

Parent and Educator Guide to Using the Student Action Plan Against Bullying

There is a lot of silence around bullying. When bullying happens, it's important that parents, educators, and youth are all involved in the solutions. Addressing bullying can be very challenging when youth don't have the opportunity to connect with a caring adult or are uncomfortable communicating their thoughts, feelings, and opinions about bullying. Someone who is targeted by bullying may be silenced by the stigma of the situation and think that they did something to deserve it. Someone who witnesses bullying may wonder if they should get involved and risk being bullied, too. Those who are engaged in bullying behavior might not view their behavior as an issue.

The "Student Action Plan Against Bullying" can help guide youth through the communication process, providing them with a structure to share their ideas and opinions about potential solutions to bullying. It can also help them feel more in control of the situation. Because most bullying will not stop unless a supportive and caring adult is involved, we encourage adults to join students in working through the Student Action Plan. With the support of an adult, students can feel empowered to speak out and end the silence around bullying.

Benefits of involving youth in the bullying prevention response.....

Experiencing or witnessing bullying often leaves young people feeling powerless. For those engaged in bullying behavior, it's important that they have the opportunity to recognize their actions and change their behavior. Talking about bullying and its emotional aspects, being a part of the solution, and weighing the impact of different responses are important steps toward helping youth become better advocates for themselves and others, whether they've been bullied, have witnessed bullying, or are bullying.

When parents and educators help youth understand and respond to bullying, youth gain:

- The self-advocacy skills to help them speak up on their own behalf, an important tool in any bullying scenario and in life
- The ability to express themselves and be heard, knowing they are an important part of the solution
- The opportunity to advocate for others. Many students who witness bullying think it's wrong but aren't sure how to respond. Thinking through responses gives them a better understanding of the different ways they can be part of the solution to bullying.
- The opportunity to change negative behavior patterns with the goal of helping others instead of hurting them
- A greater investment in preventing bullying, by including their ideas, concerns, and feelings in the solutions
- An increased likelihood that the proposed solutions will fit the skills and needs of those involved

Steps to take when completing the Student Action Plan with youth.....

There are a few different ways that the plan can be completed. Some youth will want to fill out the form on their own and then share their responses with an adult for further discussion. Some youth might want assistance from an adult they trust while completing the form. Make sure youth understand that the plan works for students in any situation: whether they are bullying, they have witnessed, or they are being bullied themselves. Let the student decide how they would like to complete the Student Action Plan and keep these tips in mind:

1. Review the plan on your own.

- a. Page one of the Student Action Plan Against Bullying provides directions
- b. Pages two and three illustrate a completed plan, including examples of a student being bullied and a student witnessing bullying
- c. Page four is blank and ready to be filled out as a personal, customized action plan

2. Be flexible when recording the responses. The form can be completed by the student on their own or through conversation and dialogue. For example, the student may have an easier time communicating verbally and would be more comfortable discussing the questions and letting the parent or educator record their responses.

3. Provide prompts for each of the steps. As the student moves through the plan, it's helpful to guide them by asking open-ended questions, informed by their situation (i.e., are they being bullied, have they witnessed bullying, or are they the one who is engaged in bullying). Make sure to spend time on defining terms and clarifying details, as well.

(Prompt questions listed below correspond with each step in the “Student Action Plan Against Bullying” template.)

Step 1: Describe your experience	Step 2: Reflect on your ideas	Step 3: Develop potential solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can you help me understand what happened?• Who all is involved?• Has it happened more than once?• Has the situation become worse for you?• Is the bullying happening online?• Can you tell me more about how the bullying made you feel?• Are there certain areas at school where you don't feel safe?• Do you think bullying is a serious issue at your school or in your community?• If you put yourself in the other student's shoes, can you imagine how your behavior might have hurt them?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How would you like this situation to be different?• Is there anything you've already tried to stop the bullying?• What can be changed to help stop the behavior?• What would be helpful from your parents?• What would be helpful from adults at school?• Which friends or peers do you feel safe with at school?• In an ideal world, what would help you feel safe again?• Would it be helpful to talk with someone, such as a teacher, sibling, or counselor?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You have amazing ideas—how can I support you?• Which adults do you feel safe with at school? How can we involve them in this plan?• I know there are a lot of ideas, but you don't have to act on them alone. What steps do you feel comfortable taking and what can others do to help?• How could you respond if another bullying situation happens?• What do you want me to do if another bullying situation happens?• Once we put the plan in place, when should we check in again to see how it's going and if changes need to be made to the plan?

My Personal Plan to Take Action Against Bullying

Step 1: Describe your experience	Step 2: Reflect on your ideas	Step 3: Develop potential solutions
Think about the bullying you have experienced, seen, or even done yourself. Describe the situation, including where it happened, who was involved, what happened, and how it made you feel.	Then consider how that situation could be different. Include what you would like to see happen, what things could change, and what would help you feel more in control of the situation.	Next, think about the steps needed to make those changes happen. Consider what role you need to take, who would need to be involved, and what they would need to do.
Add your responses in the boxes below		
Next steps		Who is involved?
<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>		