

# - Do Something about... School Violence Unit

## Day 1: Bullying

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 [lessonplanspage.com/ssodosomethingaboutschooviolenceunitday1bullying912-hm/](http://lessonplanspage.com/ssodosomethingaboutschooviolenceunitday1bullying912-hm/)

Title – Do Something about... School Violence Unit  
Day 1: Bullying

By – Do Something, Inc. / [www.dosomething.org](http://www.dosomething.org)  
Primary Subject – Social Studies  
Secondary Subjects –  
Grade Level – 9-12

Do Something about...  
School Violence  
10-Day Unit

The following lesson is the first lesson of a 10-day  
School Violence Unit from Do Something, Inc.  
Other lessons in this unit are as follows:

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### **Day 1: Bullying** (See the lesson below)

Students will be introduced to the unit and learn the definition of bullying.

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### **Day 2: What's life like in my shoes?**

Students will learn about bullying in the news and take on the perspective of someone being bullied.

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### **Day 3: Mean Girls**

Students will explore the differences and similarities of female and male violence.

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### **Day 4: School Zones**

Students will talk about safety in their own school.

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### **Day 5: Groupthink**

Students will learn about gangs and the theory of groupthink.

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### **Day 6: Stand Up!**

Students will learn about diffusion of responsibility and discuss how they should play a role in protecting others.

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### **Day 7: Responsibility**

Students will learn about the principal of diffusion of responsibility and techniques that can help them if they are ever a victim of violence.

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### **Day 8: Zero Tolerance**

Students will investigate zero tolerance laws and learn about the difficulties schools face when deciding how to handle school violence.

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### **Day 9: Still I Rise**

Students will learn about how to find inner strength and cope with bullying.

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## Day 10: Bully Pulpit

Students will launch an anti-bullying campaign in their school.

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More student resources for this cause are at:  
[www.dosomething.org/causes/school\\_violence](http://www.dosomething.org/causes/school_violence)

For more Service-Learning Curricula check out:  
[www.dosomething.org/oldpeople](http://www.dosomething.org/oldpeople)

### Day 1: Bullying

#### Goal:

Students will be introduced to the unit and learn the definition of bullying

#### Process:

1. Introduce the unit of study by reading an excerpt from a novel that deals with teen violence or cliques/gangs (*The Chocolate War*-Robert Cormier, *The Outsiders*-S.E. Hinton, *A Separate Peace*-John Knowles, *Scorpions*-Walter Dean Myers). Ask students to reflect about what it means to feel safe at school. Tell students that for the next ten days, the class will be examining bullying, violence in schools, and reflecting about how bullying affects their own school environment.
2. Relate some facts about bullying to students:
  - “About 20-30 percent of American students (i.e., over 10 million) repeatedly either engage in or are the targets of bullying tactics <sup>6</sup> that contribute to the climate of fear. <sup>7</sup> In fact, youth ages 8 to 15 rank bullying as more of a problem in their lives than discrimination, racism, or violence. <sup>8</sup> And children who view themselves as targets of bullying show high levels of anxiety and depression that impede their school performance. <sup>9</sup>” <http://www.rand.org/publications/IP/IP219/>
  - A survey of more than 15,000 sixth to tenth graders found almost a third said they’d been involved in “moderate or frequent” bullying. *Journal of the American Medical Association*
  - “Daniel Scruggs, a 12-year-old from Meriden, Conn., hanged himself in his bedroom closet in 2002. He’d been picked on so badly at school that he had missed 44 days of class that year. In 1999, a 14-year-old boy from Anchorage, Alaska, tried to kill himself because he’d been the victim of relentless harassment. Now 19, he remains physically and mentally handicapped.”  
<http://www.hon.ch/News/HSN/517687.html>

3. Start the lesson by reading students the following scenarios and asking them to vote with either a thumbs up if they think the scenario is an example of bullying, or a thumbs down if they think it is not. After you read each scenario, students should turn and talk to the person next to them and explain their vote.
- It's Monday morning and Jane is barely awake when she walks into class. Her hair looks like a mess, her glasses are crooked, and she's mis-buttoned her shirt. Lydia looks over at her and makes a mean comment out loud to the other student about Lydia's appearance. Everyone laughs. Jane feels horrible.
  - As Mr. Randolph is handing out the grades for the take home test, he stops at Brian's table and shakes his head. He announces to the class that, once again, Brian has failed the test because he never does any homework. Mr. Randolph does this every time a student who doesn't do any homework fails a test.
  - Jake is sitting with a group of people during lunch and decides to ask them if they want to go to a movie this weekend. He invites everyone at his table except for Mark, who is an outsider. Mark asks if he can join. Jake says he doesn't need any fat, ugly nerds to come along. Mark looks very upset and walks away.
  - Justin keeps sending anonymous emails to Sheila. They make comments about her appearance and are sexually harassing.
  - Susan creates an "I hate Myra" blog which invites people to list reasons why they dislike Myra. The blog has been running for a month. Susan keeps encouraging other students to check it out.
  - Chuck knows that Edward cheated on a test and is threatening to tell on him. In the locker room, Edward attacks Chuck. He throws him against the lockers and pushes him around. He threatens to continue to beat him up after school.
4. After discussing the following scenarios, ask students to write their own definition of bullying. After, explain to them that researchers on school violence have defined bullying through three characteristics:
- “(1) the behavior is aggressive and negative;
- (2) the behavior is carried out repeatedly; and
- (3) the behavior occurs in a relationship where there is an imbalance of power between the parties involved.”
- (National Center of Educational Statistics-report on school bullying
- <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2005/2005310.pdf>
- )
5. Introduce students to the concept of direct and indirect bullying. The latter is most common to female bullies and young children, and is defined by the creation of a situation where the victim is forced into social isolation. “This can be achieved through techniques such as “spreading gossip, refusing to socialize with the victim, bullying other people who wish to socialize with the victim, and criticizing the victim's manner of dress and other socially-significant markers (including the victim's race, religion, disability, etc)”.  
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bullying>
6. Ask students to go back and think about the scenarios. After learning these definitions, are there any that they would change their vote about?

