

RESPONDING TO BULLYING

(Source: "The Bully, the Bullied, and the Bystander – Helping Them All" By Esther Williams)

Teach students appropriate responses to the comments and/or actions of bullies. The following is a list of suggestions:

1. **Agree** with the possible truth.
"I know."
"My barber did get kind of carried away."
"I was kind of clumsy."
"You're right, basketball just isn't my game today."
2. **Disagree** with the bully.
"No, I'm not."
"That's just not true."
3. Give a **neutral response**.
"So."
"Whatever."
"You noticed."
"You may be right."
"You're entitled to your opinion."
"I'm sure that is the way you see it."
"It's okay, you don't have to like me."
4. **Ask** for what you want in a firm, calm voice.
"I don't like what you are saying to me."
"I'm asking you to stop."
"If you don't stop, I'm going to get help."
"I won't fight you because it's wrong to fight."
5. Use the **broken record** technique.
"I want you to stop, I want you to stop, I want you to stop."
6. **Confuse** the bully by turning the insult into a compliment.
"Why, thank you. What a kind thing to say."
"That is so sweet of you to want to help me in this way."
"Coming from you, that is a real compliment."
"You must really like me because you are having a hard time keeping your hands off of me."
"What a sweet thing to say. I didn't know you cared."
"I know you must really like me or you wouldn't spend so much time talking to me."
7. Use **humor**.
"Excellent insult! May I quote you on that?"
"Really, and I have wasted all this time thinking I was cute."
"What do I look like now?" (and make a funny face)
Laugh and act like you don't care.

8. Respond to an insult with something totally **confusing**.
“Oh, go eat ice cream.”
“Well, I heard you had two feet.”
“I’m not your egg plant.”

9. Ask the bully **questions**.
“Why did you say that?”
“Do you really think so? Who else do you think is weird?”
“How tall do you think I am? How tall do you have to be to be considered tall? How tall are you?”
“When did you learn that? What are some other things you know?”
“Why are you so interested in where I buy my clothes? Where do you buy your clothes?”
“What did you say? I’m sorry I still didn’t hear you. Could you say that again?”

10. Look beyond the insult and **show an interest** in the bully.
“You must be really angry with me. I’m sorry if I have hurt your feelings.”
“You must be really upset to say something like that. Has something happened to you?”
“I guess you think making insults is a way to fit in but it really turns people off.”
“I’m sorry that you didn’t make the team, too. I know how it feels to not get something you really wanted.”
“I don’t blame you for being upset, your team played really well. It’s hard to lose when you played so hard.”
“I’m sorry. It’s upsetting when someone bumps into you.”
“Something must have happened to make you act so mean.”

11. Give the bully a **compliment**.
“I’m sorry you feel that way because I think you are really a nice person.”
“I guess my hair is a mess today but may I say your hair looks really nice.”
“I think deep down, you have a good heart.”
“Well, I think you look nice.”

12. Use **“I” messages**.
“I feel _____” (state your feelings) when you _____ (state the behavior) and I want you to _____ (tell what would make the situation better).

13. Know when to walk away. Bullies can be dangerous.

BULLIES WANT YOU TO BE UPSET. DON'T GIVE THEM WHAT THEY WANT!!!

What is one thing you can do to help combat bullying?

I can make a difference by:
