

#LoveisLouder
than bullying

ideas for using the movie *Bully*
to create discussions and action

for students



Their stories are sad. A new chapter starts *now*.

Bully is a movie that tells powerful stories about kids and their families struggling with bullying. They remind us that we have to be careful with our words and actions, look out for each other, and speak up if we or someone we know are having a hard time.

“Love is Louder than bullying” means that the right types of caring, connection, support and action, can stop and overpower the negative influences and voices that make us, and the people around us, feel alone, different or hopeless.

Whether you’ve seen the movie, heard stories on the news or you’re dealing with bullying yourself, it can make you feel sad, mad, angry or hopeless. This guide contains some things to think or talk about, and ideas for actions you can take alone or with your friends to stop bullying and help yourself or others who feel mistreated, misunderstood or alone.

Here’s how you can get started:

- Check www.thebullyproject.com and www.loveislouder.com frequently for ways to get involved and take action. You can also follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for updates on ways to get involved.
- Think about or talk about the discussion questions on the following page. Make notes and write down your own thoughts and questions.
- Look at the ideas for action in this guide and make decisions about the things you will do everyday to prevent bullying, deal with voices that bring you down, and make your school a safe and caring community.
- Head over to DoSomething.org for info on planning a “Love is Louder than Bullying” Event at your school or in your community.

Bully also tells the stories of families with children who died by suicide. Read on for information on how feeling mistreated, different or alone, can make some people really hopeless. These feelings should never lead people to hurt themselves, so it’s important that you speak up if you or a friend feels hopeless. [You can find information on warning signs of self-harm and ways to get help here.](#)

Things to Think or Talk About

The stories of people hurting each other in *Bully*, and the ones we see on the news and in our schools, are really disturbing. But there is also hope when families really listen to each other, when students like you stand up for themselves, and when friends stick by each other. Thinking about or talking about the questions below can help us figure out how to turn those feelings into understanding and action. If you have thoughts or questions, or if you need to talk to someone about how you are feeling, reach out to a parent or someone at your school.

You can answer these questions about the movie *Bully*, or other stories you know of that involve bullying or mistreatment.

How do the stories make you feel?

Seeing people getting hurt or in pain can make us feel sad, mad or frustrated. We also might have a mix of those emotions. It's totally fine to feel that way. We have choices about how to respond to our emotions – we *can* choose to take those feelings and use them in a positive way to change things.

What does bullying mean to you?

A lot of the bullying stories we hear are about really aggressive words and actions. But other behaviors can be really hurtful too –starting rumors about others, calling people names, making people feel like they aren't good enough or don't belong. What does bullying mean to you and what are some of the ways that we hurt each other?

How have other people made you feel mistreated, misunderstood or alone?

Thinking about words and actions that make us feel bad can help us think about how the things we say and do help and hurt others. Also remember that people who act mean or bully are often dealing with their own tough situations. They may feel mistreated or alone too. There is no excuse to hurt others, but realize that the cruel things people do or say is usually about their own stuff.

Why do people hurt themselves?

In the film there are two families who have children who die by suicide. Why does this happen? Bullying can make anyone feel really alone and down, but it shouldn't lead to us hurting ourselves. Sometimes, people are hurting so much that they think there is no other way out. Bullying can contribute to those feelings, but it's usually more complicated - - there may be struggles with depression, feeling different or family problems. As bad as things can feel, there's always hope and always a way to feel better. If you or someone you know feel like there's no way out, let a parent or someone at school know. If you notice these [warning signs](#) in a friend, don't keep it a secret.

Is your school or community an accepting, safe place for everyone?

The movie highlights people who are made to feel different because of race, sexuality or special needs. Are there people or groups at your school who might feel different or unaccepted? What can you and your friends do to make them feel more accepted and supported?

How can you take action to make things better?

Read on to find things you can do every day to support yourself, help others and make your community and school safer and more caring. Use the checklist at the end of the guide to mark things you plan to do.

Ideas for Action

When people are bullied or mistreated, it's not just their problem – it affects everyone in our schools or communities. It's important that we understand the pain we cause each other when we are cruel or make people feel different. We also need to do a better job of looking out for each other and speaking up when we are concerned about friends or classmates. Here are some actions you can take to help yourself and others:

1. Speak Up

Sometimes it's hard to speak up and tell somebody that we are being bullied or mistreated, or that we feel different or alone. We feel like we need to be perfect or we don't want to seem whiny or be a burden to other people. Or it may feel embarrassing to tell parents, teachers or friends what others are saying about us or doing to us. Here's the truth — we all have a hard time sometimes and there is nothing wrong with speaking up and saying that you or someone you know are feeling sad, alone or mistreated.

2. Think Twice About Our Words and Actions

In the movie *Bully*, we see examples of really mean or violent behaviors. Being violent or cruel can cause serious pain and damage. But there are also lots of other ways that we make people feel bad or different: making comments or insults behind someone's back, starting rumors to embarrass someone, ignoring people or making them feel like they don't fit in, and standing by and watching or laughing when someone else is being bullied. The things we choose to do and say are powerful. So we can take action daily by making sure we are using our words and actions to help others and not harm them. Instead of making a joke at someone's expense, think of something kind to say. Instead of tweeting or posting an insult, use that as a chance to make someone feel good. We have to think twice before we do or say something that could hurt someone — and then choose to use those words and actions in a good way instead.

3. Focus on the Positive

When even a few people are mean to us or unaccepting it can feel like no one cares. It's easy to focus only on the negative and to start believing what's being said by all the voices that are bringing us down. Even when it feels like no one gets us or likes us, it's important that we support and love ourselves. Try to take a moment each day to focus on the positive instead of the negative. Instead of replaying that insult someone threw at you over and over in your head, make a list of things that make you feel good, or things or people you appreciate. And, if you are having a hard time changing the sad or bad feelings, or if you are thinking about hurting yourself — speak up and let someone know. Talking to someone about how you feel really is the first step to feeling better.

4. Look Out for Friends and Classmates

Sometimes we have so many things going on in our own heads and so many things we feel worried or insecure about, that we don't notice when other people are having a really hard time. If you see someone who is being bullied or mistreated, it's important to address it. You never know what is going on in someone's life. They may already be feeling depressed or dealing with tough stuff at home, and that insult or shove might be the thing that makes them feel hopeless. If you notice someone in your school or community seems really down, angry, anxious or hopeless, reach out to them and offer support...or reach out to a parent or teacher and let them know you are worried.

For more ways that students can get involved, visit www.thebullyproject.com or www.loveislouder.com.

PICTURE IT. PROMISE IT.

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Think about your school or community. How are people made to feel bad or like they don't belong? Are there people or groups who are left out or put down? Now **picture** a more supportive school and community where words and actions are used to help, not hurt. Are there ideas you have or things you can do to make that happen? Write down your thoughts and ideas here:

Now, check the things you **promise** to do:

- speak up** if I'm getting bullied or see it happening
- reach out** to someone who seems alone or needs a friend
- think twice** before I do or say things that could hurt others
- help someone** out by doing or saying something kind
- stomp out rumors** by not passing them along
- turn up the positive** by focusing on things I appreciate - not negative voices
- turn down the negative** by not dwelling on hurtful things people say
- look out for friends** and say something if I notice signs of hopelessness
- tell someone** if I'm feeling hopeless or thinking about hurting myself