

Anti-bullying assemblies for secondary schools Taking control

Participants: Readers 4: Mimers 10

Props: table and chairs: 2 hockey sticks: whistle: paper and pens

OHP/power point and screen

Music: small drum and brush/stick

Music plays as Readers 1-4 enter, two to each side. Mimers 1 & 2 as PLAYERS enter with hockey sticks to the centre and act out the bullying off that takes place at the start of a game. If the school is a hockey-playing school, the explanation can be omitted. The readers' opening lines should correspond with the mimers' actions.

Reader 1 Bully one, bully two bully three!

Reader 2 *(as briefly, Mimer 1 dribbles and Mimer 2 tackles with the ball)* They're off! The game is under way.

Mimers exit.

Reader 3 For those not familiar with the game of hockey, that is how the game starts.

Reader 4 And it's known as bullying off.

Mimers re-enter to the sound of a whistle blowing. They are chased and stopped by Mimer 3 as UMPIRE, who admonishes them for imaginary foul play. They then freeze as the readers continue.

Reader 1 But our assembly today is not about hockey.

Reader 2 But it *is* about whistle blowing

Reader 3 And it *is* about foul play

Reader 4 And it *is* about bullying off, but not the bullying off you've just seen demonstrated.

Reader 1 So let's send off the players and explain.

The whistle is blown again and UMPIRE sends off the PLAYERS and follows them.

Reader 2 We believe that the behaviour of bullies in school is foul play. Just like in sport, it's breaking the rules.

Reader 3 And it can often hurt.

Reader 4 One of the reasons bullies get away with foul play is that people are afraid to tell on them.

Reader 1 People who tell on others are often called whistle-blowers.

Reader 2 There are times, when whistle-blowing is the right thing to do. It can be the first step towards sending the bullies off.

Reader 3 Today we're going to hear about a group of secondary pupils from Croydon who came up with a great idea.

Music plays as Mimers 4-7 enter, one at a time, and take up different positions, but not connecting with each other. There should be a variety of poses and the effect should be of four isolated and unhappy people. Music then fades.

Reader 4 The pupils ranged from year 7 to Year 9. All very different from each other,

Reader 1 But with one thing in common,

Reader 2 They had all suffered from being bullied.

During the next lines, Mimers 8&9 enter and mime giving taunts and showing bullying gestures. Mimers 4-7 cover their ears. Other words or names can be substituted for the ones used.

Reader 3 Neek

Reader 4 Blik

Reader 1 Spastic

Reader 2 Your Mum's a fat cow.

Mimers 8&9 exit.

Reader 3 They tried to shut out what was being said and done to them.

Reader 4 But then, one day, they decided that enough was enough.

Reader 1 With the backing of their PSHE teacher, they decided it was time for some whistle -blowing,

Reader 2 Time to take control

Reader 3 And deal with the foul play head on.

Mimers 4-7 leave their positions, briskly meet in the centre and slap palms with each other, indicating readiness for co-operative action. They then exit buoyantly.

A few bars of music are played to denote passing of time.

During the next few lines, they re-enter, with paper and pens. They pull the table and chairs to the centre and sit as though in conference, agreeing on points and making notes.

Reader 4 They held meetings to discuss their plan of action.

Reader 1 They decided to form themselves into a group. It would be known as SOS From bullying.

Reader 2 And these were the proposals they came up with:

If possible, the proposals should be flagged up on the screen.

Reader 3 Ten pupils from years 7,8 and 9 propose to set up and run a help group against bullying.

Reader 4 They will deal with years 7&8 only.

Reader 1 The SOS group will wear an SOS badge.

Reader 2 Confidentiality will be kept at all times.

Reader 3 They will make themselves known about in assemblies and with posters and flyers around the school.

Reader 4 There will be a "Worry Box" for people to contact SOS members if they wish to do so.

Reader 1 The group will have a duty rota at lunch time, as well as meeting once a week with their PSHE teacher.

Reader 2 Problems are to be discussed at the weekly meeting with the teacher.

Reader 3 They will do an audit to find out which areas of the school feel unsafe and at which times.

Music plays briefly as mimers exit talking. The OHP if used can remain switched on for a few moments.

Reader 4 And how has it been working?

Reader 1 Very well, apparently.

Reader 2 Let's show you the SOS report sheet that the group uses when talking to someone they are trying to help.

Ideally, a blank sheet showing the questions with blank spaces for the answers should be shown on the screen as the readers read them out. To add emphasis, a soft drum beat could separate each question.

Reader 3 *holding up the sheet of questions* Name,
How and when did it start?
What actually happened?
What is the general problem?
Who is involved? (witnesses, bullies)
How did this make you feel?
How many times has this happened?
Have you taken any action to provoke the situation(s)?
What action would you like us to take (realistic and non-violent)?

OHP if used is switched off.

Reader 4 After going through these questions with the person, it is often enough for one or more members of the group to be around at the time when the bullying usually takes place. Bullies are usually cowards anyway.

Reader 1 But sometimes, a decision is made to send for the bully. This is done through the teacher.

Reader 2 The bully is summoned to come to the room where the SOS meetings take place.

During the next lines, Mimers 4-7 enter with Mimer 10 as teacher, who sits separately busying her/himself with books and leaving the SOS members to run the session. Mimer 8 as BULLY enters and looks taken aback to be confronted by the group.

Reader 3 The idea is not to use aggressive or bullying tactics, but to try and get the bully to think about their actions.

Mimer 4 moves two chairs to a back corner and away from the rest group. S/he sits on one and indicates for BULLY to sit in the other. During the following dialogue, the rest of the group should be reading and not listening. The gender of bully and victim can of course be changed.

Reader 4 Let's eavesdrop on a typical interview. The bully has been told why he has been sent for and the situation has been discussed in a calm fashion. The SOS member then tries to get through to the bully.

Reader 1 ***The words should be delivered slowly, calmly and feelingly, with pauses after each sentence.***

How would you feel if someone treated you like you have been treating this boy? Do you know the effect you are having? You're making him feel as though he is totally worthless - an utterly useless person. He is completely torn up inside. He feels like he is rubbish. Does it make you feel good to know that? Proud? Pleased that you make someone's life such a misery?

Reader 2 SOS don't claim to have a 100% success rate.

Reader 3 They know that they are only helping people in the lower half of the school,

Reader 4 But oak trees from little acorns grow, it's a start, and as they themselves move up the school, they hope that in time, SOS will be for everybody.

Reader 1 But they *do* make a big difference to a lot of people.

Reader 2 They help those who go to them by suggesting strategies for coping.

TEACHER exits. Mimers 4-7 go back into their previous positions of being bullied. Mimer 8 is joined again by Mimer 9. During the following lines, the earlier scene of bullying is repeated, but this time Mimers 4-7, instead of covering their ears, look the bullies in the eye, turn away or just confidently stand their ground.

The tone of Readers 1&3 should be aggressive and taunting. The tone of Readers 2&4 should be calm and confident.

Reader 3 Neek

Reader 4 If you say so.

Reader 1 Blik

Reader 2 Whatever.

Reader 3 Spastic

Reader 4 I can hear you but I don't actually care.

Reader 1 Your Mum's a fat cow.

Reader 2 Yeah I think my Mum's great too.

Mimers 4-9 exit. Mimers 1-2 enter as PLAYERS and during the lines that follow, replay their previous actions of bullying off. At the appropriate moment, Mimer 3 as UMPIRE enters and the whistle blows as before.

Reader 4 So it's time for bullying off, or, as we might say, off with the bullies.

Reader 1 And it's time to blow the whistle.

Reader 2 And put an end to foul play.

Mimers exit. Music plays to herald and/or accompany the final reflection.

Reader 3 Let's reflect on how making a commitment and taking control can make a difference to our lives. Members of SOS, remember, were all victims,

Reader 4 *were* victims, but not any more. They did something about it. They blew the whistle on the bullies.

Reader 1 But not only that, they gave the commitment to help others. They gave up a lot of their free time.

Reader 2 It not only changed life at school for them,

Reader 3 It provided, and still does, a real service – both to victims and to bullies.

Reader 4 Let's try and follow their great example.

Music plays for a few moments before readers exit.