



KidActions

R2: Meeting in the middle

Educational Toolkit

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OVERVIEW

Areas covered:

Understanding	Preventing	Responding
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Areas of SEL:

Self-awareness	Self-management	Social awareness	Relationship skills	Responsible decision-making
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Audience:

11-13	14-18
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Timing: **55 minutes**

Learning outcomes:

Learners will be able to:

- **Identify characteristics, values and views that unite a group.**
- **Explore the concept of zero-tolerance and its pros and cons towards cyberbullying.**
- **Consider preferred methods for cyberbullying to be handled by those in charge.**

Key vocabulary: **cyberbullying, unity, unite, zero-tolerance, advantages, disadvantages, compromise, sanction, education, intervention, investigation, resolution.**

Resources: **Google Slides, ball of string/wool**

Key questions:

- What do you share in common with your peers...
 - ...in school?
 - ...in a friendship group?
 - ...in an online group?
- Which values/views do you think are most important in bringing a group together?
- What is zero-tolerance?
 - What are the advantages of this approach against cyberbullying?
 - What are the disadvantages of this approach against cyberbullying?
 - What would be a suitable compromise?
- How could you encourage an online community to stand together to tackle cyberbullying?

ACTIVITY PLAN:

Starter activity (10 minutes)

Web of togetherness

Ask learners to stand in a circle facing inwards. Stand alongside learners in the circle and hold the ball of wool/string. Give an example of something positive or negative about your online experiences (e.g. 'I love it when a new episode of my favourite show is available to stream' or 'I hate it when people post comments under celebrities' photos calling them ugly.')

If anyone in the circle agrees with you, they should raise their hand. Wrap the wool/string around your wrist once (you may wish to tie a knot to prevent it from unravelling) and pass the ball of wool/string to someone with their hand up. They should then wrap the wool/string around their wrist and give a statement of their own. Anyone who agrees should put their hand up and the ball of wool/string should be passed to them. Continue the process until the ball of wool/string runs out. Encourage learners to try to include all members of the group.

Before unravelling the group, remind learners that they all share similar experiences and interests online. Despite their individual differences, there are aspects of online life (both positive and negative) that we can agree on.

Activity 1 (15 minutes)

Is zero-tolerance the answer?

Explain to learners that they will be considering zero-tolerance and how this might work with regards to cyberbullying.

Start by asking learners to give a definition of zero-tolerance. Take some suggestions and then show a definition of zero-tolerance on slide 5.

Using slide 6, ask learners to consider what the benefits of a community taking a zero-tolerance approach might be. The slide contains some suggestions that can be revealed after the discussion:

Pros:

- The same rules apply to everyone.
- Everyone can be clear on what the rules are.
- Sanctions for breaking the rules are clearly understood and used.
- Issues can be dealt with quickly as the rules apply to any bullying behaviour.
- Sends a clear message that bullying is never allowed or acceptable.

Cons:

- Minor actions are punished exactly the same as serious ones.
- The reasons why someone might bully someone else aren't considered (e.g. the bully is being bullied themselves).
- Mistakes/misunderstandings are treated the same as intentional bullying.
- Other factors are ignored, like context, personal history and learning needs.

- [Research](#) suggests that zero-tolerance approaches do not help reduce bullying!

On the basis of the points raised, ask learners to vote on whether they feel a zero-tolerance approach is a good way to tackle cyberbullying in a community (online or offline). Encourage learners to give reasons for their decisions.

Activity 2 (15 minutes)

Meeting in the middle

It is likely that many learners concluded that zero-tolerance is not necessarily the most effective approach to tackling complicated situations such as cyberbullying. However, it is also not acceptable for cyberbullying to take place. So how can we adopt an approach that gives clear expectations yet also takes suitable action when cyberbullying occurs?

Ask learners to work in pairs or small groups to complete the worksheet on slide 7, 'Meeting in the middle'. Learners must record some suggestions on how best they think a school or community group should tackle cyberbullying under the following headings:

- Education (how do you make everyone aware of what is acceptable/unacceptable?)
- Investigation (how should someone in charge approach a cyberbullying incident in order to sort it out?)
- Intervention (when do you step in when something is going wrong?)
- Sanctions (what consequences do people involved in bullying face?)
- Resolution (how might the issue be resolved in order for everyone involved to move forward in a positive way?)

Ask learners to share their ideas and see if you can reach consensus as a group as to how they would like cyberbullying to be tackled by someone responsible for handling the incident (e.g. school, youth group, social media platform, online game).

Plenary (15 minutes)

Encourage learners to consider a setting or provider (online or offline) where they do not feel a balanced approach is being taken to dealing with cyberbullying (either too strict or too lax).

Ask learners to draft an email or short letter (2-3 paragraphs) that could be used to convince that setting to adopt a more balanced approach. What language could be used to persuade the setting to take action? What evidence could be used to demonstrate that learners' suggested approach is the right one?