



# **Practical Social-Emotional Learning Strategies to Reduce Adolescent Bullying**

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Presented at the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual IBPA Conference

Matt Pearsall: Sr. Educational Designer, Committee for Children

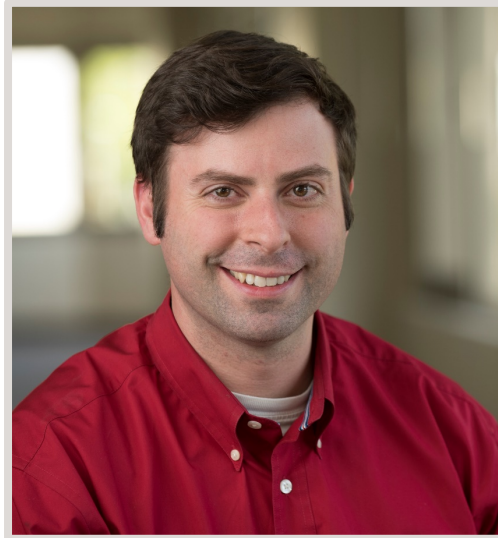
# It's 12:32 pm; do you know what your students are (or are not) up to?

“**Reports that say that something hasn't happened are always interesting to me**, because as we know, there are known knowns; there are things we know we know. We also know there are known unknowns; that is to say, we know there are some things we do not know. **But there are also unknown unknowns: the ones we don't know we don't know.**”

—Donald Rumsfeld



# Meet Your Presenter



**Matt Pearsall**

Senior Educational Designer,  
Committee for Children, Seattle, WA

# Session Overview



1. Exploring adolescent bullying
2. Intervention challenges
3. Practical SEL-based bullying reduction strategies

# Exploring Adolescent Bullying

# “Official” Definition of Bullying

“Any **unwanted aggressive behavior(s)** by another youth or group of youths, who are not siblings or current dating partners, involving an observed or perceived power imbalance. These behaviors are repeated multiple times or are highly likely to be repeated. Bullying may inflict harm or distress on the targeted youth, including **physical, psychological, social, or educational harm.**”

# Elementary vs. Adolescent Bullying

“Our school isn't like any school in the movies. Jocks don't throw freshmen into the trashcan, or dunk nerds' heads into the toilet. **Bullies aren't people who punish physically, but are mostly just people who ignore and exclude others.**”

# Elementary vs. Adolescent Bullying

## Elementary

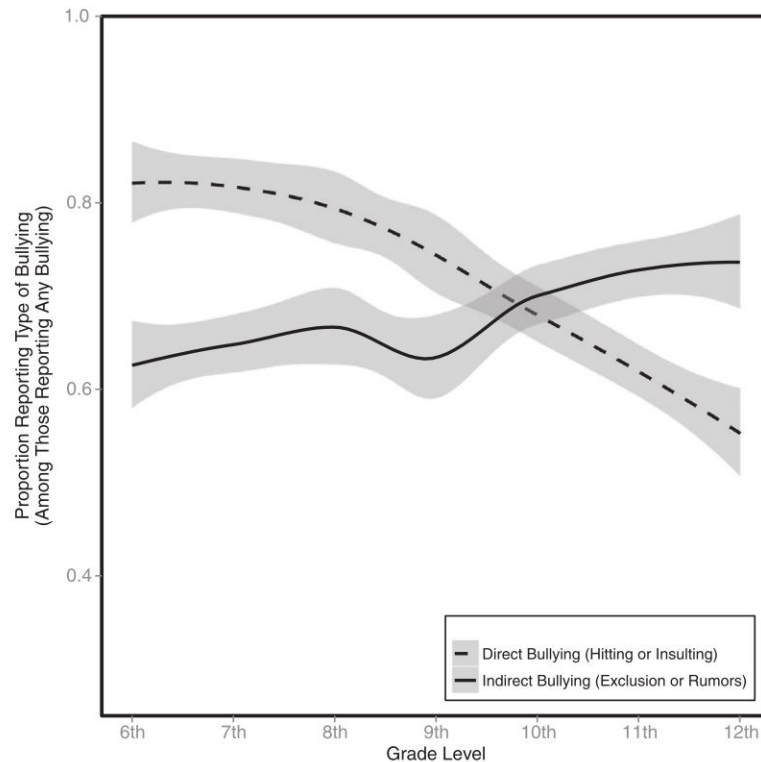
- Direct bullying
  - Physical (pushing/hitting)
  - Name calling
  - Damaging property
- Sign of poor social skills
- Engaged in by relatively few students

## Adolescent

- Indirect bullying
  - Exclusion
  - Rumors
  - Minimizing adult recognition
- Requires strong social skills
- Engaged in by many students



# Elementary vs. Adolescent Bullying



# Role of Social Skills

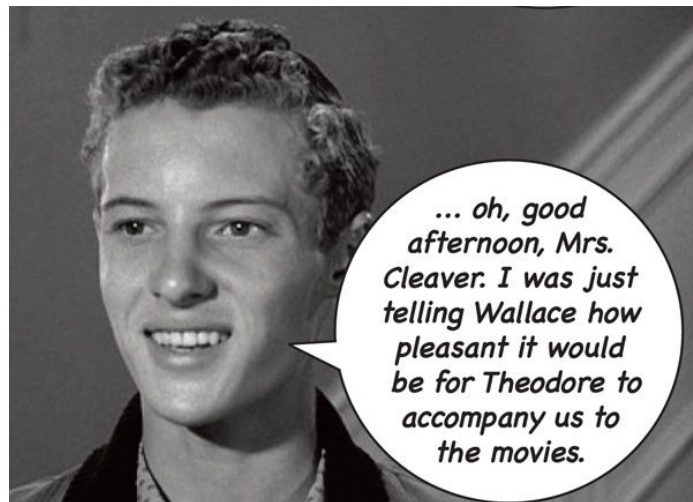
**Bullying is indirect**

**Goals are social**

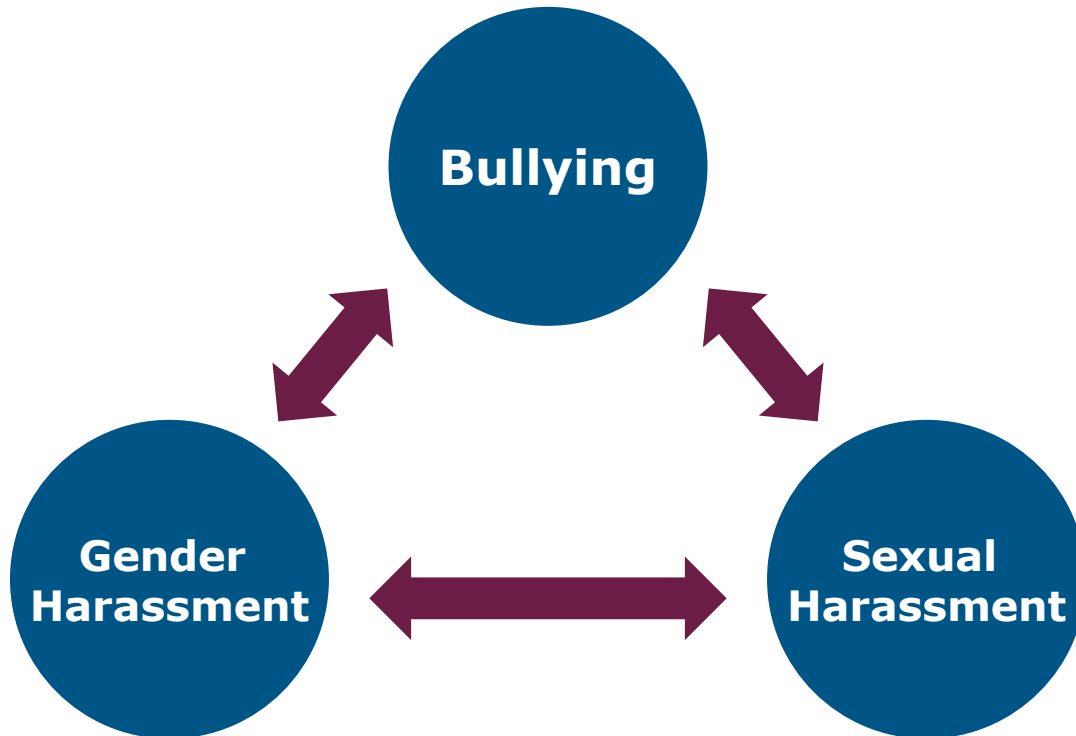
**Strategies are social**



# Eddie Haskell Syndrome



# Bullying and Harassment



# Gender Harassment

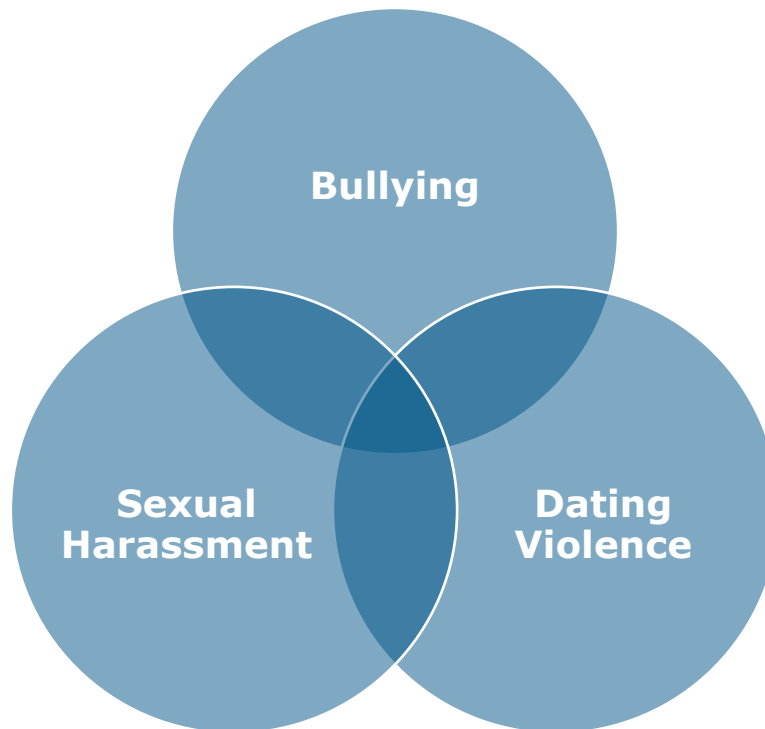
**65%** of LGBT youth frequently hear homophobic remarks.

**85%** of LGBT youth are verbally harassed.

**71%** of all students report regularly hearing “gay” used in a negative way.

**56%** of all students report hearing negative remarks about gender nonconformity.

# Sexual Harassment



# Bullying and Transitions



- Bullying peaks around the transition to ninth grade.
- Bullying declines significantly by 12th grade, BUT
- Harassment continues to increase.

# What's Your Experience?



Talk with your neighbor:

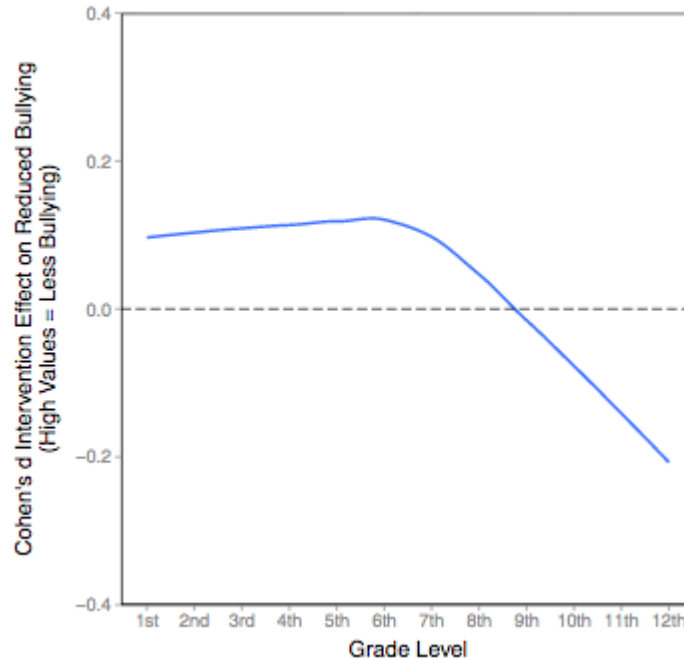
- What are the bullying behaviors you see in your context? How do they differ between grades?
- What are the harassment behaviors?



# Intervention Challenges

# Iatrogenic Effects of Traditional Interventions

Predicted Within-Study Anti-Bullying Effect



# Elementary ≠ Adolescent Bullying

## We talk about it wrong

- Define it wrong
- Give inauthentic examples
- Ignore harassment
- Ignore race

## We teach it wrong

- Direct instruction
- Role-plays
- Assemblies
- Threaten autonomy
- Focus on specific behaviors

# Practical Strategies

No more doom and gloom, I promise!

# Three SEL-Based Strategies That Work



Positive School Climate



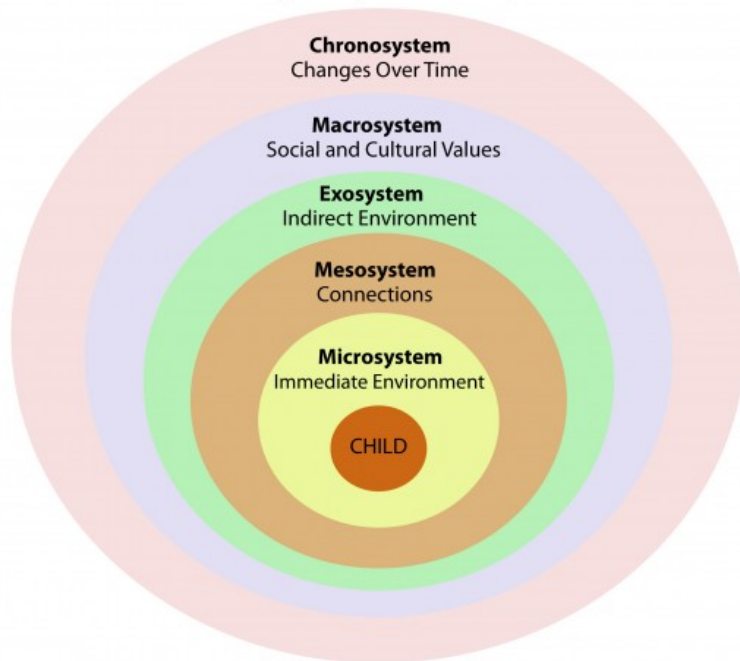
Bystander-Focused  
Anti-Bullying Intervention



Addressing Harassment

# Positive School Climate

## Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory

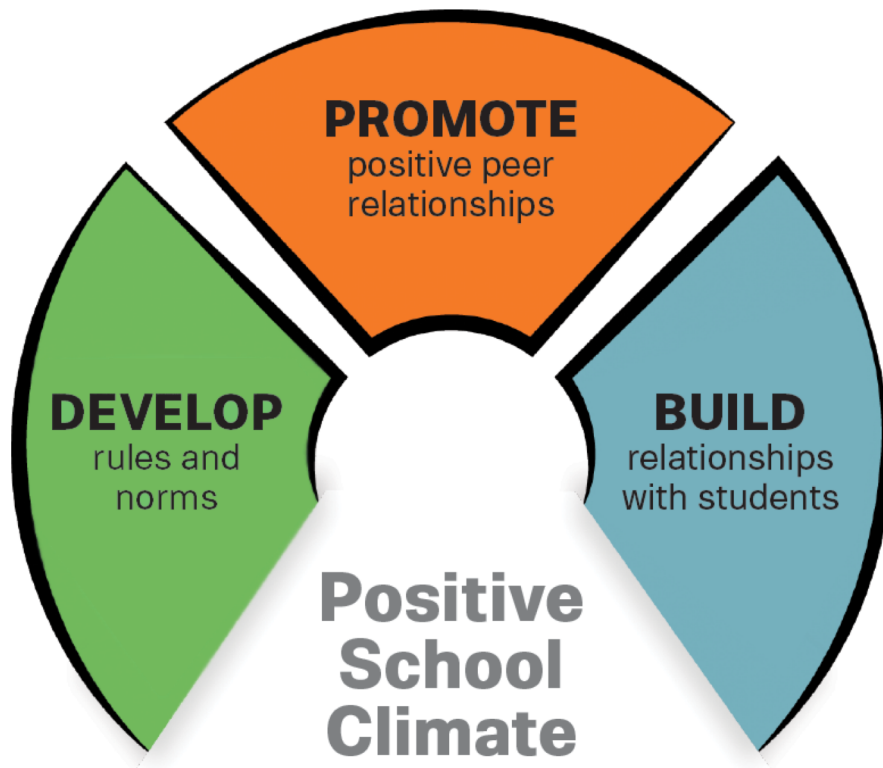


# School Climate: Defined

“School climate is broadly defined as the values, relationships, practices, and structures that contribute to students’ experiences at school.”



# How to Build a Positive Climate





# Climate, SEL, and Bullying

## Social-emotional learning:

- Fosters empathy and compassionate action
- Teaches perspective-taking
- Builds social skills
- **Establishes positive social norms**

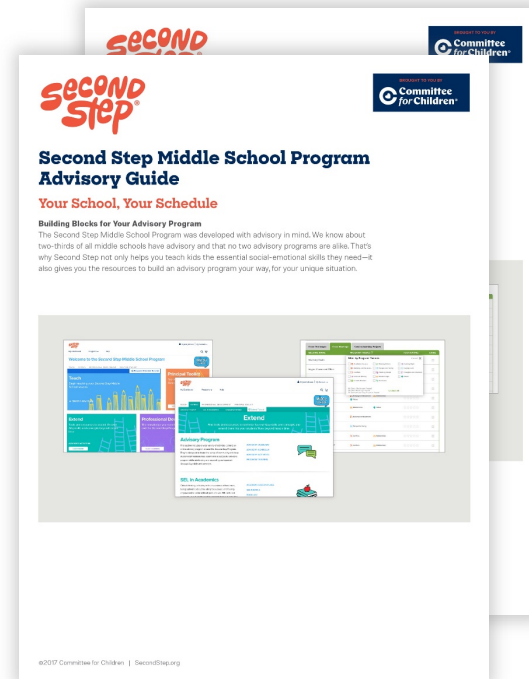


# School Climate and Advisory

Advisory programs are an effective tool for building peer relationships and student-teacher relationships.

<http://www.amle.org/ServicesEvents/Webinars/091218/tabid/1104/Default.aspx>

(Shulkind & Foote, 2009; Galassi, Gullledge, & Cox, 1997)



# Reporting Bullying

A positive school climate also encourages the reporting of bullying.



# Reporting Bullying

A positive school climate also encourages the reporting of bullying.



**REPORTING**

# Bystander-Focused Bullying Prevention



Adolescents have a lot of influence over each other.

**Empower them to take the lead.**

# Developmentally Appropriate Delivery

	Common features of traditional interventions	An intervention that <b>lessens the influence</b> of a threat to status or respect
What they say	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bullying and aggression are not allowed</li><li>• You should not be mean, call people names, hit people, exclude people, or start rumors about people</li><li>• If those things happen to you, you should think positively and use positive coping skills</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• People have the potential to change themselves or their social places in life</li><li>• Therefore people are not stuck being one kind of person—a loser or a bully</li></ul>
How they say it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Classroom lectures from teachers</li><li>• Online activities to reinforce the message</li><li>• Whole-school assemblies</li><li>• Token economies for good behavior</li><li>• Skits and role plays</li><li>• Parent training, so kids get the message at home</li><li>• Homework</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stories of formerly aggressive people or shy people who learned other ways to be</li><li>• Scientific evidence for how this was possible, drawing on neuroscience and field experimentation</li><li>• Stories from peers who found this information helpful</li><li>• Self-persuasion writing exercises</li></ul>

# Addressing Harassment

Middle school is **the best time** to address gender and sexual harassment.



# How to address harassment?



- Start by addressing homophobic name-calling.
- Focus on being a positive bystander.
- Integrate anti-harassment and anti-bullying initiatives.
- Highlight legal responsibility.



# What's Your Plan?

**Think for a moment about one new thing you can do right away to help stop bullying.**

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Share your ideas with your neighbors.

# Questions?

## **Matt Pearsall**

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# ED School Climate Survey

National Center for Education Statistics School Climate Survey  
<https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/edscls/questionnaires.asp>

## Domain: Engagement

Topics
Cultural and linguistic competence
Relationships
School participation

## Domain: Safety

Topics
Emotional safety
Physical safety
Bullying/cyberbullying
Substance abuse
Emergency readiness/management

## Domain: Environment

Topics
Physical environment
Instructional environment
Physical health
Mental health
Discipline

## REMINDER

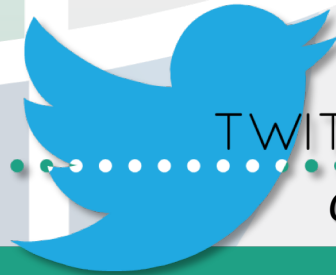
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# Handouts

# SecondStep Advisory Guide

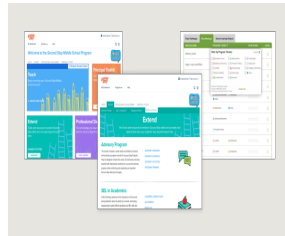


## Second Step Middle School Program Advisory Guide

### Your School, Your Schedule

#### Building Blocks for Your Advisory Program

The Second Step Middle School Program was developed with advisory in mind. We know about two-thirds of all middle schools have advisory and that no two advisory programs are alike. That's why Second Step not only helps you teach into the essential social-emotional skills they need—it also gives you the resources to build an advisory program your way, for your unique situation.



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# Anti-Defamation League Ally Guide



## BE AN ALLY

TAKE ACTION. STOP BULLYING.

Here are some simple things you can do to be an ally to targets of name-calling and bullying. And remember—always think about your safety first when deciding the best way to respond.

### 1. Support targets, whether you know them or not.

Show compassion and encouragement to those who are the targets of bullying behavior by asking if they're okay, going with them to get help and letting them know you are there for them. Ask what else you can do and make sure they know they're not alone.

### 2. Don't participate.

This is a really easy way to be an ally because it doesn't require you to actually do anything, just to not do certain things—like laugh, stare or cheer for the bad behavior. By refusing to join in when name-calling and bullying occur, you are sending a message that the behavior is not funny and you are not okay with treating people that way. The next step is to speak up and try to set a stop to the harmful behavior.

### 3. Tell aggressors to stop.

If it feels safe, stand tall and tell the person behaving badly to cut it out. You can let them know you don't approve on the spot or later during a private moment. Whenever you do it, letting aggressors know how hurtful it is to be bullied may cause them to think twice before picking on someone again.

### 4. Inform a trusted adult.

Sometimes you may need extra help to stop the bullying. It's important to tell an adult who you trust so that this person can be an ally to you as well as the target. Getting someone out of trouble is never "tattling" or "snitching." So don't think twice—reach out to a parent, teacher, guidance counselor, coach or someone else who will get involved.

### 5. Get to know people instead of judging them.

Approach people for who they are and don't judge them based on their appearance. You may even

find that they're not so different from you after all.



### 6. Be an ally online.

Bullying happens online, too, and through the use of cell phones, looking at mean Web pages and forwarding hurtful messages is just like laughing or someone or spreading rumors in person. It is just as hurtful, even if you can't see the other person's face. All the rules above are just as important to follow when texting or emailing. So online and offline—do your part to be an ally to others.

#### Other Resources

[Being a Student's Guide to Stopping Name-Calling and Bullying](#)

[Internet Safety: Strategies for Youth](#)

For more information about the Anti-Defamation League's efforts to combat bullying, go to [www.adl.org/anti-bullying](http://www.adl.org/anti-bullying).



## SEA UN ALIADO

ACTÚE. PONGA FIN A LA INTIMIDACIÓN.

Aquí hay algunas cosas muy simples que usted puede hacer para ser un aliado de las personas que son víctimas de intimidación, burlas o insultos. Y recuerde, siempre piense en su seguridad antes de decidir cómo responder.

### 1. Apoye a las víctimas, sin importar si las conoce o no.

Demuestre su compasión y apoyo a quienes son víctimas de comportamientos intimidatorios. Muestre interés y hacedles saber que usted está allí para ayudar. Pregúntele de qué otro manera las puede ayudar y asegúrese de que sepan que no está solo.

### 2. No participe.

Esto es una forma muy fácil de ser un aliado porque realmente no le exige hacer nada, tan sólo dejar de hacer ciertas cosas: reírse, mirar o celebrar las ridículas comportamiento. Al resistirse a participar cuando se presentan insultos o intimidación, usted transmite el mensaje de que el comportamiento no es gracioso y usted no está de acuerdo con tratar a las personas de esa manera. El siguiente paso es enfrentarse e intentar detener el comportamiento.

### 3. Fídelo al agresor que

### ayuda a hacerlo.

Si cree que no hay riesgo de seguridad, intente ser valiente y dígame al agresor que deje de hacerlo. Usted puede hacerle saber que no está de acuerdo en el momento de la agresión o posteriormente en privado. Sin importar cuándo le haga, hacedle saber a los agresores lo brillante que es su comportamiento tal vez los lleve a pensar dos veces antes de volver a intentar de nuevo o digales.

### 4. Infórmele a un adulto de confianza.

Algunos veces puede necesitar ayuda adicional para asegurarse de que la intimidación termine. Es importante informarle a un adulto de confianza para que él o ella sea un aliado y ayude a la víctima. Sacar a alguien de problema nunca es "cosear" o "ver en rojo", así que no lo piense dos veces: comuníquese con sus padres, maestros, consejeros, entrenador o algún otro punto que se involucre.

### 5. Conozca a la gente en lugar de juzgarla.

Apriete a las personas por lo que son y no las juzgue basándose en su apariencia. Incluso, puede llegar a descubrir que no son tan

diferentes después de todo.



### 6. Conviértase en un aliado en línea.

La intimidación también puede suceder en línea y a través de las máquinas celulares. Utilice páginas web conéctese y envíe mensajes que hacen saber a los celos de alguien o ofenden nombres en persona. Es igualmente importante seguir todas las normas cibernéticas cuando envíe mensajes de texto o correo electrónico. Así que tiene o tiene de ella, haga su parte y sea un aliado.

#### Otros recursos

[Being a Parent's Guide to Stopping Name-Calling and Bullying](#)

[Internet Safety: Strategies for Youth](#)

Para mayor información sobre las acciones de la Liga Anti-Defamación para combatir la intimidación, visite [www.adl.org/anti-bullying](http://www.adl.org/anti-bullying).



# SecondStep Advisory Activities

**secondSTEP** Second Step Curriculum  
LEVEL: **LEVEL 1**  
Version 1.0 (2018)

**Activity Name**  
**Sing to Ally**

**Objective**  
Children will be able to sing and act out the song.

**Preparation**  
1. Download and print the song.  
2. Prepare the children's songbooks for the lesson.

**Class Meeting Instructions**

**Warm-Up**  
Sing the song to the children and ask them to sing along with you. Encourage them to act out the song as well.

**Discussion**  
1. How do you feel when you see someone who is different?  
2. How do you feel when you see someone who is the same as you?  
3. How do you feel when you see someone who is different from you but you are not sure if they are different or the same?

**Message**  
1. We are all different and that's okay.  
2. We are all the same and that's okay.  
3. We are all different and that's okay.

**Materials**  
1. Songbook  
2. Songbook

**secondSTEP** Second Step Curriculum  
LEVEL: **LEVEL 1**  
Version 1.0 (2018)

**Activity Name**  
**Ally Gallery Walk**

**Objective**  
Children will be able to identify and describe different types of ally.

**Preparation**  
1. Download and print the gallery walk cards.  
2. Prepare the children's songbooks for the lesson.

**Class Meeting Instructions**

**Warm-Up**  
Sing the song to the children and ask them to sing along with you. Encourage them to act out the song as well.

**Discussion**  
1. How do you feel when you see someone who is different from you?  
2. How do you feel when you see someone who is the same as you?  
3. How do you feel when you see someone who is different from you but you are not sure if they are different or the same?

**Message**  
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2. We are all the same and that's okay.  
3. We are all different and that's okay.

**Materials**  
1. Songbook  
2. Songbook

**secondSTEP** Second Step Curriculum  
LEVEL: **LEVEL 1**  
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**Activity Name**  
**Gender-Steep Disrespect**

**Objective**  
Children will be able to identify and describe different types of gender-steep disrespect.

**Preparation**  
1. Download and print the gender-steep disrespect cards.  
2. Prepare the children's songbooks for the lesson.

**Class Meeting Instructions**

**Warm-Up**  
Sing the song to the children and ask them to sing along with you. Encourage them to act out the song as well.

**Discussion**  
1. How do you feel when you see someone who is different from you?  
2. How do you feel when you see someone who is the same as you?  
3. How do you feel when you see someone who is different from you but you are not sure if they are different or the same?

**Message**  
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2. We are all the same and that's okay.  
3. We are all different and that's okay.

**Materials**  
1. Songbook  
2. Songbook

**secondSTEP** Second Step Curriculum  
LEVEL: **LEVEL 1**  
Version 1.0 (2018)

**Activity Name**  
**Where Do I Stand?**

**Objective**  
Children will be able to identify and describe different types of where they stand.

**Preparation**  
1. Download and print the where they stand cards.  
2. Prepare the children's songbooks for the lesson.

**Class Meeting Instructions**

**Warm-Up**  
Sing the song to the children and ask them to sing along with you. Encourage them to act out the song as well.

**Discussion**  
1. How do you feel when you see someone who is different from you?  
2. How do you feel when you see someone who is the same as you?  
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**Message**  
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