

Bystander effect

Ages 11–14



THE CYBERSMILE FOUNDATION

Bystander effect

OBJECTIVE

To learn what the role of a “Bystander” is in cyberbullying.

OUTCOME

To be aware that being a bystander can make a cyberbullying situation worse for a cyber victim.

BYSTANDER

A person who watches or witnesses a situation, but does not get involved.

Cyberbully: “U look so fat in ur profile pic”

Victim: “No, I don’t”

Cyberbully: “Lol! Yea, u do.
Every1 sitting with me says so 2”

Victim: “That’s so mean”

Cyberbully: “Aww, poor baby.
R u going 2 start crying now?”

Victim: “No, of course not”

Cyberbully: “R u skipping str8 2 killing urslf
den? If I was dat fat, I wud”

**IMAGINE THE
VICTIM IS YOUR
YOUNGER SISTER,
BROTHER OR
COUSIN**

**IMAGINE THE
VICTIM IS YOUR
BEST FRIEND.**

**IMAGINE THE
VICTIM IS A
PERSON IN
YOUR CLASS
WHO YOU TALK
TO NOW AND
AGAIN.**

**IMAGINE THE
VICTIM IS A
PERSON YOU
DON'T SPEAK
TO IN YOUR
YEAR GROUP.**

**IMAGINE
THE VICTIM IS
SOMEONE YOU
DON'T KNOW
AT ALL OR
HAVE NOT
SPOKEN TO.**

15-20 MINS

11-14 YRS

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MATERIALS

A copy of the conversation (slide 4), statements (slides 5-9) and the definition of a "Bystander" (you can use the accompanying slides), paper, pens.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Introduce the exercise to the children, and present the objectives and outcomes.
2. Present the definition of a "Bystander" from the accompanying slides.
3. Present the conversation between a cyberbully and cyber victim from the accompanying slides.
4. Ask the children to say how they would feel reading that conversation. For example, they would feel helpless or want to get involved but are fearful of doing so.
5. Now present the five statements from the accompanying slides one-by-one and ask the children to write down truthfully if they would take any form of action when reading that conversation. If so, what would they do? Encourage them to be as honest as possible.
6. Take in all of their responses and read some out.
7. End the exercise by saying that many people witness these kinds of online statements everyday and do nothing about it, either because they do not know what to do or because they are scared the cyberbully may attack them. State how important it is to stand up to bullies and support the cyber victim, because the victim is also someone's son, daughter or sibling.

EVALUATION

- Ask the children to draw out two columns, one titled "Reasons to help" and the other, "Reasons not to help." Ask the children to complete the table as a bystander and then discuss.

NOTES

- Ensure the children do not write their names on any of their sheets of paper.