



# 1000 Women 1 Voice

## Anti-Bullying Programme

### Background

South African pupils are “the most bullied kids in the world”, according to the country’s education minister. The Africa Check team sharpened their pencils to verify the claim.

Researched by Gopolang Makou & Julie Bourdin

Grade 5 pupils report highest occurrence of bullying

Students at work at Ibhongo High School in Soweto in January 2008. Photo:

AFP/Alexander Joe

South African Grade 5 pupils reported the highest occurrence of bullying out of the 49 countries surveyed. Most pupils (44%) reported being bullied “about weekly” and 34% reported being bullied “about monthly”.

Of the boys who took part in the study, 47% reported being bullied on a weekly basis. This compares to 40% of girls.

The report also highlights that pupils in South Africa’s public schools are bullied more than those in independent schools. Close to 48% of pupils in no-fee schools reported being bullied “about weekly” compared to about 25% of independent school pupils.

### Bullying and Cyberbullying

Bullying is repeated and intentional threats, physical assaults, and intimidation that occur when individuals or a group exert their real or perceived difference in power or strength on another.

Bullying commonly occurs in schools and can be in the shape of physical, verbal, social, or electronic aggression.

### Types of Bullying

Bullying can take many forms:

- **Verbal bullying** — includes name-calling, threats of harm, and taunting.
- **Social bullying** — can involve excluding someone intentionally, encouraging others to socially exclude someone, spreading rumours, or publicly shaming someone.
- **Physical bullying** — often results in physically harming someone or their belongings by hitting, punching, pushing, spitting, kicking, or tripping.
- **Cyberbullying** — involves using electronic media such as on the Internet, texting, and social media to spread hurtful and damaging stories, rumours, and images. Although cyberbullying can take place anywhere and anytime, this form of bullying often can travel rapidly through a school population and beyond, devastating the victims and leaving them feeling powerless.

Students who are perceived as different by other students are more likely to be bullied. These more vulnerable students include LGBT youth, students with physical, learning, or mental health disabilities, and students who are targeted for differences in race, ethnicity, or religion.

Both students who bully and students who are bullied can suffer lasting psychological effects, including post-traumatic stress. It is vital that schools provide support to all of the students involved in a bullying incident and that schools take steps to reduce bullying.

## **Prevent Bullying**

In a trauma-informed school, the best deterrent to bullying and cyberbullying is to create a culture of acceptance and communication. Such a culture empowers students to find positive ways to resolve conflicts and has an administration, teachers, and other staff who can support students in making constructive decisions and respond proactively when aggression of any kind exists on the school campus. These steps can help you get started:

- **Establish an anti-bullying policy** — Know your state and district policies and seek input from all members of your school community to determine how your school will implement rules of conduct, a way for students to report bullying, and the process by which the school will act to address reported bullying.
- **Put into action a school-wide plan** — Disseminate a bullying prevention plan that involves all adults on campus in knowing how to support positive behaviour, address unacceptable actions, and refer students who need additional counselling.
- **Educate the school community** — Incorporate bullying prevention in lesson plans, teach students how to effectively respond to bullying, and provide resources for parents so they can be partners in your anti-bullying efforts.

### **1. Project summary**

#### **1.1. Overall objective**

To Stop Bullying

#### **1.2. Expected outcomes**

**Children will report and speak up about bullying and that a culture of acceptance of our differences are celebrated rather than exploited.**

#### **1.3. Indicators of achievement**

**No more bullying in the schools that we work in and reduced incidence, awareness and speak out. Information pamphlets will be distributed.**

#### **1.4. Main activities**

**Poster making competition to raise awareness – Schools are invited to participate**

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