



Bullying is an ongoing misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power over one or more persons. Bullying can happen in person or online, and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

The NSW Department of Education requires all NSW public schools to have an Anti-bullying Plan which details the strategies implemented to reduce student bullying behaviours.

Bullying behaviour includes:

- *verbal* e.g. name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats, making racial slurs, mocking cultural traditions, offensive jokes;
- *physical* e.g. unwanted physical contact, hitting, punching, kicking, tripping, spitting, stealing, pushing, throwing things, making others do things they don't want to do;
- *social* e.g. ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures, hiding or damaging another person's property, inappropriate use of mobile phones, malicious messages, spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, inappropriate use of cameras, forcing a student to do something against their will, prejudice or stereotyping against an individual based on their gender or sexual orientation;
- *cyberbullying* – all communications through technology that seek to threaten, humiliate, intimidate, control or put another person or persons down.

### **Forbes High School's commitment**

Our school rejects all forms of bullying behaviours, including online (or cyber) bullying by maintaining a commitment to providing a safe, inclusive and respectful learning community that promotes student wellbeing. Executive staff are committed to establishing evidence-based approaches and strategies that promote a positive climate where bullying is less likely to occur.

Teachers, students, parents, carers and members of the wider school community have a responsibility to work together to address bullying.

Students at Forbes High School have a responsibility to:

- Be aware of wrong-doing and help prevent it;
- Treat others with respect, empathy and consideration;
- Appreciate the rights and respect the beliefs of others;
- Respond to incidents of bullying by reporting it to teachers.

Parents and carers have a responsibility to:

- Support their children in all aspects of their learning;
- Support their children in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying consistent with the school's Anti-Bullying Procedure.

Staff have a responsibility to:

- Respect and support students in all aspects of their learning;
- Model appropriate behaviour and report suspicions of bullying to the Year Advisors, HT Wellbeing, Deputy Principal/s or Principal.

The school has a responsibility to:

- Educate the school community about the nature and impact of bullying;
- Educate the school community about its Anti-Bullying Procedure through targeted student wellbeing sessions, staff professional learning and parent meetings;
- Respond to allegations of bullying (by or through) adherence to the procedure;
- Review this procedure on a regular basis in line with all Wellbeing procedure reviews.

### School culture and inclusion

All members of the school community are active participants in building a welcoming school culture that values diversity and fosters positive relationships. A key component of a supportive school culture is building respectful relationships and an ethos that bullying is not accepted, in both online and offline environments. School staff will actively respond to student bullying behaviour. Our school engages in the following practices to promote a positive school culture.

### Anti-bullying Committee

- The Anti-bullying Committee will lead the raising of awareness of what bullying is and the impacts of bullying through activities throughout the year.
  - Staff representatives: DP Wellbeing, Year 7, Year 8, Year 9 Advisers, Student Support Officer
  - Student representatives: SRC, Youth Wellness committee
- Responsibilities: Action whole school focus days, including activities such as, presenting information at roll call, whole school or year level assemblies, classtime or lunchtime activities, newsletter articles and social media posts, posters

### Staff communication and professional learning

Staff will be supported with professional learning that provides evidence-based ways to encourage and teach positive social and emotional wellbeing and discourage, prevent, identify, and respond effectively to student bullying behaviour.

Dates	Communication topics
	Wellbeing committee - DPs, Year Advisers, Girls Adviser, Boys Adviser, AEO, SSO, SRC teacher
	Wellbeing committee work with the SRC and the Youth Wellness Committee to action anti-bullying days: FHS day of action, Do it for Dolly day, RUOK day
	Deputy Principals, Year Advisers and other staff trained in The Six Methods of Intervention
T4-T1	Wellbeing team respond to bullying data, adjust school programs as required
T1	Staff handbook issued, revisit Anti-bullying plan at Staff Development Day
T1-T4	Take part in anti-bullying activities
	Tell Them From Me Data shared and actioned

### New and casual staff

New and casual staff will be informed about our school's approaches and strategies to prevent and respond to student bullying behaviour in the following ways.

Dates	Communication topics
Day 1 of duty	Staff handbook issued Referred to Deputy Principal Wellbeing for induction to the Anti-bullying plan

### Communication with students, parents and community

- Student bullying and expectations about student behaviour will be discussed and information presented to promote a positive school culture where bullying is not accepted.
- Our school will provide information to parents/carers to help promote a positive school culture where bullying is not acceptable and to increase parent's/carers' understanding of how our school addresses all forms of bullying behaviour.

### Website

- Our school website has information to support families help their children to regulate their emotions and behaviour and develop socially. Information is provided to assist if children have been involved in bullying behaviour (as the person engaging in bullying behaviour, as the person being bullied or as the person witnessing the bullying behaviour).

The following are published on our school's website.

- School Anti-bullying Plan
- NSW Anti-bullying website
- Behaviour Code for Students

Dates	Communication topics
	School expectations and values referenced at whole-school assembly, year level assembly and during lessons
	Behaviour Code for NSW Students will be displayed around the school
	Year 6 to 7 transition program will include activities for building resilience and dealing with bullying
T1 W1/2	Definition of bullying, what to do/who to report to if you are being bullied
T1	Year level information sessions with the School Liason Police officer
T1 W8	Tuesday 21 March - Harmony day, school activities
T2 W1/2	School expectations and values referenced at whole-school assembly, year level assembly and during lessons, involve School Captains and SRC
T2 W3	Types of bullying – physical, verbal, social. The impacts of bullying
	Friday 12 May - Do it for Dolly Day, school activities
T3 W1/2	School expectations and values referenced at whole-school assembly, year level assembly and during lessons
T3 W3	Types of bullying – cyberbullying, racial bullying. Being an upstander
T3 W5	Friday 13 August - National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence, school activities
T3 W6	Friday 25 August – Wear it Purple Day (LGBTQIA+)
T3 W9	Thursday 14 September – RUOK day, school activities

T4 W1/2	School expectations and values referenced at whole-school assembly, year level assembly and during lessons, involve School Captains and SRC
T4 W3	Resolving conflict and overcoming interpersonal issues
T4 W6	Monday 13 November - World Kindness Day, school activities

### **Support for wellbeing and positive behaviours**

Our school's practices support student wellbeing and positive behaviour approaches that align with our school community's needs.

Social and emotional skills related to personal safety, resilience, help-seeking and protective behaviours are explicitly taught across the curriculum in Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) and the Stage 6 Life Ready program.

Examples of other ways our school will embed student wellbeing and positive behaviour approaches and strategies in practices include the following:

- Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) – school values and expectations program
- An active Student Representative Council (SRC) where student voice is heard
- Frequent analysis of Sentral entries and school data
- The Library open as a safe place
- Individualised and group support from the Student Support Officer
- Drumbeat
- Managing the Bull
- Rainbow Room
- Love Bites
- White Ribbon
- NAIDOC week
- Anti-racism group

Updated: Lee-Anne Jones, 30 January 2024

## **ANTI-BULLYING PROCEDURE**

***Students who are being bullied are requested to report instances to the Year Adviser or Deputy Principal to ensure that patterns of behaviour are recognised.***

In response to allegations of bullying, the school will:

1. Investigate the claims thoroughly and counsel the victim and the bully(ies);
2. If the claims of bullying are proven, then consistent with Forbes High School's Anti-Bullying Plan and disciplinary procedures the following steps will be taken;
3. Bullying is complex and at anytime disciplinary actions may be escalated due to the severity of the bullying.

### First reported incident:

Year Adviser manages first reported incident. Recorded on Sentral – Data entry, Bullying 1.

Year Adviser:

- collects additional information, eg; witness statements, additional information;
- interviews victim/s and bully/ies;
- chooses the most appropriate intervention strategy from The Six Methods of Intervention;
- completes an Anti-bullying Agreement which is signed by those students displaying bullying behaviour; The Anti-bullying Agreement is saved onto the incident;
- contacts parent/carer and informs them of the incident and the course of action.

### Second reported incident:

Year Adviser refers incident to Deputy Principal of year group. Recorded on Sentral – Data entry, Bullying 2.

- collects additional information, eg; witness statements, additional information;
- interviews victim/s and bully/ies;
- chooses the most appropriate intervention strategy from The Six Methods of Intervention;
- an Anti-harrassment Agreement is completed and signed for those students displaying bullying behaviour. The Anti-harrassment Agreement is saved onto the incident;
- refers students to the Wellbeing team for social skills support;
- contacts parent/carer and informs them of the incident and the course of action.

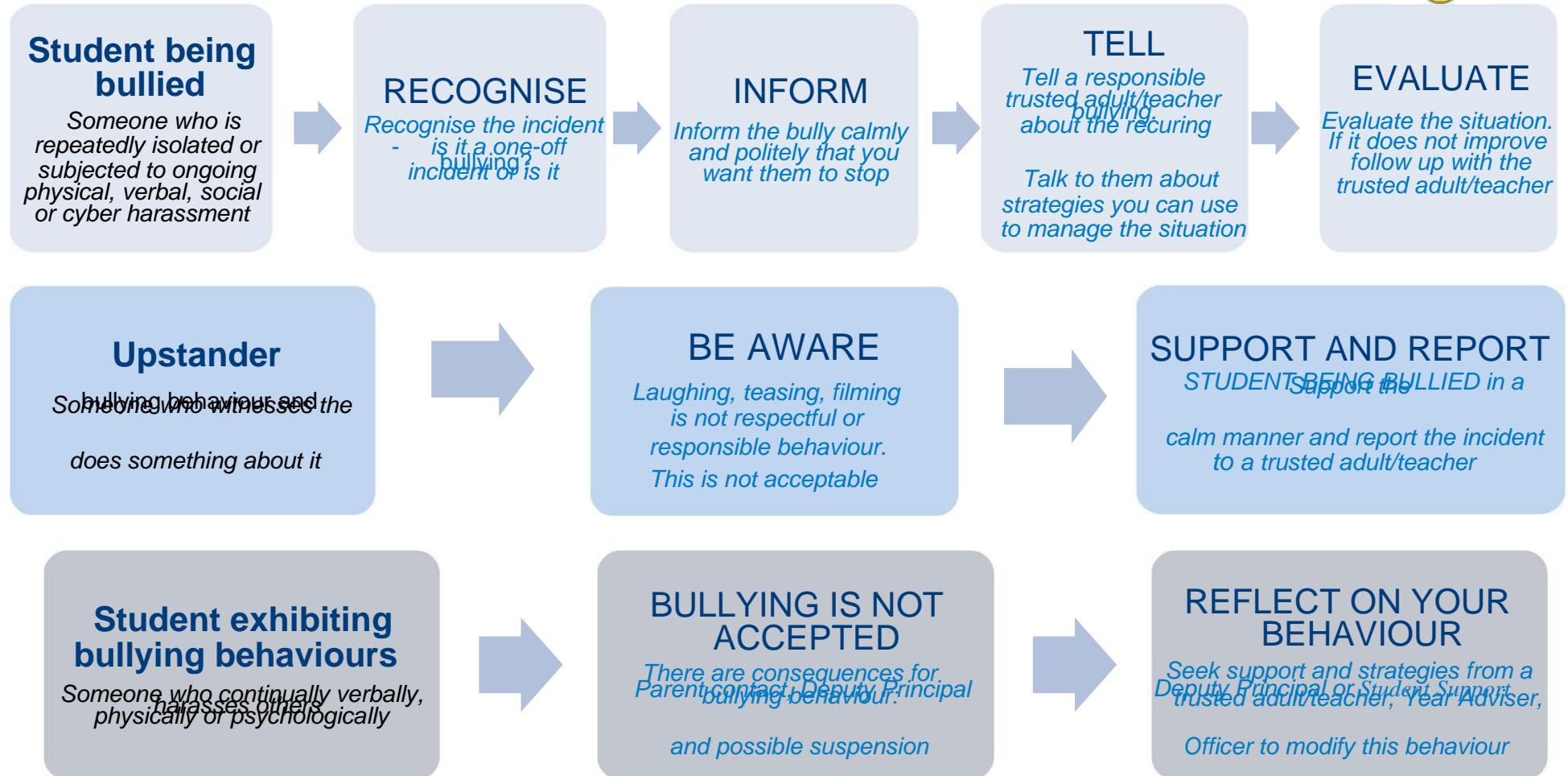
### Third reported incident:

The incident is managed by Deputy Principal:

- recorded on Sentral (Critical incident, Bullying 3) as third incident;
- formal caution of suspension given;
- contacts parent/carer and informs them of the incident and the course of action.

**FORBES HIGH SCHOOL**

Appendix A: How STUDENTS handle bullying behaviour





**FORBES HIGH SCHOOL**

Appendix B: Anti-bullying Agreement

Date: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_

SENTRAL ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Names of students entering into the Agreement:

Bullying behaviours to cease immediately:

Respectful behaviours to be demonstrated by all students from this point in time:

Consequences which may be applied should this Agreement be broken:

Signature of persons making the Agreement

Date: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_

Name:

Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_

Deputy Principal Signature



**FORBES HIGH SCHOOL**  
Appendix C: Anti Harassment Agreement

Special Conditions: This is a contract both parties have agreed to.

Put downs, name calling, spreading rumours, being mean/nasty, excluding people from a group, hiding their equipment and personal possessions, taking their seat, etc. when done repeatedly are forms of harassment that upset people.

This can be done:

directly – verbally, notes, SMS, social media etc., or

indirectly – through others, or

non verbally – uncomfortable/intentional staring, ignoring them, etc.

An Anti-harassment Agreement is given to students that have had previous ongoing forms of harassment from other students to the extent that it has affected their learning at school. It is used when counselling or mediation has not worked or when both parties agree to use it as a means of resolving their differences.

It is based on the idea that conflict or incidents cannot happen if there is no contact or communication between parties.

Remember the whole purpose of this strategy is to avoid incidents of bullying, harassment, intimidation or even assault. Minor incidents can escalate.

**FORMAL WARNING:** An intentional breach of the School AHA may result in a Form Caution of Suspension followed by a suspension if the behaviour continues.

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Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Deputy Principal

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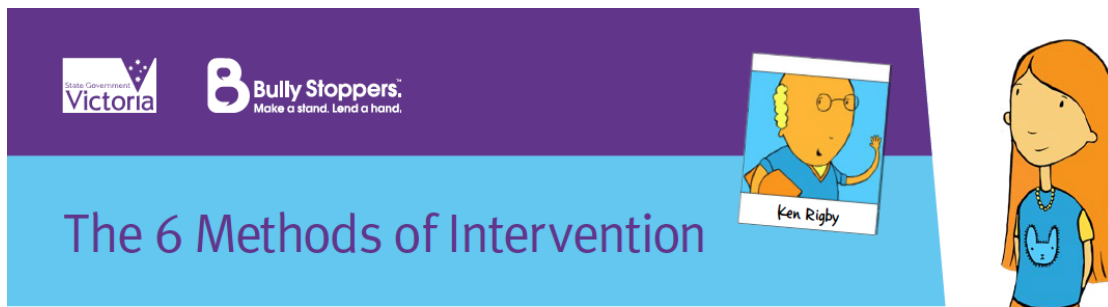
Student's name: .....

I acknowledge the letter above. I have discussed it with my son/daughter. We understand no contact between the parties means that neither party will approach each other intentionally to communicate (other than necessary as part of normal classroom interaction).

No communication also includes all text messaging, emails, posted messages, social media platforms, phone calls or messages by other people.

Parent/Carer signature .....Student.....Date: .....





The **traditional** approach of dealing with bullying is to apply sanctions to students who have engaged in such behaviour.

This approach typically involves the development and communication of clear rules about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, and reasonable consequences for breaking the rules. These consequences generally involve punishment of the student who is considered responsible for the bullying behaviour.

### Rationale

The rationale behind this approach is that applying sanctions or punishment will:

- Deter the student responsible for the bullying behaviour from continuing to behave in an unacceptable manner.
- Send a clear message to the rest of the student body that bullying is not acceptable and to deter them from bullying.
- Demonstrate to children who have bullied someone that they deserve to be punished (a traditional belief).



### Application

The traditional approach can be appropriately and most successfully implemented as follows:

1. Clear standards of behaviour are developed and communicated, including the consequences or punishment of unacceptable behaviour. This may include verbal reprimands, loss of privileges, detention, internal/external suspension and referral to the police.
2. Classroom discussions are held at which students discuss or identify the rules that should govern how they relate to others.
3. Criteria are established to define the grounds for which sanctions are justified, for example in cases of severe or criminal bullying, and following repeated non-compliance or when non-punitive approaches have proved unsuccessful.
4. The entire school community, students, staff and parents, are aware of the criteria and the grounds for applying sanctions and these are applied consistently and not in an arbitrary or vindictive manner.
5. The disciplinary action is taken in relation to the unacceptable behaviour of the perpetrators rather than any personal or social characteristics.

# The 6 Methods of Intervention

6. Serious talks are undertaken with the student—and where warranted with the parent(s) or guardian(s)—explaining why the disciplinary action was taken.
7. Careful monitoring of the student's future behaviour is needed to ensure that the bullying has really stopped and has not merely become more subtle or covert.
8. Opportunity is sought to praise and reward any subsequent pro-social behaviour.

## Limitations

The traditional approach to addressing bullying has several limitations:

- The use of direct sanctions may produce compliance but not necessarily a change in an underlying attitude. In itself, it typically does not promote self-reflection or encourage a 'change of heart.'
- A high level of surveillance is required to ensure the target's safety and this can be difficult for a school to achieve.
- The threat of further punishment for non-compliance may not be as powerful as positive reinforcement provided by supporters of the bully or by the bully's own enjoyment in continuing to dominate a victim.
- Older children are less inclined to accept the authority of teachers and are less likely to be deterred by the threat of sanctions.
- If the punishment is perceived as vindictive or unfair the student may feel highly resentful and motivated to act antisocially.

## Conclusion

Despite the risks involved in applying sanctions in cases of bullying, this approach can be justified and effective. When sensible steps are taken to minimise the risk of unintended and counter-productive results. There is now clear evidence that this approach is still employed routinely in most cases of bullying in schools; however, it has **not** been reported as more effective in stopping bullying than the use of restorative practices and non-punitive strategies.

## References

- Olweus, D. (1993). *Bullying at school*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Rigby, K. (2010). *Bullying interventions in schools: Six basic methods* (See Chapter 4: 'The Traditional Disciplinary Approach'): Camberwell, ACER. Republished (2010): Boston/Wiley (American edition).
- Thompson, F., & Smith, P. K. (2011). *The use and effectiveness of anti-bullying strategies in schools*. Research Report DFE-RR098. London: HMSO [www.newcastle.edu.au/Resources/Research%20Centres/Family%20Action%20Centre/resources/Resource\\_catalogue\\_2012\\_emailable.pdf](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/Resources/Research%20Centres/Family%20Action%20Centre/resources/Resource_catalogue_2012_emailable.pdf)





## The 6 Methods of Intervention

The **mediation** approach used by schools requires students to be voluntarily involved in the dispute resolution process.

Under some circumstances this method may be used to address conflict that may involve bullying.

### Rationale

The rationale behind this approach is that by engaging a trained mediator, students can:

- Partake in a successful problem-solving activity to address cases of bullying.
- Take responsibility for their behaviour and explore the underlying reasons for the conflict or grievance.
- Be helped to reach agreement on solutions that are reasonable and fair, even if it has involved compromise on both sides.
- Devise solutions that are better and more sustainable than if they were coerced.
- Participate in a mediation session that is a valuable learning experience that can help one in resolving interpersonal problems later.

### Application

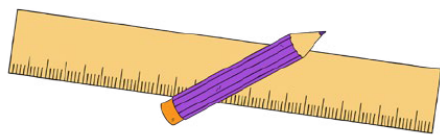
Mediation can be appropriately and most successfully implemented as follows:

1. Students are informed about the mediation service within a school and invited to seek its help if they so wish.
2. Suitably trained mediators (staff members and/or peers) meet with interested students who are seeking help over a dispute that could involve bullying. Mediation may occur on the spot where the conflict is taking place or may be scheduled for a later time. If the issue is more complicated or serious it should be in a private place where there will be no interruptions.
3. The purpose and ground rules of mediation are discussed.
4. Both sides are enabled to tell their story in turn and without interruption.
5. Concerns are clarified and an agenda is set by the mediator together with participants.
6. A solution is reached through discussion and agreed to by the parties, commonly through a process of compromise and without apportioning any blame for the dispute.
7. A shared agreement is confirmed and sometimes written down.
8. At any stage, students have the right to walk away from the mediation process if they feel it is not being constructive.
9. The situation is then carefully monitored. Techniques may be refined and improved when necessary.

# The 6 Methods of Intervention

## Limitations

- Most importantly, bully/victim problems cannot be addressed using this method if either of the participants is not prepared to enter into the process. Quite commonly the 'bully' is not willing to participate.
- Peer mediation is not considered appropriate for cases of severe bullying or issues involving drugs, alcohol or sexual assault, for which schools should have alternative processes and procedures which may involve contacting the police.
- Peer mediation is difficult to conduct if there is an extreme power imbalance. This can greatly disadvantage the target when attempting to negotiate a position.
- The mediator may feel unable to be neutral when the bullying is very unfair and is causing great distress.
- Well-developed skills are needed as in active listening, facilitating constructive interactions and neutral reframing of information on the part of the mediator, and these may be unavailable in a school.



## Conclusion

Mediation is an ideal way of ending a conflict which may include bullying or give rise to bullying. When expert mediators are available and the participants sincerely wish to resolve a dispute that is fuelling the conflict, there is good evidence that mediation can resolve such conflicts. However, the circumstances in which mediation can resolve serious cases of bullying in a school are thought to be severely limited.

## References

- Rigby, K. (2010). Bullying interventions in schools: Six basic methods (See Chapter 6: ' Mediation' : Camberwell, ACER. Republished (2012: Boston/ Wiley (American edition).
- Tyrrell, J. (2002). Peer mediation: A process for primary schools. London: Souvenir Press.





## The 6 Methods of Intervention

Restorative practice is a strategy that seeks to repair relationships that have been damaged, including those damaged through bullying.

It does this by bringing about a sense of remorse and restorative action on the part of the offender and forgiveness by the victim.

### Rationale

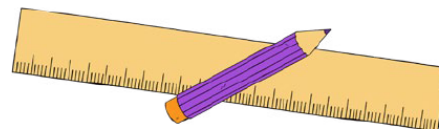
The rationale behind this approach is that when offenders reflect upon their harm to victims:

- they become remorseful and act restoratively.
- practitioners can focus on the unacceptable behaviour of offenders rather than their moral character.
- this can lead to healthier interpersonal relations among members of the school community and more effective learning.

### Application

1. Restorative practices can be undertaken in a variety of forums. It may be conducted with varying degrees of formality and may include just those students most directly involved in bullying or in some circumstances a whole class. 'Community Conferences' include supportive third parties such as friends, families and possibly a community figure such as a police community liaison officer. This forum is used to address concerns of both individuals and the wider community.

2. The work in schools with cases of bullying is commonly guided by flashcards or an agreed script which direct practitioners to ask the bully to describe what happened and to reflect on what harm it has done. The victim is asked to say how she or he has been affected and what needs to be done to put things right.
3. Feelings of shame that are elicited need to lead to re-integration into the community rather than a sense of being alienated and stigmatised.
4. In the spirit of personal responsibility, forgiveness and commitment to positive future behaviour, both the target and the bully express their acceptance of the proposed solution/s and discuss what can be done to prevent a recurrence.
5. The situation is then monitored by school staff and further intervention occurs if the situation does not improve.
6. In some cases considerable work is done behind the scenes to prepare the participants including bystanders and others to ensure a positive outcome.



# The 6 Methods of Intervention

## Limitations

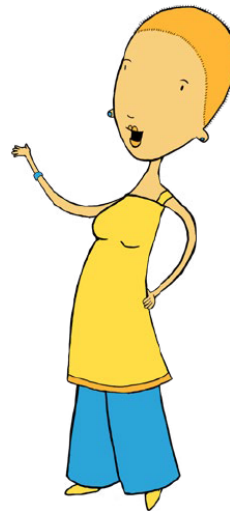
- Inadequately trained practitioners or badly executed procedures may make matters worse. Any perceived personal hostility on the part of the practitioner can result in the offender feeling resentment rather than contrition and incline him or her to act anti-socially. This must be avoided.
- Strong support in the school community for this approach may sometimes be lacking.
- Some offenders may pretend to be remorseful and deceive the practitioner into thinking the matter has been resolved.
- Being integrated into the school community may have little appeal to some children who bully, especially when their own social network provides them with more attractive support.

## Conclusion

Used appropriately by trained practitioners, restorative practices can produce excellent results, especially if its use is supported by the entire school community. It is particularly effective when the offender can be induced, without undue pressure, to experience genuine remorse to the satisfaction of those offended. The most detailed evaluation of its effectiveness in schools in England indicates that it is successful in stopping cases of bullying from continuing in about two cases in three.

## References

- Morrison, B. (2007). Restoring Safe School Communities: A Whole School Response to Bullying, Violence and Alienation. Sydney: Federation Press.
- Rigby, K. (2010.) Bullying interventions in schools: Six basic methods (See Chapter 7: ' Restorative Justice'): Camberwell, ACER. Republished (2012 : Boston/Wiley (American edition).
- Thompson, F., & Smith, P. K. (2011). The use and effectiveness of anti-bullying strategies in schools. Research Report DFE-RR098. London: HMSO. <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/DFE-RR098.pdf>
- Thorsborne, M., & Vinegrad, D. (2006). Restorative practice and the management of bullying: Rethinking behaviour management. Queenscliff, Vic: Inyahead Press.





## The 6 Methods of Intervention

The Method of **Shared Concern** (or Pikas method) is a non-punitive multi-stage strategy that addresses group bullying.

It facilitates the emergence of a solution to a bully/victim problem through the use of a series of interviews and discussions with the parties involved.

### Rationale

The rationale behind using the Method of Shared Concern is as follows:

- Bullying behaviour is commonly (though not always) undertaken by, or with the support of, a peer group.
- Approached in a non-accusatory manner, individual members of such groups will typically acknowledge the distress of the victim and agree to act to reduce that distress.
- A minority of targeted children have in the past acted provocatively and need to recognise their part in the ensuing conflict.
- Once some individual members of the group have begun to act constructively, the group can be brought together to plan how they will finally resolve the matter with the person they have targeted.
- An agreed resolution involving all concerned is likely to be sustainable.

### Application

The Method of Shared Concern can be appropriately and most successfully implemented as follows:

1. Cases are chosen in which a group of students are thought to be involved in bullying an individual student who as a consequence has become distressed.
2. Each of the suspected bullies is interviewed in turn, without any accusation, beginning with the student who seems most likely to fill the role of ringleader. The meeting takes place without other students present or able to observe the interaction. The interview begins with the practitioner sharing a concern about the plight of the victim. Once this is acknowledged, the suspected bully is required to say what he or she will do to improve the situation.
3. A further meeting is arranged several days later to assess progress with each of the suspected bullies individually.
4. The practitioner then meets with the target and offers support. The question may at some stage be raised as to whether the target could have provoked the bullying in some way. (Occasionally bullying is provoked).

# The 6 Methods of Intervention

5. Once progress has been confirmed, a group meeting is held with the suspected bullies to plan how they will finally resolve the problem when they meet with the target at the next meeting convened by the practitioner.
6. A final meeting is held with the target present to bring about an agreed and sustainable solution.

## Limitations

- The method cannot be employed in cases of criminal behaviour for which sanctions are legally required.
- Pressure in the form of threats and punishment is incompatible with this approach which seeks unforced cooperation.
- This method involves working with groups of suspected bullies and does not lend itself to dealing with one-on-one bullying.
- More so than most methods it requires the training of suitable practitioners.
- To implement this approach effectively and produce a sustainable solution requires the careful selection of cases and the allocation of sufficient time to progress through the necessary stages.



## Conclusion

Implemented rigorously, this method has been shown in several studies to have a high success rate and has considerable educational value for those involved.

## References

- Pikas, A (2002). New developments of the Shared Concern Method. *School Psychology International*, 23, 307–336.
- Readymade Productions (2007). *The Method of Shared Concern: a staff training resource for dealing with bullying in schools*, Adelaide, Readymade Productions [www.readymade.com.au/method](http://www.readymade.com.au/method)
- Rigby, K. (2010). Bullying interventions in schools: Six basic methods. (See Chapter 9 'The Method of Shared Concern'): Camberwell, ACER. Republished (2012: Boston/Wiley (American edition).
- Rigby, K., & Griffiths, C. (2011). Addressing cases of bullying through the Method of Shared Concern. *School Psychology International*, 32, 345–357.
- Rigby, K. (2011). *The Method of Shared Concern: a positive approach to bullying*. Camberwell, ACER





## The 6 Methods of Intervention

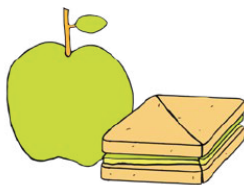


The strategy of **strengthening the target** seeks to improve the capacity of the intended target to cope more effectively with bullying.

### Rationale

The rationale behind this approach is that by improving the target's coping skills:

- The targeted person can be helped to acquire the capacity to deal effectively with the threat of being bullied by someone, without any external intervention.
- The power imbalance inherent in the bullying situation can be redressed.
- The school may not have to take action against the aggressor.
- The self-esteem of the targeted child improves and he or she is likely to be able to cope better with other potential aggressors.



### Application

The strengthening the target approach can be appropriately and most successfully implemented as follows:

1. A case is chosen in which a child is being verbally bullied and may be helped by some advice or training in how to deal with the situation.
2. The child is approached and the situation carefully examined. Suggestions are made as to how he or she might act to improve matters by learning how to respond more effectively.
3. If the child is interested, advice and training are provided. This may include assertiveness training, friendship-making, rational emotive education (REE), the promotion of emotional intelligence and the use of a 'fogging' technique.
4. The situation is carefully monitored.

# The 6 Methods of Intervention

## Limitations

- This approach should not be used in cases where physical violence is threatened, or where the imbalance of power is great (as is the case when bullied by a group).
- Some targeted children may be unable (due to extreme vulnerability) or unwilling to learn techniques that could help them to resist being bullied.
- Helping some targeted children to acquire appropriate skills can be time-consuming and challenging to would-be trainers.
- Acquiring martial arts skills may exacerbate the problem, especially when the victim is inclined to use such skills in order to discourage verbal harassment.
- This approach may address only one side of the problem and ignore factors that may be contributing to the bullying, such as family dysfunction and discriminatory attitudes.
- Some teachers do not feel comfortable with assisting the target to stand up to the bully as they believe that targets are already doing their best and would resist if they could.

## Conclusion

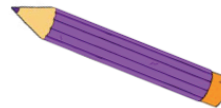
In selected cases and with appropriate training, this approach can be useful, especially as an adjunct to other approaches. However, at this stage there has been no reported evaluation of its general effectiveness.

## References

Field, E, (2007). Bully blocking. London: Jessica Kingsley

Rigby, K. (2010). Bullying interventions in schools: Six basic methods (See Chapter 5: 'Strengthening the victim '): Camberwell, ACER. Republished (2012 : Boston/Wiley (American edition).

Ykema, F. : The Rock and Water Approach. See: [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/Resources/Research%20Centres/Family%20Action%20Centre/resources/Resource\\_catalogue\\_2012\\_emailable.pdf](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/Resources/Research%20Centres/Family%20Action%20Centre/resources/Resource_catalogue_2012_emailable.pdf)





## The 6 Methods of Intervention

The **Support Group Method** is a non-punitive intervention strategy that gathers assistance for the victimised student.

It does this by sharing knowledge of his or her distress at a meeting with the perpetrators, together with peers who would offer support to the victim.

### Rationale

The rationale behind using the Support Group Method is as follows:

- Victims of school bullying will describe to a practitioner the distress they have experienced by those who have bullied them, especially when they are convinced that the perpetrators will not be punished. They will also disclose the names of the perpetrators.
- Perpetrators will empathise with what has been happening to their victim when they are told about their distress especially if they attend a meeting convened by the practitioner in the company of some other students who are supportive of the victim.
- In these circumstances the perpetrators will accept responsibility for helping to alleviate the victim's distress and act accordingly.

### Application

The Support Group Method can be appropriately and most successfully implemented as follows:

1. The target is approached by a teacher for a one-on-one meeting, and encouraged to talk about what has been happening and how he or she has been affected. The target may be asked to write about it or draw a picture describing their experience. After being told that no-one is to be punished the target is asked to name the bullies.
2. The named bullies are invited to a meeting with the practitioner, together with several other students whom the practitioner expects to be supportive of the victim, and the distress of the target is graphically described. It is made clear that no-one is to be punished. At the same time it is emphasised that everyone present has a responsibility to help.
3. Each group member is asked to state publicly what they are prepared to do to improve the situation.
4. Subsequently, the situation is monitored and further meetings may take place to assess progress.

# The 6 Methods of Intervention

## Limitations

- It is generally thought to be unsuitable for extreme or criminal forms of bullying.
- Punishment or the threat of punishment cannot play a part in the process.
- The method was designed for use with bullying by groups rather than one-on-one bullying.
- Although members of the bullying group may experience remorse they are not required to apologise (and this is sometimes thought necessary) but rather to act helpfully.
- It requires that some students who are known to be sympathetic to the target are ready to become part of the support group.
- It presupposes a high level of skill in sympathetically interviewing the target and subsequently working with the group.
- Unlike Restorative Practice and The Method of Shared Concern, the bullies and the target do NOT meet together with the practitioner to resolve the issue. There is no opportunity therefore for both parties to work things out together.

## Conclusion

Although this method does not seek to bring bullies and victims together to reach a mediated solution, it has proved to be highly effective in preventing bullying from continuing without the use of punishment and with the active cooperation of peers.

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