

Anti-Bullying Week 17 – 21 November 2014

Mind your Language campaign!

Anti-Bullying Week provides an opportunity for us to talk openly about the effects of bullying on the lives of children and young people and take action to stop it.

Despite significant improvements to how schools tackle bullying of pupils, some groups of children and young people are still more likely to be bullied than others.

From the 17-21 November, the Anti-Bullying Alliance are calling on the school and wider community to take action to stop the bullying of disabled children and those with special educational needs - children who are significantly more likely to experience bullying in schools and the wider community.

One of the key aims of the week is to ensure that the school and wider community understand that the use of any such discriminatory language is wrong and will not be tolerated and this includes disabilist language.

1. Mind your Language campaign!

In my role as Lead of the Stonewall Education Champions Programme I am urging all Norfolk schools and Norfolk organisations to get behind a **Mind your Language campaign!**. I want **EVERYONE** to challenge those who use disabilist, homophobic, racist, sexist language and make them aware that it is unacceptable. I want children to be given the skills to do this effectively and sensitively and to learn to become proactive bystanders. The message we want to be giving everyone is 'Think before you speak!'

One way that school staff and parents can get behind this is to teach children scripts to respond to different scenarios such as:

1. Institutional response
2. Question/Explore response
3. Challenge response
4. Personal response

Over the last year I have been helping schools to address the homophobic language that children use such as "That's so gay!" or "You're so gay!" where the term 'gay' has become something to mean 'rubbish', 'boring' or 'irritating'.

Results from a recent Norfolk primary schools survey on homophobic language showed that in those schools that had begun to educate children about this, most children recognised when it was wrong to use the word 'gay' and were prepared to challenge other children who did it. Similar results were found in Lyng Grove Academy following staff training on the topic.

We want children and young people to know that it is o.k. to use the word 'gay' to describe someone who is gay or lesbian and to use terms like bisexual or transgender when used to describe someone's sexual orientation (lesbian, gay, bisexual) or gender (transgender).

We also want staff and children to feel confident to respond if they hear someone using the word 'gay' or other inappropriate language in a negative way. Here are some possible response scripts that staff, children or young people could use if they hear other pupils saying "That's so gay!" or "You're so gay!" inappropriately. The scripts can be adapted to fit other forms of discriminatory language and would make a good class activity or assembly during Anti-Bullying Week:

A. For primary school pupils this could include:

Institutional response	<p>In our school we always try to be kind to each other and when you use 'gay' like that it is unkind.</p> <p>Some people would find that word insulting so it's not ok to use it at our school.</p>
Question/Explore	<p>What do you think that word means?</p> <p>What makes you think that?</p> <p>How do you think (name of someone) feels? How would you like it if someone called you names like that?</p> <p>Can you explain what you mean by calling that gay?</p>
Confront	<p>Gay is a word we use to describe people who love people of the same sex, not a nasty word to use against people.</p>

Personal	<p>I'm really sad to hear you talk like that. I hoped you knew it was important to be kind to everyone.</p> <p>I don't like you using language like that.</p> <p>I'm not happy with what you said.</p>
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B. For secondary pupils this could include:

Institutional response	<p>In our school we treat everyone with respect and when you use 'gay' like that it is disrespectful of gay and lesbian people.</p> <p>In this school, we don't use language like that. There is nothing wrong with being gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender/transsexual (whichever is appropriate).</p> <p>That kind of language is homophobic (etc) and you know it's against school policy to make homophobic (etc) remarks. Homophobia (etc) is as bad as racism and sexism.</p> <p>The school policy says that we are all responsible for making this a safe place for everyone. That kind of language is homo/bi/transphobic and makes people feel unsafe. Therefore it is unacceptable.</p>
Question/Explore	<p>What do you think that word means?</p> <p>What makes you think that?</p> <p>How do you think (name of someone) feels? How would you like it if someone called you names like that?</p> <p>Can you explain what you mean by calling that gay?</p>

Confront	<p>What do you think that word means?</p> <p>What makes you think that?</p> <p>How do you think (name of someone) feels? How would you like it if someone called you names like that?</p> <p>Can you explain what you mean by calling that gay?</p> <p>How do you think (name of someone) feels? How would you like it if someone called you names like that?</p> <p>What do you mean by "that's so gay! /lezzies etc (whichever is appropriate)?</p> <p>You wouldn't say that someone's trainers are so 'black', would you? So it's not acceptable to say that they're so 'gay' either.</p> <p>How would you feel if someone spoke about you in that way?</p>
Personal	<p>What you've said really disappoints/disturbs/upsets/angers me. I hoped you would recognise that it is important to treat everyone with respect and that it is therefore wrong to use such as homo/bi/transphobic language.</p> <p>I don't like you using language like that. I think its offensive.</p>

These scripts have been taken from
'Bullying and prejudice-based incident recording and reporting guidance for Brighton & Hove Schools', Brighton & Hove City Council, 2014

Developed by:

Brighton & Hove City Council and Allsorts Youth Project

Please also see the challenging homophobic language assembly which has been designed by Acl Academy and the Stonewall PowerPoint which you can use to raise awareness further. Appropriate for secondary schools but could be adapted for primary.

2. The role of the bystander

This is a key role for young people in reducing bullying and yet many children and young people still feel unsure of what they can do when they witness bullying or name calling and are uncomfortable with it. The research shows that where young people do intervene the bullying can stop as quickly as within 10 seconds!

The role of the bystander lesson (see attached) invites you to consider with children and young people what they can do if they witness bullying. It encourages children and young people to discuss the range of options open to them and that even walking away can be an effective option as it reduces the bully's power over an audience.

During anti-bullying use the Role of the Bystander lesson to teach children their options.

3. Get your pupils to do our online Norfolk Anti-Bullying Survey

Schools with children aged between Years 5 – 10 will have an opportunity to engage pupils in our annual online anti-bullying survey. Head teachers will be sent details and these will also be available on ecourier. The results are a useful baseline for any school to compare their progress with anti-bullying initiatives over the years and individual school results will be available on the Myschools part of the Norfolk schools website in January 2015.

4. Mind your Language poster competition

We are offering **4 prizes of £25 Argos vouchers** to children in each of the **4 key stages**. Children are asked to produce a **Mind your Language** poster which raises awareness of why discriminatory language is unacceptable.

Final date for entry is 7th November 2014 and all entries with their name, age (Key stage) and school and should be sent to:

Rita Adair
Senior Lead Educational Psychologist
Children's Services
Carrow House
301 King's Street
Norwich
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5. Bake a rainbow cake!

Educate & Celebrate has joined forces with Gay Star News to bring you The “Edu-bake & Cel-a-cake” Great Rainbow Bake Off #GRBO. We are asking all schools to send us pictures of your home-made rainbow cakes to raise awareness during National Anti-Bullying week 17-21st November 2014. This year the theme is ‘creatively dealing with bullying’ so what better way to get involved than to bake a glorious rainbow cake
Full details of the competition is at <http://www.ellybarnes.com/competitions/>

Where to get further information

For any further information and resources from the Anti-Bullying Alliance go directly to their website www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

If you would like to discuss any of the above further with Rita Adair, Senior Lead Educational Psychologist, get in touch – rita.adair@norfolk.gov.uk or 07917 215202