Activity 2: Learn about the strategies to respond to bullying

Introduction

Aim:	Students understand each of the strategies they can use if bullying happens.
Anticipated duration:	30–60 minutes, depending on time given to the initial discussion and to the optional rehearsal of each strategy.
Format:	Whole class discussion.

Important note: Ensure you have read the section of the *Teacher notes* headed *Before you run the classroom discussion starter activities*.

Instructions

1. If you haven't already done so, remind students of the definition of bullying from the animation:
   Bullying is when someone uses 'power' they have over you to try to hurt or upset you again and again.
2. Explain the activity: *The video said there were some things people can do if they are bullied. Who can remember a strategy?* Display the image for each strategy either as students recall them or as you work through each one (See *Images for Strategies* document). *This activity is to help us learn more about the strategies*.
3. General discussion questions to start the topic — keep this brief:
   - *Why is it a good idea to try some strategies to stop the bullying yourself, if you feel safe to do so, before you ask for help?*
     Answer to reinforce: Bullying is about taking power away from someone, so if a student can solve the bullying problem themselves they have taken back some power. It is okay, though, if a student does not feel they can stand up to bullying; it can be scary and hurtful.
   - *How long/how many times should you try by yourself before you ask an adult for help?*
     Answer to reinforce: A few times is sufficient; but do not allow the bullying to continue for long before telling an adult; bullying can become a bigger problem if no one talks about it or does anything about it, so while it can be good to try some strategies, you should ask for help before it gets worse.
   - *When should you get help immediately?*
     Answers to reinforce: If you feel in danger; if you feel afraid all the time and you can't think about schoolwork or enjoy anything; if you feel depressed or like you just don't want to try anything.
4. With the whole class, talk through each of the strategies using the *Teacher Answer guide*. If appropriate, incorporate rehearsal of the strategy as indicated in Optional rehearsal. How you run the rehearsal is up to you. **Avoid using class role play as it can raise issues and cause distress to some students**. Ensure you use both in person and online contexts in your discussion about strategies.
5. At the conclusion of Activity 2, wrap up with the suggested concluding activity on the *Teacher notes* about the National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence, or move on to Activity 3

Activity 2: *Teacher Answer guide* to learn about the strategies to respond to bullying

Strategy	Guide for teacher to say to class	Additional notes	Optional rehearsal
	Bullying can make you feel like you can't do anything. But there are some strategies you can use if you are being bullied and you feel safe to try them. *This activity will help us learn more about these strategies. Some of these will work sometimes. Some of them work better for some types of bullying. Some of them work if you do them right from the first time you get bullied, but might not be much help if the bullying has been going on for a long time. Also, sometimes they won't work, and people need to get help to stop the bullying.*	Students don't need to try the strategies in sequence; it's about matching the strategies to their own situation. The key sensitivity with teaching students about these strategies is to avoid implying that students must use them, or are failing if they can't deal with bullying themselves. It is understandable if a student does not feel they can stand up to bullying; bullying is disempowering. It can be scary and hurtful.	*It's not always easy to use the strategies, we need to practise them. We're going to practise with the example of someone bullying by regularly calling you mean names. So someone has called you mean names (in person and online), they did this yesterday as well, the other kids laughed about it, and you feel hurt and angry … what could you do?*

Strategy	Guide for teacher to say to class	Additional notes	Optional rehearsal
Ignore them (and don't show any reaction)			
	*The first strategy to try is 'Ignore them'. Now that sounds easy, but it's not!! You might **feel** scared, worried or sad. But for this strategy you need to try not to **show** fear or anger or frustration. Or anything at all.* *The main thing is not to react at all. People who bully others sometimes do it to see you 'lose it'.* *Bullying can happen because the person doing the bullying gets a reaction they like.* *So sometimes the best response is NONE! It's normal to feel bothered, but don't let the other person see this.* *So, the full strategy is 'Ignore them and don't show any reaction'. If you can, turn your back and walk away (see next strategy). Sometimes, not showing any reaction is enough to stop or reduce the bullying. It doesn't mean you should pretend the bullying didn't happen though. You might still want to try one of the other strategies like 'Get support from your friends'.* *Sometimes 'ignoring' doesn't work, so you need to try something else.* *'Ignoring' probably won't be much help if bullying has been going a long time …*	Teachers who suggest the strategy of 'Ignore them' to students when they report being bullied must give students much more information about how to do this, and what to do instead. 'Ignoring' is not simple when you feel distressed or hurt, and it is not always possible or the most appropriate option.	The teacher selects students to demonstrate 'Ignore them'. If appropriate, describe a bullying incident involving someone calling another person mean names … use your discretion and choose examples as appropriate to age of students. Things you can practise to help you 'ignore' and not react at all: • Look completely uninterested. • Walk away without looking at them. • Pretend they're not there. • Quickly look at something else and laugh. Some ideas to help with this strategy are to: • Go somewhere else before you show your feelings. • Concentrate on your breathing to help you calm down. • Imagine a shield or a force field around you to protect you.

Strategy	Guide for teacher to say to class	Additional notes	Optional rehearsal
Tell them to stop and then walk away			
	The next strategy is to 'Tell them to stop and then walk away'. *The main thing with this strategy is to talk calmly and firmly. Even if you feel angry or hurt, you have to pretend you are calm.* *Some strong, calm things you could say are:* • *Stop it.* • *No.* • *Just stop it.* • *Give it a rest.* • *Just cool it, would you?* • *Enough! S*top it. *Firm, assertive statements start with the word 'I', so you could also try:* • *I want you to stop that.* • *I want you to stop calling me names.* *Make sure what you say is okay language, no swearing or calling names, because that might provoke the other person. What you say has to be firm but neutral.* *Practise this with your friends or at home first so you can stay calm.* *After saying this, leave the situation as soon as you can. Walk away as calmly as you can.*	This strategy can only succeed if students can stay calm; if they argue back or look angry or hurt, this reaction could encourage the person doing the bullying.	The teacher selects student to demonstrate 'Tell them to stop and then walk away'. *This strategy may need a lot of practice to learn to speak calmly.* As appropriate, describe a bullying incident involving someone calling another person mean names … use your discretion and choose examples as appropriate to age of students. The class then discusses how calm the student appears when they say 'Stop it' or their other words. Generate more ideas for strong, calm answers among the group and practise those, for example: • That's teasing. Stop it. • Stop making fun of me. It's mean. • That's so not cool. • I want you to leave me alone. • I want you to stop teasing me.

Strategy	Guide for teacher to say to class	Additional notes	Optional rehearsal
Pretend you don't care and act confident			
	The next strategy is 'Pretend you don't care and act confident'. For this strategy, you do respond, but you pretend you feel confident. You can act as though you don't care or you can pretend to be unimpressed. Obviously, you do care; but you don't want to show that reaction. You have to ***fake*** *it.* *You could say 'Okay, whatever' and then walk away. Or you can agree with them (even though you don't really) by saying, 'Yeah, that's the way it is', or 'Okay, well I am like that, but I'll cope.' Then walk away.* *One way to look confident is to use 'fogging' to distract the person without making them annoyed. 'Fogging' is making a joke or saying a funny comment that makes the other person think you don't care about what they say, or pretending to agree so they have nothing to bother you about. So, if someone said, 'Hey, you're so dumb', you could say back, 'Yeah, but I'm good at it'.* *Make sure what you say is okay language, no swearing or calling names because that might provoke the other person. What you say must be quick, smart and neutral.*	This strategy can only succeed if students can stay calm and neutral. If they argue back or look angry or hurt, this reaction could encourage the person doing the bullying. Fogging is not easy; students who feel scared or hurt often cannot come up with a quick reply. But a general 'Okay, yeah, sure' is possible for most students. After some success, students can become more confident this strategy will help.	The teacher selects students to come up and demonstrate 'Pretend you don't care and act confident'. As appropriate, describe a bullying incident involving someone calling another person mean names … use your discretion and choose examples as appropriate to age of students. Discuss how confident the student appears when they say 'Okay, whatever', or their own version of these words. Fogging practice (but depends on what is said): • Yeah, but I'm good at it. • You're right, I'm like that (repeating mean words). • Really? Oh well. • You don't say. • And your point is? • Thanks for telling me. This is a strategy that is good to practise at home; it's not easy to look confident when you feel scared or hurt, but you can get better at it with practice.

Strategy	Guide for teacher to say to class	Additional notes	Optional rehearsal
Find somewhere safe			
	Another strategy is to 'Find somewhere safe' to go to. Sometimes leaving (and making no other reaction) is the best strategy. Of course, you can show your feelings once you are away from the bullying situation. *It is helpful to think about safe places you could go and ways to avoid where the person who has bullied you likes to hang out. Sometimes you need to plan to stay safe where the person bullying you can't find you or bother you.* *This is never the only strategy you would use; you should also make sure someone else knows and get help to stop the bullying from happening again.*	Discuss safe places in your school. A general principle for 'safe places' is somewhere that adults are supervising, therefore, not the toilet. This entails positive and supportive responses from teachers and other adults if they see bullying, as well as students knowing they will be respected and supported if they report bullying. This strategy is not a solution, but a temporary option before other strategies are used. Stress that if a student feels at risk of being physically hurt, they must report this to the school.	Discuss where students think a safe place would be. The teacher selects students to come up and demonstrate 'Find somewhere safe'. The emphasis in the rehearsal is on leaving the bullying situation without showing any reaction. As appropriate, describe a bullying incident involving someone calling another person mean names … use your discretion and choose examples as appropriate to age of students. The class then discusses how well the student hides their reaction or does not respond when they leave.

Strategy	Guide for teacher to say to class	Additional notes	Optional rehearsal
Get support from your friends			
	One strategy that can help is to avoid being on your own and 'Get support from your friends'. When you are with other students or near to teachers, this might put off other students who would bully you. It is a good idea to talk to your friends about what's happening. Talk to them about how you feel and don't keep it all inside. Your real friends will support you. Another option is to ask your friends to speak up for you — although they need to stay safe too, and so they should help you in a group. And remember to do the same for them! It's very important for them to avoid getting involved in the bullying — that can go wrong very easily, and then everyone is in trouble.	This strategy assumes that students are trained and supported by the school to be safe and supportive bystanders. In social bullying, this may not be a very useful strategy, particularly if the friends are taking the side of the person doing the bullying. Friends may feel just as concerned about being bullied, so this strategy is usually only part of the solution.	The teacher selects students to demonstrate 'Get support from your friends'. Talk about how to ask for help or how to talk about the bullying that has been happening. Here are two starting sentences: • I'm feeling awful because xxx is bothering me every lunch break. Can I tell you about it? • I'm feeling awful because xxx is bothering me every lunch break. Do you think you could help me?

Strategy	Guide for teacher to say to class	Additional notes	Optional rehearsal
Talk to an adult who can help			
	It can be helpful to talk to an adult, like your mum or dad, or an adult friend, to get ideas and support, and it is often good just to tell someone and to talk about your feelings. *Before you talk to them, think about what you want to tell them and what you want them to do. Make sure you tell them that at the start. Do you want them to listen, to help you with more ideas about what to do, to provide a safe place or help keep you safe, or to help you report it? Do you want them not to report it just yet while you try some ways to sort it yourself?* *One thing to remember is to try to avoid asking for a chat when the person is really busy. If you need to, ask to talk to them later about something.*	Students have told researchers that they don't tell someone at home or at school about bullying if they don't already have a relationship with them, or don't feel they can trust them. The nature of the personal relationship is important for encouraging this strategy.	Discuss who might be a good person to talk to; also who might not be the best person to talk to. The teacher selects students to demonstrate 'Talk to an adult who can help'. In the class, discuss how to start this conversation with an adult. Here are two starting sentences: • I'm feeling awful because xxx is bothering me every lunch break. Can I talk to you about it now or soon? • I'm feeling awful because xxx is bothering me every lunch break. Do you think you could help me think about what to do?

Strategy	Guide for teacher to say to class	Additional notes	Optional rehearsal
Leave the online conversation or chat			
	Some of the same strategies that apply in person also work if you are online — just like ignoring and walking away in person, you can do the same thing online. You can 'Leave the online conversation'. *Or just say one calm short answer that suggests you don't care, like, 'Whatevs' or 'K, whatever'.* *The key thing is for you not to **show** a response that encourages them to continue bullying you. Not reacting is often the best first strategy, because getting a response is often the aim of the person bullying.* *Most likely though, this won't be your only strategy; some of the things we have already talked about will work online as well.*	Adapt this strategy based on the types of social networking platforms and devices that students are using (this will vary with age). In terms of other strategies to add to this — for some social or verbal bullying online, friends might be able to respond to tell them to stop it.	Discuss which of the strategies that you can use in person would also work for online bullying involving someone calling you mean names. The teacher selects students to suggest if/what they might say to use the strategy 'Leave the online conversation or chat'. Discuss if it would be difficult not to show your reaction, and how to avoid responding when you feel upset.

Strategy	Guide for teacher to say to class	Additional notes	Optional rehearsal
Block and report the person			
	Make sure you know how to block people; each device and each social media service is different. *Look at how to block people on each type of social network platform on the website of the eSafety Commissioner on its Cyberbullying complaints page, or ask someone to help you to do it.* *You can report serious online bullying to the eSafety Commissioner as well.*	eSafety Commissioner Cyberbullying complaints page: https://www.esafety.gov.au/complaints-and-reporting/cyberbullying-complaints/social-media-services-safety-centres You can report serious online bullying to the eSafety Commissioner as well: https://www.esafety.gov.au/complaints-and-reporting/cyberbullying-complaints/i-want-to-report-cyberbullying	No rehearsal, optional practical component. With students look at the links suggested on the website. If there is an opportunity, step through the process with students to report serious online bullying as outlined by the eSafety Commissioner. An option, if appropriate to students' age and experience, is to discuss what might constitute 'serious' online bullying that you should report.
Protect yourself by using privacy settings			
	'Protect yourself by using privacy settings' on your mobile phone and social media, and keep records of any online bullying, like saving messages or taking screenshots. *Look up how on the website of the eSafety Commissioner on its Collecting information page, or ask someone to help you to do it.*	Instructions on the various privacy settings for various devices and services is also on: https://www.esafety.gov.au/complaints-and-reporting/cyberbullying-complaints/social-media-services-safety-centres (click on the relevant service) Collecting information page is at: https://www.esafety.gov.au/complaints-and-reporting/cyberbullying-complaints/collecting-information	No rehearsal; optional practical component. With students look at the links; the aim of this part of the discussion is to provide a resource for their future use rather than going through the details.

Strategy	Guide for teacher to say to class	Additional notes	Optional rehearsal
If these strategies don't work, talk to an adult (reporting)			
	Bullying is complex and sometimes students can't work it out themselves. In this case you need to ***report*** *it to an adult — a teacher, parent, other carer, or another adult.* *Remaining silent will not make things better and may worsen the situation. Reporting a serious problem is not the same as 'dobbing'. Adults need to know about bullying behaviour so they can support you and take action to stop it.* *Tell them that you've tried a few things and the bullying hasn't stopped. Tell them you need help to stop the bullying.* *Tell someone immediately if you feel you are in danger.* *If they suggest some new ideas, give those a go (if you feel safe to do so), and if they don't work, go back to them and tell them the bullying is still happening.* *Keep asking for help until the bullying stops. This might involve telling another adult if you need to.*	Teachers need to ensure they are prepared to handle reports of bullying in a sensitive and respectful manner. Suggest to students it is important to avoid trying to talk to someone to report bullying when that person is really busy. Ask to talk to them later about something. Students have told researchers that they don't tell someone at home or at school if they don't already have a relationship with them, or don't feel they can trust them. The nature of the personal relationship is important for encouraging this strategy. Suggest also, that if they don't know or can't find an adult to listen or take their worries seriously, they could call Kids Helpline. www.kidshelpline.com.au 1800 55 1800	No rehearsal

Strategy	Guide for teacher to say to class	Additional notes	Optional rehearsal
Other strategies			
If time allows, ask students if they have any other suggestions for responding to bullying.	*Is there anything else that anyone has tried that has worked?* Discuss the merits of the suggestions in the class.	Types of answers students might provide: • change something they do (e.g. not playing sport at lunch) so the person leaves them alone • concentrate on nice things and don't think about them too much • make picture in their mind of being powerful or safe, etc. to help keep the words from hurting them • spend more time with things they like outside school • yell or fight back — not recommended.	
Summary, wrap up			
At the conclusion of Activity 2, if time allows, move on to Activity 3.			