**Cyberbullying and Student Action: Grades 7-8**

**LEARNING OUTCOME:** Students will learn about rules, values and ethics and gain the understanding that these can change over time. They will also be introduced to cyberbullying and discover ways to prevent cyberbullying.

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| **Teacher Led** | **X** | **Can Use Technology** | **X** | **Requires a computer** | **X** |

**DURATION:** 45 minutes

**LEARNING GOALS:**

* Students will definerules, values and ethics
* Students will definecyberbullying
* Students will createandunderstandrules to prevent cyberbullying

**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:**

Science and Technology:

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/scientec18currb.pdf>

**Big Ideas:**

* Goal 2: To develop the skills, strategies, and habits of mind required for scientific inquiry and technological problem solving
* Goal 3: To understand the basic concepts of science and technology

Language Arts:

[http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/language18currb.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/language18currb.pdf%20)

**Specific Expectations:**

* Media Literacy:
  + **1.4:** explain why different audiences (e.g., with respect to gender, age, nationality, ability/disability, income level) might have different responses to a variety of media texts (e.g., messages in chat rooms, television broadcast of international news stories, music, documentaries, clothing)

**21st Century Competencies**   
[http://www.edugains.ca/resources21CL/About21stCentury/21CL\_21stCenturyCompetencies.pdf](http://www.edugains.ca/resources21CL/About21stCentury/21CL_21stCenturyCompetencies.pdf%20) (See Appendix C)

* Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
  + Solves meaningful, real-life, complex problems (1), (6)
  + Acquires, processes, interprets, and analyses information to make informed decisions
* Innovation, Creativity, and Entrepreneurship
  + Takes risks in thinking and creating
  + Pursues new ideas to meet a need of a community (3),(6)
* Learning to Learn/Self-Aware & Self-Directed Learning
  + Believes in the ability to learn and grow (1),(4),(5)
  + Reflects on experience to enhance learning (1),(7)
  + Cultivates emotional intelligence to understand self and others (1),(2),(4)
* Communication
  + Communicates effectively in different context in oral and written forms

**MATERIALS:**

* Computer, tablet, or mobile phone
* Chart Paper
* Markers
* Teacher Prep Resource: Cyberbullying
* **Handout [A] - Don’t Be A Silent Witness…Act**

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

***Before the lesson:***

1. Read the **Teacher Prep Resource** on Cyberbullying
2. Create a table on chart paper with “Home Rules, School Rules, and Online Rules”
3. Photocopy **Handout [A] - Don’t Be A Silent Witness…Act** for every student and make an additional copy to display in the classroom

***During the lesson:***

1. *Activity: Rules! 20 Questions (5-7 min)*
   * Splitthe class into two groups
   * **Group A** is told they are playing a guessing game and that **Group B** will be selecting a Fruit, and they have 20 questions to figure out what that is. **Group B** can only answer with “Yes” or “No”.
   * **Group B** is told they are playing a spelling game, with **Group A** asking them 20 questions. If the last word in the question ends with a *Vowel,* they respond with “Yes”, if it ends with a *Consonant* they will respond with “No”.
     + *\*NOTE:**Explain the rules to both groups separately, and make sure the other group does not hear the rules. The objective is for both groups to have different rules to the game.*
   * Play the game for 5-7 minutes
2. *Discussion (10-15 minute)*
   * Explain that both groups were playing by different rules, and have each group share the instructions they were given.
   * Guiding Questions:
     + What happened? Why are rules important?
     + Why did this game not work? What could have been done to make sure the rules were clear?
3. *As a class, fill in the chart on rules (i.e., Home rules, School rules, Online rules)* 
   * Guiding questions:
     + Can rules (Laws) change?
     + Have things changed in school from the time your parents where in school to you being in school?
   * Explainto studentsthat rules and laws can change over time as the world changes around them
4. *Define (5 minutes)*- *Definitions supplied by Google*
   * **Values:** A person’s principles or standards of behaviour; one’s judgement of what is important in life
   * **Ethics:**Moral principles that govern a person’s behaviour or the conducting of an activity (\*Note: You may need to also define “Morals”)
   * *Can values and ethics change over time?*
   * Hand out **Handout [A] - *Don’t Be A Silent Witness…Act!*** to each student
5. *Case Study (15-20 minutes)*
   * Read out the following case to students:
     + *“You and your friends are playing an online game \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Insert a common game played by class) where a certain amount of ‘Trash Talking’ is taking place. You invite your friend Sarah to play the game. When Sarah joins the game, a lot of players start to make fun of her because she is a girl and they assume she will be a bad player. After a few minutes of play, you notice that Sarah is not having fun anymore and decides to quit playing. What should you do?*
   * Have students log in to their myBlueprint account to create a new portfolio (Log in > Home > Portfolios)
   * Askstudents to create a new portfolio in their **myBlueprint** account titled “Digital Citizenship”
     + +Add a portfolio > Add title “Digital Citizenship” > Add portfolio).
   * Invite students to add a journal entry to their portfolio titled “Don’t be a silent witness” and respond to the case in the journal body/description (ie., What should you do?)
     + +Add box > +add journal > Add title “Don’t be a silent witness > add journal body > Add journal.
6. *Cyberbullying Do’s and Don’ts (5-10 minutes)*
   * As a class, make a list of things students can do to prevent cyberbullying on chart paper to display in the classroom
   * Invite students to add a reflection on their “Don’t be a silent witness” journal entry with the following guiding question.
     + *What can they do if they or someone they know is a victim of cyberbullying?*

***After the lesson:***

1. *Reflection*
   * In their myBlueprint portfolio, ask students to write another reflection on their Journal entry “Don’t be a silent witness” on the tips and strategies they can use to avoid, stop, or prevent cyberbullying. Use the following guiding questions:
     + *How can I avoid cyberbullying?*
     + *How can I prevent cyberbullying?*
     + *How can I stop cyberbullying?*

**EXTENSION:**

* Students can use this as a basis to spread awareness of cyberbullying across the school
* *Project Idea:* In small groups, students can create a poster board on cyberbullying prevention for posting in the classroom or around the school
* Studentscan become ambassadors for a safe online community

**ASSESSMENT:**

* The teacher can do assessments throughout the lesson or on the myBlueprint Education Planner after the lesson, by recording students’ abilityto communicate their understanding to classmates and teachers orally, and in written work
  + Teachers can monitor student understanding from the myBlueprint Portfolio Journal entry
  + Monitor student action through the myBlueprint Portfolio reflections on the Journal entry

**Teacher Prep Sheet: Cyberbullying   
(Note: Review your schools policy surrounding Cyberbullying)**

**What is it?** Many youth use the internet for socializing, and many report having positive interactions online, however for some they use the internet for harassment and intimidation otherwise known as cyberbullying.

Unlike traditional bullying which involves a power difference amongst parties, cyberbullying often includes individuals of the same status and can be **difficult to distinguish** between the victim and the perpetrator. It is common to also see offline bullying relationships filter into the cyber world.

Cyberbullying can spread to many people very quickly and is often times done anonymously. A major downside to cyberbullying is the footprint left behind, and it often times can remain online for a long period of time. This can have a strong effect on student’s life even if the bullying was not conducted on school property. With youth’s close ties to social media and technology cyberbullying can follow them wherever they go.

**Is cyberbullying common?** Cyberbullying is becoming more common among youths of today with a 3rd of students claiming they have felt abused online, and just under a 3rd of students saying they have received threats online.

Many students do not consider certain acts as cyberbullying, yet the online presence of cyberbullying can be endless. Many students report feelings of anxiety or depression after acts of cyberbullying have been conducted.

**Common methods of cyberbullying occur:**

* In an online game
* On social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)
* From rumours to sexual harassment

**Common roles in cyberbullying:**

* **Target/Victim:** Someone who is/has been cyberbullied
* **Perpetrator:** The individual who is/has committed an act of cyberbullying
* **Witness:** An individual who is/had viewed cyberbullying occurring to someone else

**How can we prevent it?** Many students claim to be a witness to cyberbullying, but do not speak or act to discontinue this behaviour. Common reasons for this may include:

* Fear of becoming the next target
* Fear of losing social status
* Fear of escalating the situation

Educators need to encourage students to think ethically if they are a witness to any bullying situation. Rather than reporting every occurrence, educators can inform students to become active participants in the situation and consider different approaches to cyberbullying. These include:

* Documenting the bullying; if they believe it will do more good to report, then reporting the bullying
* Comforting the target and offering help in private, this may include reporting
* Stepping in and mediating the interaction between perpetrator and target
* Confronting the perpetrator (if not done anonymously)

**The Law:** Certain acts of cyberbullying (continuous communication that causes fear for their or others safety) is considered a crime under the Criminal Code of Canada. It is also a crime to write something intended to insult or injure a person’s reputation. As well, a cyberbully may break the Canadian Human Rights Code is it based on hateful discrimination, racism, genderism, religion, family life or disability.

*Note: Please follow the link from the Ontario Ministry of Education surrounding their Safe Schools: Cyberbullying policy for more information*

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/safeschools/respect.html>

**HANDOUT [A] - Don’t Be A Silent Witness… Act!**

**Did you know?** Two thirds of Canadian students helped someone who was being picked on online. *You* have the power to make a change, don’t be silent! Sometimes it can be hard to do the right thing, so ask yourself:

* *Do I know the whole story?* Cyberbullying can be really unclear, someone may be fighting back against a bully, or a seamless joke may be hurting someone’s feelings. You can still act! You simply need to think of the *best* thing to do

**Am I helping?**

* *Are you helping?* Or are you just helping your friends? You may be taking your friends side, but ask yourself would you take this side if he or she **was not** your friend? If you aren’t going to help, ask yourself would you if the individual **was** your friend?

**What excuses?**

* We sometimes make up excuses to **not** do something. These reasons may be based on the values of the group we are in, ask yourself if you’re doing any of these.
  + Minimizing it (“this is just a joke”)
  + Denying it (“I wouldn’t be hurt by that, so you shouldn’t either”)
  + Blame the target (“They deserved this”)
  + Avoid it (“No one is doing anything, why should I?”)

**Will this make things better or worse?**

* You can do a lot to help someone who is being cyberbullied and make things better, but you can also make things worse. Here are some tips:
  + Spend time with target
  + Talk to and encourage target
  + Help target get out of situation
  + Give target advice
  + Distract the bully
  + Help target tell an adult that they trust
  + Tell an adult you trust
  + Confront the bully and ask them to stop (think carefully before this action)

Never: make fun, blame or ignore a cyberbullying situation. Use your judgment, don’t be silent!