacher Notes

Show the first screen of the iPad or Android tablet, and tell children that you will be hearing the next chapter of The Allen Adventure. Remind children that as you read the story there will be things to do and time to talk about the story in the group. Jump to Chapter 2 in the menu.

If necessary, remind children about the **Talking and Thinking poster** and talk through the 'rules' for group discussions.

Orientate students to the story as you would usually. Suggested orientation questions – feel free to change; discussion should be fairly brief:

- This chapter is called The Rocket - what is a rocket?
- What can you do with a rocket?
- Does anyone here have a toy rocket?

The group listens to the narrator read the second chapter of The Allen Adventure. Invite children to participate at the relevant places. You can ask individuals or the whole group to guess the answers to 'I get the feeling.' Point out what you can see in the child's face and body that shows the feeling, pointing out eyes, eyebrows, lips and posture, as relevant.

2. Retelling and extending the story

Duration 10 mins

Retell the story of Chapter 2, highlighting the actions and emotions of each character.

Teacher Notes

Focus group discussion on Allen's experiences and feelings because he doesn't know how to do things the way the Earth kids do. Use the **Critical point** illustration for Chapter 2.

Scaffold the group to retell Chapter 2, with an emphasis on what the characters might have been thinking and feeling. Suggested retell prompts (you do not need to use all the questions):

- Where were the children playing?
- What did Allen find and how did he feel when he found it?
- What did Allen do?
- What did the other children feel when Allen kept the rocket all to himself? How can you tell?
- What were the other children thinking?
- Why might Allen not have been able to 'read feelings'?
- What feelings did the children have in 'I get the feeling? How did we guess the answers?
- What did Allen do at the end of the story?

If suitable, include questions that relate Allen's story to the children's own experience:

- What would you say to Allen if you were one of the kids who wanted to play with the rocket?

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- We saw the children had lots of different feelings. Can you think of a time when you had one of those feelings too?
- What sorts of things make you feel: sad, happy, frustrated, proud, afraid or angry?
- When we were working out the feelings, we saw clues in the face and the body. We would also find clues in how a person talks, how their voice sounds. I'm going to say 'how are you today' in different voices, and I want you to tell me what you think I am feeling.

Alternative retelling

Retell the story using your own words and as you do, create a 'feelings' time line on a white board. Give out the **Emotions cards** to students (multiple copies will be needed) and ask students to identify when a character is feeling the emotions represented on the card. Students contribute by placing their particular emotion card on the time line as you retell the story highlighting the emotions and actions of the characters. If students identify emotions other than those on the six cards, write those words on the story time line.

3. Discussing the themes

Duration 10 mins

The discussion explores what clues to notice about other children so you can tell how they are feeling, and the importance of checking in with others about how they feel. It also touches on what happens if we don't pay attention to how other children are feeling.

Teacher Notes

Ask students prompt questions to encourage further exploration of the concepts from Chapter 2. The questions provided are suggestions only and can be altered as required. As much as possible, facilitate a student-directed conversation. Select from the list of **Feeling words** at the end of this lesson. Reassure children as necessary that 'reading faces' can sometimes be a challenge.

Relate the events to their personal experiences and also ask children to explain the reason for their opinions, asking, 'And why do you think that?'

Be alert to children who need additional support to develop skills in this area. While many children can name a large number of emotions by 6 years of age, many may still be developing skills in 'reading' other people's emotions. Select from the optional activities to provide skill development opportunities for students.

Suggested discussion questions

- What do you think might have happened if Allen didn't work out what the kids were feeling?
- What do you think will happen *next* time someone wants to play with the rocket when Allen has it?
- If Allen hadn't worked out how to 'read faces', and he didn't realise the other kids didn't like it when he was not sharing the rocket, do you think he might have problems when he wants to play with the other children?
- When we were little babies, we didn't know how to 'read faces'— how did we learn that?
- What might happen if you didn't notice how other people were feeling?
- How many feelings do you think there are? (See how many the class can suggest.) What sorts of things make you feel that way? What does your face and your body look like when you feel this feeling? How does your voice sound when you feel this feeling?
- Using the emotions from the **Feeling words**, select a feeling, and ask children to talk about when they have felt that feeling.
- Do you think that we can *always* tell what someone else is feeling from the clues in their face, their body and their voice?
- Why might it be important to ask someone how they are feeling (and not assume you know)?

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Optional activities for children for additional skill development

An enormous range of activities that you already do in your class can be the basis for skill development related to recognising others' feelings. The following are ideas to get you started, but many other activities will suit.

1. Have one student lie on a large piece of paper on the floor, and trace around his or her body. In the class talk about where in the body they mainly experience each feeling. Start with the five basic emotions and then extend as appropriate (use the **Feeling words**). Questions will be more or less relevant depending on the specific emotion being discussed:
 - What does 'happy' mean?
 - What makes us feel happy?
 - Where in the body do we mainly feel 'happy'? What things happen to our body when we have this feeling?
 - What is another word like 'happy'? What is the opposite of 'happy'?
 - How can we tell if someone is feeling happy?
 - What can we do that might make other people feel happy?
 - Make a sentence using the word 'happy'.
2. Use the scenarios presented below to work through the interactions between two friends using the puppets. Although the puppets' faces won't change to show feelings, children can make the puppets tell the other puppet how they are feeling.

What would you feel and do if... OR What would you say to your friend if...

- ... you were in a running race today and came first, but when you went home all excited about your win, no-one seemed to notice?
 - ... on the weekend your dog ran away during a storm and you don't know where he is?
 - ... during the break, an older kid from another class made fun of you?
 - ...in a game of soccer, one of the kids from the other team was saying awful things about your team and trying to cheat?
 - ... at the local show, one of the bigger kids made you get in line for a very big and scary ride?
3. Play 'I get the feeling' in your class using a selection of appropriate emotions from the list of **Feeling words**. Select three children who can show a feeling each and the teacher can play the game show host. After the watching children identify the child with the emotion that you nominate, then ask them how they could tell, for example saying: 'What are the clues you could see...'

4. Allen 'on the go'

Through the week after the class discussion on Chapter 2, identify suitable times to highlight the importance of recognising feelings and checking in with others about their feelings (after the prompt event is resolved). Point out times when children are clear about identifying and describing their own feelings, and times when children are sensitive to how others are feeling. Highlight these 'Allen Moments' labelling and describing the prosocial behaviour:

- Amy, I noticed early today when the game kept being interrupted you told the others you were feeling frustrated and needed to do something else for a while. You were very *clear about letting them* know your feelings.
- Daniel, just then when Ben was very upset about the broken project, I noticed you put your arm around his shoulder to help him feel better. You were *noticing his feelings*.

You can also use the **Allen stickers** to show that you have noticed children's prosocial behaviour.

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Feeling words (select those appropriate)

Affectionate, afraid, annoyed, angry, bored, brave, calm, caring, cheerful, confused, comfortable, confident, cranky, curious, disappointed, disgusted, embarrassed, excited, fed-up, friendly, frustrated, gentle, generous, guilty, happy, ignored, impatient, interested, jealous, joyful, lonely, loving, overwhelmed, peaceful, proud, relaxed, relieved, sad, satisfied, sensitive, serious, shy, stressed, strong, stubborn, tense, troubled, unafraid, uncomfortable, worried

Chapter 3 – Kinda Mean

1. Reading Chapter 3 of The Allen Adventure

Duration 5 mins

Read chapter 3 of The Allen Adventure.

Teacher Notes

Show the first screen of the iPad or Android tablet, and tell children that you will be hearing the next chapter of The Allen Adventure. Remind children that as you read the story there will be things to do and time to talk about the story in the group. Jump to Chapter 3 in the menu.

If necessary, remind children about the **Talking and Thinking poster** and talk through the 'rules' for group discussions.

Orientate students to the story as you would usually. Suggested orientation questions – feel free to change; discussion should be fairly brief:

- This chapter is called Kinda Mean – what could that be about?
- Do you think Allen might be going to be a bit mean?

The group listens to the narrator read the third chapter of The Allen Adventure. Invite children to participate at the relevant places.

2. Retelling and extending the story

Duration 10 mins

Retell the story of Chapter 3, highlighting the actions and emotions of each character.

Teacher Notes

Focus group discussion on Allen's experiences and feelings because he doesn't know how to do things the way the Earth kids do. Use the **Critical point** illustration for Chapter 3.

Scaffold the group to retell Chapter 3, with an emphasis on what the characters might have been thinking and feeling. Suggested retell prompts (you do not need to use all the questions):

- What were the children doing at the beginning?
- What did Allen do?
- What did the other children do when Allen was eating all the grapes?
- What were the other children thinking? What were they feeling?
- Why didn't Allen listen to what the girl said?
- What did the girl do when the children couldn't sort out the problem?
- What did the teacher say?
- How do you think Allen felt when he found out that eating all the grapes was 'kinda mean'?
- What did Allen do at the end of the story?
- Do you think Allen will remember to be kind and to share things with others from now on?

If suitable, include questions that relate Allen's story to the children's own experience:

- What would you say to Allen if you were one of the kids?
- How would you answer Allen's question, 'What does 'mean' mean?'?

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- Can you think of a time when you tried to sort out a problem but you couldn't?
- What do we do in this classroom if we can't sort out a problem with someone?

Alternative retelling

Children listen to the teacher retell the story, with the sound turned off. As you use your own words to tell the story, highlight how Allen is feeling at each point. Have the children make their faces show the same emotion that Allen and the other children are feeling. Also ask the children to suggest what Allen might be thinking at each point.

Before the class listens to the song again, draw two columns on a white board with the headings Being kind and Being mean. After the song, ask the children to remember some of the examples of being kind and being mean. Ask for other ideas of being kind and being mean.

3. Discussing the themes

Duration 10 mins

The discussion explores the idea that we need to try to sort out problems first, but sometimes we do need help. It highlights that it is better to get help rather than turn a little problem into a big problem.

Teacher Notes

Ask students prompt questions to encourage further exploration of the concepts from Chapter 3. The questions provided are suggestions only and can be altered as required. As much as possible, facilitate a student-directed conversation. Mentioned that sorting out problems is something that we keep learning about all their lives; even grown-ups have to work out how to do that too.

Relate the events to their personal experiences and also ask children to explain the reason for their opinions, for example asking, 'And why do you think that?' Select from the optional activities to provide skill development opportunities for students.

Suggested discussion questions

- How do we know when we can't sort something out and should get help?
- How do we feel when we have a problem we can't sort out?
- What might happen if you just asked for help without trying to sort things out yourself?
- What would happen if the other children snatched the bowl off Allen? Or all started yelling at him?
- How does it feel if someone is mean to you?
- The other children thought Allen was a little bit mean - 'kinda mean'? Do you always have to do something if someone is a little bit mean to you? (intended to lead to discussion of the value of ignoring someone else's behaviour as a solution on some occasions)
- Why is it important to be kind to each other?
- What is the difference between hearing and listening? We can't shut our ears (like we can our eyes), but sometimes we hear things but we don't really listen to them. What might stop us listening to other people?
- Why is it important to listen to other people?
- What would it be like if everyone was talking all the time and nobody did any listening?
- Are friends 'mean' to each other? If someone is mean to you and keeps being mean to you, are they your friend?

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Optional activities for fostering skills

1. Download the Kinda Mean song and lyrics from the [teaching resources catalogue](#). Dance to the music, talk about the 'kinda mean' behaviours mentioned in the song; create your own lyrics.
2. In The Allen Adventure, the class has a 3 step process that they all know and talk about; you may have a variation already in place in your class, or can use this lesson to set up your own class 'rules' for trying to sort out problems then getting help if needed. Allen's teacher had taught the class the three steps:
 - Tell them to stop
 - Walk away (or ignore them)
 - Tell a teacher (or other adult).
3. Set up scenarios and use the puppets (Allen and one other child character) in which pairs of children talk together to sort out a problem. Although the puppets' faces won't change to show feelings, children can make the puppets tell the other puppet how they are feeling.

What will you do if... (alter the suggestions as appropriate and ensure they are as concrete as possible)

- Allen and you both want to play with the blocks at the same time?
- Allen has used all the green paint (his favourite colour) and you need green paint?
- Allen is tipping the sand out of the sand box and there's almost none left?
- Allen and you want to go on the iPad or Android tablet at the same time?
- Allen is not listening when you want to tell him something?
- Allen has walked on your game and broken a piece?
- Allen keeps showing more pictures of Goopiter and you haven't had a turn?
- Allen is looking after the class pet mouse, but you think he is being too rough?

4. Allen 'on the go'

Through the week after the class discussion on Chapter 3, identify suitable times to highlight the importance of sorting out problems with others. Point out times when children do sort out social problems and conflicts. Highlight these 'Allen Moments' labelling and describing the prosocial behaviour:

- Amy, I noticed early today when there were too many children to join in the game all at once you suggested that you could solve the problem by taking turns. You *sorted out that problem* all by yourself.
- Daniel, I saw how you tried to *sort out the problem* with Karyn, and it was a good that you came to me to ask me to help after you had tried a few things.

If a child comes to you with a problem about getting on with others, talk with them about this being a chance to practise sorting out problems. Talk through:

- What is wrong (help them identify exactly what the problem is) and how they feel
- What they think should happen
- What they can do about it
- Other options for what to do (ask prompt questions for children over about 5 years 'I wonder what else you could try')
- The possible consequences of each option.

You can also use the **Allen stickers** to show that you have noticed children's prosocial behaviour related to this and earlier chapters.

Chapter 4 – Earth to Allen

1. Reading Chapter 4 of The Allen Adventure

Duration 5 mins

Read chapter 4 of The Allen Adventure.

Teacher Notes

Show the first screen of the iPad or Android tablet, and tell children that you will be hearing the next chapter of The Allen Adventure. Remind children that as you read the story there will be things to do and time to talk about the story in the group. Jump to Chapter 4 in the menu.

If necessary, remind children about the **Talking and Thinking poster** and talk through the 'rules' for group discussions.

Orientate students to the story as you would usually. Suggested orientation questions – feel free to change; discussion should be fairly brief:

- This chapter is called Earth to Allen – where is the Earth?
- 'Earth to Allen' is like the way that people on Earth talk to astronauts in space; they say 'Earth to Space Station, can you hear me?' Do you think a message is going to Allen?

The group listens to the narrator read the fourth chapter of The Allen Adventure. Invite children to participate at the relevant points and in the 'Find your calm space' activity.

2. Retelling and extending the story

Duration 10 mins

Retell the story of Chapter 4, highlighting the actions and emotions of each character.

Teacher Notes

Focus group discussion on Allen's experiences and feelings because he doesn't know how to do things the way the Earth kids do. Use the **Critical point** illustration for Chapter 4. Avoid labelling emotions as good or bad; the entire range of emotions is part of the human experience.

Scaffold the group to retell Chapter 4, with an emphasis on what the characters might have been thinking and feeling. Suggested retell prompts (you do not need to use all the questions):

- What were the children doing during this chapter?
- What did Allen do?
- What were the other children thinking? What were they feeling?
- Why did Allen go so crazy?
- What did the boy say that helped Allen?
- What is a 'calm space'?
- What did Allen try that helped him find his 'calm space'?
- What did Allen do at the end of the story?

If suitable, include questions that relate Allen's story to the children's own experience:

- What would you say to Allen if you were one of the kids (select one/each of the incidents)?
- Can you think of a time you had REALLY BIG happy or excited feelings? Like you might explode?
- Can you think of a time you had REALLY BIG angry feelings? Like you might explode?

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- How did you calm down?
- How would you feel if someone got so excited they knocked down something you had been making?
- How would you feel if someone got really really angry when you borrowed their pencils?
- Do we have a 'calm' place in our room or somewhere special that you go to calm down?
- What are some other things you do if you feel like your feelings are too big?

Alternative retelling

Children listen to the teacher retell the story, with the sound turned off. As you use your own words to tell the story, highlight how Allen is feeling at each point. Have the children make their faces show the same emotion that Allen and the other children are feeling. Also ask the children to suggest what Allen might be thinking at each point.

3. Discussing the themes

Duration 10 mins

The discussion explores the idea that we all sometimes have strong (big) feelings and it is important to learn ways to calm down by ourselves, to find our own 'calm space'. It is particularly important to learn how to experience feeling angry without losing control and to learn how to become calmer before trying to sort out problems.

Teacher Notes

Ask students prompt questions to encourage further exploration of the concepts from Chapter 4. The questions provided are suggestions only and can be altered as required. As much as possible, facilitate a student-directed conversation. Again, it is important to avoid labelling emotions as good or bad.

Relate the events to their personal experiences and also ask children to explain the reason for their opinions, for example asking, 'And why do you think that?' Be alert to any children who may need additional support to regulate their own emotions.

Suggested discussion questions

- How did Allen feel after he wrecked the science project?
- How do you think his friend felt when Allen wrecked his project?
- Do Allen's big feelings make problems for other children?
- Were the children still friends after Allen lost control of his BIG feelings? What do you think might happen though if Allen didn't learn how to control his big feelings?
- Allen's calm space - that he saw with his eyes shut - was in space. It has shooting stars and was very quiet. What sort of place would be a calm space for you? (Prompt with suggestions and share your own ideas, e.g. a waterfall, a big bed plumped up with pillows.)
- Allen did some deep breathing and some counting to calm down. What are some other things you do if you feel like your feelings are too big?
- What can happen if you do angry things when you feel VERY angry?
- Can you HAVE an angry feeling, but not DO an angry thing?
- What do you think will happen next time Allen has a really big feeling?
- Why is it important to calm down before you do something that might hurt or bother others?

Optional activities for fostering skills

1. Go through the 'Calm space' activity again, with the children lying down on the floor with or without the narration from The Allen Adventure story.

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2. Ask children to imagine then draw/paint/share their 'pictures in their head' of their own calm space.

4. Allen 'on the go'

Through the week after the class discussion on Chapter 4, identify suitable times to highlight the importance of calming down from big emotions before acting. Speak individually to children who have made an effort to calm down, at a time **well after the incident** and the calming. Highlight these 'Allen Moments' labelling and describing the prosocial behaviour:

- Krissy, I noticed this morning you got very frustrated with the tricky puzzle, but you sat still for a while and did some big breaths to *calm yourself down*.

You can also use the **Allen stickers** to show that you have noticed children's prosocial behaviour related to this and earlier chapters.

5. Closing activity (optional)

For a concluding activity, form children in two concentric circles. Children tell each child in turn what they think Allen will tell the people back on Goopiter about what he learned on earth, and then move onto the next person in the circle.

Teacher Notes

The Allen Adventure story is intended to start the conversation between you and the children (and between you and parents) about the importance of prosocial skills. Opportunities to continue to extend the children's learning and discussion about how to get on with each other will occur every day in your regular classroom activities. Extensive additional information is provided in the [Starting in early childhood](#) section of *Bullying. No Way!*