

In the DVD we see two different responses by teachers to the same situation at the lockers. >

1 Describe how the teachers react in each case.

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2 Why do they behave differently?

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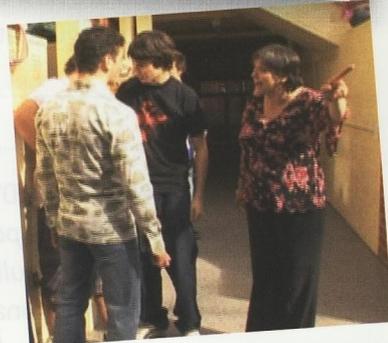
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3 Discuss the likely consequences of the different approaches by the teachers on:

the bullies

the targets

the bystanders

the school community

4 Which do you think was the better response? Explain why.

5 What do you think should happen now? In your answer, take into account all three parties: the bullies, the targets, and those who are not directly involved, but who are part of the community in which these events are happening — the bystanders.

Every school needs to have an anti-bullying behaviour policy — a SAFE Schools Policy.

But is it a good policy, and, more importantly, is it put into practice in the school?

Let's investigate for several schools — including your own.

What are the criteria of a good school policy? Here is a set of the chief features as described by a leading expert in the field, Dr Ken Rigby. He says that a school policy should clearly explain:

- ➔ the school's stand in relation to bullying behaviour
- ➔ a succinct definition of bullying behaviour, with examples
- ➔ the rights of children with respect to bullying behaviour at school
- ➔ the responsibilities of children who witness incidents of bullying behaviour
- ➔ what the school will do when there are cases of bullying behaviour.

(Ken Rigby, *Bullying in Schools: and what to do about it*, ACER, Melbourne, 1996 page 131)

6 Look at your school's anti-bullying behaviour policy. Can you identify these criteria there?

Bullying behaviour is also influenced by the school ethos — the cumulative effect of individual attitudes and related beliefs about how children should behave towards others. If these values exist in a school, the school ethos will support a culture of bullying:

- ➔ Might is right
- ➔ To be dominated by others is shameful
- ➔ You should never complain about ill-treatment by others
- ➔ You should learn to take it
- ➔ You should never sympathise with wimps
- ➔ To be gentle and compassionate is to be weak

(Ken Rigby, *Bullying in Schools: and what to do about it*, ACER, Melbourne, 1996 page 80)

7 Consider your school. What are the values that it encourages and rewards? What sort of behaviour is admired by your school community and encouraged and rewarded? Discuss this.

How do schools cope with bullying behaviour? What do you do with the aggressor?

One expert in the area, Dr Ken Rigby, identifies three broad approaches:

- ➔ Moralistic approach
- ➔ Legalistic approach
- ➔ Humanistic approach

Moralistic

That by forcibly stating the values and moral position of the school, bullies will desist. The effectiveness of this approach depends on the moral authority of the school and its acceptance by the student.

Legalistic

Where there is a set of rules that are known and applied. Consequences follow breaches of the rules.

Humanistic

Where the emphasis is on dealing with the individual and bringing about change in the aggressor's behaviour. Can be a 'no-blame' approach, or a 'shared concern' approach,

Whatever the policy, a more important aspect is how the policy is actually implemented. The best policy in the world is useless if nobody knows about it, or it is not applied when bullying behaviour incidents occur.

Here is a list of eleven criteria.

Decide if you think your school does these things. You may need to talk to other people to decide in some cases.

Factors in the effective implementation of programs

Elements of an effective anti-bullying behaviour program

My school:
Yes ✓ No X ?

- Teachers see the issue as important.
- Teachers regard the level of bullying behaviour as unacceptably high.
- Teachers are personally and emotionally concerned when they encounter cases of bullying behaviour.
- There is comprehensive staff involvement in the actual development of the school anti-bullying behaviour policy.
- Teachers fully comprehend what is expected of them in the program.
- Principals play a positive part in promoting anti-bullying behaviour procedures, for example, in placing bullying behaviour on the school agenda at staff meetings, organising meetings with parents, ensuring good surveillance of student behaviour at breaks.
- The school's anti-bullying behaviour policy is communicated to members of the school community, including parents.
- Regular classroom meetings are held with children about bullying behaviour.
- Curriculum-based work is being done with children, for example, group discussions, role plays, assertiveness training, and especially the promotion of positive action on the part of student bystanders.
- ■ Appropriate action is being consistently taken by schools when cases of bullying behaviour are identified.
- ■ There is good teacher management of classes leading to a cooperative classroom environment that promotes positive relations between students.