



# Let's Get Real

C U R R I C U L U M   G U I D E

**Lessons & Activities to Address Name-Calling & Bullying**

***Let's Get Real*** is a production of GroundSpark, the national organization that creates visionary films and dynamic education campaigns that move individuals and communities to take action for a more just world.

***Let's Get Real*** is part GroundSpark's Respect for All Project. The goals of The Respect for All Project are:

- To challenge stereotypes and to help children, youth and adults understand the connections between a variety of bias and identity issues;
- To promote respect and equity at the earliest age possible and on an ongoing basis, before negative attitudes and prejudices become entrenched and harmful;
- To reduce the number of acts of bullying and violence among youth; and
- To help create inclusive, welcoming school and community environments where young people and families of all backgrounds and experiences can thrive.

Through a series of groundbreaking documentary films, complementary curriculum guides and professional development workshops, The Respect for All Project has helped school districts, after-school programs, community organizations and religious groups open up important dialogue about differences of all kinds.

For more information and updated resources, visit <http://groundspark.org/respect-for-all>



# "Let's Get Real"

## CURRICULUM GUIDE

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#### THE REAL DEAL:

## Bullying has Reached Epidemic Proportions

Fifteen percent of all students who don't show up for school say they stayed away because of fear of being bullied at school.

—[www.bullyingstatistics.org/content/bullying-statistics-2010.html](http://www.bullyingstatistics.org/content/bullying-statistics-2010.html)

More than one in four (28 percent) of youth 12–18 reported that they were bullied at school. In grades 6 through 8, at least one-third of students were targets of bullying.

—*Student Reports of Bullying and Cyber-Bullying: Results From the 2009 School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey*

Sixteen percent of high school students (grades 9–12) were electronically bullied in the 2010–11 school year.

—*2011 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey*



## About the Film and Curriculum Guide

Studies consistently show that name-calling, bullying and school-based violence are on the rise. These problems have become so widespread that many young people and adults have come to accept them as inevitable rites of passage. We created *Let's Get Real* and this curriculum guide to challenge this belief.

We urge adults who work with youth to dig deeper to help kids examine the issues that underlie the bullying epidemic. Together, this film and guide reflect some of the best thinking of educators, child-health advocates and violence-prevention experts from around the country.

When we asked young people to tell us how they were singled out or targeted for harassment, issues such as race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, body size and immigration status, among others, came to the forefront. And yet, they told us, these issues are rarely, if ever, discussed in an honest way as part of the curriculum. We've designed exercises and activities to help you generate much-needed discussion about these sensitive subjects.

Though this curriculum guide is written primarily for middle and junior high school teachers, it can be easily adapted for use by high school teachers, school counselors, administrators, youth-service organizations, after-school providers and religious groups. It is divided into six main sections: We have organized information in this way to provide planning and preparation tips, pre-film *and* post-film activities, and additional assignments and resources.

While no one resource alone can eradicate name-calling and bullying, we know that fostering dialogue is the first step toward meaningful change. We at The Respect for All Project hope this film and guide will help you achieve just that. Share your stories with us at [info@groundspark.org](mailto:info@groundspark.org).

# Where to Use This Film and Guide

**In the classroom and school.** Use the film and curriculum as part of a health, language arts or social studies curriculum—or any class in which diversity or bullying is a topic or a concern. The film can provide a focal point for a school-wide anti-bullying curriculum or initiative. It can also be used during middle or junior high school orientations for students.

**In before- or after-school programs.** Use the film and curriculum to complement programs for young people around the school day.

**As a counseling, peer-education or intervention tool.** Use the film and curriculum to assist with one-on-one counseling sessions, as well as in peer-to-peer programs (with adult guidance) or situations in which intervention is advisable following a serious incident or problem.

**At parent/guardian support meetings.** Introduce the film and curriculum at parent/guardian-education and community-support meetings to help parents, guardians and other adults focus on supporting young people (and their teachers) at home and at school.

**In the community.** Use the film as part of a town hall meeting or community forum on youth issues. Show it at a film festival or as a feature presentation at a conference. Use it in programs at recreation centers, summer camps or other organizations serving young people. Watch and discuss it at your workplace.

**As a staff development tool.** Use the film and curriculum at staff-development workshops, trainings or staff-advisory meetings.

## THE REAL DEAL:

### Bullying and the Law

According to federal law—as well as some state and local laws—allowing serious and pervasive bullying and harassment to go unchecked may subject schools, youth agencies and even individual staff members to monetary damages, significant policy and program changes, and even oversight by a court. Although not every incident of bullying or harassment is legally actionable, schools or organizations that do not address bullying, harassment and hostile climate issues invite the possibility of litigation (as well as compromise the safety of students). While taking corrective measures after an incident has occurred is appropriate and necessary, it may not be enough to avoid liability: Schools and other organizations should adopt policies and programs that are designed to *prevent*, not simply to remedy, bullying and harassment.

THE REAL DEAL:

## Bullying Makes You Sick

Children and youth who are involved in bullying (as perpetrators or targets) are more likely to have psychosomatic problems (headaches, back aches, stomach pain, sleep problems, poor appetite, bed-wetting), and are more likely to want to avoid school and have lower academic achievement.

—2009 *School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey*

# What Makes “Let’s Get Real” Different From Other Films About Name-Calling and Bullying?

**Let’s Get Real features only youth voices.** Unlike other media resources on this issue, *Let’s Get Real* features young people—and only young people—speaking about their personal experiences with name-calling and bullying. Instead of having adults tell kids what to do when “the bully” does something mean to them, we decided to let young people speak directly to their peers. The entire film consists of real feelings and experiences, not dramatizations. Students talk candidly in their own everyday language, and they do not use euphemisms to sugarcoat their descriptions of what is really going on. After dozens of test screenings, we are convinced this is a powerful and unique way to get students to take the issue seriously.

**It doesn’t label any child as “the bully” who should shoulder all the blame, but instead looks at the full spectrum of behaviors from all points of view.** This film illuminates that students cannot simply be labeled one-dimensionally as victims, bullies or bystanders. In fact, most of us—adults and youth—have inhabited more than one of these roles depending on the situation. We hope that *Let’s Get Real* can help students begin to see a bit of themselves in one another—and give them the courage to express their true feelings about their own lives.

**It makes the link between bullying and prejudice.** Many different kinds of prejudice underlie much of the harassment that goes on between young people. With *Let’s Get Real*, we connected these issues together in one resource. You’ll hear many words in the film that raise important questions about how name-calling and bullying relate to stereotypes about race, religion, national origin, immigration status, gender, sexual orientation or disability, as well as more general factors such as physical appearance, social class and perceived popularity. By helping viewers make the link between bullying and prejudice, *Let’s Get Real* can be used to launch discussions about any number of issues with young people.

**It encourages honest dialogue and developing empathy as crucial steps toward a solution.** The young people in *Let’s Get Real* voice many thoughts on what to do about name-calling and bullying—giving educators a range of problem-solving ideas to explore further with students. The main strategy that we are advocating, however, is to facilitate *dialogue* between young people about their feelings about name-calling and bullying. In most schools today, there is actually very little discussion about the problem, even though there are many rules and punishments to discourage inappropriate behavior.



# Putting “Let’s Get Real” in Context

## The Middle School Challenge

Although name-calling and bullying can be a serious problem at any age, it is particularly acute among middle school and junior high school students. Children in elementary school often have a single teacher who is able to create a consistent classroom climate and enforce class rules for one group of children. This is not the case in middle school, where students have many teachers and must find their way in unstructured settings such as cafeterias and locker rooms. Students may encounter peers who are much more (or less) physically and emotionally mature than themselves. This change in environment, coupled with the preadolescent need for conformity and peer acceptance, makes the sixth through the ninth grades a breeding ground for name-calling and bullying.

## What’s at Stake for Students

Studies show that students who are bullied are distracted, suffer health consequences and often skip school altogether. Others become increasingly isolated and depressed or dejected. Recent data suggest that targets of bullying are more likely to carry weapons. Even the most resourceful teacher cannot teach a student who is mentally or physically absent. Therefore, establishing a safe and respectful learning environment is essential before learning can begin.

## Making Respect a Part of the Curriculum

While educators rightfully emphasize “formal” curricula such as math, science and reading, they often lack the tools to develop curricula through which students learn to express their feelings, resolve conflicts, and understand the societal factors that can lead to prejudice or violence. They struggle to influence the peer interactions and power dynamics that exist outside the classroom, where a large percentage of social learning actually takes place: in hallways and cafeterias, and on playgrounds. By helping students examine and internalize standards for their own behavior, *Let’s Get Real* and this guide bring this so-called “hidden curriculum” out into the open.

## Addressing Adult Behavior as Part of the Equation

This curriculum can also help adults examine their own behavior—which can, in some ways, convey as much information to students as the “formal” curriculum. There are plenty of ways in which educators may act—or fail to act—on a daily basis that have a huge impact on the young people around them. *Let’s Get Real* and this guide compel each of us to ask: How do we respond to bullying? How may we unconsciously perpetuate inequalities or negative attitudes toward some students in our midst? Are we setting an example of respect by our language, our demeanor, and the attention we give to students’ feelings and their treatment of each other? By raising these questions, this curriculum facilitates not just learning and self-discovery among young people, but also among adults.

### THE REAL DEAL:

## Bullying is Worst in Middle School

Almost 40 percent of sixth graders and about one-third of seventh and eighth graders are targets of bullying. One-third of the incidents of bullying take place right in the classroom.

—*Student Reports of Bullying and Cyber-Bullying: Results From the 2009 School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey*

### THE REAL DEAL:

## How Bullying Affects School Success

Ninth graders who said their high schools had high rates of bullying were more likely to drop out before they graduated. The dropout rate was 29 percent above average in schools with high levels of bullying and 28 percent below average in schools with low levels of bullying, even after correcting for income levels and academic performance... these results show the importance of school climate, not just individual experiences.

—*Cornell, D., Gregory, A. Huang, F. Perceived Prevalence of Teasing and Bullying Predicts High School Dropout Rates, Journal of Educational Psychology, Oct 22, 2012*

### THE REAL DEAL:

## How Bullying Affects Student Health

Victims of chronic childhood bullying are more likely to develop depression or think about suicide as adults compared with those who weren’t bullied, while former bullies are more likely to be convicted of criminal charges.

—*Harvard Mental Health Letter*  
September 2009



GETTING STARTED



# What You Should Do Before Showing “Let’s Get Real” to Students

- ✓ **Consider your audience.** *Let’s Get Real* is appropriate for students in grades six and up.
- ✓ **Preview the curriculum first.** Watch the film yourself in its entirety first *before* showing it to students. Familiarize yourself with the contents of this guide before your first lesson.
- ✓ **Prepare for the emotional impact.** Because *Let’s Get Real* deals with serious topics, some students (and adults) may have strong emotional responses to this film. This is OK, even desirable, but be sure to plan enough time for discussion and activities *both before and after the film*. Avoid situations in which the film is used to “fill up” unstructured or unsupervised time, discussed only in a single period, or used by a substitute teacher.
- ✓ **Plan how to discuss sensitive topics such as suicide and thoughts about extreme violence.** Some students in the film talk about feeling very depressed, even suicidal. Another boy in the film is so angry and hurt from being harassed that he fantasizes about hurting others with a gun. *Do not shy away from these distinct and important topics*. It is important for health and safety reasons to talk about them. If possible, consult with a suicide-prevention or violence-prevention expert or counselor.
- ✓ **Think about how to address bad words.** The young people in *Let’s Get Real* use words that are offensive and inappropriate when used in other contexts. We included their honest accounts of the language they hear or say so that groups using this film can get these words out in the open, talk about their impact and discuss why people say them. Among the words you will hear used in the film are *ass, whore, fag, bitch* and *nigger*. For additional tips on addressing language in the film, see p. 10.
- ✓ **Consider ways to make every student feel included.** When discussing power dynamics between students, it is especially important to ensure that every student has an equal voice. Avoid letting a few students dominate the discussion. For additional tips on facilitating discussion, see p. 35.
- ✓ **Share the curriculum with parents and guardians.** In advance of showing the film to your students and conducting lessons around it, send a letter to family members explaining the film and why you’re showing it. Invite them to preview the film and curriculum. (See sample letter on p. 120–121.)
- ✓ **Ask for input and collaboration from administrators/colleagues.** Invite principals, counselors and other colleagues to watch the film in advance. By doing so, the larger school community will be invested in the curriculum and prepared to address emotional issues that may arise. You may want to invite a colleague or counselor to “team teach” these lessons with you. Better yet, because bullying is a school-wide problem, ask to review the film and curriculum as part of a staff-development training.

## THE REAL DEAL:

### Keeping Parents and Guardians Informed

A letter informing parents and guardians about your curriculum plans is distinguishable from a permission, or “opt-out,” letter. It is worth noting, however, that some parents or guardians may be concerned about the language and subject matter of *Let’s Get Real*. Explain to them that the purpose of this curriculum is to use students’ own words and experiences as a tool to prevent name-calling and bullying, and to promote respect, safety, health and learning. If parents or guardians remain concerned and wish to remove their child from this unit, speak with your principal. Principals have the discretion, and in some cases an obligation, to support mandatory anti-bullying curricula in order to promote school-wide safety.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

To invite professional trainers to facilitate discussion on bullying and using *Let’s Get Real* in the classroom, contact The Respect for All Project at 800-405-3322 or [www.groundspark.org](http://www.groundspark.org)

## THE REAL DEAL:

# Aligning With Standards

Many educators are acutely aware of the need to align their lessons with state and/or national standards by subject. For ideas on how to conduct lessons by subject, see pp. 106–109. For additional information, visit [www.education-world.com/standards](http://www.education-world.com/standards).

- ✓ **Review your district policy on supplemental curricula.** You may need to observe special policies governing the use of supplemental materials in the classroom or take steps to have the film adopted as part of the curriculum. Ask your principal.



### ***A Closer Look: More About “Bad Words”***

It’s important for adults and students to get on the same page about which words are being used among students as put-downs, why they are used, and how they might be motivated by internal prejudice or bias.

However, conducting a lesson about slurs is hard, especially when we can’t mention the words themselves. This is probably why schools avoid lessons on the subject altogether, leaving students to navigate and cope with the world of slurs on their own.

Some educators believe that explicitly discussing slurs in a structured, safe and educational setting helps to demystify them by fostering a shared understanding of slurs and their impact and giving students an outlet to share personal experiences, possibly for the first time, without worrying that they need to edit themselves.

Other educators adamantly believe that the explicit naming of “bad words” is never appropriate, even in lessons designed to prevent their future use. They believe that the sharing of slurs may be deeply offensive to or uncomfortable for individual teachers as well as students, and may even serve to normalize the use of such words.

We believe it is up to each school community to resolve this question on its own. Some points to consider:

1. Discuss and listen to the opinions of students, parents, colleagues, administrators and, most of all, yourself as you develop your approach on slurs.
2. If you decide to allow instructional sharing of slurs in class, make sure there are clear guidelines for when and how students may use certain words, as well as a way for students to express discomfort at any time.
3. If you and your students decide instead to adopt a coding system for bad words—e.g., “the n word” [or perhaps *“the word that Umma used in the film”*—be sure everyone knows and agrees on what each code word stands for. Keep in mind that even if students want to avoid using slurs in class, they may not know how to refer to a subject respectfully. You might say, “If you aren’t sure of the respectful word for someone or something, ask.”

Remember to add your new protocol on how to discuss slurs or inappropriate language to your list of classroom agreements.



# Planning an Anti-Bullying Unit Using "Let's Get Real"

## Objectives are to help students:

- Discuss their feelings about bullying
- Know they are not alone by drawing parallels between their experiences and those of students in the film
- Understand the different roles of bullying (target, perpetrator, ally, bystander)
- Develop empathy for others
- Think about the underlying prejudice and bias that foster bullying
- Develop tangible skills for coping with bullying
- Learn how to become an ally and intervene successfully
- Work toward ongoing change in classroom and school environments

## Suggestions for planning your time:

1. **Devote a sufficient number of class periods to this topic.** While technically you could simply show the film, it is best used as a springboard for in-depth learning. We have designed a model unit that calls for 12 class periods (see p. 13). While we realize this may be unrealistic in many school settings, we urge you to be creative and ambitious in how much time you make for this unit of study.

*At a minimum, we recommend you spend at least three class periods on this curriculum (see p. 15).*

2. **Allow time for discussion both *before* and *after* the film itself.** Regardless of how much time you have overall, ensure that you have time to prepare students for what they are about to see and time to help them process what they have just seen.
3. **Talk through feelings and issues *immediately* after watching the film.** Do not wait until the next day! If possible, arrange to have a one-hour period the day you show the film. The film itself is 35 minutes in length.
4. **Show the film without interruption once.** If possible, go back and review the film chapter by chapter.



### **Why show the film in its entirety and in segments?**

Every copy of *Let's Get Real* includes an uninterrupted version of the film, followed immediately by a version broken into eight chapters. Beginning on p. 36, this guide includes discussion questions and suggested activities for each chapter. *(Cont. on p. 12)*





### **Why show the film in its entirety and in segments?**

*(Cont. from p. 11)* It might seem redundant, but in piloting this curriculum, we found that—in order to process it fully—many students really do need to see the film once as a whole, and then again in sections. Some students may not feel comfortable discussing any part of the film for more than 10 minutes at a time. We therefore recommend an extended unit making full use of the chapter-by-chapter discussion starters and activities in this guide. Of course, each class is different—you know best what your students require. Do what feels right for you and your students.



# RECOMMENDED CURRICULUM: 12 class periods

CLASS PERIOD	GOAL	ACTIVITY	PAGE
1	Unit preparation	“Establishing Classroom Agreements”	19
		“What is Bullying?”	21
2	Unit preparation	“Vocabulary Exercise”	23
		“Youth Resources”	28
3*	View film, share initial feelings	Introducing the Film: Sample Script	26
		Show <i>Let’s Get Real</i> (35 minutes)	—
		“First Reactions”	57
		“Survey: What’s Going on at Our School?”	60
4	Reflect on students in film; discuss religion, gossip, snitching	Show Chapter 1 of film (5 minutes)	—
		Discussion Starters for Chapter 1	36
		“Concentric Circles”	62
5	Discuss race, national origin, cyber-bullying; tie film to personal experience	Show Chapter 2 of film (5 minutes)	—
		Discussion Starters for Chapter 2	38
		“Think of a Time”	66
6	Discuss race, skin color, groups	Show Chapter 3 of film (5 minutes)	—
		Discussion Starters for Chapter 3	40
		“Racial Slurs” <b>OR</b>	68
		“Race Memory”	72
7	Discuss how and why students bully; popularity; build dialogue skills	Show Chapter 4 of film (5 minutes)	—
		Discussion Starters for Chapter 4	42
		“What I Want You to Know”	73
8	Discuss sexual harassment, approaching adults as a group	Show Chapter 5 of film (5 minutes)	—
		Discussion Starters for Chapter 5	44
		“Flirting or Hurting?” <b>OR</b>	76
		“Stand Up as a Group”	79
9	Discuss sexual orientation, gender non-conformity, suicide	Show Chapter 6 of film (5 minutes)	—
		Discussion Starters for Chapter 6	46
		“Act Like a Guy/Act Like a Girl”	80
10	Discuss class/income, appearance, violence; connecting bullying and societal prejudice	Show Chapter 7 of film (5 minutes)	—
		Discussion Starters for Chapter 7	49
		“Systems of Privilege”	86
11	Discuss being an ally, responses to bullying; building empathy through role-playing	Show Chapter 8 of film (5 minutes)	—
		Discussion Starters for Chapter 8	52
		“Not Just a Bystander!” <b>OR</b>	91
		“In the Hot Seat”	98
12	Discuss ways to change self, class, school	Personal Action Plan	99
		“Class Action Plan” <b>OR</b>	100
		“School-Wide Action Plan”	102
		Student Evaluation of <i>Let’s Get Real</i> Unit	104

\* If possible, arrange to have a one-hour class to enable more writing and discussion immediately following the film.



# ALTERNATE CURRICULUM: If you only have three class periods

## Your focus should be to:

- Prepare students for the unit with classroom agreements and an introduction to the film
- Show the film
- Help students share their feelings after watching the film and relate the film to their own lives
- Use the film as a way to talk about bullying and prejudice in your school or community
- Help students translate their feelings into positive behaviors and actions

CLASS PERIOD	GOAL	ACTIVITY	PAGE
1	Unit preparation	“Establishing Classroom Agreements”	19
		“What is Bullying?”	21
		“Youth Resources”	28
2	View film, share initial feelings	Introducing the Film: Sample Script	26
		Show <i>Let’s Get Real</i>	—
		“First Reactions”	57
		“Survey: What’s Going on at our School?”	60
3	Discuss ways to change self, class, school	“Think of a Time”	66
		Discuss bullying at your site	—
		“Personal Action Plan” <u>OR</u>	99
		“Class Action Plan”	100



# PRE-FILM ACTIVITIES



# Establishing Classroom Agreements

## GOALS

To create a safe learning environment; to ensure respectful listening of the film and each other

## SUGGESTED TIME

30 minutes

## RESOURCES

Poster or transparency and projector for displaying classroom agreements

Classroom agreements are crucial to creating a safe classroom environment and helping to foster mutual respect. When watching or discussing this film, in which students talk about personal and emotional experiences, some students in your class may be prone to talk or act out inappropriately. It is helpful to begin by preparing students to watch the film and treat the subject matter seriously.

1. Explain (Possible language):

*For several periods we are going to talk about name-calling and bullying and do a lot of activities around this subject: what it is, why it happens and how we experience it here at school. We are also going to see a film in which other students talk about name-calling and bullying. A lot of feelings are going to come up. It's a sensitive subject that can sometimes make us feel uncomfortable. It's important to agree on some rules for how we are going to conduct ourselves.*

2. Ask students what the purpose of classroom agreements are and why they are useful.

3. Write classroom agreement suggestions from students on the board. If you wish, have them write their suggestions on cards or pieces of paper. You may need to help them if they get “stuck.” Here are some suggested agreements:

- Active and respectful listening
- Don't laugh at someone who is trying to talk
- Don't judge people by what they have to say
- Don't interrupt—raise your hand to speak
- Only join the main conversation—no side talk
- Disagree respectfully (Challenge the message, not the messenger)
- Use “I” statements, not generalizations (Each person is the expert on his/her own experience)



- Keep it confidential *and* in the room—don't take it outside
- Use respectful language (no put-downs, mean comments, teasing or disrespectful body language)
- Everyone has the right to pass or not answer a particular question
- Share the air—be mindful that everyone needs time to speak
- Assume the best intentions of everyone
- Point it out when someone says something hurtful
- Ask if you aren't sure how to say something respectfully

4. Put the final list of agreements on a poster or overhead transparency to easily refer to in the future.

5. Review the classroom agreements at the beginning of each period to help set the right tone:

- Review the purpose of classroom agreements and what they mean.
- Have the class assess how well it is doing on each agreement and focus on the ones it needs to work on.
- Be prepared to stop an activity and return to the agreements if they are not being followed.



### ***A Closer Look: More on Confidentiality***

In almost every case, adults should respect their students' confidentiality and anonymity with respect to what students say in the classroom. In many school districts and in certain states, however, teachers may not maintain confidentiality on certain topics such as child abuse, or evidence of danger to self or others. Refer to your school policy. You may wish to let students know in advance that you are required to report some kinds of information (be sure to elaborate what kinds) to other adults in order to help students in certain situations. Lack of confidentiality notwithstanding, you should encourage students to talk to an adult if they are dealing with those situations.



# What is Bullying?

## GOALS

To establish a common understanding of bullying; to address disrespectful behavior more generally; to begin private reflection on students' own experiences with bullying

## SUGGESTED TIME

20 minutes

## RESOURCES

None

### FOR THE INSTRUCTOR:

Before discussing with students, familiarize yourself with the definition of the word *bullying*.

#### ***Bullying Defined***

Most experts define *bullying* as unprovoked, repeated and aggressive actions or threats of action by one or more persons who have (or are perceived to have) more power or status than their victim in order to cause fear, distress or harm. Bullying can be physical, verbal, psychological or a combination of these three. Specific examples include name-calling, taunting, teasing and put-downs; saying or writing inappropriate things about a person; deliberately excluding a person from activities or conversation; threatening a person with bodily harm; hitting, kicking, tripping, shoving or otherwise inappropriately touching a person; taking or damaging a person's belongings; and making a person do things he or she does not want to do. Bullying can also occur through electronic means via webpage and social media postings, e-mails, chat rooms and text messages.

The above definition can be broken into four key components. Bullying involves:

- Unprovoked actions or threats
- Motivated by an intent to cause fear, distress or harm
- Repeated and aggressive acts
- Against someone with less power

Think of some examples of bullying involving:

- Physical acts
- Verbal acts
- Emotional or psychological acts

Some experts include other components or types of bullying in their definition of bullying. Most distinguish bullying from isolated acts or teasing that does not involve intentional, aggressive behavior or a power differential between the target and perpetrator. Whatever definition of bullying you decide to work with, keep the definition and examples of bullying handy as you conduct this activity.



**WITH STUDENTS:**

1. Explain to students that, as an introduction to this unit, you want them to think about this question:

***What is bullying?***

You may wish to start off as a group, or to have them first think about this question alone and/or in pairs or triads. (See discussion on **THINK-PAIR-SHARE** on p. 35.) Encourage students to come up with examples of bullying by thinking about what they have seen, heard or experienced. Explain that they should not reveal names of real people involved in acts of bullying, and they do not have to share personal experiences at this point. Ask them to think of at least five examples of bullying.

2. Ask for volunteers to come up with a list of examples of bullying. You may wish to highlight the kind of bullying involved (physical, verbal, emotional). Ask follow-up questions to elicit a full range of bullying that students witness or experience.
3. After all examples are written down, ask:

*What is the difference between bullying and teasing?*

*What is the difference between bullying and disrespectful behavior?*

Keeping in mind the components of bullying on p.21, help students see that while not all acts are bullying, they may still be disrespectful, or intentionally or unintentionally hurtful. You may wish to review the students' examples as a group to see whether they represent bullying or something else.

4. Write down a definition of bullying on the board with input from the class. Then discuss how disrespectful behavior, though it might not be defined as bullying in every instance, may lead to an environment where bullying or hostile behavior is accepted.
5. Conclude by stating that the goal of this unit is to examine our feelings about bullying AND about promoting respect in the classroom. Help students understand the place of bullying within the larger context of disrespectful behavior and name-calling.



# Vocabulary Exercise

## GOALS

To develop a common understanding of terms that are used in the film or discussion; to introduce diversity-related words and concepts, relating them to students' own life experiences

## SUGGESTED TIME

20 minutes

## RESOURCES

Copies of handout on p.25

1. Give one copy of the vocabulary sheet on p. 25 to each student. Divide the room into three sections and assign a column of words to each section. Ask students to silently think about what each word in their assigned column means. Tell them it's OK not to know the meaning of many of the words. Say that you want them to take a few minutes to think of an example of how the word might be used based on their own experience (what they have seen or heard or felt or read).
2. Have students turn to someone in their section and take turns discussing:
  - What words they knew
  - How they would use that word based on their own experience
  - What words they did not know and what they might mean

Help students keep time, and signal when the next part of this discussion should begin.

3. Starting with Column A of the handout, lead a discussion on the first word by asking if anyone assigned to that column is willing to share his or her definition. If someone would like, he or she may also give an example of how to use the word based on personal experience. You will want to cover some words quickly. For others, you may wish to ask a few students to help define the word.

As you hear terms that help define the word, write them on the board or an overhead projector. Recite a definition of the word that emerges from all the students' responses.

Move on to the first word in Column B, and then to the first word in Column C, and so on. Alternate columns.

**Note:** It's OK if the students' definitions are not exact replicas of the definitions we've provided below, as long as they fairly reflect the meaning of the words. Your goal is to encourage students to come up with workable definitions that derive from their own language and experiences.



### Teaching Tip

Compare and contrast words. For example, ask students what the difference is between *tolerance* and *respect*. Between *prejudice* and *discrimination*? Are these words synonyms or not?

4. Discuss the words in each column that no one was familiar with. You might first give students an example of or a context for how the word might be used and ask students to come up with the meaning.
5. Consider typing up the “class definitions” of the words and passing them out the next day for students to keep.



*Assignment:* This guide includes dozens of vocabulary words in this exercise and in the pages that follow. For homework, have students choose five words that they are not familiar with. For each word, have students do the following:

- Write the word five times.
- Define the word.
- Use the word in a sentence.

## Sample Definitions of Vocabulary for Teachers and Adults



### Teaching Tip

If you need to save time, you may wish to display the sample definitions below and refer back to them during the unit.

**Ally (n.)** a person who is on your side or helps you in a situation

**Bully (v.)** to threaten, intimidate, exclude or hurt someone with words or actions

**Bystander (n.)** a person who witnesses an act or an event without participating in it

**Discrimination (n.)** the act of treating one or more people differently or worse because of a category they belong to (often by someone who has more power such as a boss, a company or a government)

**Diversity (n.)** a combination of people of different backgrounds

**Empathy (n.)** a feeling of knowing and appreciating what another person is feeling

**Harass (v.)** to bother or upset someone repeatedly through words and actions

**Hate crime (n.)** a threatening, often physical attack on someone that is motivated by prejudice

**Humiliate (v.)** to deeply embarrass or ridicule someone to make him or her feel lower as a person

**Prejudice (n.)** an opinion (often negative) about people that is made without an adequate basis, before you even know them

**Respect (v.)** to appreciate or admire someone and express that through positive words or behavior

**Slur (n.)** a disrespectful and inappropriate word or term that is intended to put someone down

**Stereotype (n.)** a description of someone that is based on an often inaccurate assumption about a whole category of people; **(v.)** to make such an assumption

**Target (n.)** a person or place that others aim to reach or hit; a person picked on or bullied by others

**Tolerate (v.)** to let someone be different from you; to not upset or bother someone for being different





Let's  
Get Real

## Vocabulary

### Column A

Ally  
Bully  
Empathy  
Harass  
Discrimination

### Column B

Bystander  
Tolerate  
Diversity  
Humiliate  
Prejudice

### Column C

Target  
Respect  
Stereotype  
Hate crime  
Slur

# Introducing the Film: Sample Script

We've provided this "script" for expediency but, by all means, feel free to use your own words! If you are short on post-film discussion time, you may wish to introduce the film one period or one day ahead of time.



## **Keep in Mind**

During and after the film, students' laughter or jokes may be signs of disrespect or inattention, but they may also reflect discomfort with a topic that deeply affects them. Let students know that it is OK to feel uncomfortable, and discuss constructive and respectful ways to express that discomfort, such as through writing or discussion after the film is over.

## **Introduce the Film**

*We're about to see a film called **Let's Get Real**. This is a documentary film, which means that the people in the film are not actors reading a script. They are real students sharing their experiences on the topic of name-calling and bullying. This may be a difficult and emotional topic for some of you, but I think you are mature enough to handle it. The students in the film talk about how they have been targets and bystanders of bullying, and sometimes how they have bullied others. Hearing this might remind you of things that have happened to you, about things you have seen, or even about things you have done to others in the past. It may make you feel sad, ashamed, embarrassed or angry. That is normal and understandable.*

*There are also moments in this film where students talk about doing hurtful or violent things to others or to themselves. We'll talk about these topics, as well as our feelings about the film, after it is over. If at any point you feel you need to stop watching for any reason, please quietly let me know.*

## **Talk About the Language**

*I also want to talk with you for a minute about some of the language used in this film. The students in **Let's Get Real** have been allowed to use the words that people say to hurt one another in order to get these words out in the open. They have been encouraged to talk as they normally would or as if they were talking to a close friend. So you are going to hear words that are not usually appropriate for use in this room or on this campus. After the film, we will talk more about how we can refer to these words in a way that makes everyone feel comfortable. It is OK to refer to these words in this room, in the way we will agree upon, while we are doing this unit. That does not mean using these words is OK outside of this unit.*



## Encourage Them to Listen With Respect

*Let's think about how to listen to this film respectfully. Students in Let's Get Real will be talking about personal and even embarrassing things. You might feel like you want to laugh or say something out loud during the film. It's understandable to feel that way, but I want us to be careful not to distract those around us. There will be a chance after the film to do some writing and activities to express our feelings about it. I want us to think about how we would want to be listened to if we were talking about the same kinds of things.*

## Explain the Unit —Adjust According to Your Lesson Plan

*We are going to watch the whole film first, then do some writing and talking about it. Over the next few days, we will go back and watch the film in smaller segments and talk about each part in greater detail. This entire unit will last several days.*

## Give Them Something to Think About

*Let's Get Real is 35 minutes long. As you watch it, what I would like you to do is focus on each of the students in the film. Think about what role they are in: Are they the target of the bullying? Do they bully other students? Are they an ally to someone who has been bullied? Are some students in more than one role?*

*Think about how **you** relate to each of the students in the film. And think of the different reasons **why** students bully each other.*



# Youth Resources

## GOALS

To ensure students know where to get help or more information about topics covered in the unit

## SUGGESTED TIME

5 minutes

## RESOURCES

Copies of handout on pp. 29–30

1. Fill in information on the handout on pp. 29–30 and distribute copies to students. Local information is best, when available. Include staff resources for your school or district, and don't forget peer resources.

If local resources are not available, consider statewide or national resources. For suggestions, see Appendix, pp. 122–124.

2. Take a few minutes to review the information on the handout with your students. Let them know they can see you privately before or after class if they have any questions.



# Getting Help or Advice

You or someone you know...	Hotlines		Websites
	National	Local	
...is depressed and thinking of suicide	<p><i>Listing of national hotlines at <a href="http://suicidehotlines.com/national.html">http://suicidehotlines.com/national.html</a></i></p> <p><b>1-800-SUICIDE</b> <i>You will be directed to your local suicide-prevention line</i></p> <p><b>1-866-4-U-TREVOR</b> The Trevor Project <i>Suicide hotline for gay &amp; questioning youth</i></p>		<p><b><a href="http://www.befrienders.org">www.befrienders.org</a></b> <i>Site in 21 languages</i></p> <p><b><a href="http://www.suicidal.com">www.suicidal.com</a></b></p> <p><i>Find your local suicide hotline at <a href="http://www.suicidehotlines.com">www.suicidehotlines.com</a></i></p> <p><b><a href="http://www.thetrevorproject.org">www.thetrevorproject.org</a></b> The Trevor Project</p>
...needs information and support for being gay or lesbian	<p><b>1-202-467-8180</b> Parents, Families &amp; Friends of Lesbians &amp; Gays (PFLAG)</p> <p><b>1-866-4-U-TREVOR</b> The Trevor Project <i>Suicide hotline for gay &amp; questioning youth</i></p> <p><b>1-800-399-PEER</b> Fenway Community Health Center <i>Peer-listening line</i></p> <p><i>Gay/lesbian hotline for all ages</i> <b>1-888-THE-GLNH</b> <b>(1-888-843-4564)</b></p> <p><b>1-800-246-PRIDE</b> <b>(246-7743)</b></p>		<p><b><a href="http://www.pflag.org">www.pflag.org</a></b></p> <p><b><a href="http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org">www.safeschoolscoalition.org</a></b></p> <p><b><a href="http://www.thetrevorproject.org">www.thetrevorproject.org</a></b></p> <p><b><a href="http://www.youthtalkline.org">www.youthtalkline.org</a></b></p> <p><b><a href="http://www.transyouthsupportnetwork.org/resources">www.transyouthsupportnetwork.org/resources</a></b></p> <p><b><a href="http://www.glsen.org">www.glsen.org</a></b></p>
...needs information on harassment based on race, religion or ethnicity	<p><b>1-800-552-6843</b> US Commission on Civil Rights <i>Hotline for reporting hate crimes</i></p>	<p>Most ACLU chapter: have local hotlines; numbers accessible from main website</p>	<p><b><a href="http://www.aclu.org/affiliates">www.aclu.org/affiliates</a></b> American Civil Liberties Union <i>to find your local ACLU chapter</i></p> <p><b><a href="http://www.adl.org">www.adl.org</a></b> Anti-Defamation League <i>(anti-Semitism)</i></p> <p><b><a href="http://www.partnersagainsthate.org">www.partnersagainsthate.org</a></b></p>

(OVER)

# Getting Help or Advice

You or someone you know...	Hotlines		Websites
	National	Local	
...is so angry you want to hurt someone else	<p><b>1-800-442-HOPE</b> National Youth Crisis Hotline <i>Crisis intervention and school tip line for reporting weapons or homicidal remarks</i></p> <p><b>1-800-999-9999</b> Covenant House Nine Line <i>Crisis intervention and dealing with angry feelings</i></p>		<p><b>www.mentalhealthamerica.net/go/information</b> Mental Health America</p> <p><b>www.nimh.nih.gov</b> National Institute of Mental Health</p>
...has been hurt or harassed sexually	<p><b>1-800-656-HOPE</b> Rape, Abuse &amp; Incest National Network <i>24-hour sexual-assault line</i></p>		<p><b>www.feminist.org/911/harass.html</b> Feminist Majority Harassment Page <i>Access to state and local organizations dealing with sexual harassment, including 24-hour hotlines</i></p> <p><b>centers.rainn.org</b> <i>Local crisis centers by state</i></p>
...wants to learn more about how to stop name-calling and bullying			<p><b>www.stopbullying.gov</b> US Health &amp; Human Services Dept. anti-bullying campaign</p> <p><b>www.tolerance.org/mix-it-up</b> Mix It Up, a program of Teaching Tolerance</p> <p><b>www.opheliaproject.org</b></p>





DISCUSSION STARTERS  
BY FILM CHAPTER



# Tips for Facilitating Discussion

*Let's Get Real* is divided into eight chapters, each of which covers a variety of topics. The following pages include discussion questions and topics related to each chapter of the film. The chart on pp. 113–117 may be used as a reference for the names of students and issues raised in the film. Each day, review classroom agreements with students, including how to discuss slurs.

## Using the THINK-PAIR-SHARE Format

With this curriculum, it is important that each student is heard, even though this may not always be possible in a large group. By encouraging students to reflect individually and then pairing with someone else, the **THINK-PAIR-SHARE** format provides each student with important reflection time and an audience for his or her thoughts.

1. Have students **THINK** about the chapter of the film. Ask them to journal or write down their thoughts first.
2. Ask students to form **PAIRS** or triads to discuss one or more main topics for each chapter. You may want to write down questions for them to answer.
3. Have one person from each pair/triad **SHARE** the thinking of the small group with the class.



### **Keep in Mind**

Establishing pairs or triads can be tricky: Some students feel anxious finding a partner or worry that no one will pick them. Others may wish to avoid being paired with someone who makes them uncomfortable. And, of course, some students want to be paired only with their closest peers, which is desirable for some, but not all, activities. For activities involving sharing, facilitate pairing students with someone they trust. They can provide this information confidentially to you on a piece of paper or an index card. For less personal exercises, you may wish to have students count off or rotate partners.

Consider posting the following guidelines in your classroom for working in pairs or groups:

1. Each person has equal time to talk.
2. Demonstrate active listening.
3. Don't interrupt.
4. Respect your partner's privacy.
5. When it's your turn, respond to the question—not to what your partner said.



# CHAPTER 1

## MAIN OBJECTIVES

Explore why students who have been bullied may question their own identity or feel that reporting bullying to an adult is “snitching”

Discuss bullying and name-calling based on religious beliefs or on identities that come from religion

Discuss experience of students who are disabled and students who are in special education and why students bully them

## KIDS IN THIS CHAPTER



GABE



GABY



AMINA



IQWAK



NATALIE

## KEY VOCABULARY

**Disability (n.)** a mental or physical condition that places special challenges on a person

**Jew (n.)** a person who follows or identifies with the religion of Judaism. There are more than 13 million Jews worldwide, the majority of whom live in the United States, Israel and other parts of Europe. Some Jews wear small caps called *yarmulkes* or *kippot* to acknowledge God’s presence and to show observance of the *Torah*, the Jewish holy book.

In the film, Gabe says that people make fun of him for being Jewish.

**Muslim (n.)** a person who follows or identifies with the religion of Islam. *Islam* means “surrender to the will of Allah (God).” There are an estimated 5.5 million Muslims in North America and 1 billion Muslims worldwide.

Amina talks about being bullied by other students for being Muslim. In the film, she wears a woman’s scarf that covers her head and neck area, called a *hijab*. Many Muslim men and women follow rules of dress that come from the *Quran*, Islam’s holy text.

(cont.)

## Discussion Starters: THINK-PAIR-SHARE

**Snitching.** Gabe talks about not wanting to tell a teacher that another student made fun of his religion because it would be snitching. Why do we feel like reporting a bad thing is snitching? How does someone who bullies us benefit from our feeling like we are snitching? How can you get an adult involved without it feeling like snitching? What would be helpful for an adult to do? How do you go about finding the right adult?

**Religious belief or identity.** Gabe was also confused about why someone would make fun of him for being Jewish. He said that another student was looking for anything that was different. He had never heard the word *Jewish* used as a slur, and it made him question whether or not being Jewish was bad. Have you ever questioned something about yourself after other people harassed you for it? What does *Jewish* mean? Why are some people hostile to people who practice certain religions? What is a religion? What do you think it feels like to have something as personal as your cultural identity or spiritual beliefs ridiculed?



### Teaching Tip

The religions listed in the vocabulary for this chapter are included because students in the film refer to them. Expand your lesson by including other terms such as *Buddhist*, *Christian*, *Hindu* and other world religions. Do students or adults who identify with these religions experience name-calling or bullying too?

**Special education.** How are special education students treated here? Why would a person tease someone who is in special education?

**Disabled students.** Do you know anyone in a wheelchair in your school, family or community? Do any of you know of someone who has picked on another person who has a disability? Why do you think he or she did it? How do you think this might make a student with a disability feel? Are all disabilities visible? What are examples of disabilities that are not so visible? Why would we want to be careful before making assumptions about a person's ability? Why would we want to be careful before judging someone simply because he or she has a disability?



## Possible Activities & Assignments

*Activity:* **Concentric Circles**, p. 62

*Assignment:* Have students write a two-paragraph essay on stereotypes and religion. The first paragraph should include their definition of a stereotype and how they have personally been affected by stereotypes. The second paragraph should focus on stereotypes about people with different religious identities and what the student thinks about them.

**Sikh (n.)** a person who follows or identifies with the religion of Sikhism.

The name of the religion means "learner." There are approximately 23 million people, most living in India or Pakistan, who follow or identify with Sikhism, the fifth largest religion in the world. In the film, Iqwak says that other students make fun of his appearance. Sikhs regard their hair (*kesh*) as an article of faith, and as such, is meant to be respected and identify one as a Sikh. Many Sikh males, and some females, wear a turban over their uncut hair to distinguish themselves as a Sikh.

**Special education (n.)** a type of class for students who have unique or different learning needs from most students.

### THE REAL DEAL:

## How Bullying Relates to Prejudice

A 2007-2009 survey of California students funded by the California Department of Education found the most common specific reason cited for identity-related bullying or harassment was because of race or national origin, with about 18 percent of students in grades 7, 9, and 11 reporting at least one bullying incident in the past year for this reason. The rate for African-American students was 23 percent, Asian-American, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander students 22 percent, Latino students 15 percent and white students 11 percent .

Eleven percent reported harassment based on gender (male or female), nine percent based on physical or mental disability, 12 percent based on actual or perceived sexual orientation, and 11 percent based on religion.

-- *Peer-to-Peer Violence, US Commission on Civil Rights, September 2011*

# CHAPTER 2

## MAIN OBJECTIVES

Discuss rumors, gossip, cyber-bullying, and whether and how girls and boys bully in different ways

Discuss bullying and stereotyping of students who are immigrants, have difficulty speaking English or have accents

Introduce discussion of how to be an ally and examine the fear of standing up to bullies/being an ally

Introduce discussion of race and ethnicity

## KIDS IN THIS CHAPTER



BRITTANY



JOSEPH



NICK



NATHAN



ZAID

## KEY VOCABULARY

**Biracial (adj.)** belonging to two different races

**Cyber-bullying (n.)** the practice of harassment, threatening, spreading nasty rumors and gossip, or posting images of somebody through social media, email, or text messages

**Ethnocentric (adj.)** making views or judgments about the world, other cultures or ethnic groups based on standards or behaviors centered around one's own culture or ethnic group

**Middle East (n.)** a region populated by different ethnic and religious groups that lies roughly where Africa, Europe and Asia connect

**National origin (n.)** the country of one's birth or prior residence

**Rumor (n.)** information about someone that spreads and can be exaggerated, untrue or hurtful

## Discussion Starters: THINK-PAIR-SHARE

**Rumors, gossip, the way girls bully.** How are rumors and gossip a type of bullying? Why is this kind of bullying so particularly painful? How do you stop a rumor or gossip? Brittany was really upset that her friends turned on her on the last day of school. Have you ever experienced friends turning on you without any warning? How did that make you feel? Did you try to find out why that happened? Have you ever turned on a friend suddenly? Why?

**Race.** Why do you think Brittany's classmates made fun of her eyes and being half-Chinese or biracial? Why would somebody point this out about Asian-Americans?

**Cyber-bullying.** Brittany explained that students said mean things to her by e-mail. Have you ever experienced this? Why would students use e-mail in this way? What is so harmful about cyber-bullying?

**Fear of standing up to bullying/being an ally.** Nick talks about being afraid to step in and stop harassment while it is happening because he is afraid he will then be targeted. Joseph says it's like "all of them versus me." How many of you feel this way? What else can make someone reluctant to stand up for another person who is being targeted? How did Zaid act that was different? Why do you think he did this?

**Bullying based on national origin, immigration status and against those who can't speak English.** Zaid talked about his friend coming to a new school and not speaking any English. How are students whose English is still developing treated here? How many of you have a parent, guardian or family member whose first language is not English? A grandparent? What do you think it would feel like not to be able to speak English or have an accent and feel that people are making fun of you? How could you defend yourself?



## Possible Assignments & Activities With This Chapter

*Activity:* **Think of a Time**, p. 66

*Assignment:* Have students prepare a brief oral or written report on one of the following:

1. What are examples of cyber-bullying (bullying through the Internet or other electronic means of communication) and how does cyber-bullying harm people?
2. Interview someone you know who grew up in another country and ask him or her how it felt to be a newcomer to the United States, as well as what kinds of things would have made the transition to this country easier.

### THE REAL DEAL:

## Cyber-Bullying

Today millions of young people spend hours everyday at their computers. Cyber-bullying involves the use of email, social media, instant messaging, websites, blogs, or cell phones to harass, threaten, spread nasty gossip, or post hurtful images of others.

The Suicide Prevention Resource Center reports that victims of cyberbullying are at risk from higher levels of depression than victims of face-to-face bullying.

### THE REAL DEAL:

## Non-English-Speaking Households in the US

21.9 % of school-age children and youth speak a language other than English at home.

-US 2010 Census

# CHAPTER 3

## MAIN OBJECTIVES

Explore different groups in school

Explore bullying based on race and skin color, including the use of racial slurs and intraracial bullying

Discuss going along with—and the fear of opposing—bullying

## KIDS IN THIS CHAPTER



UMMA

JAZMYNE

KHYBER

TINA

SOLOMON

KATE

MATTHEW

## KEY VOCABULARY

**Ethnicity (n.)** an identity based on a particular cultural or geographical background

**Immigrant (n.)** a person who enters and lives in one country from another country

**Race (n.)** a group of people with common physical characteristics or a common identity

**Racial slur (n.)** a disrespectful and inappropriate word or term intended to put someone down because of his or her race

**Racist (adj.)** a term describing an attitude or behavior based on an inaccurate or disrespectful assumption about a particular race

## Discussion Starters: THINK-PAIR-SHARE

**Groups at school.** What groups do the students in the film say exist at their schools? What groups are there at this school? Could you draw a map of our school based on where different groups hang out and where it feels safer to be than other places? What places would you draw? What kinds of bullying happen between groups?

**Race, use of racial slurs, intraracial bullying.** Do students use the “n” word here? What do you think of Umma saying that some people think it is not OK to use the “n” word unless you are African-American? Another student in the film says that she and her Latino friends may use the word *immigrant* to refer to each other, but if a non-Latino person said that to her, it would be offensive. Can you give other examples of slurs that are OK to use within a group but not OK if someone outside the group uses them? Are there tensions around the use of these kinds of words at our school?

**Bullying based on skin color.** Jazmyne and Khyber talk about being lighter- and darker-skinned African-Americans, and how other African-Americans tease them about their skin color. Is this different from teasing “outside the race,” as Umma puts it? Is teasing someone of the same race for being lighter- or darker-skinned hurtful? Is it racist?

**Race/ethnicity.** One Latina student says she would be offended if someone called her an “immigrant.” Why would someone call a person an “immigrant” in an offensive way? What stereotypes, if any, do Latino students face regarding their nationality? Tina talked about students calling her “Ching Chang Chong” or “Bruce Lee’s daughter.” Why would students say things like this about Tina? Discuss name-calling against Asian-Americans that treats them like foreigners or not really “American.” Why does this happen? Are white (Caucasian/European-American) students bullied for racial reasons? In what ways? What’s the same or different about how white students are targeted and how students of color are targeted?

**Going along with bullying.** Jazmyne says she doesn't want to seem like a crybaby so she just laughs along, but she really feels like telling them to shut up and call them something in return. Why would Jazmyne feel like a crybaby for speaking up when something bothers her? Who benefits when we are made to feel like a crybaby when we express our feelings? Give an example of how your friends have joked about you and you went along with it and laughed, but deep down it bothered you.



### ***A Closer Look: More About Racial Harassment***

It is clear that racial harassment at school is as complex as race itself.

As students in *Let's Get Real* explain, some students may be harassed because they are of a different race; some harassment may be intraracial and based, for example, on skin color. A student who is biracial may be bullied for being different from those of a certain race or from any one race. Some "racial" harassment may stem from a person's national origin, immigration status, English-speaking ability, religion, or a combination of these factors.

Among other things, racial harassment may involve unwelcome and threatening physical contact; verbal or written slurs, jokes or comments; the defacement or destruction of property with the intent to harm or threaten based on race; and the display of racially demeaning objects, symbols or images.

Schools that receive federal funding must take steps to stop racial harassment—including peer-to-peer harassment—and prevent its recurrence. See 42 U.S.C. §2000d (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964) (proscribing racial discrimination).

## **Possible Activities & Assignments**



**Activities:** **Racial Slurs**, p. 68

**Race Memory**, p. 72

**Assignment:** Have students draw a map of the school based on where different groups hang out, as well as where it feels safe and unsafe for them. Ask them to be prepared to share and describe their maps in class.



# CHAPTER 4

## MAIN OBJECTIVES

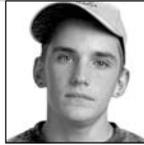
Discuss ways that students bully others

Explore why students bully others, including the desire to gain power and popularity or because students themselves have been bullied

Discuss the downside or costs of bullying and why people learn to stop bullying

Introduce concept of having empathy toward others

## KIDS IN THIS CHAPTER



STEPHEN



KATE



CARLOS

## KEY VOCABULARY

**Bully (v.)** to threaten, intimidate, exclude or hurt someone with words or actions

**Empathy (n.)** a feeling of knowing and appreciating what another person is feeling

**Harass (v.)** to bother or upset someone repeatedly through words and actions

## Discussion Starters: THINK-PAIR-SHARE

**Types of bullying.** What are the ways that students bully one another?

FOR THE INSTRUCTOR—EXAMPLES INCLUDE:

- Name-calling and slurs
- Pushing, shoving, kicking, tripping, punching, pinching and pulling
- Mocking someone
- Forcing someone to do something
- Spreading gossip and nasty rumors
- Sending threatening notes, letters or pictures
- Sexual harassment
- Shutting someone out or ignoring someone
- Humiliating someone in public
- Defacing, hiding or taking someone's property or belongings

**Power and popularity.** Stephen says he does not like the way people look at him. He says that bullying gives him a feeling of power. He also says he likes making people mad. Can you relate to these feelings? Why do you think Stephen acts the way he does? Think about when Stephen shares how his older brother picks on him and then he picks on smaller kids at school as part of an ongoing cycle of harassment. Does this help explain anything?

Carlos talks about picking on people until they cry and says that he likes to humiliate them by shining a spotlight on them. Think about whether you have seen something like that happen before. How did you feel watching it or being a part of it?

Kate talks about not caring about the person she picked on and says that she was mainly

into herself and her friends, and trying to be popular. Have you felt that you or people you know needed to bully others to be popular?

**“Benefits” of bullying.** Why do you think a person wants to “get people mad”? What else does bullying get you?

**Costs of bullying.** What does a bully give up by frequently bullying others? What are the drawbacks of making people mad or scared? How did Kate realize the costs of bullying?

**Empathy.** Kate realized what it felt like to be bullied, which made her think about her actions toward others. Have you ever treated someone else in a certain way and then realized what you did was wrong because the same thing was done to you? What is empathy? How could we develop empathy for one another as a way of guiding how we act?



## Possible Assignments & Activities

*Activity:* **What I Want You to Know**, p. 73

*Assignment:* In the film *Let's Get Real*, students describe how and why they bully others. Using this as a starting point, have students write two columns of words on bullying. In one column, have them write what they think are the “plusses” (+) of bullying. (*Some answers might include prestige, popularity, it protects them from being bullied*). In the other column, have them write the “minuses” (-) of bullying (*Some answers might be it's hard to keep friends, they feel bad for targets, it harms targets physically and emotionally, they could get in trouble, it jeopardizes their future*). On the next day, ask students to compare the columns. Brainstorm about nonviolent ways of obtaining the perceived “plusses” of bullying.

### THE REAL DEAL:

## The “In” Crowd

Is there sometimes more to popularity than meets the eye? As students enter middle school, gaining status or popularity becomes increasingly important. Students base perceptions of status and popularity on factors such as appearance, especially among girls, and demeanor, or “toughness,” especially among boys. Teasing and bullying become the vehicles for students to assert and maintain their own popularity—that is, their power and dominance over others.



# CHAPTER 5

## MAIN OBJECTIVES

Discuss sexual harassment and why students sexually harass other students

Introduce discussion of strategies to reduce bullying, including approaching an adult as a group

## KIDS IN THIS CHAPTER



LAURA



ERIC



JEN



SHANEKA



CLAUDIA



ALFREDO



BRANDON

## KEY VOCABULARY

**Gender (n.)** an identity that describes the ways in which someone feels, appears or acts that corresponds to what our society considers “masculine”, “feminine”, or somewhere in between (Compare and contrast with the word *sex*, which refers to a person’s biological status as a man or a woman).

**Sexual harassment (n.)** any unwanted and unwelcomed words or actions of a sexual nature, such as pinching or touching private parts, or making sexual gestures or put-downs

## Discussion Starters: THINK-PAIR-SHARE

**Sexual harassment.** What are the different ways guys harass girls that were mentioned in the film? Think about how these behaviors happen in our school. Do they happen in front of others or in a more private setting or situation? Are guys also sexually harassed in school? (See *A Closer Look: More About Sexual Harassment*, p. 45.) In what way is it similar to and different from the ways that girls get sexually harassed? What do guys get by sexually harassing other guys? Is sexual harassment against guys noticed or addressed in our school? Why or why not?



### Teaching Tip

For this issue, in particular, you may wish to divide the class into three groups: a boys group, a girls group, and a group for those who would like to talk about the experiences of people who don’t fit easily into these two categories. The last group is important to include as a way to create space for students who may not feel comfortable in either the boys or the girls group. Have each group talk about a separate set of questions in a “fishbowl” with the others just listening and not commenting.

*For the girls group:* What do you wish guys understood about how girls feel about sexual comments or comments about girls’ bodies? How can you tell the difference between a compliment and harassment?

*For the boys group:* How many guys here have felt a lot of pressure to talk badly about girls? What happens if you don’t talk badly about girls? How do guys benefit from harassing girls? What does it look like to treat girls respectfully, rather than participating in harassment?

*For those who are looking at the experiences of people who don’t fit traditional gender boxes:* What do you wish other people understood about what it’s like to walk through the world feeling like you don’t fit into traditional male or female categories? In what ways are people who don’t act “enough like their gender” teased, harassed or put down by others?

Conclude by forming one big circle and having everyone close with one last comment each about what they learned or thought from watching this part of the film.

**Approaching an adult as a group.** Laura told her friends about how a guy was bothering her, and her friends told her he was doing it to them as well. What did they then all decide to do? Is there more power telling an adult as a group instead of by yourself? How many of you have ever confided in your friends about being harassed? What would it feel like to find out you were being harassed by the same person? Would you want to approach an adult as a group? Would some people feel more comfortable talking to an adult on their own? Why?



## Possible Activities & Assignments

*Activities:* **Flirting or Hurting?**, p. 76

**Stand Up as a Group**, p. 79

*Assignment:* Write an essay on one of the following:

- Which of the examples of sexual harassment do you think happens most in our school? Which types of sexual harassment go unnoticed by adults?
- What is the difference between flirting and harassment? How does being the target of harassment feel different from being the target of flirting?
- What can we do when we feel that someone is sexually harassing us?
- Why do you think students sexually harass others? How do harassers benefit from their behavior? What do they lose by doing it?



### **A Closer Look: More About Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is any unwanted and unwelcomed sexual behavior that interferes with a person's life at school or work. It can be viewed as an unwanted and unwelcome sexual advance, a demand for sex, touching in a sexual way or taunting based on perceived non-conformity to traditional gender roles.

Students of the same sex can sexually harass each other. Boys can humiliate other boys through inappropriate sexual behavior. (In one prominent legal case, a group of boys committed a mock rape of another boy in a school bathroom.) Sometimes boys will harass another boy for being effeminate or acting in a gender non-conforming manner. Girls can also harass other girls for acting or appearing masculine. Same-sex sexual harassment and anti-gay harassment may therefore be closely related in many cases.

In 2011, the American Association of University Women (AAUW) conducted its third survey of school sexual harassment. Researchers surveyed 1,965 students in grades 7 through 12 across the country. They reported that nearly half (48 percent) experienced some form of sexual harassment in the 2010-11 school year. Nearly one-third (30 percent) experienced sexual harassment by text, email, social media, or other electronic means. Many of these were also harassed in person.

Girls were more likely to be harassed than boys (56 percent vs. 40 percent). Unwanted sexual comments or jokes were the most common form of sexual harassment, experienced by 46 percent of girls and 22 percent of boys. Other common forms were being called gay or lesbian in a negative way (18 percent, similar for girls and boys) and being shown pictures you didn't want to see (16 percent for girls, 10 percent for boys). In addition, 13 percent of girls and 3 percent of boys received unwanted sexual touches, 9 percent of girls and 2 percent of boys were physically intimidated in a sexual way, and 4 percent of girls, 0.2% of boys were forced to do something sexual.

Among students who experienced sexual harassment, 32 percent said that as a result they did not want to go to school and 12 percent said they actually stayed home from school. Other effects included feeling sick to the stomach (31 percent), finding it hard to study (30 percent), and having trouble sleeping (19 percent). – *Crossing the Line: Sexual Harassment at School, American Association of University Women, 2011*

Schools that receive federal funding must take steps to stop sexual harassment—including peer-to-peer harassment—and prevent its recurrence. See *Davis v. Monroe Cty. Bd. of Educ.*, 526 U.S. 629 (1999); Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. § 1681.

### THE REAL DEAL:

## Bullying and Sexual Harassment

In a study of middle school students, both boys and girls reported making sexual comments and calling other students gay/lesbian at rates of 28–39%, with boys reporting slightly higher perpetration rates.

–*Espelage, D.L., Basile, K.C., Hamburger, M.E., Bullying Perpetration and Subsequent Sexual Violence Perpetration Among Middle School Students, Journal of Adolescent Health, January 2012 Resource Center, 2002*

“Given that much of the bullying that occurs in middle school is related to sexual orientation, bullying prevention programs that do not address sexual orientation will not be effective in reducing bullying among middle school students.”

–*Stein, N.D., Mennemeier, K.A., Addressing the Gendered Dimensions of Harassment and Bullying, Critical Issue Brief, National Resource Center on Domestic Violence, October 2011*

# CHAPTER 6

## MAIN OBJECTIVES

Explore how and why students use anti-gay slurs

Explore effect of anti-gay slurs on entire student body

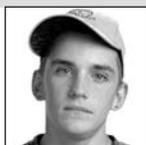
Discuss teasing of boys being or seeming “too feminine” and girls being or seeming “too masculine”

Discuss students who consider suicide and what to do in such situations

## KIDS IN THIS CHAPTER



BRIAN



STEPHEN



LA KEIA



GABE



KATE

## KEY VOCABULARY

**Bisexual (adj.)** a term describing a person who is able to fall in love with or be attracted to a man or a woman

**Gay (adj.)** a term describing a person (usually referring to a man) who is able to fall in love with or be attracted to another person of the same sex

**Gender stereotype (n.)** a fixed idea about the way men or women are “supposed” to act, dress or appear; an often inaccurate assumption about how *all* girls or boys “should” be. *For example, “real” girls should wear tight shirts; “real” boys are jocks.*

**Heterosexual (adj.)** a term describing a person who is able to fall in love with or be attracted to someone of a different sex; “straight”

**Homophobia (n.)** the act of putting down or thinking less of people who are gay or lesbian

**Lesbian (adj.)** a term describing a woman who is able to fall in love with or be attracted to another woman

**Sexual orientation (n.)** an identity based on whether a person is attracted to someone of the same sex, a different sex or both sexes

(cont.)

## Discussion Starters: THINK-PAIR-SHARE

**Use of anti-gay/anti-lesbian slurs.** How many of you have heard people calling each other “gay,” “queer,” “lesbian,” “faggot” or “dyke” at this school? In the film, Brian talks about people referring to everything from people to pencils as “gay” as a common put-down. Stephen says he uses the word *faggot* because it “gets to” the target faster. How is the word *gay* used at this school? Why do people use anti-gay or anti-lesbian slurs? Think about what Carlos said about how his stepfather called him “gay” when he wasn’t acting “manly.”

In the film, students explain that anti-gay slurs are used to mean different things. Ask your students what they think people are really saying when they call someone “gay,” “dyke,” “lesbian,” “homo,” “fag” or “bisexual.” Do they mean, “I think you are romantically attracted to a person of the same sex”? If not, what do they really mean? (*Some examples might be they think the person is ugly, weak, uncool or they just want to make someone mad.*)

**Acting “too” masculine or effeminate.** Students in the film talk about boys being feminine or girls wearing baggy jeans and sports jackets. Why does this cause bullying? Does this mean that boys whom people think are “too feminine” or girls whom people think are “too masculine” are gay or lesbian? What is a gender stereotype? How might gender stereotypes be harmful?

**Effect of anti-gay slurs.** How does anti-gay name-calling and bullying affect people who are or may be gay? How might it affect someone who is not gay? What kind of toll do you think it would take on a person to have someone saying “faggot” all day long in his ear? How did it affect Brian? When Brian’s friends tried to step in, they were harassed and called “gay” as well. Why do bullies harass people who try to intervene? What would be an effective way for friends to step in without becoming targets themselves?

**Suicide.** How would you feel if you found out that someone who had been picked on ended up hurting himself or herself or committing suicide? How do you know if people who say they are going to kill themselves are serious? Why would someone think of committing suicide? If you know someone who wants to commit suicide or if you are thinking of it yourself, what can you do?



## Possible Activities & Assignments

*Activity:* **Act Like a Guy/Act Like a Girl**, p. 80

*Assignment:* Have students do a weeklong survey to count the number of times they hear anti-gay slurs at school. For further detail, ask them to:

1. Assess what they think the person using the slurs was really trying to communicate.
2. Calculate the average number of slurs per day.
3. Count the number of times another student or teacher intervened.
4. Write a report of their findings for a school newsletter or bulletin.



### **A Closer Look: More on Anti-Gay Bullying**

Anti-gay bullying is one of the most prevalent social problems in American schools. The targeted person's actual sexual orientation is often unclear and is irrelevant. Much anti-gay bullying stems from bullying based on physical appearance, gender non-conformity, and other factors having little to do with actual sexual orientation, such as what clubs or hobbies the target belongs to or pursues. One study by the National Mental Health Association found that four out of five teens who are bullied for being perceived to be gay were actually heterosexual.

One repercussion of anti-gay bullying for teens is an increased pressure to conform to rigid gender roles. In order to prevent ridicule, girls often feel pressure to demonstrate femininity (for example, by dressing in a certain way, avoiding sports, becoming sexually involved before they are ready, or doing poorly in certain subjects), and boys feel pressure to demonstrate masculinity (for example, by sexually harassing others, getting in fights, defying adults, or avoiding or doing poorly in certain subjects). In this way, anti-gay bullying affects not only those who are targeted, but the entire student population.

Affirm that any inappropriate use of the word *gay*, as well as any other slur against gay people, is demeaning, hurtful and not appropriate for the school campus. For more information and activities, see *Lesson Plan: What Do "Faggot" and "Dyke" Mean?*, [www.glsen.org](http://www.glsen.org) (Click on Resource Center).

Schools that receive federal funding must take steps to stop anti-gay harassment—including peer-to-peer harassment—and prevent its recurrence. See *Davis v. Monroe Cty. Bd. of Educ.*, 526 U.S. 629 (1999) (proscribing peer-to-peer sexual harassment); *Flores et al. v. Morgan Hill Unif. Sch. Dist.*, 324 F.3d 1130 (9th Cir. 2003); *Nabozny v. Podlesny*, 92 F.3d. 446 (6th Cir. 1996).

**Transgender (adj.)** an umbrella term that can be used to describe people whose characteristics, appearance and behavior (including their speech, dress or mannerisms) do not match the sex they were labeled when they were born. *For example, a person who was born a boy but feels more like a girl, or a person who was born a girl but feels more like a boy.*

### THE REAL DEAL:

## Anti-Gay Bullying

Studies show that gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) students are at disproportionate risk for bullying and harassment. They hear anti-gay slurs such as "homo," "faggot" and "sissy" about 26 times a day, or once every 14 minutes. More than 30 percent of GLBT youth were threatened or injured at school in the last year alone.

—National Mental Health Association, 2002

More than 90 percent of LGBT youth report being verbally harassed; almost half have been physically harassed and one in five has been physically assaulted. Other forms of harassment against LGBT youth include sexual assault (more than 60 percent), being excluded in some way (90 percent), being the subject of rumors (85 percent), having their property damaged (50 percent) and being cyber-bullied (almost 50%).

—2009 National School Climate Survey

Those who are bullied are five times more likely to be depressed and far more likely to be suicidal.

—Fight Crime: Invest in Kids,  
September 2003



### **A Closer Look: More About Suicide**

Consider asking a health counselor or psychologist to join you in facilitating a discussion about suicide. This is a good opportunity to engage students in a preventive conversation on this topic. Unless there are special circumstances, having open conversation about suicide with students after watching the film is far preferable to avoiding the subject.

When discussing the topic of suicide, make sure you allow students to “pass.” Let them know they can talk to you privately if they wish, and make sure they know where to go and what to do if they are thinking about suicide. Pass out a handout giving students information on where to turn for help within and outside the school district (see pp. 28–30).

Find out the symptoms of at-risk young people.

One school psychologist suggests beginning a discussion in the following way:

*In the film, one of the students, Brian, says he feels like he needs to do anything—even killing himself—to get out of the constant bullying. Sometimes things on the outside of us drive us to desperate measures, and sometimes hurtful words and slurs go inside of us and make us feel ‘less than,’ hopeless and helpless. Often, friends and classmates are the first people to hear if someone is feeling so desperate that they are thinking of killing themselves. What are some things you can do to help someone who is feeling alone and helpless?*

*It is important to always take such comments seriously and to tell a trusted adult at school what you have heard. If you are having these feelings yourself, it is also important that you talk with someone you trust.*

#### **Suicide Hotlines**

**800-SUICIDE**

You will be directed to your local suicide-prevention hotline

**866-4-U-TREVOR**

The Trevor Project

Suicide hotline for gay and questioning youth

**800-399-PEER**

Peer Listening Line of Fenway Community Health Center  
(10am–5pm EST M–F)