

# SAFE ENVIRONMENT LESSON PLAN

## “CYBERBULLYING”

**Grade: High School**

### OBJECTIVES

The High School student will:

1. Define bullying and cyberbullying.
2. Discuss reasons why kids bully.
3. List steps to maintain internet safety.
4. Create a plan to be a defender against bullies.

### MATERIALS NEEDED

Student needs:

- Pencil
- Notebook

Teacher needs:

- Chart paper
- Permanent marker
- Definition of bullying
- List of “netiquette” rules
- Assessment materials:
  - Bullying Action Plan
  - Internet Safety Scenarios
  - 10 Commandments of Internet Safety

### CONTENT

#### **BULLYING**

We all know how powerful words and body language can be. That is because God designed our bodies to speak a language even when our voices are silent. We were created with a greater dignity and worth than any other creature on Earth. When we respect ourselves and others, we are reflecting His great dignity. In relationships, being assertive and speaking and acting directly affirms our dignity and worth without diminishing the worth of others. On the other hand, aggressive behavior (as opposed to assertive), is hurtful and destructive to others, particularly when one tries to diminish another’s character or value. Bullying is a form of aggression.

Let’s look at what we already know about bullying. (Have students brainstorm and write down what they already know before sharing their ideas aloud with the class. Make a list for the class to see as students share their responses.) From the suggestions, see if the class can come up with a definition of bullying. I would like each of you to write down a sample definition of bullying based on the information we have on the board. (Give students time to draft a definition of bullying before asking students to share their examples with the class.

## SAFE ENVIRONMENT LESSON PLAN

### “CYBERBULLYING”

Once a few students have volunteered, display the definition card for the class.)

The definition of bullying that we will use in our class is: Intentional, aggressive behavior repeated over time that involves unequal power, and causes injury or leaves the victim feeling fearful, hurt, distraught or isolated. Bullying behavior may include physical contact, verbal assault, social shunning, obscene gestures or other aggressive attacks. People are bullied for many different reasons. Often, someone is bullied because they are different in some way from those around them. It may be because of their weight, skin color, religion, the way they talk or walk, their lack of skills in sports, how smart they are or another reason. A bully picks on what makes the other person a unique and unrepeatable individual; the bully uses those great unique qualities to try to put the person down.

A lot of kids bully because they:

- Have trouble at home and use bullying as a way of taking out their anger on someone else
- Are trying to be part of a group that bullies
- Have low self-esteem and want to feel better about themselves and feel powerful
- Are searching for attention, and bullying someone else is the only way they know to get it.

Bullying is wrong because it hurts others, and it goes against our nature to love others as Jesus loved. He calls us to love as He loves. Jesus respected everyone – men, women, children, young, old, disabled, rich, poor, all religions, all races. All were treated with care and dignity by Jesus. We are all called to do the same. That is why bullying hurts so much – it goes against what we were created to be and do, which is to love. Unfortunately, too many of us have experienced bullying.

If you are being bullied, use the same NO, GO, TELL action plan. This action plan gives you the tools you need to take an assertive stand against this kind of behavior, get out of the situation, and then go tell a trusted adult. No one deserves to be treated badly! God tells us to love Him, ourselves, and others. By seeking help when you are being bullied, you are affirming your worth – you are saying, “I deserve better than to be bullied.”

As Christians, God calls us to love others. What is our responsibility as Christians if we know someone is being bullied? *To stand up for them, to protect them, to not join in the bullying, to help.* I am sure that each of you can picture someone whom you would call a bully. We need to remember that while many of us would not call ourselves bullies, we are aiding the bully by NOT taking action to stop bullying when we know it is happening. If you stand around when someone else is getting picked on, if you laugh as a bully calls someone names, if you walk away from a bullying situation so you “don’t have to deal with it” or “don’t have to get involved,” you are helping the bully. Standing by or doing nothing as

## SAFE ENVIRONMENT LESSON PLAN

### “CYBERBULLYING”

someone gets bullied is assisting the bully. It is our Christian responsibility to defend those who are being persecuted. As the ad says, “if you see something, say something!”

#### CYBERBULLYING

**In the world we live in, bullying may take place in our neighborhood, at school, during sports practice, while hanging out with friends, while playing video games, while texting or online. Bullying through the use of a computer, video games, or a cell phone is called cyberbullying. Cyberbullying may happen with text messages, instant messaging, video games, Skype, Facebook, Twitter, or other social media sites. Cyberbullying is especially dangerous because it is not seen publicly and therefore is harder to know that it is happening. It is secretive which is what the bully wants. The bully doesn't want anyone to find out.** This is the number one tactic of the Evil One. The devil wants us to keep our sins hidden in darkness, not brought out into the light. The bully wants his/her actions to remain hidden because then he/she can continue to sin and exert his/her power over another person.

**Don't forget that there is only one world, whether cyber or real, and in it are real people with real hearts and minds.** In the same way that it is important to have boundaries in your relationships, it is just as important to have personal boundaries on the internet. God created you with brains, so that you can think before you act. Making a good choices that keep you healthy and safe is an example of using good judgment. This is using God's gift well.

#### 4 RULES OF “NETIQUETTE”

To use good judgment on the internet, we need some basic rules of “netiquette” (net etiquette). Let's look at four simple rules to help keep you safe as you navigate the internet and social media.

##### **1. Keep your identity private.**

Never give your name, address, phone number, school name, birthday, photograph or any other personal information to someone online. Many people, including predators, criminals, and bullies will do anything to gain access to your information and may use lures to do so. For example, they may say that you need to give them some information in order to gain access to a chat room or a site they are recommending to you! Don't fall for that! Also, often people use their birth date as part of their screen name. This is a bad idea, as most predators are astute enough to determine that you are a child or a teen, and this will attract their attention. Getting information from a screen name is not difficult, so be creative when choosing your online identifying name.

Recognizing that people are not always who they say they are will help you stay safe! You

## SAFE ENVIRONMENT LESSON PLAN

### “CYBERBULLYING”

may think you are speaking to a peer, when in fact, it is a perpetrator in disguise, gaining information from you that they will use later. This is particularly true of “teen only” chat rooms – it is impossible to tell who is a real teen!

Lastly on this point, remember that any information posted online (pictures, videos, conversations, etc.) can be saved and stored for an indefinite amount of time. One “harmless” picture of yourself at a party or in an immodest outfit sent to a friend could someday circulate back to your parents, potential employer, the staff at a college you want to attend, or even a stranger. Many pictures are also “geotagged” without your knowledge, which attaches your current location to a picture. What better way to have a perpetrator come find you, than to have your picture with the location noted?

#### **2. Never respond to an e-mail, instant messages, chat comments or other social media messages/posts that are hostile, inappropriate or in any way make you feel uncomfortable.**

The best response is to simply get away from the site and make an adult aware of it. In public chat rooms, there is usually a monitor who will screen the comments, but not so in private chat rooms or on your personal cell phone or social media account. Be wary when someone asks that you leave the public chat to join them in a private chat room. A private chat room gives a perpetrator free rein to say whatever they want to you.

Never open a spam e-mail message, as this may automatically put you into a database for future inappropriate messages. Always know your sender. Be wary of those who try to isolate you by turning you against friends and family. This is a common lure to try to sway children/teens to turn their allegiances to the perpetrator.

#### **3. Never, ever, arrange to meet someone you meet online without parental permission AND supervision.**

Always let a parent know of any invitation to meet someone, whether you want to meet or not. If your parent is assured that this might be a peer who wants to become friends, meet the person in a public place accompanied by your parent. Never meet someone alone!!! If your parents say no, trust them. It's NO! They are not trying to “spoil your fun;” they are trying to keep you safe.

#### **4. Always talk with your parents to establish rules and expectations for going online.**

For your own safety, parents need to be able to monitor your Internet activity. The computer should always be in a public place in the house. Parents may put limits on the amount of time that you are online, which is a good thing. Attaching personal boundaries on time spent on the internet or your cell phone is a healthy boundary to establish – this is even something you should be doing for yourself and it helps build good habits, even if your

## SAFE ENVIRONMENT LESSON PLAN

### “CYBERBULLYING”

parents don't dictate a limit.

#### **BEING A DEFENDER AGAINST BULLIES**

At the beginning of this lesson, we focused on bullying, and then specifically cyberbullying. Remember that we are called to help those in need. When it comes to bullying, that means defending those that need help or are being bullied, whether it takes place online or in person. Defending someone who is being bullied may mean telling the bully directly to stop, supporting the student being bullied, not joining in the bullying, or telling a trusted adult. It may mean walking up to the bully (who may be your friend) and saying, “Leave that guy alone” or “That's enough!” While it likely feels easier to just ignore the bullying, we are encouraged to stand up when we see someone being wronged. Friends don't let friends bully! Jesus shows us the same lesson in the story of the Good Samaritan

“But because he wished to justify himself, he said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” Jesus replied, “A man fell victim to robbers as he went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. They stripped and beat him and went off leaving him half-dead. A priest happened to be going down that road, but when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. Likewise a Levite came to the place, and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. But a Samaritan traveler who came upon him was moved with compassion at the sight. He approached the victim, poured oil and wine over his wounds and bandaged them. Then he lifted him up on his own animal, took him to an inn and cared for him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper with the instruction, ‘Take care of him. If you spend more than what I have given you, I shall repay you on my way back.’ Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbor to the robbers' victim?” He answered, “The one who treated him with mercy.” Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.” (Luke 10:29-37)

Jesus challenges us to always do what is right even when it is the hard choice. Jesus wants us to live lives of virtue, practicing good Christian habits every day and trying our best to be more like Christ. Being Christ-like is difficult, especially when those around us aren't. It makes us stand apart, but we are reminded in the book of Jeremiah in the Bible that if we put our confidence in God, we will live a satisfying, fulfilling life.

“But blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in Him. He will be like a tree planted by water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.” (Jeremiah 17: 7-8)

We can be truly confident that following God's direction for our lives will not disappoint and will lead us to experience the best kind of life!

## SAFE ENVIRONMENT LESSON PLAN

### “CYBERBULLYING”

#### CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace;  
where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light;  
and where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master,  
grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;  
to be understood, as to understand;  
to be loved, as to love;  
for it is in giving that we receive,  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
and it is in dying that we are born to Eternal Life. Amen.

Prayer of St. Francis

#### ASSESSMENT

Ask student to complete:

- Bullying Action Plan (Resource A)
- Internet Safety Scenarios (Resource B)
- 10 Commandments of Internet Safety (Resource C)

# TEACHER RESOURCES COVER PAGE

- Definition of bullying
- List of “netiquette” rules

# Bullying:

Intentional, aggressive behavior repeated over time that involves unequal power, and causes injury or leaves the victim feeling fearful, hurt, distraught or isolated.

Bullying behavior may include physical contact, verbal assault, social shunning, obscene gestures or other aggressive attacks.



# **“Netiquette” Rules**

- 1. Keep your identity private.**
- 2. Never respond to an e-mail, instant message, chat comments or other social media messages/posts that are hostile, inappropriate or in any way make you feel uncomfortable.**
- 3. Never, ever, arrange to meet someone you meet online without parental permission AND supervision.**
- 4. Always talk with your parents to establish rules and expectations for going online.**

# ASSESSMENT RESOURCE COVER PAGE

- Bullying Action Plan  
(Resource A)
- Internet Safety Scenarios  
(Resource B)
- 10 Commandments of  
Internet Safety (Resource  
C)



Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Internet Safety Scenarios

Write a brief response to each of the questions below.

A) *You create a screen name by using your first name, last initial and birth date to make it easier to remember. Is this screen name a good idea? Why or Why not?*

B) *You just moved to a new city. You are in a chat room and someone starts to talk to you. She says she is your age and lives in a nearby town. At the end of a long conversation, she says she wants to meet you. You really want to make some new friends and are interested in meeting her. What do you do?*

C) *You are creating your own blog. You want to personalize it. What information should you include and what should you avoid putting on it?*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Ten Commandments of Internet Safety

Make a list of the rules to follow to help keep you safe on the internet. (Include websites, Facebook, Instagram, chat rooms, etc.)

A large, rounded rectangular box with a scroll effect on the left side, intended for writing a list of internet safety rules. The scroll is depicted with a grey shaded area and a curved line, suggesting the page is part of a scroll. The box is empty and occupies most of the lower half of the page.

## Internet Safety

For kids and teens



Walking the line while being online

---

Going online can be much like walking a tight rope; it's probably for the best if you don't get too distracted.

Have you ever wondered what might happen right before you double click your web browser? The internet literally brings the world to your fingertips, but though the world holds many things wondrous, it also harbors many dangers. And on the world wide web especially, those dangers can be very, VERY well disguised. Just as surely as if you and your family were traveling to a foreign country, you need to do your part to keep them and yourself safe from harm. Have fun, enjoy the sights, but be careful as you go about your business.

---

Never give out personal information to anyone online (like your name, address, phone number, school name, where you hang out).

Don't put personal information like your name and birthdate in a screen name.

Never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone you meet online.

Always let a parent know if someone online asks you to meet them someplace.

Never go into chat rooms unless your parents approve.

Never open emails from people you don't know.

Always keep your passwords secret.

Never send pictures of yourself to someone without your parent's approval.

Without a doubt, the internet is one of the most useful and powerful tools ever invented by man. And like most powerful tools, it really should come with instructions and a user's guide. The instructions are pretty straight-forward, but the user's guide would definitely include some precautions because, like every other tool ever invented, the internet is neither good nor bad, but it can be used by both good and bad people. That's what this is about; using the internet safely. With that in mind, here are some of the basics.

Never post pictures of yourself online (even on MySpace and Facebook).

Any pictures posted online should use the lowest resolution possible.

Never go to links you don't recognize.

Always let your parent know if someone offers you a gift.

Always tell an adult if you see anything or get a message that is hostile, threatening, suggestive, obscene, or makes you feel uncomfortable.

Don't believe everything you read on-line. Something that is "too good to be true" probably is. People aren't always what they claim to be.

Understand that your parents will be looking after you to protect you -- even if that means "invading your privacy" or "spying on you".



This brochure was developed by the Safe Environment Program of the Archdiocese of New York. If you have any questions, please visit us on the web at [www.archny.org/pastoral/safe-environment-program](http://www.archny.org/pastoral/safe-environment-program) or feel free to call us at 212-371-1000 ext. 2810 or email us at [safe@archny.org](mailto:safe@archny.org)