

# Lesson 3

# Teaching Strategies for the Victims

## MATERIALS

*Handout/Poster 14:* The Difference Between Tattling and Telling

*Poster 15:* HA HA, SO

*Handout 16:* Skills to Disengage

*Handout 17:* "Pushing Your Buttons"

*Handout 18:* HA HA, SO Shield

## OBJECTIVES

To teach the students strategies that they can use when they are being victimized by a bully—"HA HA, SO."

## STEPS

1. Last Lesson Review  
Ask the students to recall the classroom rules.
  2. Group Activity Crash  
To refamiliarize the students with bullying situations and break the ice, read a story from your school's library or show a video that addresses a bully-victim situation. Be sure to select one that is appropriate to the age group of the children.
  3. Teach and Model for the Students the HA HA, SO Strategies  
HA HA, SO  
H - Help    H - Humor    S - Self-Talk  
A - Assert Yourself    A - Avoid    O - Own It
- ▶ **Help**—Teach the students when and how to seek help from peers and/or an adult.

This strategy is best used in situations where help is available and willing, like at a "bully-proofed school." A victim can use this strategy during a bullying situation by calling to some other children, for example, "Could you help me ask Teddy to stop taking my books away from me?" or by running to an adult, describing what is happening, and saying, "I need help." Refer to *Handout/Poster 14*, "Tattling or Telling," and have students brainstorm and discuss the differences between these behaviors.

A victim can also use this strategy when anticipating a bullying situation by asking several other children to stay close. For example, "Susan and her friends have been bullying me at recess. Could you play with me today and help me figure out what to do if they come at me again?" or by informing the teacher and asking for a watchful eye. It can be helpful to have each student think of and name at least one adult and one peer he or she can turn to for help.

- ▶ **Assert Yourself**—Teach the students when it would be wise to use assertiveness and when it would not.

This strategy is usually the best strategy for a victim to start with. But it should not be used with severe bullying or when the victim is very scared. To use this strategy, the victim looks the bully in the eye and says, for example, "I don't like how you are gossiping about me and trying to make me have no friends. It is mean and unfair. Stop doing it."

## RESOURCE GUIDE

See "Videotapes and Films for Students," "Books for Primary Students," or "Books for Intermediate Students" for materials that address bullying situations.

## RESOURCE GUIDE

See “Books for Primary Students” or “Books for Intermediate Students” for books that feature the use of humor in bullying situations.

- **Humor**—Teach the students how to use humor to de-escalate a situation.

This strategy is fun for children and can be used in conjunction with the “Help” strategy by asking other children to help dream up humorous ways to deal with a certain bullying situation. Several of the books listed in the Resource Guide illustrate humor as a strategy for dealing with the bully (e.g., in *Loudmouth George and the Sixth Grade Bully*, the victim, with the help of his friend, makes a horrific lunch with pickles in the sandwich and hot chili sauce in the thermos for a bully who has been stealing his lunch). The victim could also use this strategy by writing a funny note or poem to the bully.

- **Avoid**—Teach the students how to walk away in order to avoid a bullying situation.

This strategy may be best for situations when the victim is alone. One way for the victim to use the “Avoid” strategy is to avoid a bully physically. The victim can cross the street or can avoid the situation(s) where the bullying is occurring. The victim can also avoid a bully by being with others rather than alone, perhaps by asking to walk home from school with other children. Another way for the victim to use the “Avoid” strategy is to analyze the situation and to stop doing anything that might be provoking the bully. If the bullying is happening when the class lines up and both the victim and the bully want to be at the front of the line, the victim can choose to be at the end of the line in order to avoid a bullying situation.

- **Self-Talk**—Teach the students how to use their self-talk to maintain positive self-esteem during a bullying situation.

Remind the students that in Session 1 they learned how victims’ self-esteem drops when they are being

bullied. The “Self-Talk” strategy is used to keep feeling good about oneself. The strategy involves “putting on a record in one’s mind” that says nice things like: “I’m a good kid. I try my best at school and I’m nice to other kids. When Jason calls me dumb, it is not my fault. It is his problem that he is being mean. It is unfair. I don’t have to accept his opinion of me. I can have my own opinion about me and I like myself.”

- **Own It**—Teach the students how to “own” the put-down or belittling comment in order to defuse it.

This strategy can be combined with the “Humor” strategy with responses like, “I agree that this is an ugly dress; my mother made me wear it.” It can also be combined with the “Assert Yourself” strategy with responses like, “I do have slanted eyes and that is because I’m Korean. Korea is a really cool country. Do you want to hear some things about it?”

Explain to the students that the first strategy that they try with a bully may not work. In that case, they will have to try another. That is why you are giving them six strategies and an easy way to remember them (HA HA, SO)—so that they will have lots of things to try. After they know the six strategies really well, they will be able to quickly figure out which strategy to try first, second, and so on, in each unique bullying situation.

As an indication of their understanding of these strategies, ask the class to identify the strategy or strategies used by the victim character in the story or video you presented to the class at the beginning of this session. If none of the HA HA, SO strategies were used, ask the students to identify a strategy or strategy that the victim character should have used.

To reinforce the memorization of the HA HA, SO mnemonic, you may wish to have the students repeat the

strategies in some way, such as singing HA HA, SO to a familiar tune, calling out the strategies as you yell the HA HA, SO “cheer” (i.e., “Give me an H!” “Help!” “Give me an A!” “Assert Yourself!” and so on), or by any other means you can think of that would be fun and memorable for the students.

Hang *Poster 15* up in the classroom with the other bullying posters to remind the students about the strategies they can use when they are being bullied.

4. **Having Students Think About how to use HA HA, SO Strategies**  
*Handouts 16, 17, and 18* can be used to teach students how to disengage from a bully’s attempts to push their buttons and how to use HA HA, SO as a protective shield to cover their buttons.

## **NEXT LESSON**

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*In the next lesson, the students will have the opportunity to try these strategies themselves, and practice them to a comfort level through role play.*

## The Difference Between Tattling and Telling



<b>Tattling</b>	<b>vs.</b>	<b>Telling</b>
Unimportant		Important
Harmless		Harmful or dangerous physically or psychologically
Can handle by self		Need help from an adult to solve
Purpose is to get someone in trouble		Purpose is to keep people safe
Behavior is accidental		Behavior is purposeful

**HA HA, SO**

**What I Can Do if I Am Being Bullied**

**HA**

**HA**

**SO**

**H**elp

**H**umor

**S**elf-Talk

**A**ssert  
Yourself

**A**void

**O**wn It

## Skills to Disengage

1. Think about what gets to you.

What are your buttons?

2. When you find someone has pushed one of your buttons, try this:

- ▶ Say your multiplication tables in your head
- ▶ Count backward from 30 to 1
- ▶ Think about the last time you were really bored
- ▶ Most of all, do not think about what the other person did or said to you

3. Remember that you are giving control to the other person if you respond. Doing nothing means that you win and they lose because you stayed in control.

Plan for the next time this same person tries to get to you. Remember that there will be a next time. People who like to push the buttons of others usually try again and the second and third time it might be worse. When it happens, remind yourself that

- ▶ It Gets Worse Before It Gets Better
- ▶ Winning Is Not Who Is Best at Put-Downs
- ▶ Winning Is Taking Care of Your Own Emotions

# Pushing Your Buttons



Right Crowd/Wrong Crowd



Racial/Ethnic Taunting



Right Clothes



Hair Color



Family



Size



Weight



Cries Easily



Too Good or Not Good at Schoolwork



Worries a Lot



Sexual Taunting



**HA HA, SO Shield**

