

## **MASTER'S DEGREE**

## **FINAL PROJECT**

**Preventing bullying in a modern**

**Kazakhstani school**

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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To all teaching staff of the university for their invaluable work on developing me as a person, thank you very much! The experience and knowledge you have given me is priceless. Thank you for your support, empathy, participation, sharing successes and failures. You paid attention, cared, taught me teamwork, finding non-standard solutions. But most importantly, you firmly believed in the success of each of us. Endless gratitude, a wish for professional feats, health, and a thousand more curious eyes of new students!

Studying at the university will remain one of the brightest pages in my life. My classmates and I came to this university from different parts of the world and found friends here. They say that it is in the student years that the strongest friendship is born. Together we learned to overcome difficulties, helped each other with advice and deed, developed and became better. The valuable experience gained at the university will become a support for us. We have mastered one of the most exciting professions and are now ready to make our contribution to the prosperity and development of society.

I would like to end with the lines of my favorite poem by prominent Kazakh writer, teacher-educator Ybrai Altynsarin.

Come on, children, let's learn!

Child, when you learn,

That knowledge, during total darkness

Better than a lamp, it'll light your way

And all your dreams will come true.

Come on, children, let's start learning

And the threads of knowledge will forever shine

In our grateful memory!

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Bullying is harassment, discrimination. In a broader sense, it is a specific type of violence when one person (or group) physically assaults or threatens another, physically and mentally weaker person (or group of persons). What distinguishes bullying from an occasional fight is its systematic nature and regularity of repetition.

The phenomenon was first described by the Scandinavian scholar David Olweus in the 1970s [\[1\]](#).

Unfortunately, despite the prevalence of this phenomenon in modern society, bullying in Kazakhstan has not been adequately researched, discussed, or reported in the media. Bullying is largely promoted by the upbringing in the family and the attitudes that are nurtured in children; the microclimate of the institution to which children are exposed is also conducive to bullying. This project aims to create the necessary conditions to eliminate bullying as a phenomenon in Kazakhstan's schools (children's communities).

My close friend Maira Ischanova works as a social pedagogue in school №35 in Almaty. I asked her to conduct a questionnaire (questionnaire - ANNEX 1) among students to give me a deeper understanding of the problem of bullying in Kazakhstan school. Which helped me in writing this project. She kindly agreed and after the approval of the school administration the questionnaire was done in September 2022. According to the results of the questionnaire which was administered to 100 schoolchildren between the ages of 7 and 11 years old, only 15.2% of students were familiar with the term "bullying", 84.8% don't know what it is. At the same time, 59% of students had experienced bullying situations in forms as humiliation (61%), insults (61%), and (verbal aggression) (77%), physical violence (24%) recording bullying on (11%), cyberbullying(25%).



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According to students, those who are most often bullied are those who are weaker physically, those who differ from others (externally, physically), and those who have their own opinion 22; 11 students said that they constantly encounter situations of bullying by teachers, 10 students have, but rarely, and 57 students have not encountered such situations at all.

Pupils think bullying can be avoided if adults notice it in time - 37; if the victim changes his/her behaviour - 39; if we punish the bully - 38; bullying is inevitable - 17 people. According to pupils, the administration, teaching staff, parents are able to stop bullying in the educational organization. Thus, it is the responsibility of educational institutions to work on and address the problem of bullying in order to preserve the psychological health of students and create a comfortable, developing educational environment that ensures high quality education, spiritual and moral development, and education of students, and guarantees the protection and strengthening of the physical, psychological, and social health of students.

Relevance and significance of the project: Peer bullying is one of the most common problems in educational institutions today, which significantly increases the risk of suicide among adolescents, escalating aggression and violence in the community, lowering academic performance, emotional and neurotic problems.

The attention of teachers and psychologists to the problem of bullying is steadily increasing, because its timely prevention and assistance to children who have already been bullied by peers must come from adults. As a rule, children themselves are powerless to solve the problem, which leads to unfortunate consequences.

A brochure<sup>[2]</sup> released in 2020 by UNFPA in Kazakhstan reports that 63% of children in the country have witnessed violence and discrimination, 44% have been victims, and 24% have committed acts of violence and discrimination against other children in school.

The issue of prevention of bullying is therefore particularly important: drawing the attention of the school community to create conditions that prevent bullying, teaching teachers and parents how to recognize bullying situations and, most importantly, how to provide timely help and the right tactics for adults if bullying has already taken place.

Main content of the project: A program to prevent has been developed bullying in Kazakhstan's schools. The work is aimed at attracting the attention of the school administration, teachers, and parents to the problem.

Project object: Peer bullying is one of the most common problems of educational institutions today, which significantly increases the risk of suicide among adolescents, leads to an escalation of aggression and violence in the team, a decrease in academic performance, emotional and neurotic problems.

The attention of teachers and psychologists to the problem of bullying is steadily growing, because it is obvious that its timely prevention and help to children who are already victims of bullying should come from adults. As a rule, children themselves are powerless to solve this problem, which leads to sad consequences.

That is why the issue of bullying prevention becomes very important: drawing attention of the school community to creation of conditions preventing this phenomenon, teaching teachers and parents to recognize bullying situations and, the main thing, timely help, correct tactics of adults, if bullying has already happened.

## DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is repeated aggression towards a particular subject, including coercion and intimidation. It can manifest itself in physical violence, threats, verbal aggression, humiliation. Bullying is the systematic abuse of power (force) by a person or group of people to suppress, humiliate, insult.

According to Igor Semyonovich Kon's (Soviet and Russian sociologist, psychologist, anthropologist, philosopher, sexologist. One of the founders of the modern Russian school of sociology, popularizer of science and educator) definition, bullying is intimidation, humiliation, harassment, physical or psychological terror aimed at causing fear in another person and thereby subduing him or her [3].

In 2018, a team of scientists from the National Center for Public Health [4] surveyed 6,456 Kazakhstani high school students to examine indicators of their health and well-being. Teenagers were also asked how often they had participated in or been victims of bullying/kicker-bullying at school in the past two months.

In bullying there is always a victim who cannot defend themselves. It is always systematic. Bullying does not occur when two pupils with the same physical abilities often argue or fight when the bullying is done in a friendly and playful way.

The aim of bullying is always to harass, fear, demoralize, humiliate, and subjugate the victim. In educational settings, bullying occurs amongst peers and is often perpetrated against younger pupils by older pupils. Bullying by peers or supervisors can be experienced by staff in educational institutions.





**Types of bullying:** direct or covert [5].

Covert bullying (ignoring, boycotting, excluding, manipulating, deliberately spreading negative rumours, etc.) is more common for girls.

Direct bullying includes direct physical aggression, sexual or psychological abuse. Physical bullying - deliberate pushing, hitting, physical bullying - deliberate pushing, hitting, kicking, beating or other bodily harm, etc. Sexual bullying is acting out of a sexual nature. Psychological bullying is violence of a mental nature, causing psychological trauma through verbal abuse or threats, harassment, intimidation, which deliberately causes emotional distress.

Variety of forms of direct bullying:

- verbal bullying, where the tool is the voice (a hurtful name that is constantly used to the victim is repeatedly referred to by name, name-calling, teasing, spreading hurtful rumours, etc.);
- hurtful gestures or actions (e.g., spitting at or in the direction of the victim);
- intimidation (using aggressive body language and voice intonation to get the victim to do or not do something);
- isolation (the victim is deliberately isolated, kicked out or ignored by part of the class or by the whole class);
- extortion (of money, food, other things, forcing someone to steal something);
- damage and other actions to property (theft, robbery, hiding the victim's personal belongings);
- cyberbullying as a set of aggressive actions against a particular person in communication on the Internet, via mobile communication. Intentional and openly aggressive behaviour towards another person online includes sexual harassment via the

Internet and the spreading of negative gossip. Cyberbullying mainly involves older adolescents and young people, equally boys and girls;

In general, the following roles in the school bullying process are highlighted:

- Leading attacker (child aggressor).
- Children involved in bullying (joining the leader).
- A child victim.
- Witnesses reinforcing the bullying (children who take the side of the attackers, laugh, express support/encouragement for the attackers, just gather around and watch).
- Outsider witnesses (children who avoid bullying situations by not taking sides).
- Defenders (children who take an obvious stand against bullying, either by actively confronting their attackers and doing something to stop the bullying, or by being reassuring and supportive of the victim).

The persistence of a student's role in the structure of violence depends on the structure of the class: the stricter the structure, the harder it is for the student to get rid of their role. The entrenched role positions in the structure of violence in the early grades often persist until the end of school.

#### Personal characteristics of participants in bullying.

Anyone involved in educational relationships can, in certain circumstances, become involved in violence. Every student can potentially become a victim, perpetrator, or witness of violence. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify the most typical personality traits that characterize bullies, victims, and witnesses. Typically, children and young people who become bullies are self-confident, prone to group domination and subordination of others, morally and physically strong, emotionally impulsive, and easily led to rage and aggression,

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with low levels of empathy for their victims, often "bullying" not only their peers and younger ones, but also adults (teachers, parents, law enforcement officials). Anxiety due to family dysfunction, strained relationships with parents, academic failure, and envy of more successful students from advantaged families can threaten the status of dominant children and young people. Turning to violence allows them to assert their status in the classroom or group, by humiliating peers or younger and sometimes older students, keeping everyone in fear. As noted, almost any child or young person can become a victim of bullying. For example, a child who for some reason has switched school or class in the middle of the year for whatever reason. A child who is very different in any way characteristics from other children. However, certain characteristics of children increase the risk that a child may be bullied. There are risk factors (common characteristics) of possible victims of bullying:

- Children with higher levels of anxiety than the group average. They often lack confidence, cheerfulness and often seem sad.
- Low self-esteem and negative self-image. They may give the impression low self-esteem and negative self-image and may give the impression that they cannot actively resist peer attacks; may not respond appropriately to aggression and may be 'easy' targets of attacks and bullying.
- Lack of friends in the group and difficulties in building and maintaining close relationships with peers, inhibit the formation of protective relationships in the classroom, and support the child's perception of themselves as legitimate targets of bullying.

- Physical strength becomes important for boys at a certain age. A child who is bullied is often physically weaker than his peers, this, along with their response patterns, reduces the child's ability to withstand attacks from their peers.
- Features of appearance. Obesity, distinct disadvantages in appearance, unattractiveness, poor clothing, and other physical features which are. It's easy to pick on a child, especially one who can't stand up for himself or herself.
- Features of behaviour. Children who do not learn well, are overly mobile and inattentive (do not know how to control their aggression) and do not know how to keep their distance which irritate others, etc.
- The targets of bullying can be children belonging to an ethnic, national, or religious minority.
- Non-traditional sexual orientation is a universal factor of high risk of bullying. Teenagers who do not behave in a masculine ("girlie") way are also often bullied.
- Increased anxiety about their bodies ("body anxiety"): may be afraid of pain, do not cope well with physical games, sports, any physical confrontation, or have poor coordination (applies mainly to boys).
- A sensitive, quiet, withdrawn, docile, shy child who cries easily and often, and who avoids direct confrontation with others.



Identifying and diagnosing bullying [6]

**At school**

*Primary signs:*

- A child is often ridiculed in an unkind and hurtful way.
- A child is often bullied, pushed, kicked, beaten and cannot defend himself adequately.
- The child is often involved in quarrels, fights in which he or she is rather defenseless and tries to avoid (often crying).
- Children take textbooks, money, other personal belongings of the child, scatter, tear them up.
- A child has marks - bruises, cuts, scratches, or torn clothing that are not naturally explained (i.e., not related to play, an accidental fall, a cat, etc.).

*Secondary signs:*

- The child often spends time alone and is excluded from the company of his peers.
- In team games, children choose him as one of the last or don't want to be on the same team with him.
- A child tries to stay close to a teacher or another adult during breaks.
- Seems depressed, upset.
- A child's academic performance deteriorates sharply or gradually.



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*Primary signs:*

- Returning home from school with torn clothes, torn textbooks, notebooks.
- A child has marks - bruises, cuts, scratches, or torn clothing that are not naturally explained (i.e., not related to play, an accidental fall, a cat, etc.).

*Secondary signs:*

- Never takes classmates or other peers' home (after school) or very rarely spends time visiting classmates in places where they play/spend time.
- A child has no friends to spend time with (playing, going to the cinema or a concert, going for a walk or sports, talking on the phone, etc.).
- Doesn't want to invite anyone to the party (because he/she thinks no one will want to come).
- Afraid or unwilling to go to school, poor appetite in the morning before school, frequent headaches, stomach aches.
- Chooses the long and inconvenient route to and from school.
- Restless sleep complains of bad dreams, cries often in her/his sleep.
- Loss of interest in school subjects/activities, poorer grades.
- Seems unhappy, frustrated, depressed.
- Demands or steals money from parents (to meet the demands of the "aggressors").

The presence of aggressive (often fighting, repeatedly hitting, and insulting other children, impulsive) children should alert adults to the possibility of bullying.



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### The impact of bullying on child victims and children's collectives

Experiencing bullying during childhood and adolescence is extremely traumatic and, in addition to the actual consequences, has a significant impact on the person's later life. Above all, it affects the child's self-esteem, communication skills and motivation for development and achievement.

#### *Topical consequences:*

- Affective disorders: low mood, depressive, high level of anxiety, multiple fears, anger (large amounts of negative emotions).
- Somatic disorders: sleep disturbances, appetite, headaches, abdominal pain, abnormal gastrointestinal function, sudden fever, etc.
- Cognitive impairment - attention deficits, difficulty concentrating, etc.
- Disruption of school adaptation: motivation to learn, missed classes, lowered academic performance.
- Behavioral disorders: aggression, running away from home.
- Suicidal thoughts and attempts.

Other common effects of bullying include decreased self-esteem, damaged trust in the world around them and a tendency to be victimized.

Bullying causes significant harm to all those involved. Affected children not only suffer from physical aggression, but also suffer psychological trauma which affects the child's self-esteem and can have a lasting impact on the child's social adjustment. Reduced academic performance, refusal to attend school and self-injurious behaviour are the most common consequences of bullying. Aggressive children are more likely than other children to be involved in criminal histories and develop a distorted understanding of conflict resolution and social interaction.



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Children who are not directly involved in bullying experience many negative emotions: fear of being in the victim's shoes, powerlessness, negative attitudes towards school. For teachers, the most frequent consequences of bullying are more negative emotions in dealing with children, discipline problems in class, lower status among students, a sense of failure and powerlessness, risk of administrative sanctions when things get out of hand and bullying leads to physical injuries, suicidal behaviour, and conflicts with parents. An unfriendly environment, disengagement between children, decreased an unfriendly environment, disunity between children, decreased motivation to learn, lack of trust in adults - these are the main consequences of bullying for a child's group.

### **Bullying prevention and avoidance [\[7\]](#)**

*Common programme components:*

- Informing teachers, school staff, children, and parents about problem of bullying, its mechanisms, and consequences
- Uniform school-wide bullying policies and coordinated measures to prevent and overcome
- Teacher training
- Group lessons with children
- Helping victims of bullying
- Interaction with parents
- Usually, any program includes both preventive measures and intervention/measures to resolve existing problems
- Any program includes measures and activities at three levels: school, class and individual.





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**Individual components that vary from program to program:**

- A detailed study of the problem and its prevalence in a particular school (anonymous questionnaires for children, questionnaires for teachers, questionnaires for parents, observation). Discussion of the results by school staff, children, and parents.
- Emphasis on relationships between children and between children and teachers, creating a welcoming, comfortable, and open atmosphere at school and in class.
- Inclusion of classes on bullying prevention in the compulsory school program.
- Creating a set of rules, together with children, regarding bullying and children's behavior when confronted (directly or indirectly) with it.
- "Library therapy" (use in the classroom of fiction, dedicated to bullying).
- Films and visual aids.
- Supervision of children during school breaks and outside the classroom, organization of play/leisure time activities.
- Supervision of children during school breaks and outside the classroom, organization of play/leisure time activities.
- Establishing committees, with children involved, to develop rules on bullying and measures to deal with it.
- Setting up a school-based bullying helpline.
- Regular meetings with parents.
- Organization of support groups for child victims of bullying, for parents of child victims and for parents of child "aggressors".
- Individual psychological work with child victims.
- Confidence training for child victims.



*In relation to 'aggressor' children: the greatest variation in approaches and methods:*

- Provision of timely psychological assistance to the child: individual and group work.
- Meetings with the victim of bullying (often with parents), in which the child victim of bullying talks about his experiences in connection with her, etc...
- Meetings of all children involved (victim, aggressor, other attackers, and several witnesses), together with a teacher/psychologist/social worker. Discussion about the situation, the feelings of the child victim, possible solutions. (No-Blame approach, Robinson, and Maines)

### **The No-Blame Approach [8]**

When bullying has been observed or reported then the following step scan be taken:

#### Step one interview with the victim.

When the teacher finds out that bullying has happened, she starts by talking to the victim about his feelings. She does not question him about the incidents, but she does need to know who was involved.

#### Step two convene a meeting with the people involved.

The teacher arranges to meet with the group of pupils who have been involved. This will include some bystanders or colluders who joined in but did not initiate any bullying. We find that a group of six to eight young people works well.

#### Step three explain the problem.

She tells them about the way the victims feeling and might use a poem, a piece of writing or a drawing to emphasise his distress. At no time does she discuss the details of the incidents or allocate blame to the group.

#### Step four share responsibility.

The teacher does not attribute blame but states that she knows that the group are responsible and can do something about it.

Step five ask the group for their ideas.

Each member of the group is encouraged to suggest a way in which the victim could be helped to feel happier. The teacher gives some positive responses, but she does not go on to extract a promise of improved behaviour.

Step six-leave it up to them.

The teacher ends the meeting by passing over the responsibility to the group to solve the problem. She arranges to meet with them again to see how things are going.

Step seven meet them again.

About a week later the teacher discusses with each student, including the victim, how things have been going. This allows the teacher to monitor the bullying and keeps the young people involved in the process.

**Controversary**

This method of working with young people is not universally accepted by other professional in the field who favour a punitive response to the bullies. "It seems to me that the No-Blame approach will only reinforce the attitudes of joy-riders, lager louts, muggers and others like them, who ultimately take no blame for the consequences of their actions." Dr Michele Elliott. The No-Blame Approach is sometimes misunderstood as a "soft" option. This could not be further from the truth...to ask young people to take this responsibility is a tough and very grown-up demand. The imposition of punitive interventions is the soft option leaving the young person in apposition of childish dependence upon adult methods of control.

### Project “Street Law Kazakhstan” [9]

This project was first organized in Kazakhstan in 1998.

The purpose of the project is to explain to children their rights and responsibilities, such as age of responsibility for offenses, and to provide courses on protection against violence and bullying. Children are helped to understand when someone tries to draw them into criminal and abusive relationships.

Since its inception, this project has achieved the following results:

- publication of human rights textbooks for grades 5–11 in the Kazakh and Russian languages
- Holding human rights seminars with 1,661 teachers and 861 students in 14 regions of Kazakhstan
- Annual coverage of up to 1,200 students in 34 Kazakh- and Russian-language schools in Almaty
- Annual interactive competitions on the RK Constitution among schools participating in the Street Law - Kazakhstan program.

### Project “Stop bullying me” [10]

Aimed at the prevention and prevention of bullying in educational institutions. It is presented in the format of an Instagram page [11] where informative posts are published three times a week,



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stories are posted, and where the person who has been bullied and the person who is bullying can get help. The target audience is Instagram users from 10 to 20 years old.

### **The process of assistance**

The project organizer herself is responsible for people's comments and direct messages - all communication lies with her. Three people can write in a day, and sometimes there are no new messages in the direct or several days.

When a message arrives in the direct, the organizers ask people to introduce themselves, express their wishes, fears, and worries, and then briefly tell their story. After that, they ask what kind of help is needed and, based on the information received, take the next steps.

Sometimes the bullying is over, but the trauma remains, and the person needs support. In this case, the project suggests using free online services for psychological help, such as [brainbild.kz](http://brainbild.kz). [12] The Stop bullying me project keeps in touch with those who contacted it even after assistance has been provided.

If bullying is happening now, the organizers together with the student contact the administration of the educational institution, help to write a statement to the police, try to understand if the parents of the child know about what is happening, and if not, which of the trusted adults can be contacted.

## PROJECT ACTIVITIES I PROPOSE

The activities in the project, to offer a different way for 7-11 ages children and adolescents at school to handle abuse or discrimination rather than forwarding, repaying, or recreating a loop of violence, shall be divided into four main groups, each group will aim at a different value, which are: Empathy, Respect, Diversity - Interculturality, and Inclusion, although they are all inter-connected and intersected. Again, this project does not strive to solve bullies and the spread of misinformation themselves, but rather to offer another angle through which kids at school can see more options on why they can say No to violence.

Name of event	Timeline	Responsible persons	Planned budget	Note
Appreciate others	In November - December 2022, in each grade for students ages 7-11	Social workers, teachers, volunteers	Payment of travel expenses for volunteers. 1 trip on the bus / metro 80 tenge. Salary of the social worker for 1 event 10 000 tenge. Expenses for the event: paper, pens, stickers 2000 tenge.	Only 1 school is scheduled to host the event 20 times. There are an average of 500 students between the ages of 7 and 11. Each class has an average of 30 students.
Watching cartoon "Helium"	In November – December 2022, in each grade for students ages 7-11	Social workers, volunteers	Payment of travel expenses for volunteers. 1 trip on the bus / metro 80 tenge. Salary of the social worker for 1 event 10 000 tenge.	Only 1 school is scheduled to host the event 20 times. There are an average of 500 students between the ages of 7 and 11. Each class has an average of 30 students.
Memo for parents	It is advisable to meet with all parents of students at the beginning of the school year to present and discuss the Memo. After that, hold meetings once every 2 months, for preventive conversations.	Social workers, teachers	Salary of the social worker for 1 event 10 000 tenge. Expenses for the event: paper.	The school year in Kazakhstan begins in September and ends in May. That is, five meetings are planned.



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No	Items of expenditure		Unit	Cost in tenge	Total expenses in tenge	Cost in euro	Total expenses in euro
1	Expenses for responsible persons					1euro=466,24 tenge	
2	Social workers	Salary	25	10000	250000	21,44	536,20
3	Volunteers	Travel expenses	25	80	2000	0,17	4,28
4	<b>Other expenses</b>						
5	Paper, pens, stickers		25	4000	100000	8,57	214,48

Budget: 352 000 tenge; 754,96 euro

Organization: Any public school in Kazakhstan.

Facilitators: social workers, teachers, volunteers.

### School evaluation

Kazakhstan has a consolidated authoritarian regime. In such regimes, power is excessively centralized, national, and local governments are neither democratic nor accountable to the people. Any proposals in public schools must first be negotiated with the school principal. It depends on the principal's loyalty to his interest in the issue of prevention of bullying. If you still managed to negotiate with the director of the school, then you need to go to the local state department of education, which supervises this or that school. Statistics on bullying in Kazakhstan are kept for the Republic as a whole, but not for each individual school or region. For example, in 2018 alone, according to official data from Kazakhstan's National Health Center, 12% of the country's students were bullied. [13]

*Purpose of the session:* Preventing bullying in the school environment.

*Objectives of the session:*

1. To strengthen students' knowledge of the topic of bullying.
2. Development of respect for the differences of others.
3. Formation of goodwill towards each other.
4. Development of interpersonal interaction skills.

*Structure of the session:*

1. Greetings. Warm-up session "Our strengths".
2. The main part:
  - group rules.
  - watching the cartoon "Helium" (directed by Tom Kyzivat, 2005)
  - mini lecture "Bullying at school"
  - exercise "How we are different from each other". - "What are we like each other".
  - exercise "Etudes".
  - exercise "Traits of a Person"
  - exercise "Labels"
  - assessing the development of one's own qualities
3. Closing part: Exercise "Rock, paper, scissors". Reflection "Smile"

Contents of the session:

### 1. Introduction

Hi, guys! Today in class we're going to talk about your class and how you relate to each other.

But first, let's get positive and find out what your strengths are. I take my right-hand





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neighbour's hand and say, "Adam, you have a great sense of humor." Adam takes the hand of his neighbour to his right and says his best quality, etc.

## 2. Main part.

Guys, let's remember the rules of group work

- We always help each other
- Everyone treats each other with respect in class
- We take turns talking and listening carefully to each other
- Everyone has the right to say what they think and feel

I now invite you to watch a cartoon Helium, directed by Tom Kyzivat.

*Discussion questions:* Are there any situations in your school life shown in the cartoon? How often does this happen? Why do you think the characters have such different moods and attitudes about life? So, if the situation shown in the cartoon is repeated very often, then we can speak of bullying, i.e., systematic abuse, humiliation of some pupils by others.

*Please note the following:*

- 1) main actors are the aggressor and the victim, who are represented very vividly in the cartoon;
- 2) bullying is done deliberately, and is aimed at causing physical and mental suffering to another person;
- 3) bullying undermines the victim's self-confidence, destroys self-respect and human dignity;
- 4) bullying is a group process that affects not only the perpetrator and the victim, but also the witnesses to the abuse, the whole class (group) where it takes place;
- 5) bullying never stops on its own: it always requires protection and support for the victim, the perpetrator (the bully) and the witnesses;

Although only two vivid characters have been shown: the aggressor and the victim, there are always observers, those who are aware of the bullying but do not stop it.

They may side with the aggressor for fear of becoming a victim themselves, or they may sympathise with the victim but passively watch everything happen. So, the better we treat each other and respect each other's opinions, the less likely it is that bullying will occur. Note that the perpetrator can also become a victim if a stronger bully appears, the ending of the cartoon illustrates the point.

Discussion questions: Who do you think is more likely to be victims? What features are characteristic of them? Well done!

Let us conclude: Almost any child or young person, given the right circumstances, can become a victim of bullying. However, we can identify the most typical personal characteristics of victims: external characteristics (obesity, defects in appearance, unattractiveness, bad clothing), children with low academic achievement, poor behaviour, low self-esteem, having no friends in the group, and difficulties in building and maintaining close relationships with peers. Children who are members of an ethnic, national, or religious minority may also be targets of bullying, ethnic, national, or religious minority children can also be targets of bullying.

*Exercise "How we are different from each other" - "How we are similar to each other".*

And now I suggest we pay attention to the fact that we are all different.

For example, Alice and I have different colored hair, Zika and Ernesto have different genders, and Alex and Karim are wearing different color pullovers today. We have different nationalities, age, gender, weight, eye color, etc.

Discussion questions: How important do you think it is to look for differences between people?

Do you often do this in your life? Does it benefit you? Right, we would rather look for what we



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have in common with each other, what we have in common, what qualities we have in common. For example, Zauresh and I have the same name. Who of you listens to the same music band? Who goes to the same section, attends the same elective or elective course? Who is continuing? (Make sure all the children are named).

And now a warm-up exercise called "*Etudes*". Work in pairs, without agreeing on anything, show: playing chess, sawing wood, playing tennis, rowing boating, volleyball, arm-wrestling, mirror and its reflection, hopscotch, handshake, rock, paper, scissors, handing a hot potato to someone else, a game of cards. You have done wonderfully well. Even without speaking, you were able to negotiate, and others understood you without words. So, it's possible in real life in real life: to compromise, to negotiate. Now I invite you to look at the slide that shows the characteristics of a person whose behaviour is present:



Figure 1 insults, mockery [\[14\]](#)



Figure 2 ignoring [\[15\]](#)



Figure 3 refusal to talk, to acknowledge [\[16\]](#)



Figure 4 negative stereotypes and prejudices [17]



Figure 5 making up a generalised opinion of a person belonging to a different culture, gender, race, ethnic group, usually based on usually based on negative characteristics [18]



Figure 6 harassment, threats, [19]



Figure 7 bullying [20]

Discussion questions: Who would want such a friend, comrade, classmate? Why?

Look at point 3 - stereotyping, i.e., labelling.



*Exercise 'Labels'.*



Hand out to participants at random.

Discussion questions: Do you guys like this sticker? Why?

Do you want to get rid of it? Why?

Now you tear this label into little pieces, throw it away and I will give you the other stickers:



Discussion questions: what did you feel, how do you feel?

Are there "stickers" in real life? Do your opinions about other people always match the real thing?

Let's get back to the slides.

Here are the qualities and characteristics of another person:

Figure #8

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Figure 8



Questions for discussion: Do you understand all the provisions? Who would like to have a friend who has quality data? Would you like to study with classmates? Why?

**Personality traits (Human Traits exercise)**

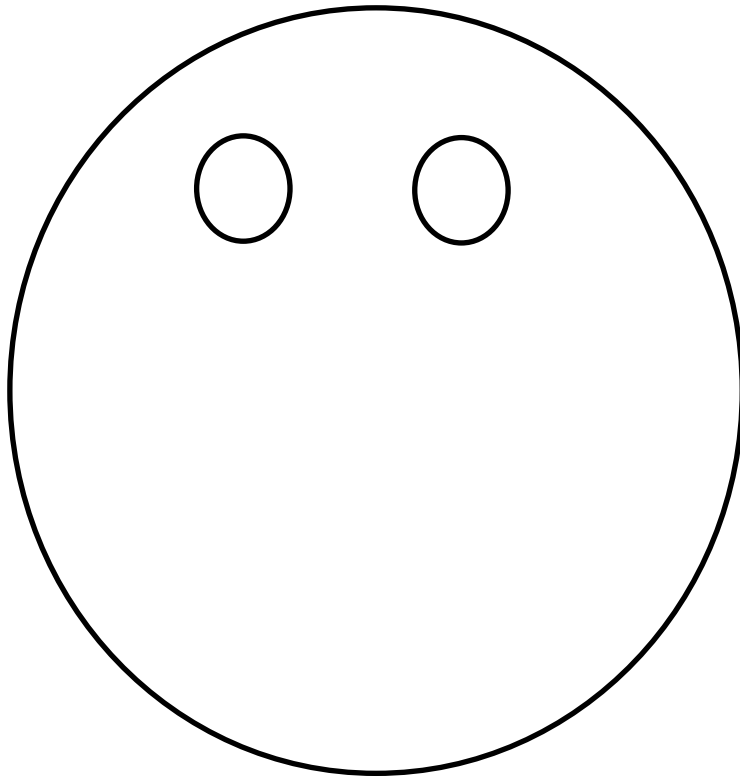
And now we invite you to rate yourself on a 5-point scale – how you have developed the qualities presented on the form. Read every statement put 1 point - you have this trait undeveloped, 5 - developed to the maximum. You have 5 for it minutes. Assess yourself honestly. Now take a close look at what trait(s) you need to develop in yourself!

Rate yourself on a 5-point scale: 1 point - you have this trait undeveloped, 5 - it is developed to the maximum.

#	Characteristics	Points
1	Ability to empathize	
2	Sense of humor	
3	Sensitivity	
4	Tolerance of differences	
5	Self-control	
6	Kindness	
7	Not judging others	
8	Ability to listen	
9	Inquisitive	
10	The ability to put yourself in someone else's shoes	

How well we understand each other without words. Rock, Paper, Scissors? On the count of 1, 2, 3, one of the three positions is thrown out. The game is over when everyone has the same position. At the same time, everyone is silent and does not agree.

Reflection. If you liked the session, then you need to draw a mouth in such a way that you get a smiling smiley, if you liked it halfway, then draw a horizontal line instead of the mouth, if you didn't like it at all, make the smiley sad.



Memo for parents.



Figure 9 [21]

Explain to children that they should be friendly with other users when communicating online.

Under no circumstances should they write harsh and offensive words - it is just as unpleasant to read rudeness as it is to listen to it. Explain to children that the personal information they post online can be used against them. Teach your child to respond appropriately to the hurtful words and actions of other users. You should not communicate with the aggressor, let alone try to respond to him or her in the same way. Perhaps you should leave the network resource altogether and delete personal information if the problem cannot be solved peacefully. The best way to ruin a bully's antics is to ignore them. Talk about the site's blacklisting or blocking options.

Make sure that the "virtual life" has not turned into a real one.

What to do:

1. Provide psychological and emotional support to the child, let the child know, that you are on his side and will make every effort to resolve the bullying situation.
2. Do not give in to panic and aggressive moods and remain calm. The priority is to calm yourself and reassure the child, giving him or her a feeling of security and emotional comfort.
3. Listen carefully to the child. Understand the cause and sequence of events, ask questions, and try to get his opinion about the cause the situation.

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4. Reassure the child that the problem is not with the one who is the victim, but with the one who acts as the aggressor. A pattern that is common to all bullying behaviors is that the bully asserts his self-image in an "unhealthy" way.
5. Teaching coping skills. Understanding such a feature of bullying as an imbalance of power, it is worth explaining to the child that the aggressor is the stronger, the more upset or angry the victim is.

In parallel with these actions, you must:

1. Report the problem to the class teacher as soon as possible. As a parent, you can ask to arrange a meeting with the principal or head teacher for a systematic approach to overcoming bullying through parent-teacher-school administration cooperation.
2. The following actions should be taken with the teacher:
  - distinguish bullying from other forms of violence and aggression
  - identify bullying not as an individual problem, but as a team problem
3. Seek help from a school psychologist. Sometimes a bullying situation is morally and emotionally difficult not only for the child, but also for the parent, so you should not neglect the help of a specialist.
4. If the bullying does not stop, with the mediation of the teacher (not by yourself) you need to contact the parents of the offender and talk to them, in the presence of the teacher, psychologist and school administration.
5. Ask teacher about the school situation at least once a week.
6. Help your child be resistant to bullying.



What to do if your child initiates school bullying?

*Signs of a bullying organizer:*

- Impulsiveness
- Annoyance
- Emotional instability
- Excessive self-esteem
- Hostility (aggression)
- Lack of communication skills with outward observance of generally accepted norms and rules
- Tendency to lie or cheat

What to do

Clearly name what is happening: "What you are doing is violence. Ask the child to put himself or herself in the place of the victim, describing specific actions, you can talk more about this with the educational psychologist. Outline the attitude to what is happening: "This is a serious problem, and not just yours, but that of the whole group (class, company).

Support your child in his intention to change. Praise him or her for following the school rules, tell them you will help them to change their behavior - think of an action plan to help them make positive changes.

Spend positive time with your child.

Control.

Help develop social skills (friendship, mutual help, responsible behavior).



What if your child witnesses school bullying?

1. Try to clarify the situation: what and with which child(ren) in the class is happening. It is equally important (!!!) to find out your child's attitude to what is happening: try to understand whether he or she supports what is happening or, on the contrary, tries to actively intervene or remains on the sidelines.
2. If your child is one of the "support group" of the aggressor - see the information above "What to do if your child is the initiator of school bullying."
3. If your child does not act as a "protector" of the victim, first support his intentions and agree on interaction. Contact the class teacher and/or school administration. Remember: the situation of bullying in the classroom requires immediate intervention, because the entire team suffers from its consequences. However, you should not directly contact other parents without informing the teaching staff and administration.
4. It is necessary to act most carefully in situations in which the child remains neutral to what is happening - most likely, the child is afraid of the possible actions of the aggressors. In this case, it is very important to form a common position together with the child - it is necessary to come to an agreement that bullying in the team is unacceptable.
5. An important step could also be the distribution of popular science materials about the dangers and consequences of bullying among the parent community in a group chat or as part of parent meetings. Coordinate your steps with the class teacher, psychologist, social teacher, school administration.

What not to do:

- Promising a child to keep it a secret that he/she is being bullied at school. The first and foremost task of the adults is to acknowledge the problem and report it to the class teacher and



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principal. Under no circumstances should you keep silent the facts of bullying, only by making the problem public you will be able to solve it. Individual work and talking to the child are not enough.

- Do not advise your child to respond to aggression with aggression. It is important for parents to understand the difference between a single school fight and regular, systematic bullying.
- According to Australian expert Ken Rigby, many bullies are not physically weak and do not always back down. Consequently, they wait for the victim to resist, but the result can be a particularly severe physical beating, continuing, and worsening the bullying situation.
- Directly confront your classmates, the bully child, and his/her parents. By doing this you can put your child in more danger. In addition, every parent will not always immediately admit the guilt of their child, but on the contrary will defend him/hers and say that he/she could not do so.
- Don't jump to conclusions and act without understanding. At this stage, your task is to get an objective picture of what is happening to get out of the situation as quickly as possible.
- Do not give advice to the school on how to deal with aggressive classmates. Wait and watch closely the actions of the school's administration and teaching staff.
- Other people's children are not your area of responsibility. Listen to the suggestions of the teaching staff, ask clarifying questions, take note of the actions that you and your child need to take, and do what depends on you. Try to trust the class teacher and administration. When building a constructive dialogue with the school, work on the problem can be carried out in a complex and, therefore, more efficiently.

Talk to your children about: Bullying is always wrong! No one has the right to intimidate you or anyone else! It is dangerous to physically fight back in a bullying situation!



Over the past 40 years, the understanding of bullying as a socio-cultural phenomenon has undergone significant rethinking. Bullying has been a recurring theme in literary works, onscreen and generally regarded as an inevitable part of growing up and socializing a child of a child's process of growth and socialization. It was only after a series of simultaneous child suicides in the 1960s and 1970s in Norway, America, Canada, and several other countries simultaneously, foreign scholars turned their attention to bullying.

In the Republic of Kazakhstan, the study of bullying is only gaining momentum.

It relates to several circumstances: first, with the collapse of the USSR which caused systemic disintegration of all spheres of life. The media also had a certain influence. They shaped social attitudes and presented violence as a justified means of solving conflicts and made cruelty a cult. For this reason, bullying was perceived as a harmless, childish, a temporary phenomenon. There was an opinion that bullying hardens a child's character.

It was only the growth of child suicides, just as in foreign countries, that fundamentally changed the current paradigm.

At present, the issues of ensuring the constitutional rights of citizens, protection them from unlawful encroachments are key. Bullying is no longer in a "gray area," the need to respond to its manifestations became undeniable. In this paper I tried to combine all points of view on bullying and develop my own version of bullying prevention and counteraction.



## ANNEX 1

Dear friend!

We ask you to answer a few questions. Before answering read carefully and circle the answer you think is right.

Choose your gender: Female; Male. Age \_\_\_\_\_

1. Do you know, what is «bullying»?

a) yes

b) no

2. Have you experienced situations where some people bully others?

a) yes, I have

b) no, I have never experienced

c) other \_\_\_\_\_

3. If yes, what kind of form:

a) insulting, humiliation

b) abuse

c) physical violence

d) taking pictures of bullying on the phone

e) cyberbullying

f) other \_\_\_\_\_

4. Have you been involved in bullying?

a) yes, as an observer



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b) yes, as a victim

c) yes, as an aggressor

d) no

5. Where do you face bullying frequently?

a) school

b) on a street

c) social networks

d) other \_\_\_\_\_

6. Who, from your perspective, is more likely to be bullied?

a) someone who is weaker and cannot fight back

b) someone who is different (outwardly, physically)

c) someone who has an opinion

d) other \_\_\_\_\_

7. Have you encountered situations of bullying by teachers?

a) yes, always

b) yes, rarely

c) no

8. Do you think that adults do not help children who are victims of bullying enough??

a) yes

b) no

c) do not think about it

9. Do you think it is possible to avoid bullying at school?

a) yes, if adults notice in time



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b) yes, if the victim changes his or her behaviour

c) yes, if you punish an aggressor

d) no, it is unavoidable.

e) other \_\_\_\_\_

10. Who do you think is capable of stopping bullying at school?

a) administration staff

b) teachers

c) parents

d) pupils

e) other \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your collaboration!**

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