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## Increasing Bullying Awareness to Middle School Students

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Increasing Bullying Awareness to Middle School Students

Karina Lopez

A Capstone project for the Bachelor of Arts in Human Development and Family Studies

## Increasing Bullying Awareness to Middle School Students

### Introduction

Nowadays, there are not enough resources to help prevent bullying. Bullying in middle school may cause psychological and physical effects to students such as depression and suicide. Therefore, I created a two day lesson for middle school students in Gilroy, California at Ascencion Solorsano Middle School on how to help victims being bullied and how to decrease bullying from happening.

### Needs Statement

Bullying is a constant problem in public schools in America. Bullying is a form of aggressive behavior where someone intentionally and repeatedly causes another person discomfort or a serious injury (Cook, Williams, Guerra, Kim, & Sadek, 2010). Bullying includes a range of behaviors, which involve a person or group repeatedly attempting to harm someone who is weaker or more vulnerable. This aggressive act is linked to many negative outcomes on adolescents that impacts mental health, substance abuse and a risk for suicide (Hinduja & Patchin, 2019).

Victims of bullying face anxiety, depression and other psychosomatic symptoms (Heino, Rimpela, Rantanen, & Rimpela, 2000). Bullying victimization connects with outcomes like low self-esteem, loneliness, isolation, and fear of going to school. Heino, Rimpela, Rantanen, & Rimpela (2000), stated that 5–15% of primary school children and 3–10% of adolescents in middle school become victims of bullying on a weekly basis. Also, victims often experience headaches, stomach pain, psychological stress, and in some cases, they have no friends due to having a low self-esteem (Essex, 2011). Fear of being bullied can result in victims dropping out

of school and low academic performance. Cope, Wolke, and Angold (2013) mentioned that being bullied in childhood predicts psychiatric problems in young adulthood after accounting for childhood psychiatric problems (Cook, Williams, Guerra, Kim, & Sadek, 2010). Therefore, it is best to try to decrease the amount of bullying happening in our schools by providing resources for the students. Alavi et al., reported that 77% of the adolescents in their study experienced bullying, and 70% had suicide ideation.

Individuals reporting verbal bullying were 9 times more likely to have suicidal thoughts (Hinduja & Patchin, 2019). Students who experienced either school based, or cyberbullying were more likely to report suicidal thoughts. Also, students who reported being bullied at school and online were even more likely to report not just thoughts of suicide, but also attempts. (Hinduja & Patchin, 2019). Substance abuse like alcohol and other drugs are ways victims use their stress to self-medicate symptoms like depression or anxiety that developed after they are bullied (Luk, Wang, & Morton, 2012). Childhood bullying behaviors lead to substance use in late adolescence and early adulthood (Litwiller & Brausch, 2013; Luk, Wang, & Morton, 2012). Luk, Wang, and Morton, (2012) have shown a positive correlation between substance use and bullying in adolescence. Hispanic adolescents were more likely to be substance users and substance-using bullies and African American adolescents were more likely to be bullies. Female adolescents were more likely to be substance users, and male adolescents were more likely to be bullies and substance-using bullies (Luk, Wang, & Morton, 2012).

Overall, constant bullying has serious negative effects on adolescents and their wellbeing. Therefore, it is essential to conduct more anti-bullying programs to try to decrease bullying cases from happening. Given that mental health, substance abuse and a suicide risk are

of concern, I will be creating a two day anti-bullying prevention lesson for middle schoolers at the school Ascencion Solorsano Middle School in Gilroy, California.

### Theory

Albert Bandura, in his Social Learning Theory, explained how children learn in social environments by observing and then imitating the behavior of others. Bandura believed that learning could not be fully explained by reinforcement, but by imitating others. He noticed that the consequences of an observed behavior often determined whether or not children adopted the behavior themselves. Young children learn new behaviors by observing their peers or adults and model the behavior, without reinforcement or practice (Swearer, Wang, Berry, & Myers, 2014). Unfortunately, children may learn bullying behaviors modeled to them at home or by peers. If children observe these negative behaviors, they will likely perform these behaviors themselves.

Bullying and aggressive behaviors are learned through a person's observational learning, reinforcement, and by recurring experiences (Swearer, Wang, Berry, & Myers, 2014). When children interact with aggressive peers, they are more likely to perform those same aggressive acts toward their peers (Swearer et al., 2014). If children live in violent neighborhoods, they learn these aggressive acts that later are portrayed into bully behaviors in schools (Swearer et al., 2014). Youth who perpetrate aggressive acts like bullying believe that they will be rewarded in some way (increased social status, access to resources). As Bandura demonstrated, children learn and imitate behaviors they have observed from others. The children in Bandura's studies observed an adult acting violently toward a Bobo doll. When the children were later allowed to play in a room with the Bobo doll, they began to imitate the aggressive actions they had previously observed. Children see that bullies get attention for bullying others they can

potentially want the same attention and do the same acts. With social learning theory, I will be modeling the behavior of what to do if bullying happens by role playing positive behaviors and potential bullying prevention acts. In order for the students to learn by social learning theory, they need to pay attention to the act that is happening and that would be me role playing a positive act when it comes to bullying. Second, retain that information that is happening, once they have paid attention to the model and retained the information, it is time to perform the behavior they observed. Lastly, in order for observational learning to happen, they have to be motivated to imitate the behavior that has been modeled. By being an adult role model, I hope they can reinforce these positive behaviors when bullying occurs.

#### Consideration of Diversity

My project will be conducted at Ascencion Solorsano Middle School in Gilroy, California for a 6th grade and 7th grade class. According to the School Accountability Report Card (SARC; 2019), Ascencion Solorsano Middle School is 1.8% African American, 0.5% American Indian or Alaska Native, 5% Asian, 2.3 % Filipino, 71.5% Hispanic, 0.2% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, 14.4% White, and 2.6% Two or more races. Also, 59.8% are Socioeconomically Disadvantaged and 23.5 % are English Language Learners. I would not expect my participants to be different from what the overall population looks. I was informed that there is one student who just came from Mexico. As a result, I will be translating the lesson into Spanish for the new student to understand. I will also be providing the worksheets in Spanish for the student to be able to participate. My content is directed towards these particular participants because the scenarios I created are specific to middle schoolers. This project can't be applied to other ages because my lesson is intended for adolescents. Since Gilroy has many

people of Hispanic descent and the majority of the participants are also Hispanic, I am not addressing bullying by ethnic groups directly. If I were to be doing my project in another area, I might need to include more on ethnic-based bullying.

### Learning Outcomes

I intended to provide a two day lesson to middle school students at Ascencion Solorsano Middle School in Gilroy, California. But unfortunately, due to COVID-19, I was not able to execute my project.

At the end of my project, participants would be able to:

1. Identify two types of bullying situations.
2. Identify two ways they can help a victim being bullied.
3. Indicate one thing they can do if they see bullying happening by role playing.

### Method

#### Day 1

First, I was going to start by introducing myself and telling the class why I am there. Then, I was going to have the powerpoint lesson up for us to go through as a class. See Appendix A. The powerpoint starts with asking the class to define bullying. I would write on the board what they think it is and then show them the academic definition of bullying. Afterwards, I would explain the potential traits of bullies. I would ask them if they know what a bystander is. I would have waited to see if anyone raised their hand and then explain what a bystander is. Then, ask them how they think a bystander plays a big role in bullying. I would have the students talk in pairs and have them come up with two examples of bullying. Then, write on the board the examples they gave me and then we'd talk about what type of bullying those examples are and

what they would do if that happened to them. Afterwards, I was going to show a video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1mODh2IreiM&feature=youtu.be> and be stopping it throughout the video to have them reflect on each scene. Lastly, I was going to pass out a post survey for them to identify if the scenarios on the survey are bullying or not. See Appendix B.

## Day 2

This day, I was going to start by asking the students what they remembered from the first lesson. I was going to go over things they should and should not do if they are being bullied. In pairs, I would ask them to share what they should do if they see a victim being bullied. Then, I would show them tips they can do if they run into someone being bullied. I would hand out a role playing worksheet and have them in a group act out one of the scenarios per group. There were going to be four groups and each group would act out one scenario in front of the class. See Appendix C. Afterwards, I was to hand out an Anti-Bullying contract, where they pledge not to bully others and they would write down two ways they would help a victim being bullied. See Appendix D. Lastly, for a closing ritual, I was going to give the kids goodie bags with pencils and pins of “no bullying” along with chocolates.



Results

Not completed due to COVID-19.

Discussion

Not completed due to COVID-19.

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Appendix A

PowerPoint on Bullying Lesson

# BULLYING AWARENESS

**By: Karina Lopez**

WHAT IS BULLYING?

**Bullying:** An aggressive behavior where someone intentionally and repeatedly causes another person injury or discomfort.



## TRAITS OF BULLIES

- Can be bigger in size (height or weight)
- Boys who bully tend to be physically stronger than other children
- Can get easily frustrated or annoyed
- Girls who bully tend to be perceived as “popular”
- Someone who tries to control people
- Views violence in a positive way

## WHAT IS A BYSTANDER?

**Bystander:** A person who is present at an event or incident but does not take part.



## BULLYING AS AN ECOSYSTEM

Bullying is not just between the victim and the bully.

The bystanders take in a big part.

Can you think about how bystanders play a big role in bullying?

COME UP WITH 2  
EXAMPLES OF  
BULLYING

## TYPES OF BULLYING

**1. Verbal**

**2. Cyber Bullying**

**3. Physical**

**4. Social**



## VIDEO OF BULLYING

<https://youtu.be/1m0Dh2IreiM>

## IS THIS BULLYING?

### SURVEY



## WHAT TO DO IF **YOU ARE** BEING BULLIED

- Tell an adult or teacher
- Walk away when the bully approaches you
- Concentrate on thinking about something else
- Yell STOP and walk away. Keep walking and don't turn around no matter what they say.
- Don't give them that attention they want

## HOW TO INTERVENE AND HELP A VICTIM

- Ask victim if they need help
- Be their friend
- Stand up to bully
- Reassure victim that they will be okay
- Include victim in some of your activities
- If you see the victim being isolated from others, invite them to join you



**Be a Friend**

## WHAT **NOT TO DO** IF YOU ARE BULLIED

- Don't think it's your fault. Nobody deserves to be bullied!
- Don't bully the person back by getting revenge
- Don't skip school because you're afraid of the bully
- Don't get your friends to bully the bully back
- Especially **DO NOT** hurt yourself if you are being bullied

## BULLYING PREVENTION/INTERVENTION IDEAS

- TRY NOT BEING ALONE
- STAND UP FOR YOURSELF
- BE AWARE OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS
- BE CAREFUL WITH WHO YOU TRUST
- ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO BE NICE
- DON'T PARTICIPATE IN SPREADING RUMORS YOU HEAR
- DON'T BE AROUND PEOPLE YOU KNOW ARE NOT NICE TO OTHERS

**\* LEARN TO LOVE AND APPRECIATE YOURSELF\***



*you  
are  
Strong*

## ROLE PLAY ACTIVITY & ANTI-BULLYING CONTRACT



## CLOSING RITUAL

*Thank You*

Bullying Survey for Learning Outcome 1

Write YES if you think it is bullying or write NO if you think it is not bullying.

1. Maria and Emma are best friends. They got into an argument and Emma now says that Julia is her best friend. Maria is hurt.

---

2. A group of 8th grade girls calls Sarah names, starts rumors and encourages others not to talk to her.

---

3. Tom and Martin are good friends. They get into a fight over a playstation game.

---

4. Linda is jealous of one of her classmates. She creates a fake Instagram profile to post things about her.

---

5. You are in the restroom and notice someone writing a person's phone number in the bathroom stall.

---

6. Fernando is walking to class and a student spits on his backpack.

---

Escribe YES si crees que es bullying o escribe NO si no crees que es bullying.

1. María y Emma son mejores amigas. Se pusieron a discutir y Emma ahora dice que Julia es su mejor amiga. Maria esta herida.

- 
2. Un grupo de niñas de octavo grado llama a Sarah nombres, comienzan rumores y alienta a otros que no hablan con ella.

- 
3. Tom y Martin son buenos amigos. Se pelean por un juego de playstation.

- 
4. Linda está celosa de uno de sus compañeras de clase. Ella crea un perfil falso de Instagram para publicar cosas sobre ella.

- 
5. Estás en el baño y notas que alguien escribe el número de teléfono de una persona en el baño.

- 
6. Fernando camina hacia la clase y un estudiante escupe en su mochila.
-

## **Bullying Role Play Scenarios**

1. You are standing in line in the cafeteria with your friend and someone starts kicking your friend's shoes from behind. What should you do?
2. During class, you hear two bullies saying mean things about a student in the class. The victim hears them and looks very sad. What should you do?
3. While walking between classes, you are pushed into the locker by a student you have never met. The student leaves and laughs at you. What should you do?
4. You walk into the restroom during break and see your friend beating up someone. Your friend tells you to start hitting the victim if not they won't be your friend and tell the teacher it was you who did it. What should you do?



### **Escenarios de juego de roles de bullying**

1. Estás haciendo fila en la cafetería con tu amigo y alguien comienza a patear los zapatos de tu amigo desde atrás. Qué deberías hacer?
2. Durante la clase, escuchas a dos bulllys que dicen cosas malas sobre un estudiante en la clase. La víctima los escucha y se ve muy triste. Qué deberías hacer?
3. Mientras caminas entre clases, un estudiante que nunca has conocido te empuja al casillero. El estudiante se va y se ríe de ti. Qué deberías hacer?
4. Entras al baño durante el descanso y ves a tu amigo golpeando a alguien. Tu amigo te dice que comiences a golpear a la víctima; si no, no será tu amigo, y le dirá al maestro que fuiste tú quien lo hizo. Qué deberías hacer?

Appendix D

Anti- Bullying Contract for Learning Outcome 2

**I will help a victim being bullied by (List 2 ways):**

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**Anti-Bullying Pledge:**

- I WILL NOT TAKE PART IN BULLYING.
- I WILL HELP PEOPLE BEING BULLIED.
- I AM AGAINST BULLYING!

I, \_\_\_\_\_

Pledge not to bully others

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



**Ayudaré a una víctima que está siendo intimidada por el bullying  
(enumere 2 formas) :**

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**Compromiso contra el bullying:**

- YO NO PARTICIPARÉ EN BULLYING.
- YO AYUDARÉ A LAS PERSONAS QUE HAN SIDO VÍCTIMAS DEL BULLYING.
- YO ESTOY EN CONTRA DEL BULLYING!

Yo, \_\_\_\_\_

Prometo nunca ser un bully

\_\_\_\_\_

Firma

\_\_\_\_\_

Fecha

**Say  NO  
to Bullying**



# Increasing Bullying Awareness to Middle School Students

By: Karina Lopez

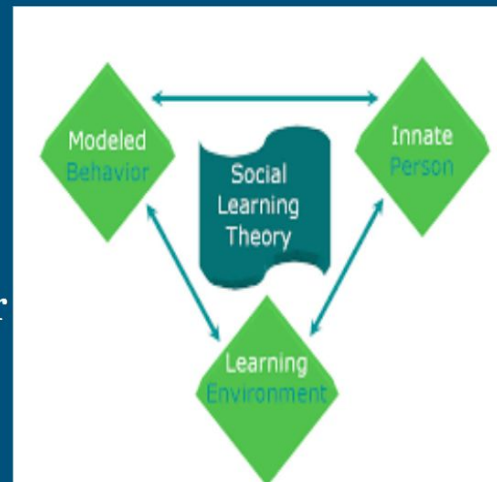
## Needs Statement

- Bullying impacts children's mental health.
- Bullying increases risk of substance abuse.
- Bullying increases risk of suicide.
- Bullying affects victims' self-esteem.
- Victims are more likely to dropout of school & have low academic performance.

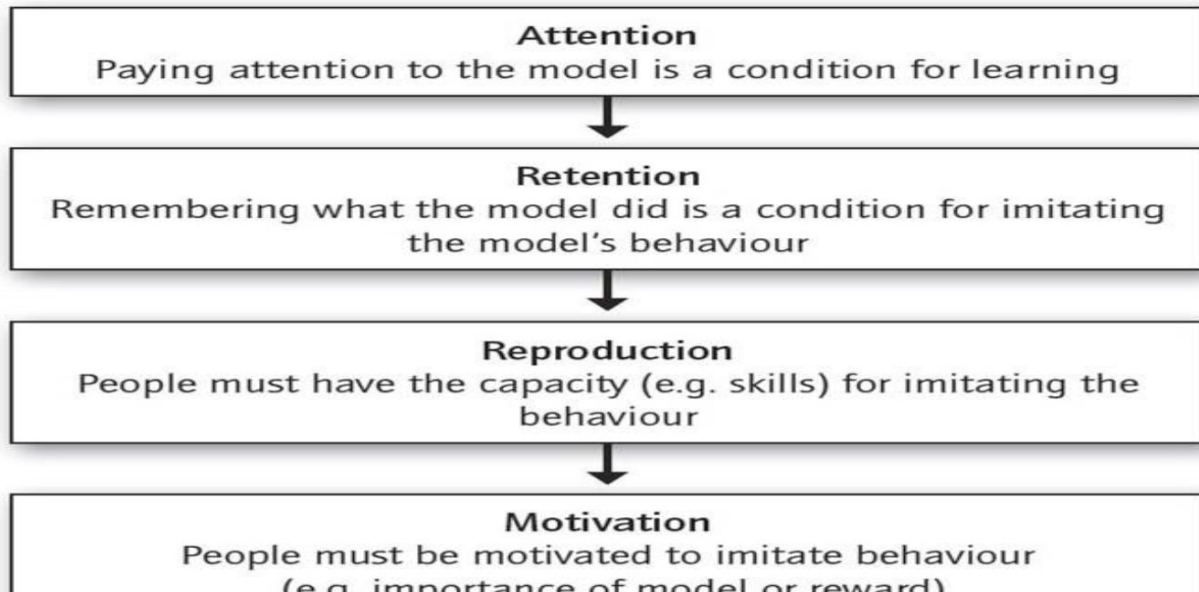
## Theory & Development

Bandura's Social Learning Theory:

- Observing others behavior then imitating
- Modeling aggressive behavior from home
- Rewarded in some way (attention or popularity)
- 4 steps in observational learning



Four important factors in social learning  
(observational learning)



## Where I planned to do my project & with who

At Ascencion Solorsano  
Middle School

in Gilroy , CA

Class of 6th & 7th graders

20 students



## What I planned to do

- Two day lesson on bullying awareness
- Discuss types of bullying
- Discuss ways to help a victim being bullied
- Post survey on bullying situations
- Role playing bullying scenarios
- Anti-Bullying contract



## Bullying Post Survey

Write YES if you think it is bullying or write NO if you think it is not bullying.

1. Maria and Emma are best friends. They got into an argument and Emma now says that Julia is her best friend. Maria is hurt.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. A group of 8th grade girls calls Sarah names, start rumors and encourages others not to talk to her.

\_\_\_\_\_



# Bullying Scenarios



## Bullying Role Play Scenarios

1. You are standing in line in the cafeteria with your friend and someone starts kicking your friend's shoes from behind. What should you do?
2. During class, you hear two bullies saying mean things about a student in the class. The victim hears them and looks very sad. What should you do?

# Anti-Bullying Contract

I will help a victim being bullied by (List 2 ways):

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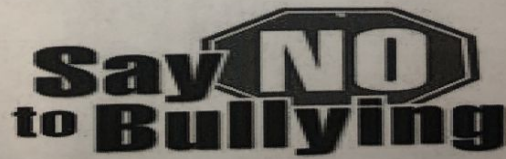
**Anti-Bullying Pledge:**

- I WILL NOT TAKE PART IN BULLYING.
- I WILL HELP VICTIMS BEING BULLIED.
- I AM AGAINST BULLYING!

I, \_\_\_\_\_  
Pledge not to bully others

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date





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## Learning Outcomes

At the end of my project participants would have been able to:

1. Identify two types of bullying situations.
2. Identify two ways they can help a victim being bullied.
3. Indicate one thing they can do if they see bullying happening by role playing.

## Results

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Not completed due to COVID-19.

## Discussion

Not completed due to COVID-19.

## Thank you!

Any questions?

