Physical Bullying

This lesson outlines one simple way to integrate the Bystander Revolution Physical Bullying video playlist and discussion questions into a middle school classroom setting.

Grade Level:
Middle School

Estimated Time:
45 minutes

Common Core ELA Standards Grades 6–8:
R.7, SL.1.B, SL.1.C, SL.1.D, SL.2, SL.3, SL.5, W.2.A, W.2.B, W.2.C, W.2.D, W.2.E, W.2.F, W.3, W.4

OVERVIEW

Students will discuss what constitutes physical bullying, along with suggestions for actions they can take when they witness or experience it. Students will watch videos with personal advice from celebrities, experts, and students; debate the merits of different prevention, intervention, and coping strategies; and problem-solve a hypothetical bullying situation. The lesson concludes with an opportunity for the educator to discuss appropriate responses to physical bullying within the school, and present an optional homework assignment.

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- Define the term "physical bullying."
- Summarize solutions heard from celebrities, experts, and students.
- Compare and contrast different prevention, intervention, and coping strategies.
- Recognize the safety and security resources available to them within the school.
- Apply what they learn to help themselves and others when they encounter physical bullying.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Computer & internet access
- LCD projector (optional)
- Physical Bullying video playlist
- Pens/pencils & paper

PREPARATION

- First, watch the Physical Bullying video playlist.
- Familiarize yourself with your school's procedures for handling incidents of physical bullying.
- Copy the **Graphic Organizer** (pg.6), one for each student.

PROCEDURE

Introduction

(5 minutes)

Introduce the topic by asking students the following questions:

- What comes to mind when you hear the words "physical bullying"?
- How do people physically bully others?
- Where does physical bullying happen?
- Can a girl physically bully a guy?
- Does sexual assault count as physical bullying?

KEY QUESTION

How can students safely address incidents of physical bullying?

DEFINITION

Physical bullying is: using one's body and physical acts to exert power over someone else, e.g., grabbing, shoving, shaking, pinching, slapping, punching, kicking, sexual assault, and other physical attacks.

Then explain to students that the definition of physical bullying is: *using one's body and physical bodily acts to exert power over peers, e.g., grabbing, shoving, shaking, pinching, slapping, punching, kicking, sexual assault, and other physical attacks.*

Video Viewing
(15 minutes)
Introduce the video playlist by explaining to students that they are about to watch 6 short, unscripted videos from celebrities, experts, and students talking about their personal experiences with physical bullying. Instruct students to keep in mind any experiences they have had with physical bullying and to consider whether the solutions presented in the videos would work in those situations. Provide students with the **Graphic Organizer** to keep track of their reactions. Then show the following 10-minute playlist.

Discussion
(15 minutes)
Below are some sample questions you might use to lead a conversation, as time permits. Each sample question has several possible follow-up questions that may be useful in the discussion.

1. Why do students have a hard time talking about being bullied physically?
 · Do you think it's because of embarrassment? Why?
 · Are they afraid of being labelled a "snitch" or a "tattle-tale"?
 · Are they concerned the bullying might get worse if an adult reprimands the person doing the bullying?

2. Why is it important to tell someone if you're being bullied?
· Is it because bullying can escalate to serious injury?
· How could suffering in silence can make things worse?
· Could someone who bullies go on to bully other people?

3. Why might it be particularly important to get an adult involved with physical bullying?
· Might it be risky to intervene just on your own?
· Do you need authority, experience, and even a considerable physical advantage to intervene effectively?

4. What are examples of things you can do if you're friends with someone who is physically bullying someone else?
· Could you tell them to stop? Why or why not?
· Could you tell them you don't like or respect the bullying actions they are taking?
· If you stand there and do nothing, do you think that could give the impression that you're supporting the bullying actions?

SUGGESTED STRATEGY

Find someone who listens well and tell them what's on your mind. Guidance counselors are expert listeners, but a parent, teacher, or adult you trust can work wonders too. If you don't get the support you need, don't give up. Try another adult.

5. In John Green's video, he says he thinks that, deep down, nobody wants to be a bully. Why do you think some people bully others physically?
· Do you think it's because it makes them feel powerful? How does that work?
· Do you think it's because they're afraid of being bullied themselves?
· How might emotional or psychological issues come into play?
· Could it be that they themselves were bullied in the past?
· Could it be that they may have witnessed or experienced physical abuse at home?

6. After the fact, how can you help someone who's been physically bullied?
· Should you check to see if they're physically okay? If they've been beaten up, should you get a medical professional, like a school nurse?
· Could it be helpful to say something like, "I saw what happened, and you didn't deserve that"? Could you say, "I'm sorry that happened to you. That wasn't right"? Why or why not say these things?
· Could it help to tell a trusted adult together, like a teacher, coach, or a parent? Do you think it would be hard for them to tell an adult by themselves? Might it be easier if they have someone with them?

7. Why is it important for bystanders to do something when they see physical bullying?
· Do you think the person who's being attacked is often defenseless?
· Do you think a neutral bystander could safely report the situation to an adult?
· Can these situations escalate in disturbing ways, including that the bullied person might seek retribution in a violent way?

WRITING ASSIGNMENT
(5 minutes)
Ask students to imagine that they go to Chad Smith's school (video #4), and they heard that a girl was going to beat Chad up after school. Ask them to write a paragraph about what they would do in the situation. Who might they tell? What would they say? If time permits, ask students to share what they've written with the class.

CLOSING
(5 minutes)
Inform students of the appropriate safety and security resources within your school. Explain your school's protocol for handling incidents of physical violence. Let your students know who to contact if they see a fight break out in school. You should also inform students that if they are in danger or are witnessing an emergency, they should tell a teacher or guidance counselor, or call 911. If students are being bullied and need to talk to someone, there are free, anonymous resources listed at bystanderrevolution.org/help. If there are resources available within your school, such as a guidance counselor or social worker, you can make students aware of those options as well.

OPTIONAL HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS
1. Watch a video and reflect in writing
Have students visit bystanderrevolution.org and watch another video of their choosing. Ask students to write a letter to the person in the video, telling them why they agree or disagree with the advice presented. Ask them to tell the person how they might apply what was said to their own life.

2. The Weekly Stand
The Weekly Stand is a list of 52 simple, fun, transformative actions bystanders can take to reduce bullying and improve school culture. Each action contains helpful background information, suggested strategies and phrases to use, and a video for inspiration.

Have students go to bystanderrevolution.org/weekly, choose one of the actions to complete, and then turn in proof that they did it through some creative means: a photo, a screenshot, a short video, an essay, or even a comic strip.

As you watch these videos keep in mind any experiences you have had with physical bullying. Consider whether the solutions presented in the videos would have worked in those situations. Use the notes column to keep track of comments, questions, or thoughts you may have.

VIDEO	NAME	NOTES
1	Demi Lovato	
2	Gavin de Becker	
3	Shereen	
4	Chad Smith	
5	Paris	
6	John Green	