

# Faith-based Bullying

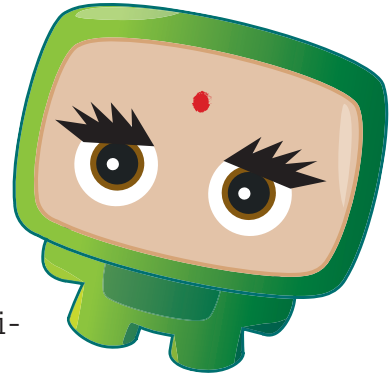
## Lesson Plan

**Cyber  
Mentors**

### Background and Overview

Faith-based bullying is a topic which is important to discuss with young people. It is a big problem across the UK, especially due to stereotypes that some people have about certain religions. Young people need to understand that there are similarities as well as differences between their beliefs, and that acceptance is needed to help alleviate faith-based bullying. To help make your stand for young peoples' right to believe what they want, we've created a special lesson plan which addresses the rights of young people with special attention paid to religious beliefs.

To accompany the lesson, Beatbullying have created anti-bullying stickers to show merit and completion of each task. The stickers are also a great way for pupils to show that they are standing up for their rights and against bullying.



### Learning outcomes will include:

The understanding that there are both differences and similarities between faiths and that difference is to be respected.

Gain a recognition of the influences and pressures young people face with specific focus on faith.

Understanding of why young people can be bullied because of their faith, both on and off line.

Develop a forum to be able to discuss issues around faith.

Understand how to deal with faith-based bullying.

Encourage active participation, communication, and group discussion.

The following lesson plan is suitable for young people between the ages of 10-16, but can be adapted for other ages. It will take approximately one lesson, depending on how much discussion takes place at each step. The creative part at the end can then take place in the following lesson if it cannot be fitted in. As this is a great opportunity for teachers and pupils to broach the subject of faith-based bullying, please extend the discussion into further lessons if necessary. This activity is also a great opportunity for schools to discuss their own measures in place to campaign for young peoples' rights, like raising awareness and whole school and community involvement in creating charters.

## Requirements:

- classroom large enough for students to sit in a circle
- whiteboard/flipchart and pens
- paper and coloured pens
- use of a photocopier
- video camera (optional)
- internet access (optional)

### Ice-Breaker - Sun Shines On



Step

1

The group sit on chairs in a circle (enough chairs for all except one student). The one without a chair begins in the middle of the circle by saying The sun shines on anyone ... (anything they want, e.g. who has black shoes on; has red hair; likes the movie Twilight; went on holiday this summer). Everyone who fits this statement then gets up and has to find another chair. The person left standing in the middle with no chair then has their turn. Students cannot move to the chair right beside them, and it is useful to remind them to be careful of others while racing to sit on chairs.

Start by using random statements, then focus on ones specifically focussed on faith-based bullying (e.g. The sun shines on anyone who has been bullied because they believe in a god/don't believe in a god/ pray/go to church/wants to learn more about different religions/ has bullied someone else because of their faith/wants to help stop faith-based bullying/has been bullied because of what they wear/eat because of their faith/religious traditions etc).



Step

2

Once young people are all sitting comfortably, make sure they all agree to the 'working agreement' for the lesson/s. This needs to be put in place as topics that can be emotional and private may be discussed.

The agreement should include confidentiality, listening to each other, participation, having fun, no aggressive or oppressive behaviour, no use of names when sharing experiences, and the right to question others in a respectful way if they have differing beliefs. Others may also be added.

It is a good idea to brainstorm these as a group and write the points on a poster and put it on the wall so it can be referred to at any stage if necessary.

## What is bullying/cyberbullying/ faith-based bullying?



Step

3

Go around each student and write a list on the flipchart of the definition and examples of these three terms. Students should have a good idea of what to include after playing 'The Sun Shines On'. Discuss and debate respectfully any points that cause discussion.

## Judgemental/stereotyping photos exercise



Step

4

Photos can be shown on a projector or printed and handed out to participants to discuss the different types of stereotypes. This might include the way the different members of faith groups dress, their appearance, and how they are perceived.

## Courtroom exercise



Step

5

Use the attached statements as topics for this exercise.

Get all students to stand up, you read out one statement, and then ask the students to go to one side of the room if they think it's bullying, the other side if they don't, and to stand in the middle if they aren't sure. After the students decide where to stand, ask a few of them to explain why they chose to stand there. This is a great chance to have a healthy debate about each statement.



## Charter of rights

There is no bill of rights in the UK that covers the right to practice a religion but the first Amendment of the US Constitution does cover this and it is in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (see below).

You can create your own charter on what rights you would expect to see protected in relation to faith, beliefs and religious practice. This is a way in which student can articulate their understanding of issues around respect for difference and diversity but also how different faiths have much in common.

The areas that might be covered are:

- The right not to practice a religion
- The right to practice established religious acts such as praying, wearing certain items etc without fear of persecution
- The right to ask questions about other faiths
- And any other points you think are particularly relevant to your students.

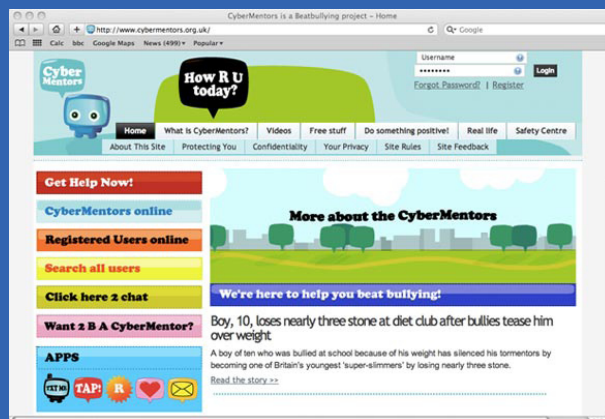
Once the charter is finished, the students can discuss how it could be used. For example: should it be on the wall or discussed in assembly?



## Cybermentors.org.uk

This is a safe social networking site where young people can go if they're being bullied or cyberbullied and to get information, help, and support from other young people. It gives young people the online rights they should always have on every website.

Suggest students have a look at the site and register from home or another time within school.





## Video/drama/song

As an end result, you should ask the students to imagine their friend being bullied as a result of their faith, and describe or express how they would feel, how they can help their friend, and how they can help alleviate end based bullying. They can do this by writing a song/drama/video. This gives the students a chance to be as creative as they want and express their emotions and concerns about the topic in whatever way they want. This exercise can be done in the next lesson if time runs out. You may want to even suggest the students perform their drama or song in an assembly to spread the anti-bullying message around the school.

## Faith-Based Bullying Courtroom

Read the following scenarios and tick the answer you think is the best way to respond:

- 1. Stuart always gets teased in class because he wears a kippah (skull cap).
- 2. Laura never goes to parties on Saturday night because she has to get up early on Sunday to go to church. Now she never gets invited to any parties.
- 3. Daniel's family does not celebrate Christmas and some of his friends show off their presents to him.
- 4. Lydia wears a burqa to school and some girls sometimes mock her by trying to make their clothes look similar.
- 5. Justin's parents both have dreadlocks so the boys in his football club say that they must take lots of drugs.
- 6. Senada fasts every October for Ramadan but people in her class purposefully eat chips and sweets around her.
- 7. Shaun's dad is a minister, so some boys at his school put on dog collars and imitate him in a negative way.
- 8. Rachael only eats food that is kosher, so when she goes to McDonalds with her friends she doesn't eat anything.
- 9. Ravi doesn't believe in any god so his teacher always tries to convince him to come to church with him.
- 10. Belinda's mum works at a synagogue and they often get eggs thrown at their house because of it.
- 11. Sophie's family members often volunteer at the Salvation Army, but get abuse yelled at them on their way home.
- 12. Jay's parents have a shrine to Buddha in their garden which was spray painted by some boys from down the road.
- 13. When Sanjay goes to his temple at the weekends he gets nasty texts which disrupt the service.
- 14. Aman wears a turban and a guy in his class always tries to pull it off in P.E.
- 15. Nabila prays to Allah every night but she often gets anonymous phone calls where she just hears laughing and people saying bad things about Muslims.
- 16. Cara follows the Baha'i faith and doesn't believe in war and sending people to fight, and has been receiving emails with violent war pictures on them.
- 17. Steven's parents aren't married, so his neighbours say they won't go to heaven.
- 18. Sarah isn't baptised so her friends sometimes don't allow her to play with them after church.