



# Where All Can Safely Live

A guide to understanding bullying in our communities,  
how to talk about it, and how to prevent it.

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how to talk about it,  
and how to prevent it



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## Introduction

### What is this curriculum for?

This anti-bullying curriculum is an introduction to what bullying is, how it functions, and why we as Christians are called to prevent it from happening in our communities. It was developed with the help of the staff at the Pacific Violence Prevention Institute, from the pioneering research on bullying by Dan Olweus, and materials created by the United States government.

*This curriculum is not intended to be a comprehensive guide to stopping bullying.* However, this guide provides a basic understanding of how bullying works and offers suggestions for steps in creating a congregational bullying prevention plan.

### How should I use it?

Before you decide to use this program, go through the “Building Your Leadership Team” section to see if the program is right for you and your setting.

Each module takes an hour to 75 minutes to complete, including breaks, and was designed for use in congregations. It’s suitable for use in adult forums or education sessions on Sundays, or for a separately scheduled workshop series. Feel free to team up with another local congregation when you use it. We advise against doing multiple sessions in one sitting; there is a lot of material for anyone to absorb all at once.

*Please use “Building Your Leadership Team” before anything else, as it contains crucial information for preparing to lead this program.*

### What are some of the features of this curriculum?

**Congregational.** This curriculum is designed for use in congregations or in other church-related settings. However, it can easily be adapted for use in school settings.

**Inter-generational.** This curriculum is intended to be inter-generational. For small-group discussion, session leaders are encouraged to ask participants to form groups that include both youth and older adults—the greater diversity of age within the groups, the better. A few activities are designed to showcase possible differences in experiences of bullying for people in different age groups.

All members of congregations should be invited to participate. Be intentional in inviting youth and young adults to attend as well as family members and teachers. Bullying happens to people of all ages, but if your work will be with youth, their stories and witness are crucial to making sure their needs are being met. They are the experts on their experiences and ought to be included.

If the group with whom you'll be teaching this module is not diverse in age, you may wish to extend the invitation further: to the neighborhood, to churches with whom you have a good relationship, to a local community center, etc.

**Intersectional.** An important part of the mission of Lutherans Concerned is to “work from the intersection of oppressions.” The term *intersection of oppressions* refers to the complex combinations of various social and cultural categories such as class, race, age, body shape, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and ability. These “intersections” often act together on multiple levels. For instance, a person may be defined by more than one “category,” such as by race, gender, and sexual orientation, all at the same time.

While bullying against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people has taken center stage in the media in recent years, anyone who is perceived as “not like us” can and does become a target of both physical and verbal bullying. Acts of bullying and related violence cut across all communities. If we focus on only one facet of the problem, we run the risk of unintentionally making it more difficult to see the inequality and injustice perpetrated within other contexts.

When sharing stories from personal experiences, group participants should be reminded that it is important to hear each person's story, no matter what type of bullying was involved.

**Discussion-based.** Much of the curriculum is based on group conversations. We suggest that you try not to let the group get bigger than 25 people. If there's high interest, we recommend hosting multiple sessions.

**Age appropriate.** This discussion guide is suitable for those in middle school and older, but anti-violence work of all kinds should start at an earlier age. There are many programs designed to work with young children against bullying and to work for their appreciation of difference and diversity. You'll find resources for some of them in the Resource List on page 38. If you're familiar with others, please contact us so we can evaluate them and consider adding them to our resources.

### **We've talked about bullying: Now what?**

We encourage everyone not to stop their work at the end of this guide. Instead, there are a number of ways to work against bullying in your area. Sessions three and four include ideas for further actions to take, from screening videos to advocating for training in schools. In the Resource List on page 38 you'll find a partial list of organizations, books and films that deal with bullying, discrimination, and violence prevention.

## **Building Your Leadership Team**

*This section was developed using the time-proven methods of the Pacific Violence Prevention Institute. It is **absolutely necessary** that you address the information in this section before launching your program.*

### **Is this program is right for your congregation or group?**

We're excited that you want to find a way to address bullying as a congregation. To make this as positive an experience as possible for everyone involved, it is critical that your leadership team be prepared for the twists and turns that may occur over the course of this conversation.

To determine whether this program is a good fit for you, your leadership team, congregation, or group, **consider** the following questions *individually*:

- What feelings do I hold about bullying?
- Have I experienced bullying in my life? Do I belong to a group that experiences violence and oppression through bullying?
- Can I put aside those feelings, attitudes, and beliefs in order to provide neutral leadership for the group?
- What strategies will I use to put aside those feelings and maintain neutrality?
- Do I have a personal relationship with any of the participants?
- Since having any kind of personal relationship with a participant can make it hard to maintain neutrality, what strategies will I use to put aside that relationship during the program?

**Consider** the following questions *as a team*:

- What feelings do we hold about bullying that need to be addressed?
- Have any of us experienced bullying, or do any of us belong to a community that experiences violence or oppression through bullying?
- In order to provide neutral leadership for the group, what strategies will we use to put our experiences aside during the program?
- What are the power differentials in our proposed audience? Are they manageable?

*If the primary members of the proposed audience are targets of bullying and include those who bullied them, or any other group of violence victims and perpetrators, this program will not be feasible and you should decline to run it.*

If you decide the power differentials are manageable, discuss as a team what strategies will help to diffuse those differentials.

To decide if the audience will participate positively, **consider** these questions *as a team*:

- Do you believe that the potential participants care about their community?
- Do you believe they want to make it better or more effective?
- Do you believe they will listen and work positively with others who have different opinions, backgrounds, and beliefs in order to attain that goal?
- Do you believe they will continue this process even if they don't get their own way?

*If the answer to any of these questions is "No," the program is probably not viable at this time.*

### **Who should be on the leadership team?**

At least two people are needed to run this curriculum. The first will lead sessions in the front of the room, guiding individuals through the material, leading discussion and activities. The second will be a support person responsible for gauging the emotions of participants, providing individual attention to participants, and stepping in to help the discussion leader when necessary.

When talking about a sensitive topic with which many of your participants will have personal experience, ideally your support person should be familiar with as many of the participants as possible. That way when he or she is watching for signs of trouble, he or she will notice unusual behavior—being quieter than usual or acting out in a way that distracts from the program, for example. This person can keep an eye out for those who may need personal attention, to provide a listening ear, to offer resources if necessary, and to defuse potentially difficult situations.

### **What do you do when personal experiences are shared?**

There are different types of sharing that may occur when discussing personal experiences with bullying. They can be generalized into three categories.

1. The participant is sharing a past experience from which they have had time to heal emotionally and physically. The person can speak about it without experiencing much discomfort.
2. The participant is either still experiencing this type of violence or has not had enough time to heal from it and is seeking assistance by sharing.
3. The participant accidentally disclosed something he or she intended to keep private.

**If you are the presenter:** In the first type of disclosure, it is important to recognize what has been shared. You may use it as an example if it is relevant; if it is not relevant, acknowledge the disclosure positively while quickly returning to the subject at hand.

If a disclosure is troubling or disturbing to either you or the participants, call a five-minute break to relieve some of the tension and to provide time to check with the participant to make sure he or she is all right continuing with the program.

**If you are the support person:** Keep checking participants, both those sharing and listening. If someone looks upset, take the time to check in with the participant by asking discreetly if they will step outside with you for a moment. If this isn't possible, you may need to call for a five-minute break in the session yourself. The presenter should be prepared for this possibility. Then, keep an eye on them as the presentation continues in case they need more assistance.

When checking in with participants who have shared, try to find answers to the following questions:

- Description of the incident, including when it occurred.
  - If the incident is in the past and the person has processed it, you can probably make sure they are okay right now and then move on. If not, continue investigating to determine what other actions will be necessary.
- Who perpetrated the act of violence?
  - If this was an act of physical, sexual or severe emotional violence perpetrated by an adult against a minor, take action. It is likely this incident must be reported to Child Protective Services. In congregational settings, you may need to notify the pastor (assuming the he or she is not the alleged perpetrator)—in many cases, the pastor is considered a mandated reporter and can help recommend a course of action.
- Is the participant in danger?
  - If the participant is not in danger and both target and perpetrator are minors, you cannot force the targeted individual to take action.
  - However, if you do feel the participant is in immediate danger, you should contact the police or other authority.
- Is the participant comfortable talking to the pastor or youth director about the incident?
  - If so, this person may have a closer relationship with them and be able to offer more support in the future. Encourage the participant to speak to the pastor or youth director. Consider following up with church staff if appropriate.

### **What else needs to be done to prepare?**

As a team, run through the entire curriculum together to look for particular points that may need

adjusting for your setting. If you have more than one presenter, decide who will run which part of the curriculum.

Be sure you have all the necessary materials.

Look for other local resources in your community:

- If someone has experienced serious violence, who can you ask for help?
- Are there local committees, teams or organizations committed to doing diversity training or anti-violence work you can reach out to?
- What do you know about the local schools and their policies on bullying?

### **What do we do after each session?**

Debrief as a team and address:

- Disclosures. What needs following-up, referrals, or reporting?
- What parts of the program went well?
- What went poorly?
- What changes would help this program be more effective in the future?
- What follow-up programs are you interested in, if any?

**Congratulations! You're ready to go!**

## Curriculum Guide

This curriculum contains four modules:

Module 1: Bullying 101– Understanding the Basics of Bullying

Module 2: Shining a Light on Bullying

Module 3: Bullying Prevention and Response

Module 4: Congregational Anti-Bullying Action Planning

It's recommended that each module be presented in a separate session. Each module contains the following elements:

**Preparing to Lead the Module.** Suggestions are provided to help you prepare to lead the session.

**Opening Prayer.** Prayers are provided, or use one of your own choosing.

**Introductions.** Take the time to go over names and what brought individuals to this conversation today. Knowing participants' motivations can help you guide the discussion appropriately. If the participants change from session to session, you will want to include this element for each session. If the participants remain the same, you can skip this after the first session.

**Scriptural Grounding.** Passages from the Bible are provided to provide a faithful grounding for your discussion and activities. Suggested commentary is provided.

**Establishing Safe Space** is especially important. As with introductions, establishing ground rules for safe space may not be necessary for each session if participants remain the same session-to-session.

**Activities/Discussion.** Each module contains appropriate activities and discussion topics.

**Closing Prayer.** Prayers are provided, or use prayers of your own choosing.

The following materials are needed for each session:

Note paper

Flip chart, or large paper and tape

Nametags

Copies of handouts for all participants

Pens or pencils

Markers

Bibles

# Module 1: Bullying 101: Understanding the Basics

## Preparing to Lead Module 1

This session contains a lot of information for participants to take in at once. It is helpful to have definitions of the terms *bullying*, *verbal bullying*, *social bullying*, *physical bullying*, *cyberbullying*, and *violence* pre-written in large print for display (see Box 1.3), as well as copies of Olweus' *Bullying Circle* diagram (page 19) so participants can see as well as hear what you have to say and more easily take notes if they desire.

Giving a foundation of information to a group is not a highly interactive exercise. Wherever possible, seek extra involvement from participants, including inviting them to read the scripture passage or definitions aloud and asking for questions.

Consider your audience. Do you have younger students who might not be as familiar with words like *continuum*, *cultural milieu*, or *power*? Make sure you find a way to explain more clearly. For example, you might say, "A continuum shows how certain items are related, but not the same. Not everyone will measure it the same way. You could have a continuum of colors in rainbow order, or from 'cool' to 'warm,' or from dark to light." "A cultural milieu is the mix of people, traditions, and ways of interaction that shape how we live together." "One way to think about power is the ability to make things happen."

### Goals

- To recognize shared definitions of, and dispel common myths about, *bullying*.
- To identify the roles we play in a bullying incident; to distinguish between *bullies* and *bullying behaviors*, recognizing the latter is more useful.

## Opening Prayer

**Read aloud** this opening prayer (or one of your choosing).

God, we thank you for bringing us together today to learn about bullying and how it affects a community. Please bless our studying and discussion. Let them bear fruit worthy of you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

## Introductions

**Ask** participants to give their names and say a few words about what brought them to this conversation today. Knowing participants' motivations can help you guide the discussion appropriately.

## Scriptural Grounding

**Read aloud** the text from Luke 10:25-37 (see Box 1.1)

**Explain:** Jesus' story tells us about the ways people treat one another in a system based on oppression and violence. The road between Jericho and Jerusalem, on which our first man

### Box 1.1

#### Luke 10:25-37

Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he said, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? What do you read there?" He answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." And he said to him, "You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live." But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.' Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" He said, "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

walked, was notoriously dangerous due to its winding path and many hidden locations seemingly made for ambushes. However, the physical setting doesn't create violence of its own accord.

*What was it about the society of that time that made this road so treacherous? The Jews and Samaritans of Jesus' time typically hated one another, a mutual feeling generated from years of conflict between the two peoples. Violence on the road had come to be the norm. But even in a violent system such as this, Jesus shows us the behavior we should strive for: showing mercy, even to those with whom you do not get along.*

*Whom do you identify with in this story? Of course, on different readings of the story, we may see ourselves in different characters, and not always the Samaritan—perhaps we identify most with the Priest and the Levite, crossing to the other side. Or maybe sometimes we think of ourselves as being like the man, battered and bruised, lying on the side of the road. And sometimes, might we even feel like the robbers, responsible for the mistreatment of others?*

*How does this story speak to bullying? Addressing bullying requires us to look at all of the roles in which people experience bullying—from the other side of the road, from the hidden crags where the robbers lurk, and from the ditch. Later in this session, we'll*

talk about how those roles interact and how we're called to react to our newfound knowledge as Christians.

Obviously, the way things are for people today is much different than the context of Jews and Samaritans of the first century. We'll explore that particular world in greater depth in later sessions.

### Box 1.2

#### Suggested Ground Rules for Safe Space

1. We agree to **speak from our own experience** and to not make assumptions about the experiences of others.
2. We agree to **maintain confidentiality** and not to share one another's stories inappropriately.\*
3. We agree to **respect** individuals and their opinions and experiences regardless of age, race, ethnicity, ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, etc. This comes across in the words we use, body language, attitudes, and the way we listen to each other. Respect also includes treating bullied individuals and those who bully as children of God.
4. We agree to **participate** as fully as we are able and to make room for others to participate as well.
5. We agree to **communicate boundaries**, physical, emotional, and spiritual—and to respect the boundaries drawn by others.

#### **Note to Leader**

Ground rules are established to protect participants from harm they might inadvertently do to one another. If you see the ground rules being broken, return to them. Go over them again, and re-establish the buy-in of the whole group.

\*In a conversation that may bring up sensitive subjects and stories about great hurt, we can't promise confidentiality wholly beforehand, as it may come into conflict with mandatory reporting laws.

### **Establish Safe Space**

Have the group establish together how they will handle a conversation that might involve sensitive stories. What does safe space mean? How do we live that together? How far can confidentiality extend?

**Discuss** as a large group the ideas of safety, sensitivity, confidentiality, and respect as they pertain to sharing stories together.

**Ask the group:** Are there any ground rules we want to lay down in terms of language? (See Box 1.2 for examples.)

**Write down these ground rules** where the whole group can see them.

**Explain** that at the end of this session, the group will have to return to the question about confidentiality and talk about what to do with information that's been shared.

**Introduce** your support person and explain his or her role in gauging reactions to the information provided and for debriefing with individuals as needed.

### **Activity: Myth Busting**

To keep kinetic thinkers engaged, designate one side of the room "true" and the other side "false." After reading the opening statement (shown in *italics*), ask all participants who are

able to move to the side they think is most accurate, either the "true" side or the "false" side. Then provide the correct answer and additional comments.

**Emphasize** that the goal of the activity is to debunk common myths about bullying held by many

people, so if anyone's answer is incorrect, it is completely understandable and perfectly acceptable. (These myths and quoted materials come from [www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov), the U.S. Government's anti-bullying education page.)

*Bullying is another name for conflict.*

FALSE. "Conflict involves antagonism among two or more people. Whereas any two people can have a conflict, bullying only occurs where there is a power imbalance—where one person has a hard time defending himself or herself.

Why is the difference between bullying and conflict important? Conflict resolution or mediation strategies are sometimes misused to solve bullying problems. These strategies can send the message that both people involved are 'partly right and partly wrong...' The appropriate message to the one who is bullied should be, 'Bullying is wrong and no one deserves to be bullied. We are going to do everything we can to stop it.'"

*Bullying isn't just physical violence; it's also verbal and social.*

TRUE. "Physical bullying may be what first comes to mind when adults think about bullying. However, the most common form of bullying—both for boys and girls—is verbal bullying (e.g., name-calling, rumor-spreading). It is also common for youth to bully each other through social isolation (e.g., shunning or leaving a child out on purpose)."

*Bullying is more prominent on school grounds than on the bus to and from school.*

TRUE. "Although bullying does happen on the bus, most surveys indicate that bullying is more likely to occur on school grounds. Common locations for bullying include playgrounds, the classroom, the cafeteria, bathrooms, and hallways. A student survey can help determine where the hotspots are in any particular school." Don't forget: regardless of how often, bullying happens everywhere!

*Bullying isn't serious. It's just "kids being kids."*

FALSE. "Bullying can be extremely serious. Bullying can affect the mental well being, academic work, and physical health of children who are targeted. Children who are bullied are more likely than other children to have lower self-esteem; and higher rates of depression, loneliness, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts. They also are more likely to want to avoid attending school and have higher school absenteeism rates.

Recent research on the health-related effects of bullying indicates that victims of frequent bullying are more likely to experience headaches, sleeping problems, and stomach ailments.... Research suggests that adults who were bullied as children are more likely than their non-bullied peers to be depressed and have low self-esteem as adults... Children who bully are more likely than other children to be engaged in other antisocial, violent, or troubling behaviors."

**Note to Leader:** Suicidal thoughts are not the same as directly causing suicide. Do not allow the conversation to turn to "bullying causes suicide." It contributes to negative effects on emotional,

psychological, and physical health, but does not cause suicide.

*Bullies are loners with limited social skills*

FALSE. “Children who bully usually do not lack friends. In fact, some research finds that they have larger friendship networks than other children. Importantly, they usually have at least a small group of friends who support and encourage their bullying behavior. Bullies also generally have more leadership skills than victims of bullying or children not involved in bullying.”

*Children who are bullied aren't likely to tell an adult.*

TRUE. “Adults are often unaware of bullying—in part because many children and youth don't report it. Most studies find that only 25%–50% of bullied children talk to an adult about the bullying. Boys and older children are less likely than girls and younger children to tell adults about bullying.

Why are children reluctant to report bullying? They may fear retaliation by children doing the bullying. They also may fear that adults won't take their concerns seriously or will deal inappropriately with the bullying situation.” It isn't that teachers don't care about students, but many teachers are surrounded by a culture of violence so strong that they become desensitized to it.

*Bullied kids ought to learn to deal with it on their own.*

FALSE. “Some children have the confidence and skills to stop bullying when it happens, but many do not. Moreover, children shouldn't be expected to deal with bullying on their own. Bullying is a form of victimization or peer abuse. Just as society does not expect victims of other types of abuse (e.g., child maltreatment...) to ‘deal with it on their own,’ we should not expect this from victims of bullying. Adults have critical roles to play in helping to stop bullying, as do other children and youth who witness or observe bullying.”

*Bullying happens only to people perceived to be lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender.*

FALSE: While bullying against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people has taken center stage in the media in recent years, anyone who is perceived as “not like us” can and does become a target of both physical and verbal bullying. Acts of bullying and related violence cut across all communities, often occurring in a multi-faceted context, where issues of race and ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, gender, body shape, age, and physical and mental abilities are mixed together in complex ways. If we focus on only one facet, we run the risk of unintentionally making it more difficult to see the inequality and injustice perpetrated within other contexts.

*Bullying happens in my town, city, village, or school.*

TRUE. “Bullying occurs in rural, suburban, and urban communities, and among children of every income level, race and geographic region.”

## Activity: Defining Bullying

**Ask** the group to divide into clusters of three or four. We suggest that, wherever possible, the groups be diverse in terms of age, thus allowing for valuable inter-generational sharing.

**Give the groups two to three minutes** to create a definition of *bullying*, and two to three minutes to create a definition of *violence*.

### Box 1.3

#### Some Definitions of Bullying

Here is one definition from the US Government.

Bullying involves:

**Imbalance of Power:** people who bully use their power to control or harm and the people being bullied may have a hard time defending themselves

**Intent to Cause Harm:** actions done by accident are not bullying; the person bullying has a goal to cause harm

**Repetition:** incidents of bullying happen to the same person over and over by the same person or group

Bullying takes many forms, including:

**Verbal:** name-calling, teasing

**Social:** spreading rumors, leaving people out on purpose, breaking up friendships

**Physical:** hitting, punching, shoving

**Cyberbullying:** using the Internet, mobile phones or other digital technologies to harm others

**The Pacific Violence Prevention Institute (PVPI)** defines violence as any act, emotional or physical, that causes pain.

At the end of the time, **bring the groups back together** to share the definitions they came up with, and share other available definitions like the ones provided in Box 1.3.

**Ask** how these definitions might be helpful. Do they look familiar compared to how they've heard bullying discussed or depicted in the media? Are they reflected in the policies on bullying with which they're familiar?

**Ask older participants:** Has bullying changed since you were younger? Do you think of it differently now than you did then?

**Note to leader:** When talking about the real or perceived imbalance of power, you may wish to make reference to other oppressive systems like racism, sexism, heterosexism, and ableism. These, too, are based in an imbalance of power in our society, and they can come into play in bullying scenarios. There may be differences in how these issues play out between different age groups.

### **Discussion: The Violence Continuum**

When we talk about different sorts of bullying, from verbal to physical, we need to

remember that acts of violence are connected to one another. Calling names, shoving people, and harassing people online are all acts of violence whose effects will vary depending on their circumstances. (See Box 1.4)

**Explain:** All of these acts are connected and affect people in different ways. Keep in mind that it isn't always fair to say that one action is more severe than another. People will understand them differently. While it's much harder for anyone, especially very young people, to intervene in the most obviously extreme acts of violence, we can help prevent them by stopping the violence that appears to be less severe, like the verbal harassment seen in many acts of bullying. The less acceptable those acts are, the less acceptable those that seem more extreme will be.

For example, if a student gets away with calling someone names, he or she may progress to intimidating them physically as no consequences have been presented. The behavior was silently deemed acceptable.

**Box 1.4**

The Violence Continuum: How different kinds of harassment and violence are related

The violence continuum and "bullying behaviors," models were created by the **Pacific Violence Prevention Institute**, and they explain it like this:

All acts of violence occur in a continuum, meaning that acts of violence that may not seem very severe (i.e. objectification, stereotyping, offensive jokes or comments), are connected to acts of violence that may seem more severe (i.e. ... intimidation, physical violence), which are connected to acts of violence that seem to be the most severe (assault, murder). These ideas hold true for all types of violence, including bullying, harassment, and related school violence.

**Discussion: Bullying Behaviors**

**Explain:** A powerful way to address bullying is to look not for bullies but for bullying behaviors. The crux of the difference is where we lay the responsibility for bullying. Instead of saying that there are some people who are bullies who are responsible for the damage done by bullying, we look at the behaviors that qualify as bullying and address them as they appear, regardless of whether or not the person performing that behavior is typically thought of as a bully.

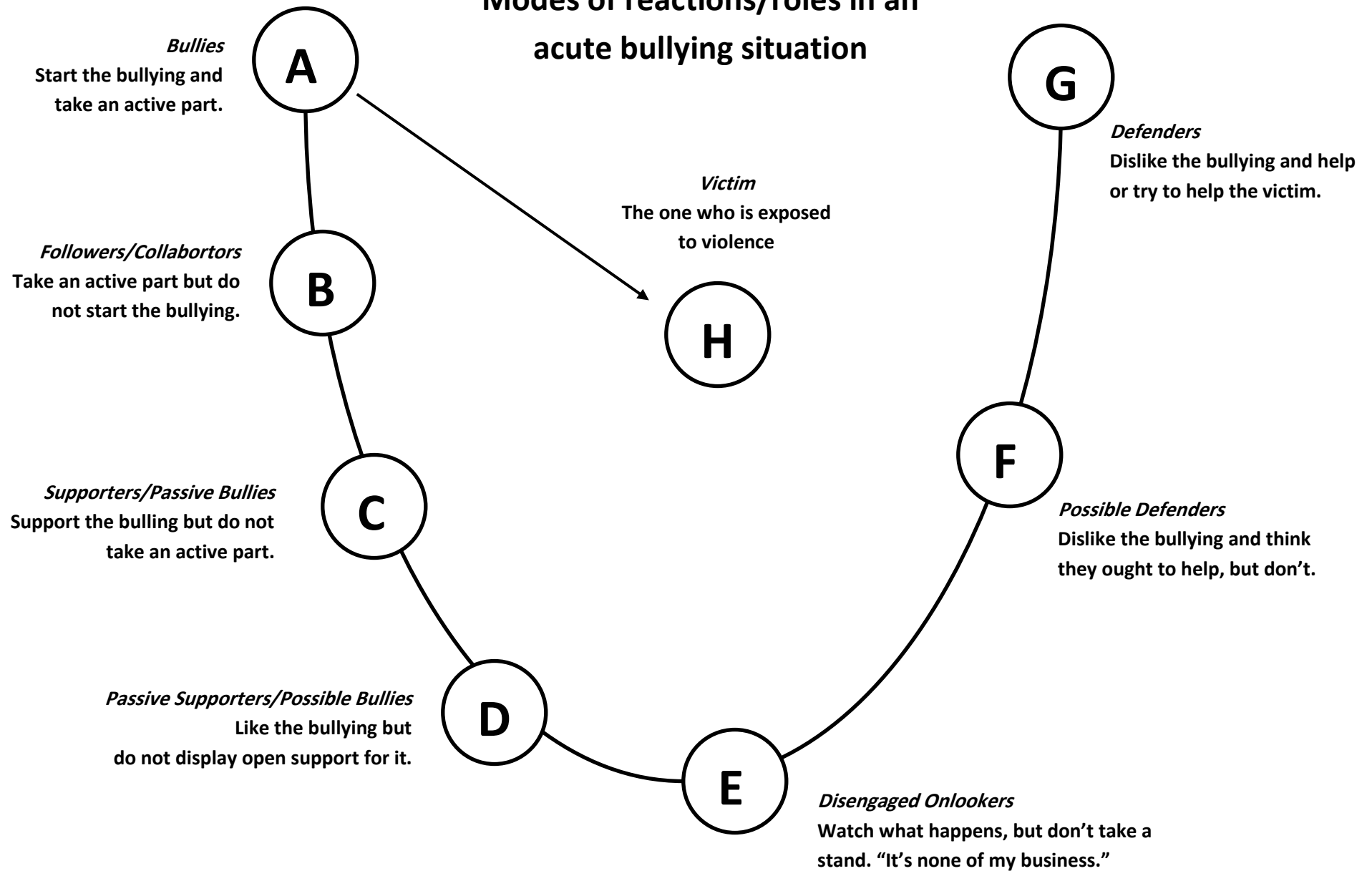
When we're living in a system where violence such as bullying is acceptable, it is not helpful to pick out one or two individuals as the source of the problem. It simply isn't accurate. Not everyone will directly engage in bullying behavior all of the time, but many

people will do so some of the time. We are all responsible together in this model. Even those who aren't participating in the bullying act are involved in the violent system around them. There is more to the system than a bully and a victim, as evidenced in Box 1.4. Even bystanders play different roles, as described in the *Bullying Circle* diagram on page 18.

**Distribute copies** of the Bullying Circle diagram (or project on a large screen, or draw on a large sheet of paper) to the group and have a volunteer read the roles out loud.

# *The Bullying Circle*

## Modes of reactions/roles in an acute bullying situation



**Explain** that these roles are only applicable in a particular bullying event, not at all times; no one is *always* a bully, or a bystander, or a defender.

As a large group, **explore these roles** in a hypothetical situation. Rather than ask for an example from someone's experience, we'll use one everyone is familiar with: The Good Samaritan story.

**Discuss:** Let's explore these roles further. As an example, we can take another look at the Good Samaritan story. This story provides us a model of an act of violence and types of responses to it. We can identify at least some of the points on the curve—the victim, and the instigators of the violent act. What would be tweaked or added to fill other roles? What is missing?"

**Remind** participants not to get too caught up in minor details of the story. The key element is the fluidity of participation in bullying behaviors—sometimes we react positively, sometimes negatively, and sometimes we simply avoid it as much as possible.

### **Bullying Behaviors, Roles in Bullying**

#### **The Bully/Bullies**

Start the bullying and take an active part.

#### **Followers/Collaborators**

Take an active part but do not start the bullying. (Maybe some robbers didn't *plan* to be bandits, but grabbed the opportunity when offered.)

#### **Supporters/Passive Bullies**

Support the bullying but do not take an active part. (Perhaps a passerby during the robbery shouted encouragement.)

#### **Passive Supporters/Possible Bullies**

Like the bullying but do not display open support for it. (As he passed by, maybe the priest thought, "He didn't watch out for himself; he deserved it.")

#### **Disengaged Onlookers**

Watch what happens; "it's none of my business." (Maybe someone passed on the road during the robbery but chose not to get involved.)

#### **Possible Defenders**

Dislike the bullying and think they ought to help, but don't. (The Levite maybe wanted to help, but felt unable because of purity laws.)

#### **Defenders of the Victim**

Dislike the bullying and help or try to help the one the victim. (The Samaritan eventually helps, but is not there to intervene. Maybe if he and some friends had been there at the time?)

#### **The Victim**

The one who is exposed to violence.

*From:* Dan Olweus, "Peer Harassment: A Critical Analysis and Some Important Issues," in *Peer Harassment in School: The Plight of the Vulnerable and Victimized*, ed. Jaana Juvonen and Sandra Graham (2001), 3-20.

**Note:** Feel free to be imaginative. Jesus doesn't say, but what if others were present on the road at that time? Do you think the priest, Levite, or Samaritan could see the violence down the road? What might have gone through their heads when they saw the victim? Perhaps the robbers were still lying in wait—there could be great danger associated with helping the victim!

**Explain:** We can see how complex bullying is. I hope this session has been helpful in sparking thoughts and ideas about bullying in our community. If you're interested in pursuing this further, we have a list of resources that can further inform our knowledge on this subject and make change in our community.

## **Closing Prayer**

**Read aloud** this closing prayer (or one of your choosing):

Creator, you made us in your image and sent your child to teach us how to live as you desire. Bless us as we learn to stop crossing to the other side of the road when our neighbor is facing violence. Inspire us to learn to intervene and to create a culture where violence is unacceptable. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

## Module 2: Shining a Light on Bullying

### Preparing to Lead Module 2

It may be helpful to have the foundational materials from Module 1 (i.e. definitions of bullying, and violence, see Box 1.3) pre-written in large print for display as well as copies of the *Bullying Circle* diagram so participants can see as well as hear what you have to say and more easily take notes if they desire.

This session works best when people of all ages can speak together about their experiences and how they've differed, and when they know that they can be taken seriously by both their peers and those of different generations.

Be sure to display up the generational group questions, and the large group questions, where everyone can see them. Write up positive techniques as they are offered.

This session includes drawing a map of your church building or school. For church buildings, include such rooms as the fellowship hall, youth room, bathrooms, hallways, offices, sanctuary, sacristy, narthex, Sunday school rooms, and church library.

For a school map, you may include bathrooms, hallways, gyms, locker rooms, auditorium, classrooms for each subject, guidance office, main office, library, nurse's office, computer lab, lockers in hallways, sports fields, parking lots, and buses.

Additional Materials needed: Red, green, yellow, and blue colored "dot" stickers or marking pens.

#### Goals

- To listen to one another's stories about bullying; to recognize what about bullying has changed and what has remained the same.
- To locate bullying hotspots in the community and to determine what makes them dangerous and other locations safe.

### Opening Prayer

**Read aloud** this opening prayer (or one of your choosing):

God, we thank you for bringing us together today to learn from one another about how bullying has affected our own lives. Teach us patience as we garner wisdom from one another about our unique experiences. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

## Introductions

If participants have changed since the first session, go through introductions again.

### Box 2.1

#### Matthew 5:14-16

You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your [God] in heaven.

## Scriptural Grounding

**Read aloud** the text from Matthew 5:14-16. (See Box 2.1)

**Explain:** We know that standing by and staying silent are ways to reinforce and tacitly support cruelty in our world. Bullying is often made invisible by reinforcing myths about its insignificance. What's more, not speaking out about acts of violence renders those acts invisible and hidden, making them even more difficult to fight against in the future.

Part of the work of countering an invisible phenomenon is to shed light on it. We don't need special equipment; we don't need to be in positions of special power or authority. Jesus tells us that we—*we* are the light of the world. It is up to us.

Indeed, it is a wonderful gift to be light—but it also implies a responsibility to not hide our light. We are called to *shine before others*. We have been given the opportunity to share our knowledge and stories of bullying with the community, and through these means we can expose the acts of violence we see in our everyday lives.

In acknowledging that *we* are the light of the world, we will begin a process of transformation and reconciliation together, as we help spread the light of Christ—the light of peace, justice, and healing—in our communities.

## Establish Safe Space (optional)

If participants have changed since the last session, or if you feel the group needs a review, establish ground rules for safe space. See Module 1.

## Discussion: Review definitions of bullying, violence, and roles (optional)

**Ask:** who remembers the key points in defining bullying, the forms of bullying, and the definition of violence. Affirm true answers and gently correct answers that do not work. Note: Asking those who attended the Module 1 session may be more helpful. There is no need to take up too much time here if the group still remembers this well.

**Ask** why it is useful to talk about *bullying behavior* instead of *bullies*.

**Explain:** What’s important about looking at *bullying behaviors* instead of the bullies themselves has to do with identifying responsibility for bullying. Instead of saying that there are some people who are bullies and some who are not, we instead look at *what somebody does* and then ask ourselves how that behavior is hurtful.

When we’re living in a world where violence happens every day, it is not helpful to pick out one or two individuals as the source of the problem. It simply isn’t accurate. Not everyone will engage in bullying behavior all of the time, but most people will do so some of the time. Focusing on behaviors rather than individual people helps us remember that we are all responsible and that we are called to work together to end the behavior.

**Name** the roles from the *Bullying Circle* (Module 1) and **ask** for brief descriptions of how each role acts in a bullying situation:

Bully/Bullies	Disengaged Onlookers
Followers/Collaborators	Possible Defenders
Supporters/Passive Bullies	Defenders
Passive Supporters/Possible Bullies	Victim

### **Small Group Discussion: Talking About Your Own Experiences**

**Invite** the group to break into generational groups. These may vary from congregation to congregation, but consider having Youth, Young Adults, Adults, and Elders—whatever breakdown will make sense for your group. Explain that you will ask a question for them to discuss for a few minutes, then the groups will report back to share with the others.

**Note to leader:** We recommend that church groups focus on congregational contexts. However, this activity can also be focused on school or other community contexts.

If you are discussing experiences within the school context, **explain** to members of generations no longer in school that we’d like them to talk about their own personal experiences in school, not only those of their kids or as teachers.

**Ask:**

- Have you seen social bullying at your church in the form of exclusion, shunning, leaving people out?
- Was it addressed by the staff or other leaders? If so, how? Who, if anyone, acted as “light” in that situation?

- Ask a representative from each group to share with the larger group.

**Ask:**

- Have you seen verbal bullying at your church?
- Was it addressed by the staff or other leaders? If so, how? Who, if anyone, acted as “light” in that situation?
- Ask a representative from each group to share with the larger group.

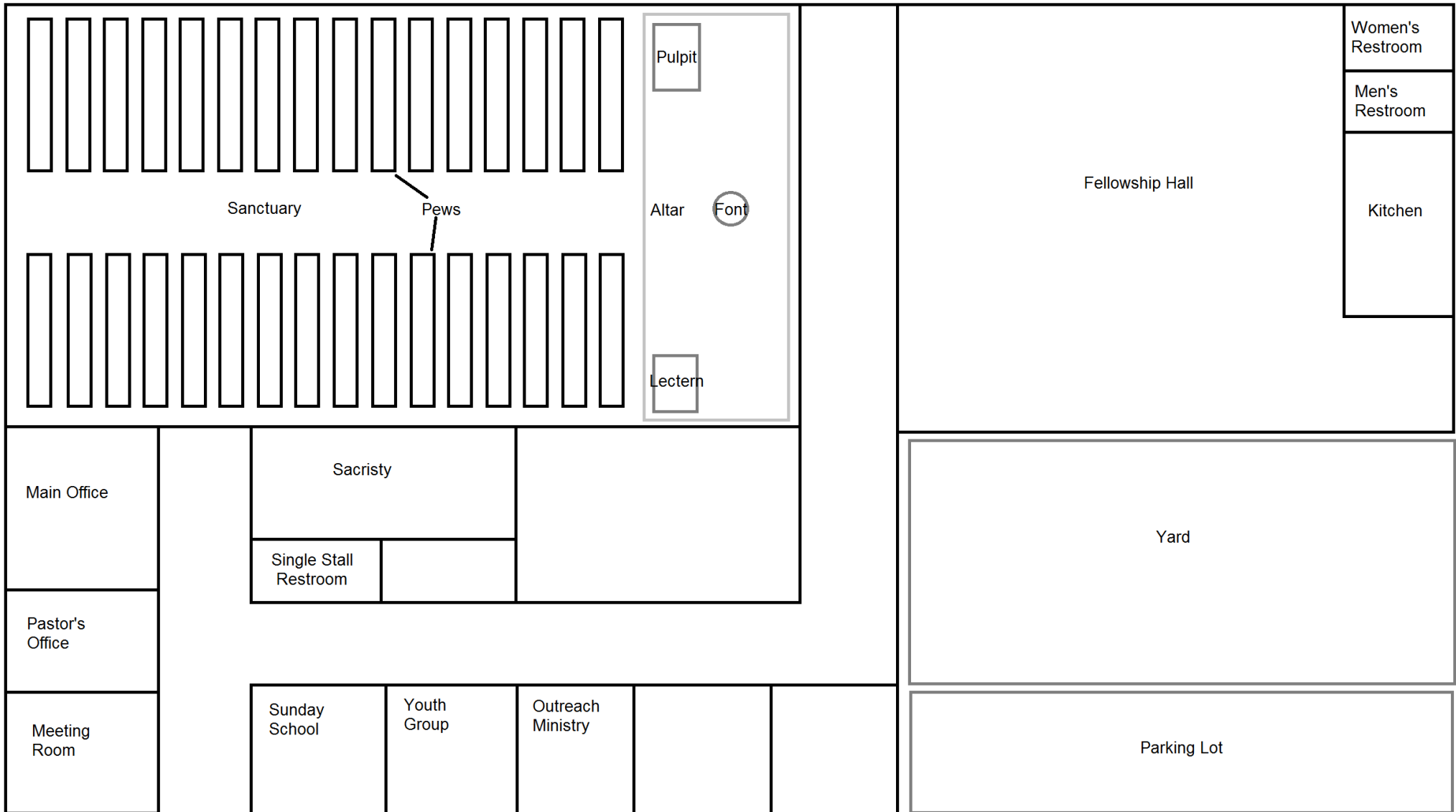
**Ask:**

- Have you seen physical bullying at your church?
- Was it addressed by the staff or other leaders? If so, how? Who, if anyone, acted as “light” in that situation?
- Ask a representative from each group to share with the larger group.

**Ask:**

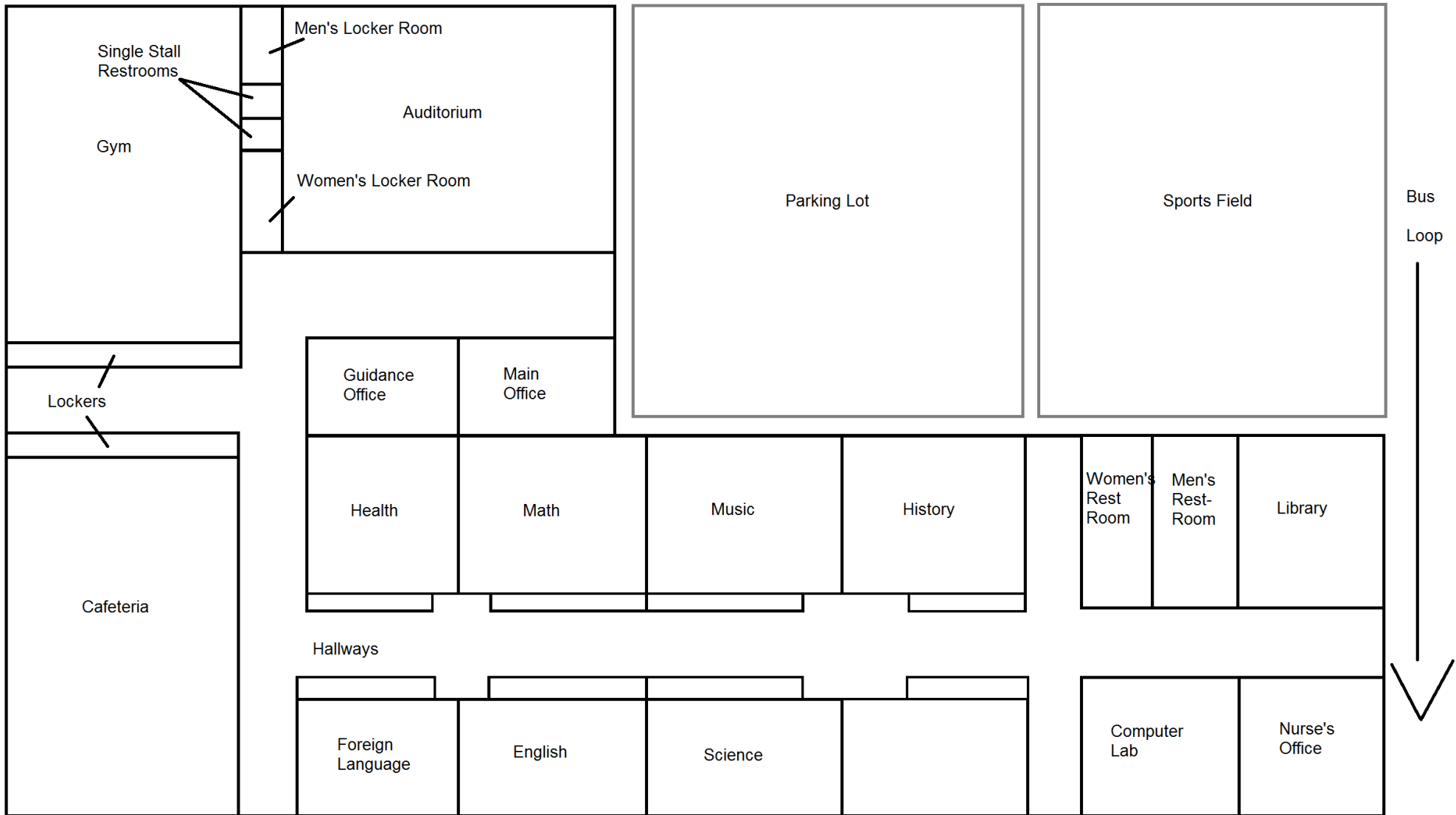
- Youth and Adults: what policies are in place at your church about bullying, if any?
- Youth and Adults: Are these policies enforced? Do they “shine a light”?
- Ask a representative from each group to share with the larger group.

The following maps are for the activity “Drawing a Map of Bullying.”



Sample Church Map - fill in blank rooms as applicable for your congregation

Sample School Map – fill in blank rooms as applicable for your school



## Activity: Drawing a Map of Bullying

**Draw a map of your church.** This activity works best when you ask the group for input about what rooms and spaces to include as you draw the map. (See example maps, pages 25 and 26.)

**Hand out** red and green stickers (or markers) to younger people, and yellow and blue to older adults.

**Explain:** “We’re going to map our churches based on safety. Youth, take your red stickers (older folks should use yellow) and place them in the location at your church where you feel (or felt) most at risk of bullying and other acts of violence.”

After this is done, “Youth, place your green stickers (older adults should use blue) where you feel most safe from bullying and other acts of violence.”

### Box 2.2

#### Positive Intervention Techniques

##### For Adults

- In non-dangerous situations, get physically between the bully and victim.
- Call the behavior by name: “Using that slur is bullying and is against our policy.”
- Gently encourage bystanders to intervene next time: “Next time this happens, if you aren’t sure what to do get an adult to help or tell the person to stop.”
- Impose immediate consequences that are logical and connected to offense, such as taking away a social opportunity.

##### For Youth

- Say something if you feel safe, but don’t bully back.
- If you weren’t able to intervene, show your support to the victim in other ways.
- Encourage others to report bullying and report it yourself.
- Don’t laugh or join in with bullying—that only shows support for it!
- Tell an adult who has power to impose consequences.

*from StopBullying.gov*

**Keep everyone together** in a large group for the following discussion about the responses to bullying we see by individuals, communities, and institutions.

**Ask:** What made those places you marked on the map seem either safe or dangerous? (Answers might include presence of specific students or teachers, lack or presence of supervision, ability to move freely.)

**Use the following questions** to guide discussion of the map as necessary:

- Have you ever (seen someone who) intervened or responded to bullying behavior in your church?
- What did that look like? (Did it work? Just that time? Did it affect the overall environment?)
- Who was it that intervened?
- How have you or your peers been taught to respond to bullying? (Does it work? Just that time? Does it affect the overall environment?)

**Affirm positive techniques** mentioned by participants, including referring to bullying policies and enforcing them. (See Box 2.2.)

**Ask:** Are there any differences between how the youth answered these questions and how older adults answered? If so, why do you suppose there are such differences?

### **Establish Safe Space: Review**

*Note to leader:* Earlier, the group discussed how to share sensitive stories. Now you need to help lead them to determine how the group will handle what was talked about in this session.

**Ask:** Were there any stories (especially involving current minors) that *need* to be addressed by parents, teachers, or other authorities? What needs to remain confidential? Are there stories individuals don't mind others sharing without identifying details?

### **Closing Prayer**

**Read aloud** this closing prayer, or one of your choosing.

Christ, you live among us and call us to be lights to the world, as you have been and continue to be for us. Strengthen the courage we showed today in speaking about bullying in our lives, help us to use the light we created here to illuminate the violence of bullying that remains hidden around us, and guide in building your peaceful, life-affirming kingdom among us. In your holy name we pray. Amen

## Module 3: Bullying Prevention and Response

### Preparing to Lead Module 3

It may be helpful to have the foundational materials from Module 1 (i.e. definitions of bullying, and violence, see Box 1.3) pre-written in large print for display as well as copies of the *Bullying Circle* diagram so participants can see as well as hear what you have to say and more easily take notes if they desire.

Remember to take notes on helpful suggestions made by the group.

Be prepared for possible frustration around trying to imagine how to respond to bullying. If members of the group express feelings that they don't know how to intervene appropriately, use that feeling as a springboard to suggest inviting another educator to help the whole group with this in the future.

#### Goals

- To practice healthy responses to bullying scenarios.
- To identify possible motivations behind bullying behaviors.
- To list potential systemic responses to bullying.

### Opening Prayer

**Read aloud** this opening prayer (or one of your choosing):

Good and gracious God, we thank you for gathering us here safely to study ways to respond to the violence we encounter in our daily lives. Inspire us with the love of your child, Jesus Christ, to react in ways that give life to others. In your holy name we pray.  
Amen

### Introductions

If participants have changed since the first session, go through introductions again.

### Scriptural Grounding

**Read aloud** the text from Matthew 5:38-42. (See Box 3.1)

**Note to Leader:** We highly recommend reading “Beyond Just War and Pacifism: Jesus’ Nonviolent Way” by Walter Wink. It provides the full cultural context for this passage, reads it

as a form of non-violent resistance, and is available online at [www.cres.org/star/wink.htm](http://www.cres.org/star/wink.htm). The following paragraphs are paraphrased from Wink's scholarship.

**Explain:** In Jesus' time, as in ours, the dominant systems recreate violence and oppression toward certain groups. How do we get to the point of needing to intervene against great,

**Box 3.1**

**Matthew 5:38-42**

"You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous."

noticeable acts of violence? How do we respond to them in a culture that doesn't always have good examples of standing up to mistreatment? Jesus' model is to reinforce the humanity of the oppressed.

Turning the other cheek references the fact that striking a peer with the left hand on the right cheek was an extreme insult, a humiliation. To turn the other cheek is to say, "Your insult didn't take effect. Try again, but this time, treat me as your equal instead of your inferior." Handing over all your clothing until you had none left shamed the one looking upon your nakedness. Furthermore, walking around naked would draw questions and lead to the exposure of the one suing you as a person causing enormous indebtedness in his neighbor, an act the community would find shameful. To go the second mile instead of the legally required one returns the

freedom of choice back to the impressed Jew, throwing the soldier off guard. The soldier needs to figure out if this person is trying to be kind, or wishes to provoke him, or if his act could get the soldier in trouble. He may be forced to beg the Jew to return his pack—unheard of! These actions throw the status quo off balance because they assert the dignity of the oppressed in the face of their oppressors.

To replace a culture of bullying, we also need to create a culture that acknowledges the full humanity of every person in the community *without* resorting to fighting violence with violence.

### **Establish Safe Space**

If participants have changed since the last session, or if you feel the group needs a review, establish ground rules for safe space. See Module 1.

## Discussion: Review definitions of bullying and violence (optional)

**Ask** who remembers the key points in defining bullying, the forms of bullying, and the definition of violence. Affirm true answers, gently correct answers that do not work. Note: asking those who attended the Module 1 session may be more helpful. There is no need to take up too much time here if the group still remembers this well. (See Module 2, page 22, for an outline of this review discussion.)

## Large Group Discussion: Bullying as a System (see Box 3.2)

In a large group, **ask**: What supports bullying? What does a bully get out of it, or why does it happen at all?

### Box 3.2

#### Bullying as a System

Bullying is tied into a culture that tacitly, or not so tacitly, endorses violence. Knowing this, and knowing that we are grounded in Christ who urges us to turn the other cheek, how do we become effective allies against bullying without resorting to violence ourselves? How do we start interrupting the cycle?

These motivations were gathered and developed by the Pacific Violence Prevention Institute.

**Note to Leader:** You may ask for responses to these questions, but ultimately make sure these are included:

- Some are unaware that their behavior is problematic—for example, no social consequences for it, no policy enforcement at school.
  - We socially reward bullying behavior by not responding at all, by laughing, by participating, and/or by siding with the bully when interventions are made or attempted.
- 
- Some bullies are lashing out in response to a previous painful experience of their own. This idea fits together with the idea of a **bully-victim**, who is both bullied by others and bullies others him- or herself.
  - **Note:** merely being indiscriminately mean and aggressive is not enough to get these social benefits; however, bullying behaviors performed in a context that implies that “*bullying is ok*” do reap those rewards. Remember, bullies often have a bigger friend network that will reinforce the bullying behavior.

## Small Group Discussion: Preventing Bullying

**Explain:** To prevent bullying from happening, we need to be able to intervene appropriately when bullying behavior occurs *and* support an atmosphere in which bullying behavior does not occur.

Earlier in this session, we talked about actions that go against the status quo in society by showing the world the humanity of the oppressed—i.e. turning the other cheek to force the next strike to acknowledge your full humanity. “Turning the other cheek” had a particular meaning in Biblical times—let’s now discuss scenarios from our own times and context.

**Divide into small groups.** We suggest that, wherever possible, the groups be diverse in terms of age, thus allowing for valuable inter-generational sharing.

**Provide examples of situations of bullying.** Many groups will benefit from being able to create their own examples that fit with the situations they have experienced. If such is the case for your participants, be sure that each group addresses a different context: online, at church, within a youth-group setting, in class, in hallways, bathrooms, locker room etc.

If you think the group will benefit from hypothetical situations, feel free to write your own or to use the ideas we’ve provided. Ideas might include:

- A parishioner approaches you at church with a serious accusation about the pastor which you know to be false.
- On Sunday morning, you see a visitor enter the sanctuary and move to take a seat in a pew. Although there is clearly room available, the parishioners sitting on the end of the pew bury their heads in their bulletins and refuse to let the newcomer in.
- In the hallway, a youth calls out a homophobic or racist slur and makes a threatening gesture at another youth, who looks uncomfortable and unhappy while some laugh and others remain silent. It’s the third time the youth has done that this week.
- A paid political TV ad uses issues of socio-economic status, race, or sexual orientation in ways that demonize opponents.
- In the locker room after gym, a student goes out of his/her way to shove someone into a locker, only to apologize sarcastically afterward.
- While visiting a church member’s webpage, you notice several anonymous comments insulting her personal appearance and telling her to “stop trying” because no one likes her.

Give the small groups time to discuss each example that you provide. For each example, ask the following:

- Remembering the social rewards for bullying we discussed earlier, what motivations for bullying behaviors do you see working in a particular instance of bullying here?
- How can you undercut that motivation with your response as a congregation member, minister, student, faculty member, community member, parent, staff, or administrators?

**Remind** participants that they might not be able to completely fix a situation, but they can *notice* what is happening, *show support* after the incident, or *intervene* during it.

**Gather the groups back together** and offer time to debrief. Have groups share their examples, the motivations they saw and helpful ways they reacted. Invite all participants to share their thoughts about the scenarios, including possible motivations and their own experiences.

**Ask:**

- What kind of behavior and attitudes carried into these spaces could have *prevented* such acts from happening?
- How can our systematic (rather than incidental) responses not only stop the violence or harassment in progress but prevent it in the future?

If the group is struggling, here are some ideas to consider:

- People with the knowledge that bullying is unacceptable have a reason to intervene.
- Greater knowledge of the diversity of communities and how people of all races, abilities, gender identities and sexual orientations have done great things (obtained through inclusive curricula) can decrease bias-related violence.
- Training ministers, youth workers, teachers, and other leaders on anti-bullying strategies gives them tools to respond, and gives others the knowledge that leaders *will* respond.
- Writing and/or enforcing a [more useful] anti-bullying policy could help.
- Ensuring accountability in churches and schools to maintain a non-violent culture, perhaps through the Parent-Teacher organization, bullying task force, or other committee.
- Working with a local anti-violence organization to find ways to establish a culture of non-violence.

## **Closing Prayer**

**Read aloud** this closing prayer (or one of your choosing):

Reconciling God, we entrust our works and learnings to you. Fill us with your Spirit of peace as we journey together in creating nonviolent communities. Renew us for the work ahead. In your holy name we pray. Amen

## Module 4: Congregational Anti-Bullying Action Planning

### Preparing to Lead Module 4

It may be helpful to have the foundational materials from Module 1 (i.e. definitions of bullying, and violence, see Box 1.3) pre-written in large print for display as well as copies of the *Bullying Circle* diagram so participants can see as well as hear what you have to say and more easily take notes if they desire.

Hopefully, your group will come up with many ideas about how to continue their work against bullying. Take notes on all of their ideas. Even if you decide not to use them immediately, you may want them in the future—and you'll definitely want to remember who was interested in which ones.

At the end of this session, the group should have at least one action step with particular members assigned to the relevant tasks and a deadline for its finishing. Be sure that someone has been selected to follow up with the group. Perhaps you as the leader will be the natural choice.

#### Goal

- To develop a concrete action step and accountability plan to continue anti-bullying work in the community.

### Opening Prayer

**Read aloud** this opening prayer (or one of your choosing):

Holy Spirit, be with us this day as we decide how to move forward together in our work for justice in schools, congregations and all the places young people gather. Fill our hands with your love so that we may deliver the good news of freedom from oppression into our world. In your holy name we pray. Amen

### Introductions

If participants have changed since the first session, go through introductions again.

### Scriptural Grounding

**Read aloud** the text from Luke 10:25-37 (see Box 4.1).

**Explain:** In previous sessions we have discussed what encourages the violence so common in our culture, how that violence manifests, and ways to intervene when violence erupts before us.

Jesus tells us of the violence caused by robbers and thieves to passersby on the road to Jericho and the way the Samaritan responded to it with mercy. However, our emphasis now needs to be on Jesus' instruction to "Go and do likewise."

**Box 4.1**

**Luke 10:25-37**

Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he said, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? What do you read there?" He answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." And he said to him, "You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live." But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.' Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" He said, "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

How can we act as allies? How can we not only pick up those hurting on the side of the road, but also create a safe path for travelers in the first place? The conversation can no longer only educational or theoretical; it needs to be concrete and practical. What can *this group of people in this congregation* do to build a supportive culture instead of a bullying one?

**Establish Safe Space**

If participants have changed since the last session, or if you feel the group needs a review, establish ground rules for safe space. See Module 1.

**Discussion: Review definitions of bullying and violence (optional)**

**Ask** who remembers the key points in defining bullying, the forms of bullying, and the definition of violence. Affirm true answers and gently correct answers that do not work. Note: asking those who attended the Module 1 session may be more helpful. There is no need to take up too much time here if the group still remembers this well.

**Small Group Discussion: What Can We Do About Bullying?**

**Ask:** Now that we know more about bullying, how can we help? How can our congregations

combat bullying in our own community, whether in the church building, neighborhoods, or schools? What resources, people, connections, and skills does the congregation have to offer?

**Divide attendees into groups** and have each one discuss one of the following questions:

- How can we establish a non-bullying, life-affirming space in our congregation?

*Note to Leader:* All congregations are in different places regarding health of the community; this will be very individual and situation dependant. Discussion points may include:

- Do we call out bullying where we see it, in youth or adults?
- Have youth ministers and Sunday school teachers learned about bullying? Have the youth themselves?
- Do we need continuing education beyond what we've done here? What would this look like?
- Movie screenings, attending workshops and conferences, meeting with a local anti-violence organization
- Would a small group lead us in more work on this?

- Are there other places this congregation can work to stop bullying?

Discussion points may include:

- Congregations, schools, camps where we have connections
- What can we do there?
- Raise funds for education; spread knowledge by providing materials or hosting events; set a good example as volunteers, neighbors and siblings in Christ; help train youth workers; establish or enforce policies;
- Partner with other organizations working against bullying

### **Bring the group back together.**

**Ask** each small group to share their thoughts with everyone. Members of other groups should add thoughts on that topic, as well. Make a list, whether on paper, chalkboard or whiteboard, that the whole group can see.

*Note to leader:* It's fairly easy to come up with ideas for things to do, but to be successful in making change, we have to begin and we need accountability for our chosen actions.

**Ask:** Where is our energy? What action steps should we choose to start off?

*Note to Leader:* Be sure your action plan includes names and deadlines for each step, exchange of necessary contact information, and schedule a follow-up meeting if necessary!

## **Closing Prayer**

**Read aloud** this closing prayer (or one of your choosing):

Gracious God, each day you provide us with sustenance for our bodies and our spirits. Through the scriptures we hear you call us to lives spent on the roadside showing mercy as well as removing the yokes of oppression. May our labors make the road we travel together a little safer each day. In your holy name we pray. Amen

## Resource List

### “Where Hands Will Reach”

[www.lcna.org](http://www.lcna.org)

A booklet of devotions, personal stories, and theological reflections on the problem of bullying and what some have done to help. ELCA pastors, theologians, and others offer an ongoing testimony for the need to “activate and organize the passion of God’s people for justice to transform the life of the church and society.” Great for book clubs, bible study groups, or as a companion resource for the *Where All Can Safely Live* anti-bullying curriculum. Produced by Lutherans Concerned/North America.

### The Pacific Violence Prevention Institute

[www.pvpi.org](http://www.pvpi.org)

PVPI’s creates safer and more effective communities by helping them prevent and respond to acts of violence. PVPI holds workshops in schools, congregations and other communities on violence prevention and intervention of all kinds, from bullying to domestic violence.

### “Stop Bullying”

Department of Health and Human Services

[www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov)

U.S. Government site on bullying; provides educational materials and recommended actions about bullying in U.S. schools.

### “Bullying: The congregation’s responsibility”

[www.elca.org/Our-Faith-In-Action/Life-Transitions/Youth-Issues/Bullying.aspx](http://www.elca.org/Our-Faith-In-Action/Life-Transitions/Youth-Issues/Bullying.aspx)

From the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) website.

### Family Equality Council

[www.familyequality.org](http://www.familyequality.org)

Contains resources on a proposed federal amendment to the Safe Schools Act to include bullying regulations.

### AMAZE

<http://amazeworks.org>

Creates safe and respectful communities through the Families All Matter Book Project.

### *Bullied* (film)

The story of Jamie Nabozny who endured bullying through his school years and went to court as an adult to fight for change.

[www.tolerance.org/bullied](http://www.tolerance.org/bullied)

### “Beyond Just War and Pacifism: Jesus’ Nonviolent Way” (article)

Theologian Walter Wink provides cultural context and analysis of Matthew 5:38-42.

[www.cres.org/star/wink.htm](http://www.cres.org/star/wink.htm)

### ADAPT

[www.adapt.org](http://www.adapt.org)

A national grass-roots community organization working for disability rights.

### Gay-Straight Alliance Network: “How to Start a GSA”

[gwanetwork.org/get-involved/start-gsa](http://gwanetwork.org/get-involved/start-gsa)

Guidance for starting a Gay-Straight Alliance or similar club in schools in order to support and advocate for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

(Resource List continued next page)

**California Safe Schools Coalition: “Get the Facts.”**

<http://casafeschools.org/getfacts.html>

Resources on transgender and gender variant issues, including creating safe space and educating others.

**GLSEN: “A Safe Space in Every School”**

<https://safespace.glsen.org/campaign.cfm>

Resources for creating safe space in schools; especially helpful for educators looking to show their support in the classroom.

***Out in the Silence* (film)**

Citizens of a conservative rural town address bullying and anti-LGBT sentiment in their community.

<http://wpsu.org/outinthesilence>

**Crossroads**

[www.crossroadsantiracism.org](http://www.crossroadsantiracism.org)

Organizes and trains to dismantle institutional racism.

**National Association of Black and White Men Together**

[www.nabwmt.org](http://www.nabwmt.org)

A gay, multiracial, multicultural organization fostering supportive environments to overcome racial and cultural barriers and realize the goal of human equality.

**Teaching for Change**

[www.teachingforchange.org/](http://www.teachingforchange.org/)

Working to make schools centers of justice; provides resources for parents and teachers.

***White Like Me* (book)**

Tim Wise’s classic book on how racial privilege affects the everyday lives of whites in America.

## Where All Can Safely Live: Evaluation Form

1. Please rate the following on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being least helpful and 5 being most helpful.

a. Preparing to Lead the Module

i. 1      2      3      4      5

ii. Comments:

b. Prayers and Scriptural Grounding

i. 1      2      3      4      5

ii. Comments:

c. Introductions, Ground Rules, Safe Space

i. 1      2      3      4      5

ii. Comments:

d. Myth busting activity, bullying definitions and roles

i. 1      2      3      4      5

ii. Comments:

e. Talking About Your Own Experiences With Bullying; Mapping Activity

i. 1      2      3      4      5

ii. Comments:

f. Bullying Motivations and Practice Scenarios

i. 1      2      3      4      5

ii. Comments:

g. Action Planning

i. 1      2      3      4      5

ii. Comments:

h. Resource List

i. 1      2      3      4      5

ii. Comments:

2. What aspect of the guide did you find most helpful? Why?
  
3. What aspect of the guide did you find least helpful? Why?
  
4. What other information do you want to know about bullying?
  
5. What concrete action steps did your congregation plan to address bullying?
  
6. Do you believe that this curriculum would be helpful for other congregations/individuals to learn more about bullying and how to address it?
  
7. What other resources should we consider adding to our list?
  
8. Were there unresolved issues or questions for you?

*Please return completed Evaluation Form to:*

*Name (optional):* \_\_\_\_\_

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