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Give Respect, Earn Respect

Bullying is a sign of weakness

Let's Begin

How would you feel in the situations given below?

1. You go to a new school and the children there are rude to you.
2. The older children of your school push you around in the playground.
3. Your classmates call you names every time they see you alone.
4. You are waiting for your school bus alone and the people standing there pick a fight with you and start using abusive language.

What is bullying?

Bullying is repeated aggressive behaviour that can be physical, verbal, or relational, take place in-person or online, at school, work, in the neighbourhood, or even at home. Bullies are often

relentless, bullying over and over again for long periods of time. You may live in constant fear of where and when the bully will strike next, what they'll do, and how far they'll go.

Who is a bully?

A bully is a person who tries to intimidate or scare other people, especially those who they feel are weaker than them, with the aim of gaining respect or gaining what they want. Let us read the following story to understand bullying.

Aarav's family recently moved into a new neighbourhood. He liked his new house, which was close to a park. While shifting their furniture inside, he noticed a group of boys playing floor ball in the park. Aarav, who loved playing floor ball, was so excited that he immediately unpacked his new bat and ran to join them.



A few of the boys happily welcomed him, while some others observed him quietly. One tall boy, whose name was Rowan,

walked up to him and said in a threatening tone, “Hey Shorty! Leave the bat here and wait for your turn to play. What makes you think you’ll get to play with us on the first day? Go wait there!”



Aarav sat on the bench and saw the boys play. Rowan shouted and pushed everyone, and the other boys seemed afraid of him.

Next week, when Aarav started going to his new school, he came to know that Rowan was repeating the same class as he had failed his exams. He also saw that Rowan had no friends. The other children obeyed him out of fear but no one wanted to be around him. Once he beat up his classmate so badly that the boy needed stitches.

Think and Answer

1) Who is the bully in the story?

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2) How does Rowan treat others around him?

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3) Why does Rowan act the way he does?

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4) Can Rowan gain others' respect by threatening them?

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Rowan enjoyed the fact that the other boys were afraid of him. But he also secretly feared that they laughed at him behind his back because he was weak in his studies. He wanted to be liked and respected and he tried to get these things by force.

The Victims of Bully

The bullied victims are impacted physically, emotionally, socially, and academically. They also are left feeling like there is no end in sight and no way to escape. Being bullied also

can lead to low self-esteem and increased negative self-talk leading to depression and other forms of mental illness. People who face ill treatment from bullies can also go through a lot of hurt and agony. It can often lead to lifelong scars on someone's personality.

These things can help stop bullying:

- **Stay calm** - don't react emotionally (people who bully want you to get angry or upset).
- **Report it** - tell trustworthy adults and keep talking to them until bullying stops. Reporting it helps keep people safe. (note: reporting is not the same as 'telling on someone' which is about getting someone into trouble over nothing).
- **Get support** – bullying can affect your mental health and self-worth – having the support of family, friends, teachers and/or professionals can make a big difference.

Let us see how Rowan's victims felt about his bullying.

In Aarav's class there was a small boy called Neil. He was a soft-spoken and gentle little boy, and he was Rowan's favourite victim. Rowan pushed Neil and mocked him every time he saw him. Poor Neil was so scared that he was always trying to hide himself from Rowan. Once Rowan pulled his shirt collar so hard that his shirt buttons came off, but Neil was too afraid to tell his teachers or parents, as Rowan had warned him not to do that.

Slowly Neil's parents started noticing that he was not focusing on studies and his marks were dropping. He stopped going to the park to play. He became lonely and depressed and lost his self-confidence. He felt insulted and was laughed at, by his classmates whenever Rowan pushed him. He felt ashamed of himself for being too weak to say anything to Rowan.



Think and Answer

1) Why did Rowan pick on Neil more than others?

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2) How did Neil feel when Rowan bullied him?

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3) What effect did bullying have on Neil's personality?

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Overcoming Bullying

No one should have to deal with this kind of bad treatment from others. If you are ever faced with such a situation, you must take a stand for yourself as well as for others who are not able to stand up for themselves.

Bullies are simply people who are dealing with their own insecurities but are not able to find the right way to do so. With some help from elders or psychologists, they can overcome this problem and become pleasant and gentle people who take care not to hurt others. Let us see how Rowan overcame his bullying habit.

One day, Aarav saw Neil sobbing in the school corridor. When he asked him what had happened, Neil told him that Rowan snatched the money his parents had given him to buy a project book. When he resisted, Rowan had hit him with a basketball. Aarav saw bruises on Neil's face and decided that things had gone too far.

Aarav took Neil along with him to the principal's office and explained to him about the events and also that such things happened regularly with Rowan. The elderly principal was shocked to hear this. He said angrily, "I will teach him a lesson. Such things will not be tolerated in this school!"

"With due respect sir", said Aarav politely. "I feel that Rowan needs help. If he is scolded and suspended from school, he may become worse. Perhaps there is some issue inside him that needs to be addressed with love."

The principal told Aarav gently, "Don't worry, son. We will look into the reason for his behaviour. But before that he needs to be taught never to hurt others ever again."

Rowan was called to the principal's office with his parents the next day. When he got a serious scolding from the principal, he felt guilty and ashamed. No one had ever scolded him before this. After promising never to bully anyone again, he was sent back to his class. The principal then asked his parents the reason for his bullying nature.



His parents took him to a counsellor, who resolved Rowan's problem by talking to him about it and by helping him understand how to deal with his feelings.

Rowan began to show a lot of improvement in his personality and studies. He made new friends and never bullied anyone again.

“Hey buddy!” Aarav heard Rowan say to the new boy in the park one day. “Here, take this bat. We welcome new friends by letting them bat first. It’s a tradition,” he said as he handed his bat to the new boy with a smile.

WORD WALL

Intimidate: Threaten

Insecurities: Lack of confidence

Resisted: Refused to accept

Think and Answer

1) What did Aarav do to stop Rowan’s bullying?

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2) How did the principal deal with Rowan?

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3) Do you think Rowan felt better about himself once he started treating others with love and respect?

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Activity A: What Would You Do?

1. Have you ever felt bullied by someone in your life? How did you deal with it? Could you have handled it in a better way? Write in your notebook what happened and how you would deal with the situation if it happened again.

2. Have you ever bullied someone? Why did you do it? Write in your notebook what happened and how you would change your behaviour.

Quiz

What would you do in the following situations? Please tick the box that matches your decision.

1. Your classmates often make fun of a girl/boy for her different accent. They imitate her/his speech loudly and laugh at her/him.

a) You join them and find it funny.

b) You tell the teacher.

c) You tell your classmates that it is not a nice thing to do and they should stop doing it.

d) You do nothing fearing that your classmates will make fun of you too.

2. Your neighbour bullies you in the playground and cheats to win all the games.

a) You avoid playing with him.



b) You tell him not to bully or cheat or else no one will play with him.

c) You fight with him.

d) You let him have his way because he is bigger than you.

3. Your parents are scolding your brother for bullying his classmate. What will you tell them?

a) "He bullies me too. Beat him so he never does it again."

b) "Maybe we should ask him what the problem is. He seems a little cut off lately."

c) You tell them that the classmate is lying, in order to save your brother from the scolding.

d) You don't say anything as you think he deserves it.

4. Your friend is upset as she/he is being teased for being overweight. What do you tell her?

a) Why don't you exercise and lose weight?

b) Ignore those people, their opinion doesn't matter.

c) Let's tell them to stop it or we'll tell the teacher. No one should say such mean things to you.

d) How dare they!? We'll make fun of them and see how they like it!



Let's Remember

- 'Bullying' means hurting or threatening someone by way of words or actions.
- It causes pain to the victim and should never be done.
- If you are a victim of bullying, you must tell the person to stop doing it and tell a trusted elder if they continue to bully. Do not suffer in silence.
- Bullies are people who have unresolved issues of insecurity or inferiority and they need help.

My Space

What I liked most about this lesson :

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I learnt that

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Ask your parents/family members/guardians what they would do if you told them that you were being bullied by someone in your school or neighbourhood. Discuss with them what you learnt about dealing with bullies—sternly stopping them while trying to learn the reason for their bullying behaviour.