BULLY BEHAVIOR EXCLUDING OTHERS

INSTRUCTIONS

This Packet will help you understand why you have acted like a bully. It will also help you avoid behaving like a bully again. Below are several pages of text and Response Sheets. The text describes why some people become bullies, how their actions affect others, what can happen to them, and what they must do to change their behavior. The text also includes three stories about bullies and their victims. The Response Sheets ask questions about the narrative and the people in the stories. Reading the text and answering the questions will help you understand how you can stop acting like a bully and change for the better. Read the text first and try to remember what you’ve read. Then read the Response Sheets and write your answers to the questions.

WHAT YOU DID AND HOW IT AFFECTS OTHERS

You are being disciplined because you have engaged in bullying behavior. There are many ways to bully others. You bully people by being bossy. This is a demonstration of your lack of respect toward them. Your actions may arouse strong feelings of resentment and anger on the part of the persons you bully. Also, victims of bullying sometimes join together for mutual defense. They often react either on their own, or through their teacher, the Principal’s office, the police department or the courts.

Neither society nor the law will tolerate bullying behavior. The sooner you realize this fact, the better off you will be. Nobody likes a bully. If you continue to act like a bully, you risk being treated like others who bully: you will either become isolated from the rest of society, with more enemies than friends; or you will run up against someone who is not afraid to challenge you. Bullying behavior is risky behavior.

WHY SOME PEOPLE BECOME EXCLUSIONARY BULLIES

Some people are afraid of others. They fear that others will be smarter or stronger or more talented or better-liked or more successful than they are. They make up for this fear by making others feel bad about themselves. One of the
ways they do this is by excluding others from various activities. They create situations in which they can belittle others by not allowing them to participate. They treat others as outsiders so they make them feel less worthy and less comfortable than they would be otherwise. This puffs up the bully’s ego while making others feel belittled or angry. Some people, especially those with low self-esteem, may allow these bullies to get away with it. This reaction strengthens the bully’s feeling that he or she can dominate others. But others may resist and fight back.

THREE STORIES ABOUT EXCLUSIONARY BULLIES

THE NEW KID IN TOWN

It was Brent’s first day in his new school. His dad had been transferred to town a few weeks earlier, and Brent had finished out the term in his old school. He’d hated to leave Central High—so many good friends, good times, good memories. But Dad and Mom were already living in the new house, so Brent said his goodbyes and caught the afternoon train that would take him to his new home.

The first day started off on the wrong foot. Brent was running late, which meant that he didn’t get to meet many of his new classmates before the first bell rang. At lunch period, he got his tray and went through the cafeteria line, but no one spoke to him.

Brent got his food and paid for it. Then he looked around the cafeteria at all the tables. There seemed to be lots of small groups of kids, chatting away in groups of threes and fours and fives. Brent selected a long table with about a dozen boys and girls and went to an empty seat.

“Mind if I sit down?” he asked. A girl at the end of the table looked up and shrugged her shoulders, then went right on talking to her friends. Nobody else seemed to notice that he was even there.

Brent waited for a break in the conversation. Then he introduced himself to the tall boy sitting to his right.
“Hi, I’m Brent, I just moved here from Central High and this is my first day.”
“Hey, are you mistaking me for somebody who cares about who you are?” the tall boy said. “You want a friend, get a dog!” And he went on eating his lunch and sailing paper airplanes across the room at a friend.

Next Brent tried to make conversation with the girl at the end of the table. He learned that her name was Sally, so he tried a new approach:
“Hi, Sally, I’m Brent. Didn’t I see you in third period history class this morning?” Sally shrugged. “Maybe, maybe not. I cut that class a lot, can’t remember if I went today or not. That’s, like, maybe a whole hour ago, you know what I mean?” And then, after turning her back to Brent looked at Dana and in a loud voice said:

“Hey, Dana, what are you wearing to Brittany’s party this weekend? I’ve got absolutely, totally nothing to wear! Everything in my closet is so totally last week. You want to go to the mall after school today?”

The two guys at the other end of the table were talking about basketball. Brent had been a star basketball player at Central High and hoped to play at this new school. When the crowd thinned out a little, Brent moved up a couple of seats and asked them about the next game.

Nothing. Nada. No response at all. The two guys just went right on talking as if Brent weren’t there. Brent felt strange, as if he were invisible. After a few minutes, they stacked the dishes on their trays and left without even looking in Brent’s direction.

And so on. Brent finished his lunch in silence. He went to fourth period class feeling sad, thinking about Central High and all his many friends. He’d been part of the crowd there; what was different about this new school? Brent went home that afternoon feeling lonely because he had been excluded by everyone.

Years later, Brent could not remember the name of the school, much less the names of the students who snubbed him.
THE MAKEOVER

Tina had picked up a little weight during last semester. She wasn’t really overweight, just a few extra pounds here and there. She decided that what she needed was a makeover.

So Tina spent the summer working out. Before she went to her afternoon job at the mall, she went for a run in her neighborhood. She watched what she ate and tried to eat healthy snacks instead of fast food. At home in the evenings, she used her little brother’s weights and weight bench. By the end of summer, Tina had lost fifteen pounds. She was strong and healthy and could lift more weight than her kid brother could.

To go with her new look, Tina got a hot new hairstyle. Her older sister bought her new makeup—new blush, new lip gloss, new mascara. Tina went back to school looking good. She couldn’t wait to hear what the other girls said.

She could have waited for a long time. Here’s a sample of the conversation that Tina overheard in the locker room at the gym:

“Well, did you see Miss Perfect? Wonder who she thinks she is?”

“I dunno, another Carrie Underwood or Taylor Swift wannabe, if you ask me. And that hairdo is so completely last summer, don’t you think?”

“And that skirt! Wonder which thrift shop she found that in—the Bargain Mart or something?”

“And did you see all the weight she’s lost? Anorexic, if you ask me! I know Jeff won’t like it. I know: I asked him to the homecoming dance with me and he said yes. I guess Miss Perfect is a little too perfect for her soon-to-be ex-boyfriend!”

BULLY BEHAVIOR

SOMETHING DIFFERENT

Jason and Jenna were twins. Jason had been born with a severe hearing loss—he didn’t really hear sounds until he was four or five. As a result, he spoke differently than most of his classmates. He’d been in Special Ed. classes until ninth grade when he was “mainstreamed” into regular classes.

Jason was smart—in fact, smarter than most of his peers. He had a photographic memory, which means that he could remember long lists of facts and figures. He loved sports and could recite the batting average of almost every major league player in the last twenty years.

Jenna was pretty, energetic, funny and “cool”—but also hyperactive. Jenna had ADD (Attention Span Deficit Disorder) and needed a major dose of Ritalin just to get her through the day.

So: Jason and Jenna were “different.” But everybody sort of liked them and included them in school activities until something happened.

That something was Darryl, a new girl who moved into the neighborhood and started school in the fall in Jason and Jenna’s class. Darryl was tall and loud and forceful. She always had an opinion about everything, and she wasted no time in letting you know it. Darryl never kept anything to herself.

The first week of school she looked over at Jason, who was busy working on a geography project at his computer. “What’s he doing in this class? I thought they put people like him in different classes!”

Sandy shrugged her shoulders. “Oh, that’s just Jason. We all know him, he’s cool and so’s his sister Jenna. They’re…you know, just a little challenged, is all. They’re cool kids. They’re OK.”

But Darryl wouldn’t let it go so easily. “What do you mean, cool kids? He’s definitely not cool and she’s off the wall, always bouncing around from one thing to the other. And did you know she’s on Ritalin! There is nothing cool about the two of them.”
BULLY BEHAVIOR

When Jenna tried out for the cheerleading team, Darryl started campaigning:

“I heard somebody tell Tasha the other day that she had to have a tutor to pass her math last spring. She may be a retard too, just like her crazy brother…”

“Did you see that new stud in her left ear? That makes five—way too many for somebody on my team to have. None of that weird stuff on Commander Darryl’s team!”

And so Jenna got voted down for cheerleader, although she was the best of the whole group who tried out that September afternoon. Jenna went home and cried herself to sleep that night. What had happened to her friends? Everything had been fine until that bully Darryl moved to town.

But Darryl’s victory was short-lived. She was suspended from school for bullying the girls on her team. And next year, Jenna had no problem making the team.

HOW TO GET BACK ON THE RIGHT TRACK

Here’s the key: You don’t have to act like a bully. You don’t have to become an outcast and trap yourself in a life where you have no friends, have to treat everybody like an enemy, and live from day to day in fear of not being able to compete with others on an equal basis.

Your bullying activities may have been minor so far but keep in mind that bullying can result in serious harm: physically and/or emotionally. You may have just been joking or did something without thinking and got caught. However, this is not an excuse for acting like a bully. Be careful not to establish a pattern of this type of behavior. No one enjoys or respects a bully.

So right now, as much as you might like to race through this packet and walk out—try for a few more minutes to take it seriously, finish reading it, and answer the questions at the end. With a little work, you can change the way you behave toward others. After reading this packet and thinking about what you’ve read, you can see why bullying behavior is a wrong choice. You have the determination that it takes to behave in acceptable ways so that people respond to you positively instead of negatively.
BULLY BEHAVIOR  EXCLUDING OTHERS

STEPS IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

Think about the following, as a start:

Look back at your life and try to understand why you behave like a bully.
When did you start excluding others? What made you feel that you had a right to hurt others by excluding them from activities over which you had control? What makes you think you have the right to judge others?

Learn to respect others and accept them for who they are.
Everyone has a right to grow and develop into the person he or she wants to be. Some grow up to be firemen and others fly airplanes. Some become singers, actors, or writers. Others go into politics or medicine or teaching. It’s the very diversity of human beings that makes us so interesting. So stop trying to impose your will on others. Let people live their own lives and make their own decisions without interference.

Learn to work with others instead of working against them.
Everyone has his or her own talent or gift. Nobody excels in every activity. Sometimes people need guidance, just as you do today. But when you arbitrarily exclude others, you offend people and make them unhappy with you. Eventually, you get tagged as a bully. Then nobody wants to be your friend. Who needs that?

Set some goals that will help you stop acting like a bully.
Instead of excluding others, try to think of ways to stop this negative form of behavior. Think about ways you can become more sensitive to the feelings of others. Think about practical ways to make friends instead of enemies. Try to see yourself from the other person’s point of view. You may not like what you see, but you might learn from it.

Now write some constructive answers to the serious questions you’ll find on the Response Sheets. They will help you reach your goals.
### WHAT TO DO

Below are some questions about the text you just read. These questions will help you remember the text, learn why you have acted like a bully, and learn how you can avoid being a bully in the future.

Because each person’s situation is different, for most of the questions, the “right” answer is simply the truth about what you think and feel. Be honest with yourself as you write the answers. Take time to think before you write. Write your answers in the spaces below the questions. If there is not enough room, write on the backs of these sheets. Be neat, spell correctly, use good grammar, and write in complete sentences. If you don’t understand what you are supposed to do, ask the person who gave you this packet.

1. How have you excluded others in your school? Explain.

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2. When did you start excluding others? Explain.

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3. Explain why you exclude others. Be as specific as you can.

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4. Explain how excluding others can be a form of bullying.

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5. How have your friends and classmates been affected by your excluding others?
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6. Do you feel that excluding others makes you look more powerful or more popular? Explain.
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7. Have you ever lost a friend by excluding him/her from some activity or group? Explain.
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8. Have you ever been excluded from an activity or group? How did it make you feel? Explain.

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9. How might Brent’s classmates have treated him in a way so that he did not feel excluded?

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10. How did Brent’s classmates bully him when he moved to the new school?

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11. Tina spent a lot of time and energy making herself look good for the first day of school. What might have been her friends’ motives in putting her down?

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12. How was the girls’ criticism of Tina a form of bullying?

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13. Why do you think Darryl bullied the twins?

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14. If you were a school counselor, what would you tell Darryl to help her stop bullying her classmates?

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15. What would be a good goal for Darryl to help change her bullying behavior?

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16. Why is it important to set reasonable goals when you are trying to change? Explain.

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17. What is your greatest problem in getting along with others? Explain.

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18. How do you feel when you bully others by excluding them? Explain.

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19. Can you think of other ways to feel good about yourself instead of by bullying others? What might these ways include? Explain.

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20. Write three goals that will help you avoid excluding others in the future.
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**WHAT TO DO**

Below are some questions about the text you just read. These questions will help you remember the text, learn why you have acted like a bully, and learn how you can avoid being a bully in the future.

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1. You’ve been excluding others again. Describe what you did that brought you back here.

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2. The last time you worked with this packet, you wrote three goals to help you avoid excluding others. Did you achieve any of these goals? Explain.
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3. Do you remember any of the goals you wrote? Write them below.
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4. How has your exclusion of others affected your friends and classmates? Explain.
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5. Why did you start excluding others again? Explain.
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6. Do you understand what led you to start excluding others? Did you do it in order to feel better about yourself? Explain.
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7. How might the person you bullied feel about what you did?
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8. Read the story of Brent again. How did his classmates bully him by excluding him?

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9. If you were a school counselor, what would you tell the students who excluded Brent? How might you suggest they treat him?

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10. How do you think Tina felt about herself when her friends excluded her for being too attractive? What might this do to her self-image?

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11. Write three ways in which Tina’s classmates might have responded positively to her makeover.

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12. How is excluding others a form of bullying? Explain.

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STUDENT RESPONSE PACKET 2  EXCLUDING OTHERS

14. If you were a school counselor, how would you help Darryl stop being a bully?

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15. Do you think schools are justified in disciplining students who bully by excluding others? Explain.

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16. Last time, you failed to meet your goals of not excluding others. Why did you fail to meet these goals?

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17. Last time, you didn’t reach your three goals. Now write three more goals that you think you can reach that will help you be more accepting of others.

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18. Tell us why you are going to meet your goals this time.

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19. If you were a school counselor, what would you tell yourself to help you stop acting like a bully?

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20. Have you ever been bullied by being excluded from something? How did that make you feel? Explain.

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STUDENT RESPONSE PACKET 2        EXCLUDING OTHERS
WORD SEARCH

EXCLUDING OTHERS

Name: _________________________________________    Date: ________________

WELCOMING                        SENSITIVE                        KINDNESS
DISCIPLINED                       HURTFUL                            BULLYING
COMPASSION                       EXCLUDING                        RESPECT
TRUST                           OUTCAST                          FRIENDS