

## BULLYDOWN PHASE ONE BULLETIN BOARD FOCUS GROUP: MODERATOR SCRIPT

*[Note: This is a template. Questions will evolve based on the content of the discussions.]*

Objectives:

1. To illuminate the current exposure to anti-bullying programs among middle school teens, and to document the variation of this exposure across schools; and
2. To gather ideas for compelling names for the intervention.

**Hi there! Welcome to the discussion board.**

We are Michele and Dorothy. We will be moderating the discussion and are excited you're here!

We are in the process of creating a program to help young people in middle school with bullying. The idea is to send young people text messages on their phone each day for about 6 weeks. They would receive about 4-5 text messages per day. Content would help young people deal with being bullied and also better understand why young people might bully each other.

We need your help to make sure that the final program is something that middle school teens like you will find interesting and want to be a part of. To do that, we are going to ask you questions on this bulletin board over the next 3 days to get your thoughts and ideas about the different things we are planning to include in the program. We also are going to ask you questions about your life so that we make sure that the things we talk about in the final program will be interesting to people like you.

We are excited to hear about your experiences. There are no right or wrong answers. It is important that we hear from *\*you\** so please complete the Board **on your own**.

[Parents, please make sure that your child is able to complete the Board in a private space, on their own, so they can be completely honest. We can email you the script if you would like to see the questions.]

So, here's the plan: Today, we want to hear from you about your experiences with text messaging and about the types of programs related to bullying prevention you have been involved in at your middle school. Tomorrow, we will talk about resources in your school to help teens cope with being bullied. The final day, we will ask you what you think about parts of the program that we are developing.

As you can probably see, you are one of 18-20 other middle school teens taking part in this focus group. We think we're going to have a lot of fun!

**Here is some basic information about how the next 3 days will go:**

1. Each day, two sets of questions will be posted: one set will be posted in the morning; and the other set of questions will be posted at 12 noon. You all are from across the United States so please note that this might be a different time where you live.

We think it will take you about 20-30 minutes to answer all of the questions in each post. It might be a bit different for some posts.

2. Please look at every post. To answer the questions, click the blue "REPLY TO THREAD" button located on the left corner. Be sure to answer all of the questions.

Posts you still need to read will be bold and blue.

To reply to other people's comments, please use the "REPLY WITH QUOTE" button just below the comment you are responding to.

3. Please drop by and check this Board at least twice per day (more if you want to!). We will be reading your posts and might have some follow-up questions for you. We may also ask follow-up questions of the whole group, so please read through older threads for those questions as you can. We don't want to take too much of your time, so we will try to make it short and sweet!
4. If you have any problems at all with using this Board, or are confused or not sure what we mean by a question, please let us know or contact the technical help line at: [Help@BullyDown.com](mailto:Help@BullyDown.com).

If you are confused by any of the questions, you can always ask us to explain what we mean.

**Day 1, Morning Session****Let's break the ice!**

Please answer questions using the blue "REPLY TO THREAD" button located in the left corner. To reply to other people's comments, please use the "REPLY WITH QUOTE" button just below the comment you are responding to.

Let's start with a general question to get to know each other a bit: Tell us your favorite band!

**Using text messaging**

- How long have you had a cell phone?
- How often do you send text messages?
- Who do you text most often?

**Text messaging privacy**

- Who reads your texts? How do you feel about it?
- When do your parents read your texts?
- What kinds of things happen when other people read messages on your phone?
  - *PROBE: If you do get in trouble or there's drama, can you explain why?*
  - *PROBE: How would you feel if someone saw texts on your phone that were from a bullying prevention program? or about other private things?*

**Preventing people from reading your texts**

- How do you keep other people from reading text messages that you want to keep private?
  - *PROBE: What advice would you give to someone like you who wanted to keep their text messages private?*

**Texting in school**

- What are the rules your school has about using your cell phone at school? What about text messaging at school? How often do you follow these rules?

**Thank you! Instructions for the next session**

Thanks for your time so far. You're doing a great job! Please log on again this afternoon any time after 12:00 Noon for more questions. You will go to the section titled Day 1, Afternoon Session.

## Day 1, Afternoon Session

### Welcome back! Instructions for this afternoon

Welcome back!

You all are doing great! Please remember that there are no right or wrong answers. Please complete the Board **on your own**. It is important that you share *\*your\** experiences.

Be sure to go to the sections from this morning and do a quick check to see if there are questions that you missed.

Also, we may have asked you questions about your answers. Please look through to see if there's any questions for you.

**And, don't forget to talk to each other.** Feel free to comment on other people's answers, ask questions, whatever you want! Talking to each other will make it more fun – and also improve our research.

### What “bullying” means to you

- When you think of the word “bullying,” what do you think of?
- How (if at all) is this different from what you think of when you think about “aggression”? What about being angry? Or getting into fights with friends?

### School definition of “bullying”

- How does your school define bullying? How is your school definition of bullying different than your own?
  - *PROBE: It sounds like bullying is something that people do to each other face to face - not behind their backs. Can you say more about why one is bullying and the other is not?*

### School-based bully prevention curriculum experience

- What bully prevention programs or classes have you gone to at your school? (We mean things like exercises in the classroom such as role-plays and group work about bullying) What do you remember about the programs or classes?
  - *PROBE: If you have had bullying prevention programs at your school, do you remember the names of them?*
- Also, what ideas do you have about things that might be useful to hear related to bullying prevention?
  - *PROBE: If your school has assemblies or other programming, what did you learn about bullying? How useful was the information?*

### School-wide bully prevention efforts

- What school-wide activities have you taken part in that are about bully prevention? These could include assemblies, putting up a bulletin board, or organizing an activity.
- What have adults at your school said to you about bullying?

#### School bullying policies

- What happens at your school when people are bullied?
- What do adults do when they see someone being bullied?
- What happens to the bully? What happens to the person who is being bullied?
  - *PROBE: For those of you who have said that people stand up for the bully, what has your school done (if anything) to encourage this?*
  - *PROBE: For those of you have seen a bully apologize to their victim: how did it go? what are your thoughts on this?*

#### Thank you! Day 1 wrap-up

That is all of our questions for today. If you have answered them all, please remember to check back later to see if we have more questions for you or to comment on other people's responses.

Tomorrow's questions will be online by 6am, so we'll "see" you then!

## Day 2, Morning Session

### Welcome back! Instructions for today's sessions

Welcome back! Glad to see you checking in. Yesterday was great. We are getting fantastic information and appreciate your detail.

Please be sure to go to the sections from yesterday and check to see if there are posts that you missed. Also, please take a quick look to see if there are any follow-up questions for you to answer from yesterday. To do this, simply go back to the previous section and look to see if there are any blue envelope icons showing that you have unread posts. You can be sure that you have answered each question if there is a green arrow next to the thread when you enter the session. Thanks!

**Don't forget:** If you are confused by any of the questions, you can ask us to explain what we mean. Remember that you can respond to other people's posts too.

Now, on to today's questions!

### Safe places

[Please take a quick look to see if there are any **follow-up questions** for you to answer from yesterday. Also, please be sure to go to the sections from yesterday and check to see if there are **posts that you may have missed**.

And don't forget to **talk to each other!** It makes it more fun and interactive]

- Where are places you can go that feel safe, relaxed, and open to talk about things that are bothering you?

### Your experiences being bullied, seeing other kids be bullied, and/or bullying others

- Why do you think people your age bully one another?
- What are your experiences with being bullied? Have you bullied other people?
  - *PROBE: Thanks, all, for your responses. Some of you said during enrollment that you had bullied others. This is an anonymous space. No one knows who you are here. if you feel comfortable sharing about when you bullied someone - or were bullied, it will really help us in developing the program!*
  - *PROBE: Many of you have talked about bullying that happens at school, among kids of the same age. What are your thoughts on whether brothers and sisters can bully each other? whether bullying happens in places outside of school?*

### **Coping with school bullying**

- If you have been bullied, how have you handled it? Who did you tell? What happened when you told someone?
  - *PROBE: Did you tell your parents?*
  - *PROBE: Does anyone disagree that getting parents (or adults) involved is always a good thing?*

### **Dealing with your feelings**

- Who at school has talked to you about how to handle your anger? Like, things to do when you get really angry?
- What have you found to be helpful when you get angry? What are things that people have told you to try that did not work for you when you feel angry?
- When you are feeling sad, what are some things you do to feel happier?

### **Thank you! Instructions for the next session**

That's it for this morning's questions. Please log back in this afternoon any time after 12 noon EST for your next session. Thanks!

## *Day 2, Afternoon Session*

### **Welcome back! Instructions for this afternoon**

Welcome back!

Please be sure to go to the sections from this morning and do a quick check to see if there are questions that you missed.

Also, we may have asked you questions about your answers. Please look through to see if there are any questions for you.

**And, don't forget to talk to each other.** Feel free to comment on other people's answers, ask questions, whatever you want! Talking to each other will make it more fun – and also improve our research.

### **Respecting differences**

- What groups of people at your school are bullied more often than others? Why do you think these groups are bullied more?
- Some people are different in the way they look, talk, and in other ways. What things have you done to understand how and why people are different? How does your school talk about these differences?

### **Understanding other's feelings & thoughts**

- Has someone asked you to think about what it might feel like to be bullied?
- What are things that you do that help you understand how others might be feeling? Like how it might feel to be bullied, or to bully someone?
- When is it easy to feel sorry for some people your age who are bullied? When is it hard to feel sorry for people your age who are bullied?
  - *PROBE: Someone shared that the word "bullying" is an awful word and that it makes the person sound like a victim and vulnerable. What do you think about this? How are your feelings about the word similar or different?*
  - *Also, is there a better word than 'bullying' that we could use that is more empowering (could make the person feel better)?*

### Helping other people

- Have you ever stopped someone from bullying someone else? What did you do to help the victim (person being bullied)?
- When have you have seen someone being bullied and not helped that person? Why do you think you did not help the victim? What would have needed to be different for you to stand up to the bully?
- When do you think that it is okay to bully someone?
  - *PROBE: What do you think of the comment "I hate to say it but there have probably been many times when I have not stopped a bully because I was afraid and too nervous to do anything"?*
- Can you describe a time when you intervened to help someone and it did go well? Or you lost friends or the bully turned on you?

That is all of our questions for today. If you have answered them all, please remember to check back later to see if I have further questions for you or to comment on other people's responses.

Tomorrow's questions will be online by 6am EST, so we'll "see" you then!

### ***Potential follow-up questions for Day 2***

*Thanks so much for all of your comments this morning!*

- *I wonder if you could say more about what your experiences have been with dealing with fights and bullying at school.*
- *What have you learned in classes about how to manage your emotions and deal with bullying when it happens at school? What have your parents said to you about bullying? Were these discussions helpful or useful for you? What was missing in terms of dealing with bullying and the way you felt about it? Thank you!*

### Day 3, Morning Session

#### Welcome back! Instructions for today's sessions

Welcome back! This is our last session. Thanks for hanging in there. We've been learning so much from you all.

Please be sure to go to the sections from yesterday and check to see if there are posts that you missed. Also, please take a quick look to see if there are any follow-up questions for you to answer from yesterday. To do this, simply go back to the previous section and look to see if there are any blue envelope icons showing that you have unread posts. You can be sure that you have answered each question if there is a green arrow next to the thread when you enter the session. Thanks!

Don't forget: If you are confused by any of the questions, you can ask us to explain what we mean. Remember that you can respond to other people's posts too.

Now, on to the next sets of questions!

#### Likes about receiving program text messages

Ok, I think we're ready to start talking more about the bullying prevention program that we're developing. The idea is to send middle school teens like you information about bullying and how to manage feelings related to being bullied, witnessing bullying, or bullying others.

The program would last about 6 weeks. Young people would receive 3-5 text messages per day.

- Can you tell me what you *like* about the idea of getting text messages that talk about bullying and bullying prevention?

#### Dislikes about receiving program text messages

- What do you *not like* about the idea of getting text messages that talk about bullying or bullying prevention?
  - *PROBE: What are some ways that we might make the messages more interesting? We want to be sure that they 'speak' to you even if you are not being bullied and do not bully others.*
  - *PROBE [To those of you who said the program might be boring]: What would be boring about it? Is it what we say in the messages or how often we send them?*
  - *PROBE: Also, we want to talk about as much information as we can in the program. Each message would be the usually length for a text message (less than 160 characters). Most messages you would read but not respond to. But some, maybe like one every other day, you would need to respond to. How many messages could we send each day before it became annoying?*

#### Thoughts about the program: what do we need to be thinking about?

- What do you think could go wrong in a program like this?

- What are things that we need to be thinking about and planning for – especially to help teens who are being bullied?

#### **Things the program can do to help**

- What are things we can do to help teens who see others being bullied?
- What are things we can do help teens who bully other people?

#### **Bully prevention program name ideas**

- We would like your help with deciding what the program name should be. Our ideas are:
  - BullyDown.com
  - PreventBullying.com
  - BullyLess.com
  - ReduceBullying.com
- What do you like the best and why?
- What do you like the least and why?
- Do you have ideas for other names that we might consider?

#### **Final wrap-up!**

We've had such a great experience talking with all of you! We're sad to say our discussion is complete. You have been great and we appreciate the time and effort you put into the discussion over the last few days.

- Is there anything else that you think might be useful for us to know?

Please take one final look over all the sections to make sure you didn't miss any posts and to see if there are other comments you'd like to respond to. We'll be leaving this board open through tomorrow evening so that you can continue to respond and talk with each other. If you have participated fully by answering questions in each session, you will receive your gift card in one week.

Thank you!!!