

Follow-Up Interventions with a Student Who Has Been Bullied

Checklist

- Choose a private setting.
- Invite another staff person, if appropriate.
- Be supportive!

Meeting Outline

Here is an overview of what to say. A more detailed script is provided on the next page.

- “Thank you for being willing to talk with me.”
- “I wanted you to know that I heard about the incident involving . . .” and “This is bullying. We take this seriously.”
- “Can you please tell me what happened? Could you talk about what that was like for you?”
- “I’m sorry that this happened, and we want you to know that we will do everything possible to get the bullying stopped.”
- “Here are our next steps regarding (the student who bullied you) . . .”
- “What we’ve talked about today is confidential, private. What that means for me is . . .”
- “Please agree to come to me if anything like this happens again.”
- “What, if anything, might you need now to feel safe?”
- “Here are some things that will happen next . . . We’ll be contacting your parents to let them know we’ve talked.”
- “I’m going to check in with you in two to three days to see how things are going.”
- “Thank you for talking with me.”

Consider the student’s potential need for counseling/additional referral. Meet with the student to follow up in two to three days.

Script

Note: The following script is meant to serve only as a guide when you meet with a student who is being bullied. The script should not be read word for word. Adapt the language to fit the specific situation you are dealing with.

The Setting

Meet with the student who has been bullied as soon after the incident as possible. Meet with this student before meeting with the students who bullied. Choose a private, quiet room where other students cannot observe the meeting. Ask the student who was bullied if there is a particular adult that he or she would like to have at this meeting as well. Recognize that this meeting could be difficult for the student. Be supportive!

Example Discussion

Say: I heard about (saw) what happened earlier today with your lunch in the lunchroom (cafeteria). I'm very concerned that some students aren't treating you with respect, and I want to find out more about what's been happening and who has been involved. This is bullying, and it's *not* acceptable. We take this very seriously here and will see to it that it comes to a stop. Could you please talk about what's been going on?

Get the facts—the who, what, when, where, how often—but also ask open-ended questions that illicit feelings, such as, “What was that like for you?” and “What was your reaction when the other students made those comments to you?”

Say: I'm so sorry you've had to go through this, and I really appreciate that you're talking to me about it now. We are going to do whatever is needed to put an end to this unacceptable behavior. It's not fair, and we're going to see that we provide whatever support and help is needed so you don't have to put up with it anymore.

What we're going to do is talk with the other students who were involved. Please know that we're not going to say that you came to us and told us what happened. The situation has come to our attention by a number of people, and we don't want to make things uncomfortable for you by saying anything about our talk today. This meeting is private. Do you have any questions or concerns about that?

There will be some type of consequence for the other student(s). We are going to keep a close watch on the situation so we're aware of these students' actions and so they realize we're very serious about it. We'll also be calling your parents to let them know what happened and that we've talked with you.

Thank you, (student's name), for talking with me about this today. Some students don't want to discuss these things because they're afraid they're "tattling." This is *not* tattling—it's reporting, just as we've asked you to do, and we really appreciate learning more about this situation. Will you please be sure to let me know if there is *any* other incident that happens with these or other students? It's very important that we keep informed of students' behavior here at school, and we certainly don't want you to have any more bad experiences. So do please come to me or another staff member if anything else happens. Will you agree to do that? (See if student agrees.) Do you have any questions about that?

I'm wondering if there is anything we can do to help make things more comfortable for you right now. What do you think is needed in order to address this situation?

Talk about specific measures that may be needed to ensure the student's safety. Is a "Safety Plan" needed? For example, does he or she need a buddy to walk with him or her to a particular class, to sit with at lunch, or to be with during recess/breaks? Do staff members need to assist the student during recess/break times? From observing the student's demeanor, does it seem like the student could benefit from seeing your school's guidance counselor or social worker? Has the student indicated fear about encountering the bullying students? Has the student indicated that he or she would like an apology?

Say: I'm going to check back with you in two or three days to see how things are going. Is it okay if we meet here again? (Provide location; approximate day and time; it can help if you give the student who has been bullied some choices.) In the meantime, please remember to let me know if this happens again. Take care, and I'll talk with you soon.

Discuss the situation with your colleagues. Call the student's parents. Be certain to mark on your calendar to check in with this student in two to three days.

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